

jr. nba •



COACH MANUAL

V1.2



WELCOME



Welcome to the Jr. NBA Youth Basketball program!

Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Canadian basketball family! Whether it's your first time coaching, or you've been in the game of basketball for many years, thank you for taking your time to ensure our young athletes are getting the best experience possible. As you start your journey with JNYB you'll experience basketball like never before.

Basketball in Canada is becoming an increasingly popular sport, especially among youth. This drive and excitement gets young athletes from coast to coast to enter the sport, but it is great people like you that keep those athletes in the game by making it fun and creating memories that last a lifetime.

We've tailored our new curriculum to focus on an athlete-first approach so coaches can help their players grow on and off the court. We've also reached out to multiple experts in many new areas of athlete development to provide you with cutting edge content and knowledge to ensure you have the best resources to help your athletes to be successful.

Once again, thank you for choosing to coach with JNYB; your effort and energy does not go unnoticed!

Sincerely,
Canada Basketball

CONNECT
WITH US



<https://jrnba.ca/>



<https://ca.nba.com/>



<https://basketball.ca/>



USING THIS
MANUAL

This manual is designed by coaches for coaches with the intended purpose of providing up-to-date and easy to follow coaching resources. The manual is intended to be used to help guide coaches through a successful session of Jr. NBA Youth Basketball.



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CURRICULUM WRITERS



MIKE MACKAY



DAWN SMYTH



GREG FRANCIS



MICHAEL MEEKS



RON YEUNG

Ron has been heavily involved in the sports industry, and specifically in the sport of basketball for over 15 years. Over this time, he has served in a number of important roles responsible for the strategic development and implementation of grassroots basketball in communities across Canada. Ron worked with the Toronto Raptors Basketball Club from 2000-2006, where he was responsible for the successful growth and operation of the Raptorball Youth Leagues and Jr. NBA/WNBA. In 2007, he was commissioned by Canada Basketball to design and develop Steve Nash Youth Basketball (SNYB), a national youth development program aimed to grow the game at the grassroots level. Following the guidelines of the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) policy, along with researching best practices from other youth sport program models around the world, Ron was able to incorporate his vision to develop SNYB as the foundation of the Canadian basketball development system.



BRANDON BROCK

Brandon worked for Canada Basketball as a Domestic Program Assistant, with a focus on redeveloping the SNYB curriculum, including lesson plans and the drill bank. Brandon graduated from the University of Waterloo from the Recreation & Sports Business program with honours, and while attending U of W he was an Assistant Coach with the Men's program. He is a trained Coach Developer for the Coaches Association of Canada and has a passion for youth sport/athlete development.

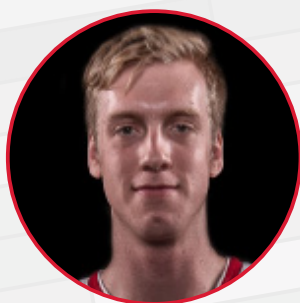
CONTRIBUTORS



**AUSTIN "WADE"
WILSON, Ph.D**

Dr. Austin "Wade" Wilson is a Mental Performance Consultant and Lecturer in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo. Wade has been a Professional Member with the Canadian Sports Psychology Association since 2008 and provides athletes, coaches and parents of athletes with the mental skills, techniques and information to take their performance to the next level and maintain success. Wade strives to empower athletes and coaches to develop the connection between the mind and body to inspire confidence and motivation for athletes to reach their optimal performance and goals. Wade runs his private consulting business: Wilson & Associates Mental Performance Consulting out of Kitchener-Waterloo Ontario area, and works with a variety of U-Sport Varsity Athletes, High-Performance Elite Youth Athletes, Amateur Athletes and Professional Athletes.

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ALEX FOSTER

Alex Foster follows his love for basketball around the world as both a professional player and youth coach. While playing overseas, Alex learned how to use principles of mindfulness to maintain a healthy attitude towards athletic performance. As a coach, he teaches the same tools directly to young athletes through his basketball initiative, Sense Basketball. By combining mindfulness with skill development, his curriculum focuses on the overall wellness of youth athletes, which leads to long-term success as a player.



1.0

COACH OVERVIEW



ABOUT JYNB

Jr. NBA Youth Basketball (**JNYB**) is a national youth basketball program designed to develop fundamental skills, sportsmanship, and a love for the game of basketball. This NBA Canada & Canada Basketball grassroots initiative empowers community sport groups, facilities, and clubs in an effort to positively influence youth through basketball.

JNYB was developed along the guidelines of Sport Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development (**LTAD**) Model, a research based approach to optimal **ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT** at all levels of sport. Focusing on physical literacy and the fundamental skills, JNYB acts as the entry point to Canada Basketball's Athlete Development Pathway.

JNYB believes sport is a powerful development tool, providing youth an opportunity to build character and life skills. JNYB aims to take full advantage of this to **DEVELOP THE WHOLE CHILD**, not just the athlete, using activities that teach goal setting, communication, teamwork, and more.

Young athletes play sports for fun, not to score points or win games. By maximizing player participation and engagement while promoting fun and friendly competition, we help young athletes embark on a long and successful basketball career by **PUTTING FUN FIRST**.

JNYB is based on an extensive review of existing community basketball programs across Canada and around the world – **EVERY COMMUNITY IS UNIQUE**. As a result, the model offers the structural foundation for a youth basketball program while remaining flexible enough to adapt to the needs, resources, and people of any community.

MISSION

To empower youth and communities across Canada through basketball – the right way.

VISION

For all youth in Canada to have the opportunity to play basketball.

VALUES

FUN



Creating a positive environment that builds a life-long enjoyment of sport and basketball.

PARTICIPATION



Maximizing access and opportunity for young Canadians to learn and play basketball.

DEVELOPMENT



Progressing athletes according to the LTAD Model, encouraging high performance opportunities and be active-for-life athletes.

EDUCATION



Providing coach and parent education through NCCP training, full curriculum, Parent Guides, and supporting resources.

CHARACTER



Helping athletes make the most of their potential, using basketball as a vehicle to develop character and life skills.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Coaches are the most important factor of a quality youth sport program. Coaches drive philosophy, guide athlete development, and foster a love of physical activity and basketball that JNYB aims to build in young athletes. Everything —down to the JNYB mission, vision, and values—depends on you as a coach.

ROLES

BE A PARTICIPANT

You are a leader. Be positive, be attentive, and be engaged. The best programs have the best coaches, who set the tone early and often with energy and enthusiasm.

BE A TEACHER

You are an educator. Be organized, be flexible, and be patient. Coaches guide the development of every athlete — embrace this responsibility to see all players improve.

BE A FRIEND

You are a role model. Be honest, be kind, and be fair. Youth sport offers a unique opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with young athletes through sport.

COMMITMENTS



THE CHILD

JNYB adopts a child-centric philosophy and a holistic approach to basketball — develop the child, not just the athlete.

Get to know the kids you work with, and promote life skills in lessons. Create an environment where players are challenged to work cooperatively, think critically, and grow as people.

THE ATHLETE

JNYB develops complete athletes, emphasizing a strong foundation of all fundamental skills.

Ensure players aren't limited to one position or skill set—coaches should develop well-rounded (not one-dimensional) athletes. Play position-less basketball, and help athletes try new skills without being afraid to make mistakes.

THE PROGRAM

JNYB commits to delivering quality, consistent, and sustainable youth basketball programming.

Coaches are encouraged to adapt the lesson plans to best meet the needs and abilities of their participants, while understanding the value of the program's underlying structure, philosophy, and curriculum.

COACHES CREED

AS A COACH WITH JR. NBA YOUTH BASKETBALL, I WILL...

- Embrace a child-centric coaching philosophy.
- Make basketball fun and enjoyable for everyone.
- Ensure activities are appropriate for the age, experience, and fitness of all players.
- Learn the game, its rules, and concepts as they apply to youth basketball.
- Be organized and prepared for each session.
- Act professionally regarding dress, language, and behaviour.
- Be a positive role model for athletes, parents, and other coaches.

WHY KIDS PLAY SPORTS

WHY KIDS PLAY SPORTS

1. HAVE FUN
2. IMPROVE SKILLS
3. STAY IN SHAPE
4. Do something they are good at
5. Be part of a team
6. For the challenge/competition
7. Learn new skills
8. To win

WHY KIDS QUIT SPORTS

1. NOT HAVING FUN
2. LOSS OF INTEREST
3. TOO MUCH TIME
4. Poor coach/instruction
5. Too much pressure
6. Choosing other activities
7. Coach playing favourites
8. An emphasis on winning

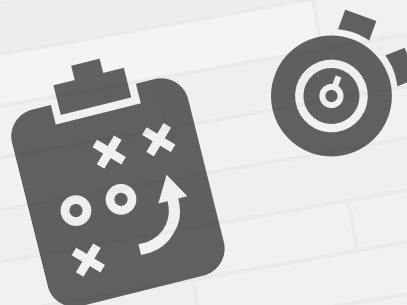
TIPS TO KEEP KIDS ENGAGED IN SPORT

1. Take a games approach to learning (see page 32)
2. Encourage your athletes to provide feedback on what they want to do
3. Have kids choose the games and activities you do, and as a coach, facilitate play

Apache, R.R.G. Why kids Play Sports- And why they Quit. Retrieved from:
http://assets.ngin.com/attachments/document/0037/9955/Why_kids_play_sports.pdf



FAIR PLAY



FAIR PLAY PRINCIPLES

The Fair Play Principles apply to anyone who organizes, coordinates, and participates in a community sport program. By promoting Fair Play Principles to all parties involved (i.e. players, parents, coaches, volunteers, and officials) you will have a positive impact on the sport experience and individual development of every child.

- I. RESPECT THE RULES.**
- II. RESPECT YOUR OPPONENT.**
- III. RESPECT THE OFFICIALS AND THEIR DECISIONS.**
- IV. GIVE EVERYONE AN EQUAL CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE.**
- V. MAINTAIN SELF-CONTROL AT ALL TIMES.**

PROMOTING FAIR PLAY

Fair Play Principles are a pillar of JNYB, ensuring the promotion of physical activity and sport in a safe, secure, and positive environment. Establish clear expectations for conduct of your players and parents early on, especially in competitive drills and games. Children often learn through imitation—it is important to adopt and model the Fair Play Principles yourself, so athletes learn those same principles in your sessions.

For many athletes, the difference between lifelong participation and early drop out is whether or not they enjoy their youth sport experience. Athletes who feel they are treated unfairly, who don't get a chance to play, or who are marginalized by their peers are much less likely to remain active in sport. Other athletes may be over competitive, placing too much emphasis on scoring points or winning games, and not enough on sportsmanship and teamwork.

JNYB CODES OF CONDUCT

In an effort to highlight the Fair Play Principles, NBA Canada and Canada Basketball has approved a set of Codes of Conduct for JNYB program hosts, coordinators, and participants. It is recommended that all JNYB programs and staff communicate these codes to participants, even posting the codes at facilities and sessions. These Codes of Conduct represent the philosophy and environment necessary for all JNYB programs, though hosts may adapt the codes to best suit their needs.

The JNYB Codes of Conduct can be found online on Game Plan with the other JNYB resources.

2.0 LTAD



THE LTAD MODEL

LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

The Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Model is based on the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) Resource Paper, put together by Canadian world leaders in the areas of child and sport development.

The LTAD Model is athlete centred and coach implemented, and is supported by parents, administrators, and sport science professionals. The model strives to accommodate individuals of all abilities and skill levels to ensure everyone has an opportunity to play. LTAD incorporates multi-stage training, competition, and recovery pathways guiding an individual's experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through adulthood.

