

# INTRODUCTION

## AIM

To improve the skill level of 5 - 9 year olds.

## WHAT IS 'ABC Junior Football Program'?

ABC Program provides a structured training program over a 5 year period. There are 18 skill exercises.

All exercises have been designed for simplicity and can be practised at home.

A player can start the Program at any age. The longer a player has been involved in the Program the better the results.

Players can be tested for their proficiency in each of the exercises by referring to "the challenge" and the target levels. The target must be achieved in successive repetitions or, by a time to beat based on an average of 3 successive attempts. If the sequence is broken the player must start again.

Some skills will be more difficult than others, but the aim is to master them all by practice, practice, practice. Coaches should err on the side of perfection with regard to the performance of each skill.

There will undoubtedly be a need for the junior coach, to seek technical developmental advice from the supervisor coach on certain skills with which a particular player has difficulty. Upon the successful completion of the Program the player will possess good basic skills, which can be developed by future coaches. The player will possess skills in ball control, heading, passing, striking, receiving, kicking with both feet, eye/foot co-ordination, sprinting, backwards running, turning, feinting, juggling, dribbling and goalkeeping.

## RATIONALE

*A more concentrated coaching program can supplement the development of the player at an early age.*

*Numerous children drop out of soccer because they were never trained properly during their early years and cannot cope with the basic skills of the game.*

*Numerous players over the age of 10 cannot execute a full range of basic skills because of bad habits developed over many years of neglect.*

*If good habits can be taught, it goes without saying the child will be a better player.*

## BENEFITS

### Development of the player

ABC Program will produce a better balanced and better prepared player at the age of 10 than is presently produced. The skills obtained will encourage the player to be more adventurous in a game situation. It is designed to identify deficiencies of a player at an early age and to correct technique problems.

### Assistance to coaches

ABC Program will provide the inexperienced coaches with list of exercises to coach that will enhance the players' potential. It will provide coaches with a program as a supplement to a normal training session. It can be incorporated into part of each session.

### Involvement of the parent

ABC Program is designed with the emphasis on simplicity requiring a minimal amount of equipment on a small area of ground. It provides the parents with various tasks, which can be practised, at leisure, in the backyard or the nearest park with their child. It is emphasised that, if possible, the skills should be demonstrated by a qualified coach. The exercises can be practised all year round.

## SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION

*Excerpt from Australian Coaching Council "Aussie Sports Start"*

*'Children's natural energy and enthusiasm can be channelled into experiences where they learn about their bodies, and how to cope with others when sharing in movement, games and skill-based activities.*

*Children are active learners and they need to move to learn and, in the process, learn to move with skill, precision and enjoyment. Children's play is often spontaneous and unstructured, but, with appropriate encouragement, skills can be developed at the same time. Further, it is important for children to understand how a set of skills, once put together, make up a game that they can enjoy playing.*

*Every day, children participate in many movement and sporting activities. Clubs can provide the opportunity to further develop skills and to participate in appropriate competitive structures. But parents have a role to play, too. They are in a unique position to support and guide children in developing skills.'*

*Excerpt from Football Federation Australia "Coaching Grassroots Football".*

*'It is not an exaggeration to state that Grassroots coaches have perhaps the biggest influence on the future of football in Australia.'*