



Get   
Coaching!





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# PREPARE

- ✓ Coordinate logistics
- ✓ Organize equipment
- ✓ Consider safety
- ✓ Identify participant needs

## Coordinate Logistics

- Consider the number of participants you will have at each practice.
- Create a team list with contact information.
- Consider how you will communicate to your participants and parents (email, phone, club website.)
- Coordinate dates, times and locations of both practice and games. Share this information with your participants and parents.
- Consider environmental factors:

COLD WEATHER TIPS	HOT WEATHER TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmentally friendly heat packs are often available at sporting stores. Keep some on hand for cold fingers and toes!</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan activities that allow everyone to be moving as much as possible.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep instructions short and simple. This will keep the participants' focus on the activity and not on the cold.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Staying hydrated is as important in cold weather as it is in hot weather. Be sure to plan water breaks for your participants.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider bringing a spray bottle filled with water and spray participants intermittently throughout the practice. Kids love to run from the spray bottle as much as they love to be sprayed!</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Hot weather also means that the coach needs to plan lots of water breaks for the children.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bringing extra water is always a good idea in case someone forgets their personal water bottle.</li></ul>

## Organize Equipment

- Determine what equipment is available to you.
- Determine whether you require additional equipment to run your practice.
- Don't limit yourself to using only sport-specific equipment. Items such as hoola-hoops, foam balls, or rubber chickens can add a whole new level of fun to learning new skills.

## Consider Safety

- Ensure that the practice area is free from physical hazards (ex. broken glass, uneven surfaces, litter, etc.)
- Ensure participants understand to stay away from permanent physical hazards by marking the area with pylons or other bright equipment.
- Follow your club's policies in terms of cancelling practices and games due to poor weather.
- Use the 30-30 rule: When you can count 30 seconds or less between lightning and thunder, head for safe shelter. Remain sheltered for 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.
- Review the **SAFETY CHECKLIST**
- Complete the **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

## Identify Your Participants

- Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) is a national movement that is sweeping the country. It is working towards a goal where all Canadians will have the skills and abilities required to allow them to joyfully participate in activity and sport throughout their lives.
- A key feature of CS4L is Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD). LTAD is a developmental pathway that guides an individual's experience in sport and physical activity.
- LTAD experts identified 7 stages of human development, each with its own set of characteristics.
- Knowing where a participant fits in this pathway helps coaches choose activities that will be safe, appropriate, and effective for their participants.
- **Physical Literacy:** By providing children opportunities to develop fundamental movement skills (such as running, jumping, and throwing) and fundamental sport skills (e.g., sprinting, pitching, passing) in a developmentally appropriate way, you are setting your participants up for life-long success in activity and sport.
- You can learn more about Physical Literacy, CS4L, and LTAD by downloading **LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**, or visiting the CS4L website at <http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/>.

## LTAD Stage Characteristics

LTAD STAGE	CHARACTERISTICS
<b>ACTIVE START</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active Start children are typically under the age of six.</li><li>• In this stage of development, it is critical for children to learn that physical activity is a FUN part of their daily routine.</li><li>• Children under the age of six are not developmentally ready for adult-like movement patterns.</li><li>• Active Start children learn best through exploration and free play.</li><li>• You can learn more about this stage by taking an NCCP workshop on how to develop Fundamental Movement Skills.</li></ul>
<b>FUNDAMENTALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skill development is best achieved through multiple opportunities to play.</li><li>• In this stage, girls are typically 6-8 years old and boys are typically 6-9 years old.</li><li>• It is critical for children in this stage to master fundamental movement skills such as running, hopping, skipping, sliding, throwing, catching, striking, and balancing.</li><li>• Children should experience as many different activities as possible throughout the year.</li><li>• Children participate because they want to have FUN!</li><li>• All activity should be based on fun and not on scores.</li><li>• You can learn more about this stage by taking an NCCP workshop on how to develop Fundamental Movement Skills.</li></ul>
<b>LEARN TO TRAIN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In this stage, girls are typically 8-11 years old and boys are typically 9-12 years old.</li><li>• The focus of sport activities should be on skill development, not winning.</li><li>• In this stage, children should not specialize in a single sport. Instead, they should participate in 2-3 sports per year.</li><li>• Children are starting to develop endurance and improved coordination.</li><li>• There should be a minimum of two practices for every game/competition played.</li></ul>