LTAD ensures Physical Literacy in all children, encouraging lifelong activity and wellness and providing a training path for high-performance athletes. The model focuses on the general framework of athlete development, ensuring proper growth, maturation, and physical and mental development. There are seven stages in the LTAD Model – JNYB focuses on two: **FUNDAMENTALS (5-9)** and **LEARN-TO-TRAIN (9-12)**.

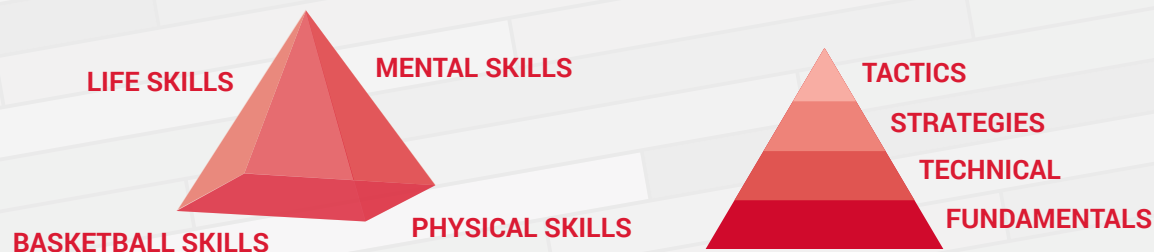
The overall aim of the LTAD Model is two-fold:

- I. To allow participants to find fun, fitness, social interaction, and self-fulfillment through an all-inclusive sport environment.
- II. To develop competitive pathways that are developmentally appropriate and lead players to the highest possible levels of achievement.



BASKETBALL PYRAMID

To help frame athlete development, the BASKETBALL PYRAMID combines the four big skills with the four teaching progressions—JNYB develops each skill, emphasizing the fundamental and technical teaching progressions.



10 FACTORS OF LTAD

PHYSICAL LITERACY

The cornerstone of both participation and excellence in physical activity and sport, physical literacy is a priority prior to a child's adolescent growth spurt. Physically literate individuals are more likely to achieve sport success and remain active for life.

SPECIALIZATION

Late-specialization sports (like basketball) require athletes to play other sports until they are over 12-years-old. Early specialization can cause overuse injuries, burnout, early retirement, and limit fundamental skills. Coaches should develop "global players", where every player learns the skills for every position.

DEVELOPMENTAL AGE

Physical, mental, and emotional maturity refers to one's development age – and not everyone matures at the same rate. Sport often uses chronological age (i.e. years) for distribution, pushing early-maturing athletes into elite streams prematurely (limiting their fundamental skill development) and late-maturing athletes out of competition entirely (limiting their opportunities to advance in the sport system).

SENSITIVE PERIODS

Specific windows in maturation create conditions for optimal development for a specific skill or physical capacity. If these windows are missed, a child may never reach their greatest athletic potential.

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Coaches should focus on all areas of athlete development, finding a complimentary balance in mental, cognitive, and emotional development. Quality sport programs aim to develop well-rounded and self-reliant individuals and athletes.

PERIODIZATION

A time management approach to athlete development, periodization gives a framework for the frequency, intensity, and volume of training to ensure optimal efficiency.

COMPETITION

Adult competition models are often imposed on youth sport. In childhood, the focus of all activities should be on fun first, with limited structured competition. As athletes mature, competition should still be no more than 30% of one's sport participation.

EXCELLENCE TAKES TIME

Research suggests it takes at least 10 years of training for a talented athlete to reach an elite level – elite is defined as when an athlete specializes in one sport. Development is a long-term process, and there are no shortcuts to achieving excellence.

SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Pathways for sport participants must be clearly defined with multiple entry points. There is an interdependence between physical education, persons with disabilities, school sport, competitive sport, and recreational activities. Program connections across these channels must exist to ensure smooth transitions between stages.

KAIZEN

Continued improvement (Kaizen) refers to an ever-changing sport climate, and the need to stay in touch with relevant issues and trends. To optimize the sport system, basketball uses sport science, medical plans, and integrated support teams.

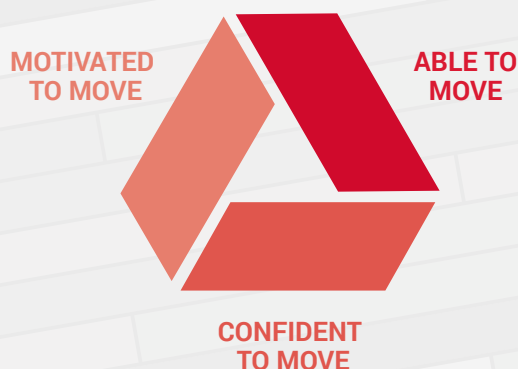
PHYSICAL LITERACY

Physical Literacy gives children the tools to take part in physical activity and sport, and is a key component of the LTAD Model. Physical literacy refers to the mastery of fundamental movement skills (FMS) and fundamental sport skills (FSS), and the ability to perform and transfer those skills across contexts, sports, and other activities.

It is one thing to be able to run, it is another to run on pavement, wet grass, or a court. It is one thing to throw an object, it is another to toss a discus, pitch a baseball, and shoot a basketball. It is one thing to jump high, it is another to spike a volleyball on a beach court, jump for a frisbee on turf, or elevate for a rebound in the gym.

One goal of LTAD is to develop a healthy nation of physically literate individuals, who move with competence and confidence in varied physical activities. This development also enhances one's physical and psychological wellness, allowing for the pursuit of sport excellence based on ability and motivation.

PHYSICAL LITERACY



PROMOTING PHYSICAL LITERACY



TALK TO PARENTS

Discuss the idea of Physical Literacy with parents, about why it is important and how they can help encourage development at home. Ensure parents also receive the JNYB Parent Guide, a resource specifically for youth sport parents.

PROMOTE VARIETY

Make sure that both parents and players understand the value of multi-sport participation. Encourage parents to have their children in a variety of sport and physical activities, both formal and informal (i.e. active play).

MAX PARTICIPATION

Design sessions and activities for maximum participation from players and coaches (the less standing around in practice, the better). Some children struggling with a skill may withdraw from an activity – encourage them to stay involved, even working with them one-on-one to help them gain confidence.

BE REALISTIC

Understand that young athletes are still learning, and the fundamentals need to be developed before working through skill progressions. Children will master physical skills at different rates despite going through the same stages of development.

APPLAUD MISTAKES

The best way for children to learn new skills is by experimenting, making mistakes, and going through the experience. Create an environment where players are not afraid to fail, and are applauded for trying skills outside their comfort zone.

*Active for Life.
Canadian Sport for Life. (2017).
Long-Term Athlete Development
Resource Paper (2.1). Retrieved
From Sport for Life [http://
sportforlife.ca/wp-content/
uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.
pdf?x96000&x96000](http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.pdf?x96000&x96000)*

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

Fundamental movement skills offer the foundation of all movement, and are a vital component to the physical development of a child. Without these basic skills, development of fundamental sport skills is extremely limited.

Without learning and experimenting with different throws, a young player may not be able to take a jump shot. Without practicing catching, a young player may have difficulties receiving a pass. Without a base of agility, balance, and coordination a young player may struggle on defense.



AGILITY



BALANCE



COORDINATION



RUNNING



JUMPING



THROWING



CATCHING



KICKING



STRIKING

ANDREW WIGGINS

Consider Andrew Wiggins, current NBA player and previous NBA Rookie of the Year.

Wiggins began his athletic career in track-and-field, developing fundamental movement skills and learning how to move well. Now Wiggins sees those same movement skills transfer, helping him succeed on the basketball court.



FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

FUNDAMENTAL SPORT SKILLS

With a foundation of fundamental movement skills, children are better equipped to understand and perform a wide range of fundamental sport skills. Sport skills are the essential skills specific to each sport.

The fundamental sport skills for basketball give young players the essential tools they need to be successful in basketball. But it is also important for players to develop sport skills from other sports as well. Many fundamental sport skills transfer between sports, and help contribute to the development of well-rounded athletes.



BALL HANDLING



PASSING



SHOOTING



LAY-UPS



REBOUNDING



OFFENSE



DEFENSE

STEVE NASH

Consider Steve Nash, two-time NBA MVP, eight-time NBA All-Star, and former member of Canada's Senior Men's National Team.

Despite enjoying a long career, Nash did not start playing basketball until he was 12-years-old — and as a teen he played soccer, hockey, baseball, and was an avid skateboarder. Nash's basketball success stems from the skill sets he developed in other sports.



FUNDAMENTALS



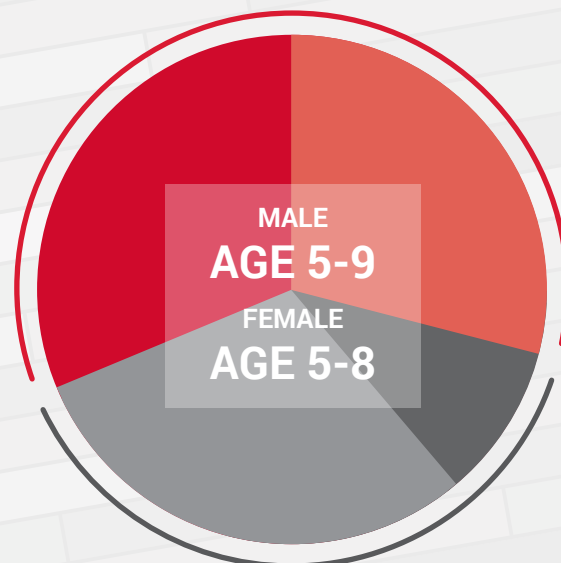
FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

30%
BASKETBALL SKILLS

30%
MOVEMENT SKILLS

30%
INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

10%
TEAM CONCEPTS



TECHNICAL SKILLS

MOVEMENT & BASKETBALL SKILLS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Limited muscle development / fine motor skills
- Learn to use muscles through movement discovery and exploration
- More engaged when enjoying the activities
- Learn best through fun, positive, inclusive games

STRATEGIES

- Foster a passion and excitement for basketball
- Develop ABC's—agility, balance, coordination
- Use brief, vigorous activity with lots of rest breaks
- Try a variety of movements and exercises
- Focus on movement while emphasizing fun
- Develop strength through body weight exercises

MENTAL & LIFE SKILLS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Learn through exploration and imitation
- Form bonds and seek attention from role models
- Typically sportsmanlike, cooperative, and listen well to adult figures
- May struggle with ownership/ coping with losing

STRATEGIES

- Play games giving children roles
- Teach children to win and lose with grace
- Use small groups and include everyone
- Let children experiment and express creativity
- Give lots of praise and recognition
- Introduce simple rules of fair play

LEARN TO TRAIN

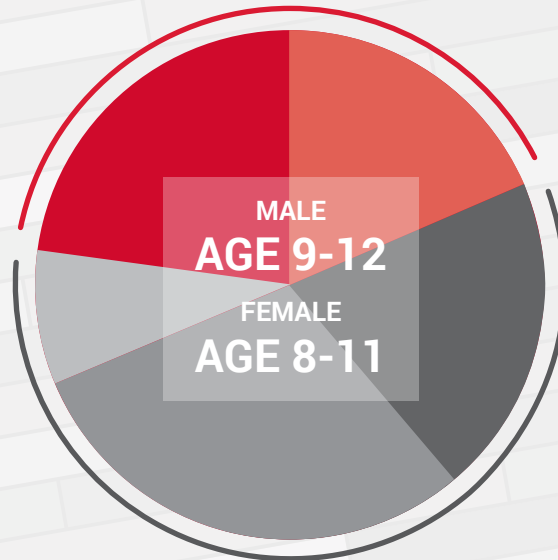


FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

20%
BASKETBALL SKILLS

10%
OFFENSE/DEFENSE
STRATEGY

30%
INDIVIDUAL SKILLS



20%
MOVEMENT SKILLS

20%
TEAM CONCEPTS

TECHNICAL SKILLS

MOVEMENT & BASKETBALL SKILLS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Major learning stage for all children: all basic sport skills should be learned before puberty
- Some development in larger muscle groups
- High energy, but more prone to fatigue
- Better awareness, coordination, and tracking
- Willing to experiment with new movements