## Important Things to Consider about Children and Activity

- Children who have fun playing a sport are more likely to stay active for life. They also have a better chance of developing the necessary skills to continue to succeed.
- Children are not born as natural athletes. They all need to learn fundamental movement skills to develop physical literacy.
- Long-term success comes from a long-term approach to skill development. The stress that results from emphasizing winning is part of the reason 70% of kids drop out of sport by age 13.
- If a child is encouraged to develop a skill before they are physically ready, they can suffer repetitive stress injuries that might actually limit their development as an athlete.
- Children often quit an activity because they feel “useless” or “no good”. They worry about being laughed at or harshly criticized. If a child is encouraged to develop a skill before they are ready, they can suffer. Learning the right skills at the right time and in the right way allows children to progress naturally and at their own pace. This gives them the confidence to stay involved and to try new things.

# PLAN

- ✓ Consider your coaching philosophy
- ✓ Identify your practice goals
- ✓ Choose warm-up activities
- ✓ Select appropriate skill development activities

Planning is the foundation of coaching. Having a plan helps you be organized and efficient in your practice. Use the Get Coaching practice plan template and set yourself up for success at each practice.

## Coaching Philosophy

- A coaching philosophy is a statement that identifies your attitudes, beliefs, and values about coaching. It guides your choices and behaviours while you are coaching. A coaching philosophy:
  - helps you to identify what is important to you;
  - allows you to clearly communicate your program priorities to participants and parents;
  - provides a consistent, sincere, and credible approach to your coaching practices;
  - Builds trust and establishes leadership within your team.
- Ask yourself: “What is the purpose of my program?”, “What is important to me as a coach?” then record it in your **PRACTICE PLAN**
- Sample coaching philosophies:
  - I will provide a fun and safe first-time experience in a sport for my athletes.
  - I believe that all participants should have an equal opportunity to play.
  - I want to deliver programming that reflects LTAD principles.

## Practice Goals

- Goal-setting allows you to choose the most appropriate activities for your practice
- Goals should be **SMART**:
  - **Specific** - I clearly identified what I want to accomplish.
  - **Measurable** - I will be able to tell when, and if, the goal is achieved.
  - **Achievable** - The participants' current skills will allow them to achieve this goal.
  - **Realistic** - The participants have the background knowledge and skill they need to achieve this goal.
  - **Timely** - There is enough time in the practice to achieve this goal.
- Practice goals should reflect the Long-Term Athlete Development stage of your participants.
- Don't try to accomplish too many goals in a single practice. To be effective, stick to one or two goals only.

## Sample Goals for LTAD Stages

LTAD STAGE	SAMPLE GOALS
ACTIVE START	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ensure all participants have a minimum of 10 minutes of safe free play.</li><li>2. Ensure all of the kids are moving by providing interactive games.</li><li>3. Ensure that, by the end of practice, all participants can at least identify at least one activity that was fun.</li></ol>
FUNDAMENTALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Teach fundamental movement skills that include running, jumping, throwing, catching, and kicking through fun activities and games.</li><li>2. Include at least one coordination activity and one agility activity in the practice warm-up.</li><li>3. Get all participants moving and having fun by keeping games and equipment simple.</li></ol>
LEARN TO TRAIN	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Improve participants' strength through activities using their own body weight (ex. Sit-ups and push-ups).</li><li>2. Develop participant's stamina through relay-type activities.</li><li>3. Develop a healthy level of competition among the participants by ensuring that everyone has a chance to compete in the practice activities and games.</li></ol>

## Design Your Activities

### Warm-up activities are important! They...

- Help to increase blood flow which warms up muscles and makes them more supple
- Reduce the potential for injury
- Help the participants and coach make the transition FROM school, work, or home TO practice
- Prepare participants mentally for the upcoming exercise
- Set the tone for the rest of the practice
- Prepare your heart for an increase in activity

### Checklist for Designing Warm-up Activities

- Start with large, easy, slow movements
- Progress into faster more complex movements
- Choose purposeful activities
- Make it fun!!

## Sample Warm-up Activities

### **TAG/FREEZE TAG**

**LTAD Stage:** Active Start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train

**Equipment:** N/A or optional, depending on variation

The game not only gets everyone moving, but avoiding being tagged encourages agility and coordination. You can make the game even more fun by directing the tagged participants to freeze in various and crazy poses until a teammate unfreezes them. There are many ways that tagged participants can be unfrozen: a simple touch, a completed pass, or other action can be used. Don't hesitate to use the creativity of your participants!

**TIP FOR ENGAGING YOUNG PLAYERS:** In a sport setting, it is usually more fun and engaging when the coach is "it" and chasing the players. Children tend to love be chased, rather than being the chaser.

**VARIATIONS:** **Jumping Tag** –In this modified game of tag, children are practicing the fundamental movement skill of jumping with both feet. This makes the game more challenging so you might have more than one person doing the tagging. **Chicken Tag** – Use a rubber chicken to tag participants. Those tagged must cluck and move on-the-spot like a chicken until they are unfrozen.

### **FOLLOW THE LEADER**

**LTAD Stage:** Active Start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train

**Equipment:** Whistle (optional)

**Active Start, FUNdamentals** - Include a variety of fundamental movement skills such as running, hopping and turning. You can modify this activity by giving each child a chance to be the leader. Blow a whistle or clap your hands to have the child at the front of the line move to the back so the next child can be the leader. Shout out a fundamental movement skill for the new leader. Be creative! Ask them to walk like a duck, crawl like a crab, or jump like kangaroos. Follow the Leader is a great way to incorporate imagination for this stage of development.

**Learn to Train** - Move between quick dynamic movements that get the heart pumping, coordination and agility movements that connect brain to body, and large muscle movements that get blood flowing. Encourage leadership and creativity by giving everyone a chance to lead. This is also a great activity to practice sport-specific skills.

## **SIMON SAYS**

**LTAD Stage:** Active Start, FUNdamentals

**Equipment:** N/A

Coach stands facing the children. Coach calls out “Simon says jump up and down”. Coach continues to call out various actions always saying “Simon says” before the action. The children only perform the action if the coach calls out “Simon says” before the instruction. The goal is for the children to outwit the leader by only performing the action when Coach says “Simon Says”.

**TIP FOR ENGAGING YOUNG PLAYERS:** given that the purpose of the game is to warm up the players’ bodies, no one should ever be “out” or win. Children should continue to play the game regardless as to whether they followed the instructions or not. Don’t point out children who missed the instruction, simply say to the group as a whole “I didn’t say Simon says!” and continue with the game. This ensures that all children feel they can continue to play.

## **RED LIGHT/GREEN LIGHT**

**LTAD Stage:** Active Start, FUNdamentals

**Equipment:** Markers for starting line (pylons, sweaters, etc.)

- Have all the players form a straight line in front of a marked “starting line”, or stand along a wall. You are the Stoplight and they are the cars.
- The Stoplight is to stand a distance away opposite the starting line.
- With your back turned to the cars, call out “Green Light!” and all the players begin running towards you. Call out “Red Light!” and turn around quickly. All players must freeze. Anyone caught still moving is sent to the starting line.
- Repeat until a player reaches you without getting caught. They become the next Stoplight.