STRATEGIES

- Focused on performance, and critical of failure
- Better able to concentrate / make connections
- Begin to divide into leaders and followers
- Respond stronger to youth peers than adults
- Keen to display independence, though still seek recognition for achievements

MENTAL & LIFE SKILLS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Intro training concepts like nutrition and rest
- Emphasize skill mastery through drills and games
- Introduce basic offense/defense concepts
- Develop a sense of the game and a comfort in competitive situations

STRATEGIES

- Design activities for small groups or teams
- Incorporate skill repetition and self-evaluation
- Foster decision making and team building
- Give positive feedback and recognize success
- Introduce mental preparation

10 S's OF TRAINING

THE BASIC 5

OPTIMAL TRAINING PERIODS		
	MALE	FEMALE
STAMINA	Onset of growth spurt	Onset of growth spurt
STRENGTH	12-18 months after growth spurt	Immediately after growth spurt
SPEED	Ages 7-9 and 13-16	Ages 6-8 and 11-13
SPEED	Ages 9-12	Ages 8-11
SUPPLENESS	Ages 6-10 and during growth spurt	Ages 6-10 and during growth spurt



THE EXTRA 5

THINGS TO CONSIDER	
MALE & FEMALE	
STATURE	Tracking standing height, sitting height, and arm span every 3-months during development stages allows for determination of optimal training periods.
SCHOOLING	Account for school work load, personal relationships, and other life commitments when programming for athletes.
(P)SYCHOLOGY	Emphasize concentration, mental training skills, and a positive attitude at all stages of development.
SUSTENANCE	Nutrition, hydration, rest, sleep, and an overall balanced lifestyle must be considered at all stages of development.
SOCIOCULTURAL	Use sport as a means to broaden the perspective and experiences of young athletes, enhancing appreciation of different societies and cultures.

Canadian Sport for Life. (2017). Long-Term Athlete Development Resource Paper (2.1). Retrieved From Sport for Life http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.pdf?x96000&x96000

3.0

TEACHING



LEARNING TO TEACH

PROCESS > PRODUCT

There are two approaches coaches can take when teaching a skill—each emphasizing a different aspect of that skill. When working with youth athletes (especially when introducing or developing a new skill) coaches should use a **process focus** rather than a product focus.

PROCESS FOCUS

The process approach highlights the **skill execution**; whether technique is improving and how comfortable the athlete is performing that movement or skill. This method is optimal for much of youth education, but especially in sport. A focus on the athlete's process helps them become more self-aware, and allows them to make their own corrections in the future.

PRODUCT FOCUS

The product approach highlights the **skill outcome**; whether the intended result of the skill was achieved, regardless of technique. While there are exceptions, this method can often hurt youth development, especially in sport. A focus on the outcome or result places unnecessary pressure on the athlete to achieve that desired outcome, distracting from whether or not the skill was actually preformed correctly.

FEEDBACK

As the biggest contributor to skill development, giving appropriate and constructive feedback is key for any youth coach. Throughout a season, look to improve your feedback, both in what you say and how you say it.

- Use feedback after both successful AND unsuccessful skill performances
- Summarize feedback after multiple attempts (instead of after every repetition)
- Use positive words like “do” and “try” and avoid negative words like “don’t” or “stop”
- Give “bandwidth feedback” to correct only when errors exceed a certain threshold
- Ask athletes what they think is working, and what they need to improve on

TYPES OF FEEDBACK	
PROGRAM FEEDBACK	Helps beginners understand basic technique of movement patterns, such as relative timing of skill components (i.e. footwork for a lay-up) or emphasis on specific motions (i.e. step into a pass). Program feedback should be short and easily understood.
PARAMETER FEEDBACK	Provides advanced players adjustments to movement patterns, such as improving inefficiencies (i.e. flick the wrist for more rotation on the ball) or focusing attention on one aspect (i.e. arms up on defense to shrink passing lanes). Parameter feedback should be specific, in instruction and desired effect.
VISUAL & PHYSICAL FEEDBACK	Offers non-verbal cues for players who may be struggling with program or parameter feedback. Either through demonstration (visual) or contact and guided movement (physical) coaches can emphasize specific teaching points in a new way.

STAGES OF LEARNING

Everyone goes through the same learning process regardless of who they are or what skill or concept they are learning. Players will pick up certain skills slow or faster than others, but the phases of learning remain the same. Effective delivery of lessons and drills should consider the four stages of learning:



I. SUPPLY	Provide information about the skill
II. PROCESS	Relate or analyze the skill
III. EXPERIENCE	Implement and practice the skill
IV. REFLECTION	Evaluate and experience the skill to improve understanding

STAGE I: SUPPLY

First, youth athletes are introduced to the new skill with the basic information that is easily understood. The best way to introduce a new skill to young players is through demonstration—specifically a “show-and-tell” method that makes use of the three learning styles:

LEARNING STYLES	
I. VISUAL	<i>The physical demonstration by the coach</i>
II. AUDITORY	<i>A verbal description of the demonstration</i>
III. KINESTHETIC	<i>The imitation and repetition of the demonstration by the athlete</i>

TIPS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS

- Be visible, ensuring all athletes can see and hear the demonstration (see Teaching Formations)
- Demonstrate without the ball first, highlighting what it should look and feel like
- Use descriptive words which will be helpful cues when coming back to that skill
- Keep your demonstration short and simple—if you’re long-winded, athletes will become disengaged
- Ask if there are any questions, either to the group or to individuals

STAGE II: PROCESS

An often forgotten stage of learning, processing allows athletes to digest the information to understand the how, when, and why of a new skill through questioning. Use leading questions to draw information from athletes, gently guiding their thought process so they can come to the answer themselves.

LEADING QUESTION EXAMPLES

- I. We want our stance to be low and wide when in triple threat—what is the reason for this?
- II. If we are taking a shot at the basket, where should your follow-through be pointing?
- III. Try to keep your head “on a swivel” on defense. Can you tell me why this helps?

TIPS FOR QUESTIONING

- Show the athletes you care about what they think—be patient and respect all answers
- Put yourself in the athlete’s shoes to consider their perspective
- Encourage honest responses, not answers they think you want to hear

STAGES OF LEARNING

STAGE III: EXPERIENCE

Create situations so athletes can practice skills through experimentation, repetition, and guided competition. As athletes refine their technique, guided competition (offense/defense) can introduce simple decision making to help deepen their understanding of the how, when, and why the skill is applied.

GUIDED DEFENSE	GUIDED OFFENSE
Guided defense is used to improve offensive skills. A player (or coach) acts as a “fake defensive player”, behaving predictably and moving slowly to allow the offense to succeed. Progress by allowing the defense to play “live” and adapt to the offense, adding another layer of decision making.	Guided offense is used to improve defensive skills. A player (or coach) acts as a “fake offensive player”, behaving predictably and moving slowly to allow the defender to react. Progress by allowing the offense to play “live” and react freely based on the defense, adding another layer of decision making.

TIPS FOR GUIDED COMPETITION

- Use guided competition to modify drills and games to progress skill development
- Ensure athletes are challenged enough to make decisions
- Reinforce technique through cue words
- Rotate athletes from guided defense/offense to the decision maker in the activity
- Allow for plenty of time for repetitions
- Applaud creative decision making and effective guided offense/defense
- Progress to “live” offense/defense to reinforce decision making at game-speed

STAGE IV: REFLECTION

Effective learning requires appropriate feedback (this is where the art of coaching really comes into play). Constructive feedback is vital to correct errors and maintain motivation as athletes practice a skill/concept. Keep feedback positive, and include variety—nothing frustrates a young athlete more than hearing the same correction from a coach over and over without any improvement in performance.

This phase is also another opportunity to ask leading questions to encourage self-reflection and confirm that participants truly understand the new skill. Ask athletes what went well, what didn't go well, and how they might improve moving forwards.

It's also a great time to spend doing individual work with athletes. All players struggle with something—be sure to address these individually rather than assuming every athlete is going through the same challenges.

TIPS FOR REFLECTION

- Individualize your coaching style to the learning style (and skill development) of each athlete
- Return to earlier phases of learning if athletes are struggling significantly
- If athletes have mastered the skill, encourage them to get creative and practice the skill in new ways

COMMUNICATION

THINGS TO SAY

TELL STORIES	Tell a story to convey a lesson or idea. Children will be more likely to stay engaged if your lesson has a narrative and characters they can relate to.
USE LANDMARKS	Refer to lines on the court and walls in the gym when giving direction. It may help to review landmarks with athletes at the beginning of the season.
SPEAK TO THEIR LEVEL	Be clear, concise, and speak to the level of the athlete. Remember you are working with kids—simple instruction and expectations go a long way.
REPEAT KEY WORDS	Make use of distinct and consistent key words. Coaches tend to talk a lot, but you can cut back on “over instruction” by using cues everyone is already familiar with.
BE DESCRIPTIVE	Use animated words to help convey more abstract concepts. Children will always understand words like “freeze” and “pop” and “explode”.
BE PERSONABLE	Make eye contact, say names, and use humour. Get to know your athletes and let them get to know you to strengthen your relationship with the group.

THINGS TO DO

CREATE A CULTURE	Foster a culture of support and positivity. Remember that kids play sport to have fun, so create an environment that makes this a priority.
HOLD THE BASKETBALLS	Make your life easy, and have a strategy for players to hold (not bounce) basketballs during instruction. Try a pose (“statue” or “between your legs”) or cue (“balls away”).
SPEAK ACTIVELY	Use your hands, move around, and use demonstrations. The best speakers are active speakers—and the same goes for coaches.
REWARD ENGAGEMENT	Applaud athletes who are listening and involved. If one athlete is engaged, recognize them. This will encourage others to follow suit, improving the lesson for everyone.
ASK QUESTIONS	Get athletes engaged by asking them questions. If children are given the opportunity to contribute (and ask their own questions) it’s more likely the lesson will sink in.
SHOW ENTHUSIASM	Make your passion obvious: as a coach you set the tone and energy level in the gym. Enthusiasm is infectious, so if you bring it you can expect your athletes to as well.

**TAKE ENERGY TO EVERY
PRACTICE. THAT ENERGY
WILL TURN INTO
EXCITEMENT AMONG
YOUR ATHLETES AND THE
ATHLETE EXCITEMENT
WILL BRING YOU MORE
ENERGY AS A COACH.**

RON YEUNG (MANAGER OF JNYB)

GROUP MANAGEMENT

Managing a group of youth athletes can be a challenge at times—there’s no way around it. As a coach, it helps to have some tricks up your sleeve to help control and direct your group so everyone gets the most out of a session. Coaches should customize their strategies as they gain experience, but these can help get you started.

I. STATE RULES POSITIVELY

Make use of positive phrasing (with words like “try” and “always” and “do”) instead of relying on negative phrasing (with words like “don’t” or “shouldn’t”) to help build a culture of positivity.

II. OUTLINE CONSEQUENCES

Work out a plan to deal with general (and specific) disciplinary issues. Explain these policies to your group at the start of the season, so athletes (and parents) have a clear understanding of program protocol.

III. ESTABLISH SIGNALS

Blowing a whistle, clapping your hands, holding a finger to your lips—these can all be signals for players to look and listen. Again, introduce these at the start of the season so athletes learn them quickly.

IV. USE EQUIPMENT RULES

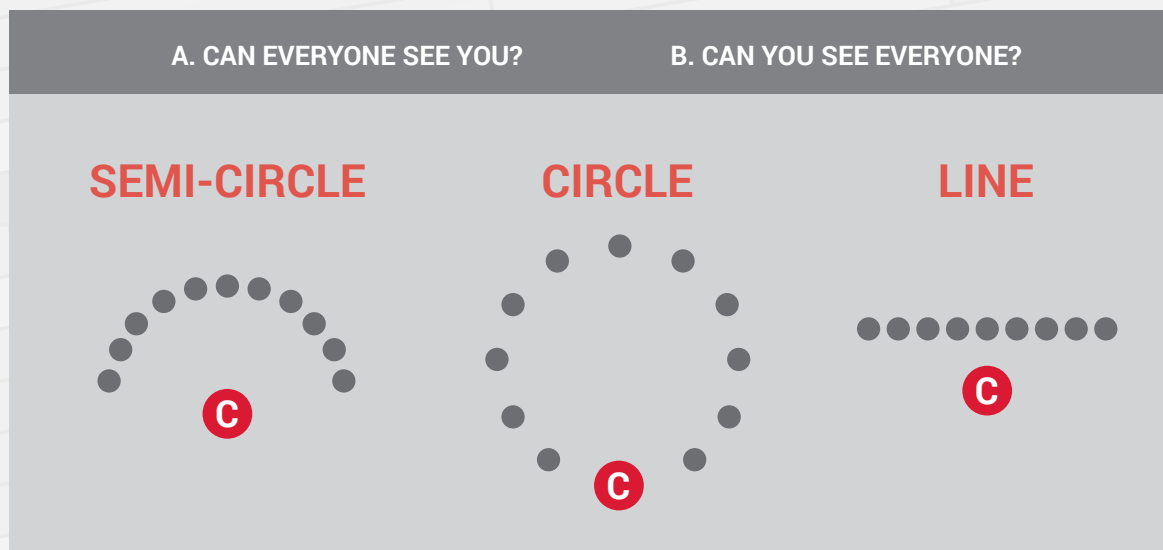
Managing equipment (both yours and your athletes) in a hectic gym can be tricky, so outline safe and proper use (and clean-up) of all equipment before and after activities. Emphasis on “safe”.

V. BE A ROLE MODEL

Children learn through imitation, so behave as you want your athletes to behave. If you are calm and collected, respectful and honest, and put others before yourself, your athletes will follow suit.

TEACHING FORMATIONS

There are a ton of different ways to situate your group when teaching lessons or giving a demonstration. A few favourites are listed below, but there are two factors you’ll always want to consider:



INCLUSION

MAKE THE SPORT INCLUSIVE

It's important to note that many programs across the country include athletes with and without various disabilities. While it's not expected that all coaches will be experts in disability, it is ultimately up to coaches to provide a supportive, welcoming and inclusive environment consistent with the values of the Jr. NBA program.

Inclusion means that all athletes experience meaningful participation, feelings of belongingness, and autonomy over how they participate. Inclusion is more than a checklist, strategy, or body of knowledge: it's a philosophy of teams and programs, and a culture created through role modeling, behaviour expectations and acceptance of the diversity each athlete brings to the team. Just as coaches adjust their coaching to fit individual learning styles, they can adjust to meet other needs of their athletes as well.

If you do have an athlete with a disability, there are many resources available if you have questions about strategies you can use to enhance inclusion in your program. The athlete, their family, and their family's support network may provide all the help you need to execute an exceptional athletic experience. Remember, many high performance athletes display quirks that make them unique! With a nurturing and supportive environment, coaches have the ability to set athletes on their own unique path to their own unique success.

To learn more about sport inclusion, check out these resources:

<http://www.sportdevelopment.org.uk/index.php/subjects/98-disability-sport-a-physicalactivity/748-the-inclusion-spectrum>

<https://www.coach.ca/coaching-athletes-with-a-disability--s17345>

1. Black, K. Stevenson, P. (2011). *The inclusion spectrum. Disability sport & physical activity*. Retrieved from <http://www.sportdevelopment.org.uk/index.php/subjects/98-disability-sport-a-physicalactivity/748-the-inclusion-spectrum>

2. Coaching Association of Canada. (2018). *Coaching Athletes with a Disability*. Retrieved from <https://www.coach.ca/coaching-athletes-with-adisability--s17345>



4.0

LESSON DESIGN



LOADS & MODIFICATION

Effective youth coaching is about adapting activities to the skills and development needs to your players. Making modifications to drills and games can highlight particular skills in order to maximize their development while offering players a new challenge to keep them engaged. For instance, through modifications and loads, we can make a wall toss drill into a full-court 5 on 5 transition drill.

PASSING

- Teams must make a minimum number of passes before attempting a shot
- Each player on a team must receive a pass before the team attempts a shot
- Players are not allowed to dribble, advancing the ball only by passing
- Teams must pass to a specific spot (i.e. top of the key) before attempting a shot

SHOOTING

- Players are only allowed to score from inside the key
- Players are only allowed to score from outside the key
- Players are only allowed to take lay-ups (i.e. no jump shots)
- Players are not allowed to shoot if they have taken a dribble (i.e. “catch-and-shoot” or “cut-and-finish”)

BALL-HANDLING

- Players are only allowed to dribble with their non-dominant hand
- Players are only allowed 3 dribbles before they must pass
- Add an additional defender to challenge the ball handler
- Players must take at least 1 dribble before attempting a shot

FOOTWORK

- Change the way players are allowed to move (i.e. pivoting instead of running)
- Players are only allowed to jump off their left foot
- Players are only allowed to jump off two feet

PLAYERS

- Add a guided offensive player to the drill to aid either the defense or offense
- Add a guided defensive player to the drill to aid either the offense or defense
- Add a player to progress the drill to the next stage

BOUNDARIES

- Adjust the boundaries of the basketball court to make the game more or less challenging
- Add unique spots to the floor that players need to get to (i.e. Get to the paint 5 times in 30 seconds)

PHASES OF TEACHING

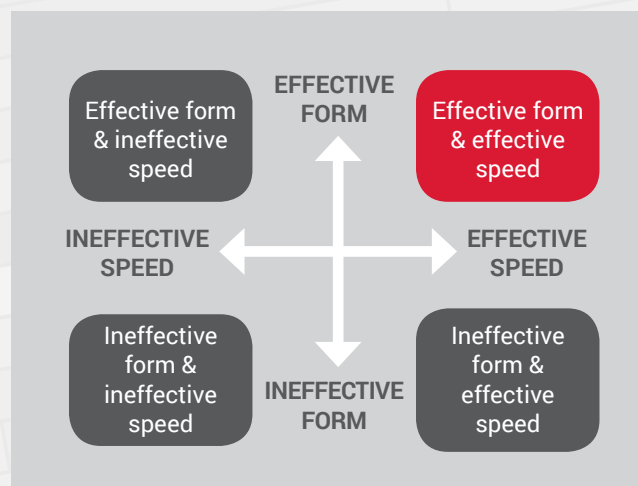
Much like how Fundamental Movement skills are the baseline progress for Fundamental Sport Skills, each Fundamental Sport Skill is a foundation for in game performance: from first trying the skill in the practice, to then performing it in overtime of the Gold Medal game in the Olympics.

However, getting athlete skill levels up to Olympic standard is not a one-step process. Canada Basketball identifies 4 unique phases of teaching, standard for every skill that will aid in the progression of an athlete.

Used in unique combination, these phases will give your athletes the greatest opportunity to achieve success on the floor. Moreover, note that not every skill needs to go through the A to D progression. Some skills you may want to start at a “C” or some skills may jump straight to “B” or “D”. The balance comes in the “Art of Coaching” knowing when to teach the skill and at what Phase to best ensure proper learning.

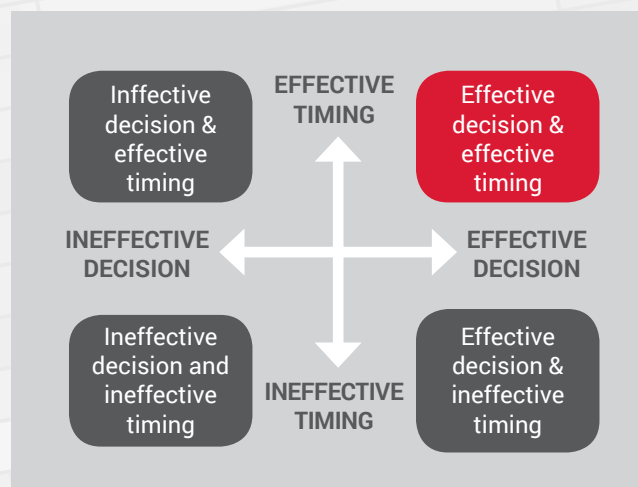
PHASES A: ON AIR (FORM & SPEED)

- **FORM FIRST. SPEED SECOND.**
- Use implements/tools to assist in form and speed.
 - For example: Pylons, chairs, guided player to force change of direction.
- Restrict the number of dribbles to force the player to go faster.
- Give them time to wobble, to figure it out for themselves. Too much instruction too early freezes the mind.
- Phase A is mostly used early in practice during warm-ups, cool downs, and for review.
- Phase A should be used sparingly in the initial teaching, where players need to visualize both the offense and defense.



PHASES B: DECISION MAKING (GUIDED)

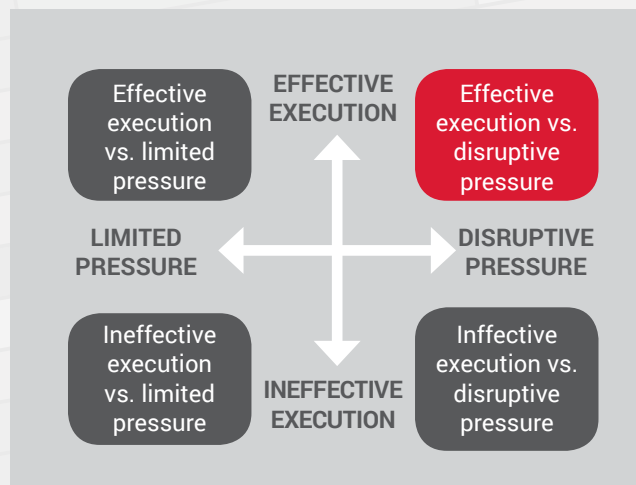
- **DECISION FIRST. TIMING SECOND.**
- Important to have an accurate cue. What does the player see in the game?
- Must always be an “either/or” in order for a decision to exist.
- Load in decisions as they become relevant. For example, on the catch in dynamic 1-on-1:
 - Cross over or curl vs shade or force defense;
 - Back door vs over play or deny defense;
 - Shot or attack vs stag defense;
 - Space pivot- static 1-on-1 or dribble centre vs neutralizing defense.
- Phase B is mostly used early in practice for individual or small group work or later in practice to initiate Phase C or D drills.