**NOTE:** The higher the LTAD stage, the greater the distance should be between the starting line and the Stoplight.

**TIP FOR ENGAGING YOUNG PLAYERS:** It is helpful when you, as a coach, begin the game as the Stoplight so you can demonstrate the variety of time between shouting out Red Light and Green Light.

**VARIATIONS:** Red Light, Green Light, Yellow Light: where green light means run and yellow light means walk. Instead of the cars running, how about jumping? Or rolling? Bouncing a ball? The possibilities are endless!

## **WHAT TIME IS IT MR.WOLF?**

**LTAD Stage:** Active Start, FUNdamentals,

**Equipment:** Markers for starting line (pylons, sweaters, etc.)

- Have all the players form a straight line in front of a marked “starting line”, or stand along a wall. You are the Wolf.
- The Wolf is to stand a distance away opposite the starting line, with his/her back turned to the players.
- The children yell “What time is it Mr. Wolf”, and the Wolf calls out a time between 1 and 12 o’clock. The children take the same number of steps towards the Wolf, counting aloud as they go.
- After a few times of calling out, when the children next ask for the time, the Wolf should yell out “Dinner time!” and turn around and run after the players. The players need to run back to the starting line before being caught.
- If a player is caught, he/she becomes the Wolf. Alternatively, if a player reaches the Wolf before he/she shouts “Dinner time!”, the player becomes the Wolf.

**NOTE:** The higher the LTAD stage, the greater the distance should be between the starting line and the Wolf.

**TIP FOR ENGAGING YOUNG PLAYERS:** It is helpful when you, as a coach, begin the game as the Wolf so you can demonstrate shouting out various times.

**VARIATION:** Instead of taking steps, how about hops or bouncing a ball to the appropriate count?

## Skill Development and Practice Activities

- Select activities and drills that will promote the learning of skills and that will allow the greatest opportunity for all participants to be active throughout the practice.
- The more children get to participate, meaning the more they get to touch the ball or puck, the quicker children improve their skills.
- Recommend the **LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS** to help parents choose the right activities for their child.
- See what else is available for coach training in your sport by visiting [coach.ca](http://coach.ca).

## Checklist for Effective Activities

Determine if an activity will help contribute to an effective practice by asking yourself the following questions:

- Will the activity contribute to my practice goal?
- Does the activity focus on the skill I want to introduce or refine?
- Will the activity allow the children to be successful after two or three attempts?
- Is the activity LTAD stage appropriate?

LTAD STAGE	CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE ACTIVITY	
<b>ACTIVE START</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow everyone to participate <input type="checkbox"/> Involve fundamental movement skills, imagination, and creativity <input type="checkbox"/> Limit duration to 3-5 minutes per activity <input type="checkbox"/> Limit "all out" physical effort to a few seconds per activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Use equipment that is designed for children <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for lots of variety <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for a high probability of success <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Make it FUN!</b>
<b>FUNDAMENTALS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Refine fundamental movement skills <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce basic sport-specific skills and tactics <input type="checkbox"/> Limit duration to 5- 10 minutes per activity <input type="checkbox"/> Limit "all out" physical effort to 20 seconds at a time <input type="checkbox"/> Use equipment that is designed for children	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize practice and learning ...NOT competing <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for a high probability of success to develop motivation and confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Highlight giving a 100% effort <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Make it FUN!</b>
<b>LEARN TO TRAIN</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Refine fundamental movement skills <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce basic sport-specific skills and tactics <input type="checkbox"/> Limit duration to 5- 10 minutes per activity <input type="checkbox"/> Limit "all out" physical effort to 20 seconds at a time <input type="checkbox"/> Use equipment that is designed for children	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize practice and learning ...NOT competing <input type="checkbox"/> Allow for a high probability of success to develop motivation and confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Highlight giving a 100% effort <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Make it FUN!</b>

# DELIVER

- ✓ Communicate
- ✓ Provide feedback
- ✓ Keep participants engaged
- ✓ Deliver activities with confidence

## Communicate

- **Communicate:** the process of giving and receiving a message.
- As coaches, we always need to think about who is receiving our message. This impacts what we say and how we say it.
- Effective communication tips for coaches of FUNdamentals and Learn to Train participants:
  - ✓ Emphasize the positive.
  - ✓ Keep the message short and simple.
  - ✓ Use words and actions that match the age and maturity of their audience.
  - ✓ Be sincere.