PHASES OF TEACHING

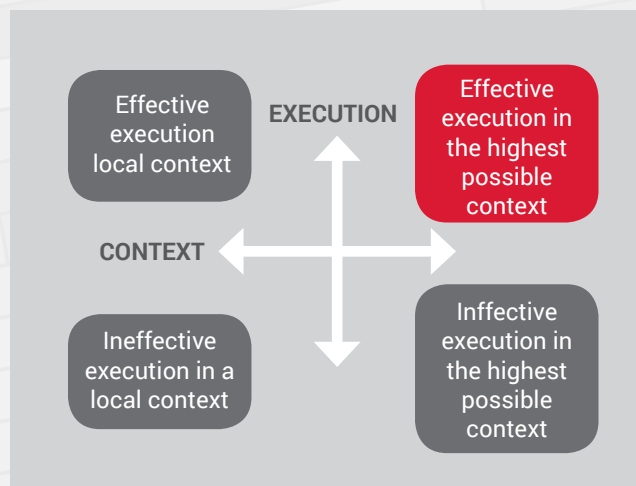
PHASES C: 1 ON 1 (EXECUTION & PRESSURE)

- **EXECUTION FIRST, PRESSURE SECOND.**
- Levels of pressure — these need to be guided to move players out of comfort zones.
 - Sag, Hand Pressure, Bump
- A Phase C drill is not only 1-on-1, it is where we control the defensive pressure and the offense is not entirely free or live.
- Phase C drills are used to execute any skill that must be executed vs defense.
For example:
 - Passing to a post - The player passing the ball has a defender applying body pressure. The post receiver has a player behind. The players must execute the pass. They are not playing free to screen or cut.



PHASES D: GAMES (EXECUTION IN COMPETITIVE CONTEXT)

- **EXECUTION FIRST, HIGH LEVEL CONTEXT SECOND.**
- Making decisions at the unconscious competent level in the context in which the competition is being played.
- Players are given some structure (rules), but are allowed to play free.
- These types of drills make up the bulk of the practice.



POINTS TO PONDER

- We do not always teach the four phases in chronological order.
 - It is often best to start with a games approach (Phase D) to identify what is required.
- Phase D drills allow players to play the game and solve problems. The majority of drills should allow players to be creative within a prescribed structure.
- Many drills can be combinations of the different phases.
- A drill may start with a guided defender (Phase B), or a type of pressure (Phase C) on the first possession, but in transition, morph into a Phase D competitive drill.
 - A transition drill may be 5 on 0 (Phase A) going down the floor and come back 5 on 5.
- Give the players a little structure to allow them to play free.
- Do not fill their minds up with too much detail, therefore preventing them from making decisions.
- This will be ugly at first - allow them to play through it.

DRILLS AND GAMES

TYPES OF DRILLS

CONSTANT PRACTICE

A single skill practiced over and over in a short period of time, with rapid repetitions.

Develops closed skills. Closed skills take place in predictable contexts where the skill is unaffected.

Example: Wall passes (50 in a row)

VARIABLE PRACTICE

A single skill practiced in a variety of situations (determined by the coach/other players).

Develops open skills. Open skills take place in unpredictable contexts requiring skill adaptation.

Example: 2-on-1 (passing against a defender)

BLOCKED PRACTICE

A variety of skills performed in distinct sequential segments, also known as “chunks”.

Develops beginner skills. Allows for increased skill acquisition and improved player confidence.

Example: Dribbling course (right hand, left hand)

RANDOM PRACTICE

A variety of skills performed in a random order (determined by the coach/other players).

Develops advanced skills. Allows for increased skill retention and player adaptability.

Example: Crossover moves (against a defender)

GAMES APPROACH

In the games approach to practices, the coach will allow the player to play a game, or a slight variation of it, in order to learn more skills quicker. This should be done in place of the drills in practice that could otherwise be made into a game. Within these games, coaches will put in place rules or intervention strategies within the rules of the actual game in order to have the player focus on something specific.

THEORY BEHIND A GAMES APPROACH:

- Every child should have the opportunity to participate in fun and challenging sporting activities
- Remove the idea that play must become work in order to have improvement
- Gets a beginner playing a game as quickly as possible
- It allows players to be more creative and innovative

THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICES OF A GAMES APPROACH:

SHAPE PLAY	By using different rules, you shape the direction in which the game develops.
FOCUS PLAY	By focusing on specific aspects of the game, the coach can guide improvement in a certain area.
ENHANCE PLAY	Enhance learning by making improved performance appear important and meaningful. Present challenges, time restraints, handicap teams, or individuals.

PRACTICE OUTLINE

PRE-PRACTICE

Have a coach meeting to assign admin tasks, and review session skills and drills. Execute a safety check, set up any spectator area, and organize equipment. Finally, welcome participants as they arrive and sign-in.

FREE SHOOT

Before the start to the session, encourage players (and their parents!) to try new skills, play with friends, or shoot freely on their own.

FIRST HUDDLE

Bring players in for a huddle to start the session. Review the skills learned in the previous session, and preview the skills that will be taught this session—each session focuses on one sport skill and one life skill.

DYNAMIC STRETCHING

Execute a series of dynamic (not static) stretches so players can loosen and activate their muscles before exercise to avoid injury. Be sure to lead (or have a player demo) each stretch.

WARM-UP GAME

Play a big group warm-up game that develops fundamental movement skills. Use the Re-cess Guardians approach, having small groups of players introduce and lead the game to the rest of the group.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Each session has a specific skill focus. Review the key teaching points and short activities to introduce and develop that skill with players.

DRILLS & GAMES

Play short drills and games specifically designed to help players practice their new skill(s) in a fun environment that still challenges their learning.

GAME-PLAY

Slowly build up to a large group game (or 3X3 scrimmages) to give the players opportunity to apply their new skill(s) in structured competition.

COOL-DOWN

Each session has a specific life skill focus. Run through a cool down designed to help players develop as well-rounded people.

FINAL HUDDLE

Bring players in for a huddle to end the session. Review the skills learned in the previous session, and review the skills that were taught this session.

POST-PRACTICE

Be sure to meet and greet parents as players are picked up, discussing the session and their child. Always tear down and clean up the gym, including any equipment. Hold a quick coach debrief to share feedback on the session, and preview the next session.

5.0

ATHLETE CARE



HYDRATION

SPORTS DRINKS AND HYDRATION



Sports drinks - they are everywhere. We see them on TV, on the Internet, on bus benches, and even on the court. Additionally, there is constant messaging targeted at our youth athletes by their professional idols endorsing the beverages so they must be the right option when it comes to hydration, right?

Not quite. There is an abundance of information available reporting either that sports drinks aid athletic performance, or they hinder it. But which is it?

THE FACTS:

- We know that during exercise our body loses water, electrolytes (salt), and carbohydrates (sugar)
- An average adult who partakes in 45 minutes of constant physical activities does not deplete enough electrolytes to require the benefits of a sports drink¹
- A typical sports drink contains 150 calories, 205 mg of sodium, and 35g of sugar²

It has been shown that sports drinks can help after prolonged periods of exercise however when it comes to training in the Jr. NBA Youth Basketball program, water should be sufficient in helping young athletes refuel and replenish any lost minerals.

With regards to hydration, refer to the chart below for the amount of fluids which are absorbed by the body and should be replaced in one hour. It is recommended that these fluid amounts are not replenished all at one time and they are taken in smaller amounts roughly 10-15 minutes apart.

APPROXIMATE QUANTITY OF FLUID ABSORBED BY THE BODY IN ONE HOUR (ML)		
BODY WEIGHT (KG)	FROM...	TO...
30	300	450
40	400	600
50	500	750
60	600	900
70	700	1050
80	800	1200
90	900	1350

1.Griffith-Green, M. (an 31, 2014). Sports Drinks unnecessary, counterproductive for most people. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/sports-drinks-unnecessary-counterproductive-for-most-people-1.2517424>

2.myfitnesspal (2017). Calories in Gatorade Lemon Lime 591 ML. Retrieved from: <http://www.myfitnesspal.com/food/calories/gatorade-lemon-lime-591-ml-390454651?v2=false>

NUTRITION

SPORTS NUTRITION



Coaches can also serve as a positive influence for a healthy balanced diet for children and their families. Whether you coach first-time participants or national team athletes, proper nutrition is essential for overall good health and optimal athletic performance. Participants of all ages and at all levels of competition are affected by good nutrition. It is not only about knowing what to eat - it's also knowing when to eat!

Maintaining a healthy balanced diet is vital for all children, regardless of athletic involvement. Athletes and their parents need to be aware of their diet and how it may affect their health and performance. Adopting a healthy diet at a young age can go a long way to maintaining a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. Consider the following suggestions in order to optimize dietary habits:

- Meals should be eaten 3 hours prior to exercise to allow for proper digestion
- Eat a variety of foods, including grain products, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat or alternatives
- Snacks are rarely required during activity - offer healthy snacks after exercise as a reward celebration
- Encourage athletes to try new foods - they won't know what they like until they try it!

For more great information on nutrition for your athletes check out:
<http://coach.ca/sport-nutrition-s14783>

WHOLE FOODS DIET (VISIT GAME PLAN FOR MORE INFORMATION)

A whole-foods diet based on plants is a great starting point for athletes, especially a basketball player. One big reason many athletes globally have been adopting a plant-based diet is because of the improved ability to recover between workouts and game days.

A healthy, plant-based diet aims to maximize consumption of nutrient dense plant foods while minimizing/avoiding processed foods, oils, animal foods (including dairy products and eggs). Lots of vegetables, fruits, beans, peas, lentils, soybeans, seeds, and nuts are encouraged in a plant-based diet.¹

SNACK	SPORT SUPPORT	OVERALL NUTRITION	HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
Fruit	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Raisins, dried fruit, etc.	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Chocolate milk / milk	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ●
Trail mix, nuts, seeds, etc.	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ●
Fruit juice	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Sports bars & drinks	● ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ●
Granola Bars	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ●
Cheese strings	●	● ● ●	●
Cookies, muffins, etc.	●	●	● ●

PREHAB & REHAB

DYNAMIC STRETCHING

An ideal warm up will prepare athletes for physical activity through fun and engaging exercises and games. As such, it is encouraged that coaches use a mix of specific dynamic stretches as well as short high intensity games.

The warm up period of each session is an ideal time to train and develop the fundamental movements through a dynamic stretch. The purpose of a dynamic stretch is to prepare players for activity by stretching tendons and ligaments, activating muscles, and raising the heart rate. An effective dynamic stretch will spark energy levels, limit injury risk and help to focus the attention of young athletes on the lessons in practice.

DYNAMIC STRETCH	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTIONS
Arm Circles	Jogging while rotating straight arms forwards and back peddling while rotating arms backwards.	Forwards to ½ court Backwards to ½ court
Side Shuffles	Side shuffle with butt down and feet shoulder width apart; keep shoulders level (i.e. don't bounce).	Lead right leg to ½ court Lead left leg to ½ court
Lunges	Take large steps with alternating legs, keeping the front knee behind the front toe and back knee to the ground.	Forwards to ½ court Backwards to ½ court
Lateral Lunges	Take large steps laterally, sit down on the heel of the lead leg, with both feet pointed forwards and sit back.	Lead right leg to ½ court Lead left leg to ½ court
Knee hugs	Hug one knee with both hands, bringing knee up to chest while remaining balanced on the opposite leg.	To ½ court
Ankle Pulls	Grasp one ankle with the opposite hand, brining ankle to butt while remaining balanced on the opposite leg.	To ½ court
High Knees	Quickly alternate driving knees to chest, pushing off the ground with the toes, and taking as many steps as possible.	To ½ court
Butt Kicks	Quickly alternate pulling ankles up to butt, dragging toes off the ground, and taking as many steps as possible.	To ½ court
Skips	Generate maximum power alternating legs, fully extending the ankles, knees, and hips	For height full court For distance full court
Sumo Squats	Begin squatting low, attempting to grab toes with butt down, back straight, and knees wide.	10x

Note that the traditional approach of a static stretch (i.e. holding a stretch for an extended period) before exercise has been abandoned by experts in favour of a dynamic stretch. Dynamic stretching is proven to be superior at preparing athletes for training, as static stretching can actually deactivate muscle neurons necessary for activity preparing athletes for training.

6.0

LIFE SKILLS



HAVE FUN

“YOUTH SPORT ISN'T JUST ABOUT SPORT. IT'S ABOUT KEEPING THE FUN IN THE GAME AND TEACHING YOUR ATHLETES LESSONS THEY CAN TAKE WITH THEM IN LIFE.”

Coach John Burns



If there is one thing we want athletes to take from sport it's to have fun. When young athletes enjoy the game, they will be more engaged and performing at their best. There is a ton coaches can do to help athletes have fun, including introducing the three keys to enjoying sport: attitude, enjoyment, and motivation.

ATTITUDE

Positive thinking can create positive energy, improving the chances of success¹. Having a positive attitude is a choice coaches can help athletes make. By choosing to be positive, athletes give themselves the opportunity to “see the good in the bad” and understand that one performance does not define them. Coaches can help athletes adopt this attitude, directly impacting their skill discovery, development, learning, and fun.

ENJOYMENT

Providing athletes with the tools to empower themselves to make positive choices will make it easier for them to enjoy the game of basketball – even when faced with challenges. When athletes understand how to enjoy playing through difficult moments, they can do anything they want, with enjoyment.*

MOTIVATION

Youth athletes play for a number of reasons, but the most common reason is to have fun. There are two types of motivation that coaches need to be aware of, as they inform whether an athlete is playing for themselves.

I. INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Engagement driven by internal factors. The athlete plays because they want to—leading to long-term enjoyment and participation, better focus, and less pressure. Examples include love of the game, valuing competition or skill development, etc.*

II. EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Engagement driven by external factors. The athlete plays to achieve some goal or accomplishment, or because of an outside influence. Examples include winning a trophy, social recognition, social pressures from family or friends, etc.

1. Wilson, A.W. (2016). *Psychology of sport & physical activity: For all performers – beginners to elite*. Retrieved from <http://app.tophat.com/e/990099>.

CONFIDENCE

**“ IF YOU DON'T HAVE
CONFIDENCE, YOU WILL
ALWAYS FIND A WAY
NOT TO WIN. ”**

Carl Lewis



Confidence is a key to success—without it our accomplishments can prove very challenging. Confidence is a fundamental yet fragile skill, and is often identified as a mental skill to be developed, nurtured, and maintained throughout an athlete's career¹. Like any other skill, confidence needs practice and repetition to be mastered.

I. THINK POSITIVE

Getting young athletes to believe they can do something is the first step to building confidence. Athletes should be encouraged to affirm their positive thoughts with positive “I am...” statements. For example, “I am prepared” or “I am going to give my best effort”.

II. TAKE RISKS

When athletes think positively they are more likely to take calculated risks and be invested in outcomes. Practices offer a low-risk high-reward environment to try new skills, make mistakes, and find adjustments. Not every attempt will be successful, but by being willing to take risks athletes will have the courage to try again. To be confident, athletes must give themselves permission to be confident.

III. EXPERIENCE SUCCESS

Success is only possible if athletes are committed to i) thinking positively, and ii) taking risks. This positions them to experience success and refine their self-confidence. Coaches can facilitate these steps, and foster an environment for young athletes to build their confidence through this process.

THE CONFIDENCE CYCLE

THINK
POSITIVE

TAKE
RISKS

EXPERIENCE
SUCCESS

1. Wilson, A.W. (2016). *Psychology of sport & physical activity: For all performers – beginners to elite*. Retrieved from <http://app.tophat.com/e/990099>.
2. Smith, L.H. & Kays, T.M (2010). *Sport psychology for dummies*. Mississauga, ON: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.

COMMUNICATION

“COMMUNICATION—THE HUMAN CONNECTION—IS THE KEY TO PERSONAL AND CAREER SUCCESS”

Paul J. Meyer



Communication is a vital tool in life and sport. As leaders of young athletes, how coaches communicate has a direct impact on how athletes communicate¹. Coaches should work on their own communication skills, being open and respectful, and encourage athletes to follow suit. By developing communication skills on the court, athletes can apply those same skills off the court in other areas of life.

COMPONENTS OF COMMUNICATION

- **Talking** - Speak emphatically, honestly, and personally with a clear, specific message
- **Active Listening** - Be fully attentive and open-minded, and ask questions when needed
- **Body Language** - Use facial expressions, hands, and body position to engage listeners

Great coaches are great listeners who employ simple strategies such as active listening, rephrasing, and reflection. As leaders of young athletes, how coaches communicate has a direct impact on how athletes communicate. Coaches should work on their communication skills so their athletes can follow suit¹.

REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT

If you want athletes to hear what you say, say it once. Then say it twice. Then say it a third time if necessary. Repeat key points, as the more you repeat the message the more likely the information will be internalized and remembered¹.

USE AND'S (NOT BUT'S)

When giving feedback, using “BUT” increases the chance that only the negative half of the message will be heard. Replace it with “AND” to create a clearer message and help the athlete work on that feedback¹. For example, “You did that great AND you can still work on this”.

SANDWICH FEEDBACK²

- I. Start by describing something the athlete did well
- II. Provide specific, future oriented feedback on how the athlete can improve
- III. End on a note of encouragement and positivity

1. Hardy, C.J., Burke, K.L., & Crace, R.K. (2005). *Coaching: An effective communication system*. In S. Murphy (Ed.). *The sport psych handbook* (pp. 191-212). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
2. Burton, D., Raedeke, T.D. (2008). *Sport psychology for coaches*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

MINDFULNESS

**“TENSION IS WHO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE.
RELAXATION IS WHO YOU ARE.”**

Jim Afremow



Like many life skills, a strong and focused mind has a profound impact on success both on and off the court. This kind of mindset—a “champion’s mind”—is developed through mindfulness. And as with any other skill, mindfulness needs to be deliberately practiced in order to get stronger¹.

Practicing mindfulness in sports (and life) reminds us to stay focused and present in the moment. There are many benefits associated with mindfulness that transfer such as: increased calmness and relaxation, energy, self-confidence, self-acceptance, and self-compassion¹. Coaches can help athletes stay focused in the moment.

Mindfulness is being aware of, or bringing attention to, this particular moment in time deliberately and without judging the experience². By being present in the moment, we only need to focus on what we need to do. The only thing that matters is the moment we are in—we can’t change the past, we can’t predict the future. The only thing in our control is what we think and do in the moment. Athletes must be strong enough to avoid letting unwanted thoughts and emotions from the outside influence their performance¹.

Athletes play sports because they love it—so why not stay immersed in that positive moment? It’s as simple as making a choice¹. The body does what the mind tells it to, so be deliberate and positive in how we think about how we want to perform.

INTRODUCING MINDFULNESS

I. MAKE TIME FOR THE MIND

Mindfulness takes time. It is easiest to control and understand the workings of the mind if thoughts are slowed to a manageable pace.

II. FOCUS ON THE BREATH

The mind follows the breath. By focusing on the breath, thoughts are centered in the moment. Try the “4-2-5” sequence: inhale for 4-seconds, hold for 2-seconds, and exhale for 5-seconds.

III. GET A SENSE FOR SURROUNDINGS

Centre the mind in the present by observing the surrounding environment. An awareness of physical senses (sights, sounds, smells, and sensations) focuses the mind.

IV. MEDITATE IN THE MOMENT

Meditation is the key that unlocks mindfulness. The best way to synchronize with the present is to direct awareness inwards and reflect on one’s own consciousness and breathing.



1. Wilson, A.W. (2016). *Psychology of sport & physical activity: For all performers – beginners to elite*. Retrieved from <http://app.tophat.com/e/990099>.

2. Collard, P. (2014). *The little book of mindfulness*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Manda Group.

3. Foster, A. (2016, July 29). *Why and How to Practice Mindfulness*. [Blog Post] Retrieved from: <https://snybblog.basketball.ca/2016/07/29/why-and-how-to-practice-mindfulness/>

MANAGING EMOTIONS

**“IF YOU DON’T MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS,
YOUR EMOTIONS WILL MANAGE YOU.”**

Chinese Proverb



Sports can be extremely emotionally charged activities. Instantly an athlete can win or lose, make or miss, succeed or fail. And this can greatly affect their emotions. Results can hurt performance if the athlete is unaware of how to manage their emotions properly. Teaching athletes to manage emotions is an extremely useful skill to help them perform at their best¹. If you can't name it, you can't tame it².

EMOTION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

I. PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT

This helps athletes develop greater emotional control and automate coping skills to deal with potentially challenging situations. Proactive management is developed through regular breathing and relaxation techniques, positive self-talk and attributions, and proper pre-training planning². Coaches can help athletes through this process by asking ahead of time: “If ____ happens, what is the most effective way to handle it and move forward?”

II. REACTIVE MANAGEMENT

This helps athletes maintain composure when in challenging situations. Reactive management is used when athletes find themselves overwhelmed in the moment and need to reduce their arousal or anxiety. Strategies include breathing techniques, self-talk, and imagery (see Core Mental Skills).

MOOD MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES³

MANAGING TENSION

Use relaxation techniques.
Use sport related imagery.
Engage in physical activity.
Humour and team banter.

MANAGING SADNESS

Deal with the cause or trigger.
Talk to someone about
the cause. Put feelings in
perspective. Seek support
from team or coach.

MANAGING ANGER

Use relaxation techniques.
Spend time alone. Put
feelings in perspective.
Avoid the cause or trigger.

1. Burton, D., & Raedeke, T.D. (2008). *Sport psychology for coaches*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

2. Wilson, A.W. (2016). *Psychology of sport & physical activity: For all performers – beginners to elite*. Retrieved from <http://app.tophat.com/e/990099>.

3. Terry, P.C., Dinsdale, S.L., Karageorghis, C.I., & Lane, A.M. (2006). *Use and perceived effectiveness of pre-competition mood regulation strategies among athletes*. In M. Katsikitis (Ed.), *Psychology bridging the Tasman: Science, culture, and practice – Proceedings of the 2006 Joint Conference of the Australian Psychological Society and the New Zealand Psychological Society* (pp. 420-424). Melbourne, VIC: Australian Psychological Society.

RESILIENCY

“FAILURE IS A BRUISE, NOT A TATTOO.”

John Sinclair



Every person in the world will have to overcome failure or disappointment at some point in their lives in order to achieve their goals— just look at Steve Nash. How athletes handle those defeats will separate those who find consistent success from those who don't. With some specific strategies, coaches can help athletes get back on track when things aren't going their way.

BOUNCING BACK AFTER MISTAKES¹

KNOWING WHAT HAPPENS MENTALLY AFTER A MISTAKE

There are 2 choices our athletes have after a mistake:

1. Use the mistake as an attack on their personal self-worth. This begins a downward spiral of negativity, increasing the chances of further mistakes.
2. See the mistake as a positive or neutral event. This offers evidence that they are trying to be active and make things happen.

ESTABLISH A POST-MISTAKE ROUTINE

Responses to mistakes should be automatic, but first they must decide how they want to respond to mistakes before they happen. Start by thinking about how we respond to a mistake versus how other athletes respond, and use the table below to outline how athletes will respond to mistakes.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A MISTAKE			
MISTAKE	HOW CHAMPION ATHLETES RESPOND	HOW NON-CHAMPION ATHLETES RESPOND	HOW I RESPOND

DISPUTING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS²

Athletes create many of their own adversities based on their interpretation of events - especially when events are perceived as uncontrollable or negative. Coaches and athletes should develop positive arguments to counter unwanted reactions.

Step 1: Identify the athlete's evaluation of the situation.

Step 2: Ask the athlete to consider the evidence used in their evaluation.

Step 3: Consider if the actions are intentional or unintentional.

Step 4: When athletes have identified the errors in their evaluation, they will automatically consider a more positive thought process.

Step 5: Discuss a positive procedure to replace the pessimistic evaluation habits.

Step 6: Have the athlete remind themselves what they have control over.