## Feedback

- **Feedback:** to describe the process of providing information to improve performance.
- Coaches must strike the right balance to make feedback an effective tool:
  - ✓ Too much, and the participant tunes out.
  - ✓ Too little or too vague, and the participant doesn't understand what they did well, or what they need to do to improve.
- To make feedback effective, you should be:
  - ✓ Encouraging
  - ✓ Specific
  - ✓ Positive and constructive
  - ✓ Focused on what to improve
  - ✓ Balanced
  - ✓ Short and simple

## Keep Participants Engaged!

- The more chances children have to practice and play, the more likely they are to develop skills
- To keep children moving:
  - ✓ Have enough equipment for each child.
  - ✓ Ensure children are not waiting in line-ups.
  - ✓ Rotate children through activity stations.
  - ✓ Modify games so participants get more playing time.
  - ✓ Consider player attention span. You may need more games that are shorter in duration to keep the interest of younger children.

## Deliver Activities with Confidence

### Building Self-Esteem in your Participants

- ✓ Give them a warm and personal welcome when they arrive
- ✓ Use their names when you speak to them.
- ✓ Encourage cooperation and fair play.
- ✓ Make sure everyone has a turn to shine.
- ✓ Do not tolerate behaviour that makes other children feel bad.
- ✓ Acknowledge and encourage their efforts.
- ✓ Tell them what their positive qualities are, and what they do well.
- ✓ Give frequent and sincere praise.
- ✓ Show that you are happy to be with them.

## The 5-Step Coaching Process

STEPS	COACHING TIPS
<b>1. EXPLAIN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kneel so you are at eye level with the participants</li><li>• Make eye contact with the participants</li><li>• Have the children sit/stand so that the sun is at their back and not in their eyes</li><li>• Use simple language that participants can understand</li><li>• Use only one to three key points</li><li>• Use action words</li></ul>
<b>2. SHOW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Position children so they can all see and hear</li><li>• Demonstrate how to do the action</li><li>• Check that the participants understand the instructions and demonstration</li></ul>
<b>3. WATCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay out of the playing area</li><li>• Move around to see everyone's efforts</li><li>• Allow participants to learn through the process of making mistakes</li><li>• Ensure everyone is engaged in trying the activity</li><li>• Make certain that all the participants are playing and practicing the skills</li></ul>
<b>4. GIVE FEEDBACK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage what went well</li><li>• Focus on a single specific thing to improve</li><li>• Use positive and constructive language</li><li>• Provide a balance between what went well and what could be improved</li><li>• Keep it short and simple</li></ul>
<b>5. WATCH AGAIN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move around to see everyone</li><li>• Be positive by acknowledging the participants who successfully made corrections</li><li>• Encourage those who are still working on the corrections</li></ul>

# CONCLUDE

- ✓ Cool down participants
- ✓ Ask for feedback
- ✓ Implement reflection techniques
- ✓ Next steps in coaching

## Cool Down Participants

- A cool-down allows both the participants and the coach to:
  - ✓ Engage in relaxation exercises
  - ✓ Share highlights
  - ✓ Reflect on what was accomplished
- Review **COOL-DOWN ACTIVITIES** for examples of relaxation exercises

## Ask for Feedback

- Obtaining feedback from young participants can be challenging:
  - ✓ Children may feel pressure to say they liked an activity because they think that's what the coach wants them to say.
  - ✓ Others may not have the confidence to speak out in front of their peers.
- Review **COOL-DOWN ACTIVITIES** for examples of obtaining feedback from your participants

## Before They Go...

- Ensure you provide some closing messages to your participants before they leave. This means:
  - ✓ Share information they need to know to be ready for the next practice or event.
  - ✓ Always finish on a positive note.
  - ✓ Find something encouraging to say to each participant as they depart with their parents.