1. Smith, L.H. & Kays, T.M (2010). *Sports psychology for dummies*. Mississauga, ON: John Wiley & Sons Canada Ltd.

2. Statler, T.A. (2010). *Developing a shared identity/vision: Benefits and pitfalls*. In S.J. Hanrahan & M.B. Andersen (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of applied sport psychology* (pp. 325-334). New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

TEAMWORK

“IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER.”

African Proverb



While there is not a huge emphasis on traditional game play in JNYB, it does not mean that there is no place for teamwork. Rather than helping each other win, we want to emphasize helping each other get better and improve. One way to do that is to foster an environment of great teammates.

Coaches often talk about whether a player is a good teammate or a bad teammate. What we really want to see is coaches helping every player be a GREAT teammate. Rather than everyone working together to win, teamwork should be viewed as everyone helping each other to improve. In other words - being great teammates.

Being a great teammate starts with a team's culture, specifically values and vision. Values give guidelines for teams to behave. Vision gives a team direction, a group outcome for everyone to work towards¹.

A quality team culture doesn't happen by accident—it takes attention and dedication from the coaches, and then from the players. To help establish a value set and team vision, consider the following questions:

ESTABLISHING VALUES

- Are you focused on the learning process and skill development? Or on hitting target goals?
- Do you encourage crossing the finish line as a team? Or just the first player up the hill?
- Is it important that everyone gets equal opportunity? Or will better players get more chances?

ESTABLISHING VISION

- What is the players' vision of a great team? What does it look like? How do players behave?
- What is your vision of a great team? What does it look like? How do players behave?
- What is something the entire team can work towards?

Once you establish strong values and a strong vision, your athletes will be in a great position to succeed as athletes but also be in a great situation to be great teammates. When you create an environment where you foster great teammates your athletes will be more inclined to want to help one another get better.

1. Statler, T.A. (2010). *Developing a shared identity/vision: Benefits and pitfalls*. In S.J. Hanrahan & M.B. Andersen (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of applied sport psychology* (pp. 325-334). New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

LEADERSHIP

“THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE IS THE HIGHEST CALLING OF LEADERSHIP.”

Harvey S. Firestone



Being a leader is an important skill in both sports and life. But what does being a leader really mean and how can we instill some of those values into our Jr. NBA Youth Basketball athletes?

There is no set “leadership” personality type, and leaders come in all shapes and sizes. Some children seem to be natural leaders whereas other children seem to be natural followers.

Often these traits are linked with whether they tend to be introverts or extroverts. The extrovert is often the leader and vice versa especially among young children. But this doesn’t mean that if your child is naturally shy he or she can’t be a leader. It also doesn’t mean that if your child is a “natural” leader that they are going to be an effective leader. As most adults know, there are many people in leadership positions who are terrible leaders.

True Sport has provided an acronym that is easy to remember and covers the most important leadership traits; C.A.R.E²

C

COMPLIMENT
AT LEAST THREE
PEOPLE A DAY

A

ACT IN THE
TEAM’S BEST
INTEREST

R

RESPECT THE
DIFFERENCES
OF OTHERS

E

EXTEND A
HELPING
HAND



1. Dr. T Baghurst. 13 Ways to Develop Leadership Skills in Youth Athletes. Retrieved from: <https://learn.truesport.org/13-ways-develop-leadership-skills-youth-athletes/>
2. The C.A.R.E Formula for Leadership. Retrieved from: https://teach.truesport.org/wp-content/uploads/Teach_Leadership_Handout1.pdf

CORE MENTAL SKILLS

CONCENTRATION

Sports require us to divert much of our attention to a specific task. This is concentration—directing attention to a specific goal¹. If coaches improve the concentration abilities of athletes, they will have an additional tool to be successful. Coaches can encourage using cue words, imagery, process goals, and pre-performance routines.

PRINCIPLES OF CONCENTRATION²

I. CONCENTRATION IS AN ATHLETE'S DECISION

Athletes can choose to invest mental energy to improve performance through concentration.

II. ATHLETES CAN ONLY FOCUS ON ONE THOUGHT AT A TIME

Sports are fast, making conscious focus on one thing is difficult—use cue words to stay focused.

III. ATHLETES ARE FOCUSED WHEN THEY'RE DOING WHAT THEY'RE THINKING

The ideal body mind connection occurs when there is no difference between thoughts and action.

IV. REFOCUSING IS NECESSARY TO KEEP AN ATHLETE'S MIND ON TRACK

Sport demands a lot of an athlete's attention—athletes must bring themselves back to the present.

V. WHEN ATHLETES ARE ANXIOUS, FOCUS ON CONTROLLABLE ACTION

Anxious athletes should focus on something within their control to avoid self-criticism or self-doubt.

IMAGERY

Imagery uses all the senses to create/re-create an experience in the mind. Imagery allows athletes to mimic a real experience as a way to practice without actually having to physically perform. Athletes can control their imagery to ensure positive (not negative) performance and outcomes³.

PERSPECTIVE

I. INTERNAL

Seeing things through your own eyes, as if you were experiencing them (i.e. first-person)

II. EXTERNAL

Seeing things through someone else's eyes, as if in a movie (i.e. third-person)

For beginners, either perspective works. As athletes improve, the internal perspective can relate thoughts to physiological sensations, while the external perspective is better at directing focus to strategic play⁴.

IMAGERY TIPS

• SET A VIVID SCENE

Try make images as clear as possible, include all five senses, and really try to live the moment.

• ENSURE A POSITIVE OUTCOME

Visualize success, with flawless performance and enjoyment of the moment.

1. Karageorghis, C.I. & Terry, P.C. (2011). *Inside sport psychology*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

2. Kremer, J. & Moran, A. (2008). *Pure sport: Practical sport psychology*. London, UK: Routledge.

3. Morris, T. (2010). Imagery. In S.J. Hanrahan & M.B. Andersen (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of applied sport psychology* (pp. 481-489). New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

4. Perry, J. (2015). *Sport psychology: A complete introduction*. Croydon, UK: Hodder & Stoughton.

CORE MENTAL SKILLS

GOAL SETTING

Goal setting works—if it's done right. There are countless examples of goal setting having a positive impact on athletic performance, enjoyment, and self-worth^{1,2}. One mistake many people make is setting too many goals at once. It is best to keep it simple, set a couple of priority goals, and evaluate progress regularly.

SMART GOAL SETTING

- S SPECIFIC** - Be specific in what you do (and want to do)
- M MEASURABLE** - You must be able to track and assess progress and success
- A ADJUSTABLE** - Goals should be modified as necessary based on progress
- R REALISTIC** - Overly challenging goals may limit success and hurt confidence
- T TIMED** - Identify a deadline for when the goal will be achieved

BENEFITS OF GOAL SETTING ³	FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE & PROCESS GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I. Enhance concentration and self-confidenceII. Create a positive mental attitudeIII. Increase intrinsic motivation to excelIV. Improve overall performance	<p>Performance Goals: Focus on improving and attaining personal performance (e.g. number of shots in a quarter)</p> <p>Process Goals: Focus on specific behaviours that athletes must engage in (e.g. keeping hands up on defense)</p>

SELF-TALK

Humans think almost every moment they are awake. Most people find it impossible to empty their mind of all conscious thought, because we are in constant conversation with ourselves whether we realize it or not. This constant wave of thoughts is called “self-talk”, which also describes what athletes say to themselves out loud or internally. Self-talk is a powerful performance tool, relating to focus, mindfulness, confidence, and imagery¹.

TYPES OF SELF-TALK²

I. INSTRUCTIONAL

Helps athletes tell themselves reminders of what needs to be done to perform a skill. Short phrases like “stay low” or “hands up” direct attention to skill specific cues.

II. MOTIVATIONAL

Focuses on positive thoughts and repeating them often (like “I can do this” or “we can be better”). Affirmation assists with confidence, focus, motivation, stress control, and optimal performance.

COUNTERING³

A proven technique to dealing with negative thoughts is to counter them, with a more logical argument. When negative self-talk creeps in, replace those negative thoughts with positive ones. For example, “I’m probably going to miss the shot”, to counter, ask yourself where is the proof that says you will miss, or how can you know the future?

1. Burton, D., & Raedeke, T.D. (2008). *Sport psychology for coaches*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

2. Zervas, Y., Stavrou, N., & Psychountaki, M. (2007). Development and validation of the Self-Talk Questionnaire (S-TQ) for Sports. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 19, 142-159.

3. Wilson, A.W. (2016). *Psychology of sport & physical activity: For all performers – beginners to elite*. Retrieved from <http://app.tophat.com/e/990099>.

7.0

BASKETBALL SKILLS



MOVEMENT



The importance of movement skills and physical literacy has been emphasized throughout this manual. Learning to incorporate them into your training sessions is extremely important for the proper development of your athletes.

Below are a few tips and strategies to promote movement skills and physical literacy in your training sessions, as well as a few key basketball movements which athletes should focus early on in their development.

TIPS AND STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE MOVEMENT SKILLS

1. **Adopt a Games Approach to teaching.**
See more on p. 32
2. **Incorporate and substitute new movements during activities**
3. **Do as much development without the ball as you do with the ball**

SKILLS

RUNNING

To run effectively, ensure:

- Balls of the feet are the main contact points
- Drive knees up towards the chest
- Take long strides with each step
- Keep torso upright, with the back straight and head up
- Arms should move rhythmically in opposition to the legs
- Hands should be relaxed, not clenched

CHANGE OF SPEED

Changing speed helps to create separation from a defender, both on and off the ball. Effectively changing speed requires an adjustment in the size or frequency of strides while running, as well as an awareness as to where the defender is.

Example: Hesitation Move

BACKPEDALLING

To backpedal effectively, ensure:

- Foot rocks from balls of the feet to the heels
- Feet should reach backwards with small, quick strides
- Keep hips low to control momentum
- Torso should be bent slightly forward to maintain balance
- Arms should move rhythmically in opposition to the legs
- Hands should be relaxed, not clenched

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Changing direction can also create separation from a defender. Cuts and crossovers are the basis for many offensive actions, allowing an athlete to get open to receive a pass or to get by their defender. Players need to learn to slow down, plant their outside foot, and drop their hips to explode in a new direction.

Example: Crossover Moves

FOOTWORK



READY POSITION

Ready position is a balanced stance that provides a base of support enabling players to initiate movement in any direction. Ready position is used without the ball on defense or offense.

- Spread feet apart shoulder width
- Evenly distribute weight on the balls of both feet
- Drop the butt and stay low, bending at the hips, knees, and ankles
- Maintain good posture, with the head up, back straight, and chest out
- Extend arms with hands ready to deflect (defense) or receive (offense) a pass
- Keep eyes up and in front

TRIPLE THREAT

The triple threat position is Ready Position, with the basketball. It is an offensive stance players learn, allowing them to protect the ball while providing the opportunity to perform the three primary offensive moves:

PASS DRIBBLE SHOOT

- Spread feet apart shoulder width
- Evenly distribute weight on the balls of both feet
- Drop the butt and stay low, bending at the hips, knees, and ankles
- Place the dominant hand on the back of the ball (wrist bent)
- Place the non-dominant hand on the side of the ball
- Hold the ball firmly in both hands, tight to the body (near either hip)

STOPPING

Stopping effectively can also be an effective way to create separation from a defender, but should also be coached properly as poor stopping technique can lead to knee injuries.