**Never leave the practice until all of your participants have been picked up by a parent or guardian!**

## **Sample Cool-down Activities!**

### **LARGE BODY ROTATIONS**

Body rotations are a great way to slow down the heart and provide some dynamic stretching. Engage the large body parts - trunk, arms, legs – and rotate in a slow, controlled manner. Rotate in both directions to develop balanced flexibility.

### **FLOPPY RAG DOLL**

The purpose of this activity is to release any muscle tension that might have built up over the practice. Have the children pretend they are ‘floppy rag dolls’ or ‘bean bag animals’. Start by shaking the entire body, then move to individual body parts. Encourage them to be as loose and floppy as possible. This is a great dynamic stretching activity.

### **BALLOON**

For younger children, a fun cool-down is to pretend to be a big balloon full of hot air. Tell the children that their balloon has a small leak and encourage them to slowly deflate down to the ground.

### **TREE IN THE WIND**

A nice cool-down at any age, stand with feet wide apart and knees slightly bent. Raise both arms overhead and, like a tree in the wind, gently wave them from side to side.

### **DEEP BREATHS AND HUG**

Have the children slowly take a deep breath in through the nose and out through the mouth, three or four times. Then, wrap arms around the shoulders and have them give themselves a big hug and a pat on the back. This is a great way to wrap up the cool-down and practice.

### **RELAXATION AND SHARING**

The children have just completed their cool-down exercises and are relaxing on the grass with their eyes closed. Name the different games played during practice and ask the children to raise their hands if they enjoyed it. Alternatively, children could give a ‘thumbs up’ or a ‘thumbs down’ sign to indicate their likes and dislikes. The key to both of these techniques is having the children keep their eyes closed so they cannot base their opinion on the actions of their peers or coach.

## Implement Reflection Techniques

It is important to reflect on your coaching practice. The SMART goal method can help you determine if your practice objectives were met. Make notes on your practice plan on which activities were successful and which ones were not, and detail what could be done next time to make them better.

### Reflection on SMART Goals

- ✓ Specific – Was it clear what I wanted to accomplish?
- ✓ Measurable – Did I achieve what I had hoped for?
- ✓ Achievable– Were the participants skilled enough to achieve the goal?
- ✓ Realistic – Did the goal make sense to my participants playing reality?
- ✓ Timely – Was there enough time in the practice to achieve the goal?

The following checklist allows you to reflect on the role your actions played in building participants' confidence and self-esteem.

### Reflection Checklist on Giving Feedback

- ✓ Was I warm and welcoming?
- ✓ Did I provide lots of opportunities for every child to practice and play?
- ✓ Did I encourage fair play?
- ✓ Did I not tolerate behaviour that made others feel bad?
- ✓ Did I acknowledge and encourage effort?
- ✓ Did I provide frequent and sincere praise?
- ✓ Was I happy to be there?

# NATIONAL COACHING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), launched in 1974 and delivered in partnership with the government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, and national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, gives coaches the confidence to succeed.



When you take an NCCP workshop, you'll not only gain technical abilities, but also mentoring and decision-making skills.

It begins here.

## Who is it for?

NCCP workshops are designed for all types of coaches. Whether you're thinking about coaching your child's community team or you're already the head coach of a national team, the NCCP has workshops to meet your needs.

## How much time does it take?

NCCP training doesn't require much time. Individual workshops can be completed in a single evening, and some workshops can now be taken online at your convenience or via home-study.

## Where do I start?

The National Coaching Certification Program makes it easy to get started and stay motivated on the path towards coaching skills development. Visit the Coach Training section on [coach.ca](http://coach.ca) to find the path that's right for you. Coach.ca is also loaded with additional tips and tools for coaches just like you. Don't wait, visit today!