1-2 STRIDE STOP

- When moving forward, begin to lower the body
- Land with feet staggered, one foot in front of the other
- Sink the hips and bend both knees when stopping
- The first foot to land will become the pivot foot
- Assume ready position or triple threat (with the ball)

JUMP STOP

- When moving forward, begin to lower the body
- Land with both feet simultaneously, slightly staggered
- At this point, either foot can become the pivot foot
- The planted foot remains the pivot foot (with the ball)
- Assume ready position or triple threat (with the ball)

STUTTER STOP

- When moving forward, begin to lower the body
- Perform stutter steps, chopping the feet on the ground
- Come to a complete stop or prepare for change in direction

FOOTWORK

PIVOTS/ DROP STEP

Pivoting allows a player with the ball to rotate and adjust their body position, allowing for one step without travelling. When a player establishes a pivot foot, that foot must remain planted until the player passes or shoots.

FRONT PIVOT	Player turns FORWARD on their pivot foot, steps forward
REVERSE PIVOT (DROP STEP)	Player turns BACKWARD on their pivot foot, steps backward

KEY TEACHING POINTS:

- Assume triple threat position, protecting the ball with the body
- Pivot foot must remain planted at all times—use free foot to rotate body
- Square up to the basket in order to take a jump shot
- Improve a passing lane or view the court
- Beat a defender at the hoop by pivoting around them

D-SLIDES

Defensive slides are crucial in playing good defense. The reason we encourage our athletes to slide along side their check, rather than run along side them, is because when you slide, you are balanced and low to the ground. This allows you to change directions quickly should your check change directions in a moments notice.

KEY TEACHING POINTS:

- Start from a “Ready Position” stance (See p. 51) Butt down, knees bent, back straight, arms out
- Point both of your feet towards the player you are guarding
- When sliding, try not to “bob” up and down
- Avoid crossing your feet while sliding (Imagine a plank of wood between your feet at all times as you slide)

FOOTWORK CUES

Footwork transfers to every other skill in basketball. Effective footwork allows players to learn, develop, and execute all other skills without having to worry about what their feet are doing. In order to maintain body control while changing speed and/or direction, players must develop four key areas:

BALANCE COORDINATION FOOT SPEED TECHNIQUE

KEYS TO GREAT FOOTWORK ARE:

1. Maintain a low and wide position
2. Keep arms up and out for balance
3. Change direction quickly using sharp corners
4. Moving in a straight line (not curved) when possible
5. Keep eyes forward without looking at the feet
6. Introduce all footwork skills without a ball first

BALL-HANDLING



Ball-handling is to basketball what wheels are to a car, without them, there is no hope of getting where you want to go. Being able to handle the basketball well and efficiently will allow players the freedom of moving around the court with confidence.

BALL-HANDLING CUES

1. Dribble From a Triple Threat or Ready Position
2. Keep Head-up and Eyes off the Ball
3. Use the Finger Tips (Not the Palms) for More Control
4. Protect the Ball with the Off-Hand and Body
5. Become Comfortable Dribbling with Both Hands
6. Dribble Low, Fast, and with Force

BALL-HANDLING PROGRESSIONS

1. Static / Stationary
2. Controlled / Slow
3. Running / Fast
4. Change of Direction / Crossovers
5. Against a Defender

DRIBBLING VIOLATIONS

- **Double Dribble:** Bouncing the ball with two hands together OR by picking the ball up between dribbles
- **Carry (discontinued dribble):** Letting the ball come to rest in the palm of one hand while dribbling
- **Travel:** Taking more than two steps without dribbling OR picking up a pivot foot before dribbling

DRIBBLE MOVES

IN AND OUT	In one hand, bring the ball from the outside of your body to the middle and then back out on the same side
FRONT CROSSOVER	Dribble the ball in front of your body from one side to the other
BETWEEN THE LEGS	Dribble the ball between one of your legs
BEHIND THE BACK	Dribble the ball behind your back from one side to the other
NORTH - SOUTH	On the side of your body, push the ball out in front and pull back
EAST - WEST	In front of your body, dribble the ball from side to side

LAY-UPS



Lay-ups are the easiest way to score in basketball and understanding how to finish correctly is an extremely valuable skill to have in the game of basketball.

TYPES OF LAY-UPS

REGULAR LAY-UP

Shoot the ball with the outside hand while taking off of the inside foot. For example, a lay-up from the right side of the rim will use a right hand finish and a left foot takeoff (and vice versa on the left side of the rim).

Tell players to imagine a string tied from the elbow to the same side knee. When you reach up with that hand, the same knee should also move upwards—meaning the opposite leg will be used to jump.

POWER LAY-UP

A power lay-up uses a two foot take-off, for stability and strength, with the body square to the hoop. Power lay-ups are best used when a player is contested or beat to the rim by a defender and the player needs to get more balance as they explode into their lay-up.

REVERSE LAY-UP

Reverse lay-ups are used when a player is attacking a baseline and finishing on the opposite side of the rim with the same side hand as they are attacking. For example, if a player attacks the right baseline, they will finish with their right hand on the far side of the rim. The footwork is the same as a regular lay-up, just from a different angle.

LAY-UP CUES AND PROGRESSIONS

LAY-UP CUES

1. Bring the ball up with both hands
2. Right hand right side (vice versa)
3. Attack on an angle (not straight ahead)
4. Outside-Inside footwork
5. First-step outside
6. Second-step inside
7. Jump off second step (inside)
8. Drive outside knee up
9. Use guide (or inside) hand to protect ball
10. Finish with outside hand reaching for rim
11. Use the near corner of the backboard

LAY-UP PROGRESSIONS

1. Finish next to the rim
2. Footwork lay-ups (without a dribble)
3. Regular lay-ups (with a dribble)
4. Lay-ups against a defender
5. Creative Lay-ups (Reverse lay-ups, Power Lay-ups, Finger roll Lay-ups, etc.)

PASSING

The key to becoming an universal basketball player is by mastering the art of moving the basketball, by passing. There are multiple ways of passing the ball each having their own specific situations that they are best used in.

TYPES OF PASSES



ONE-HANDED PUSH PASS

- Hold the ball on the hip of the lead foot
- Place the passing hand behind the ball, with the wrist bent
- Place the non-passing hand on the side of the ball, acting as a guide
- Follow through with an extended arm and flicked wrists

BOUNCE PASS

- Hold the ball on the hip of the lead foot
- Push the ball straight down and forward to the receiver
- The ball should bounce approximately 2/3 the distance to the receiver
- Follow through with extended arms and flicked wrists
- Step in the direction of the pass for extra power

TWO-HANDED OVERHEAD PASS

- Hold the ball on the hip of the lead foot
- Raise the ball above and behind the head
- Use both arms and core for power
- Use fingers and wrists to guide the ball
- Step in the direction of the pass for power
- Don't leave feet on the pass
- Follow through with arms

PASSING PROGRESSIONS

1. Static / Stationary (passer & receiver)
2. Static Passer & Moving Receiver
3. Moving Passer and Static Receiver
4. Against a defended receiver
5. Against a defended passer
6. Ball fakes and creative passing

PASSING AND RECEIVING CUES

PASSING CUES

1. Pass from a triple threat position
2. Keep the head up to see teammates
3. Hold the ball with the finger tips
4. Keep elbows tight to the body
5. Call the name of the receiver on the pass
6. Extend the arm and flick the wrist
7. Step in the direction of the pass for power
8. Keep passes short and crisp
9. Pass to where the receiver is going to be
10. Use ball fakes to create separation (L2T)

RECEIVING CUES

1. Start in ready position and step into the pass
2. Keep the head up to see the ball
3. Anticipate passes and open passing lanes
4. Hold hands up to give a target
5. Trace the flight of the ball into the hands
6. Finish the catch in triple threat position

SHOOTING

Shooting is the most fun part of basketball for most players but is also the most difficult part to perfect. Contrary to popular belief, great shooters are not born, they are made in the gym through countless repetitions to refine their craft.

SHOOTING CUES

1. Eyes on target, aiming at the back of the rim
2. Start low in a half-squat position, bent at the knees and hips
3. Hold the ball with the finger tips (not the palm)
4. Flex the wrist of the shooting hand for the ball to rest in
5. Use the non-shooting hand as a guide only
6. Jump into the shot for power, releasing at the top of the jump
7. Try to get lots of arc on the shot, up and over the front of the rim
8. Roll the ball off the fingers, hold the follow through, and flick the wrist

THE 1,2,3 METHOD (UP, ON, IN)

Even though shooting can be complicated, when we break it down, its as simple as 1,2,3!

- (1) **UP** - Holding the ball in triple threat stance, ball at the hip with dominant hand on top and non-dominant hand on the side
- (2) **ON** - Ball is raised up above eye level, legs stay bent
- (3) **IN** - Explode up with legs, extend arms, flick the wrist, and follow through on the shot

LTAD CONSIDERATIONS

Some players may struggle with the shooting technique because of their developmental age or physical and muscular strength. Consider the following when assisting a young athlete with their shot:

BALL SIZE

BASKET HEIGHT

DISTANCE OF SHOT

SHOOTING PROGRESSIONS

1. Form/stationary Shooting
2. Shooting off a Pass / Catch
3. Shooting off the Dribble
4. Shooting against a defender



REBOUNDING

Rebounding the basketball is the most underdeveloped skill on the defensive end. Most coaches focus their defensive teaching on stopping the basketball or keeping the ball out of the paint and forget about what happens after the shot goes up. A defensive possession is not finished until the defensive team comes down with the rebound.

REBOUNDING CUES

1. Locate matchup (nearest player) on release of the shot
2. Get low and establish body contact (with butt)
3. Fight to earn inside position (closest to rim) against matchup (BOX OUT)
4. Bend knees / use legs to clear space for rebound
5. When in reach, elevate and extend both hands for ball
6. On landing bring ball to chin to protect from opponents (like a quarterback)

REBOUNDING PROGRESSIONS

1. Self-Toss and Catch
2. Wall-Toss and Catch to Quarterback Stance
3. Rebound off Back-Board
4. Rebound off Back-Board with Pressure into Quarterback Stance



8.0

TEAM CONCEPTS



OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

WITH THE BALL

While in games, players spend the majority of their time off-ball, (without a ball in their hands). It is equally, if not more, important to develop skills when they have the ball as those are much more difficult to learn. Developing basic on-ball skills and principles when players are young will have a huge impact on their confidence and abilities as they mature into global players. Encourage the following three on-ball skills with your athletes.

1. PATIENCE

Young players need to learn to develop patience with the ball. Many young athletes panic when they receive a pass, resorting to poor decisions based on instinct or desperation. Encourage athletes to protect the ball, adopt a triple-threat position, and keep their head and eyes up. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure players are able to take their time with the ball, by adjusting player match-ups or enforcing an arms-length bubble for ball handlers.

2. LOOK TO PASS

Often times as players catch the basketball they will instinctively want to put the ball on the floor and dribble. Encourage players to use their patience and look for a pass before dribbling. Moving the ball is a skill that engages more players and provides more opportunities on offense. It also promotes the development of global players, where everyone can shoot, dribble, and pass.

3. ATTACKING

Effectively and efficiently attacking the basket is a skill all players should develop. Ensure players attack the paint and rim (not the baseline or corners) and to work their way around defenders (not through them). Teach athletes the multiple scoring opportunities that come about when attacking the middle: the ball handler may have a chance at a lay-up, or teammates may become open as the defense moves and adjusts to the ball.

4. PVAD

The concept of PVAD applies to every situation in basketball, however it is very important while in possession of the ball. PVAD is an acronym for Position, Vision, Anticipation, Decision, and is essential to a young athletes understanding of the game of basketball.

POSITION	Position of the ball, position relative to teammates, opponents, and landmarks
VISION	What and how much a player is able to see based on their position
ANTICIPATION	A player's ability to anticipate teammates getting open or their defenders movement
DECISION	Being able to make the right decision that can lead to an advantage

OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

WITHOUT THE BALL

“Swarming”. A common sight at many youth sports, and yet a huge problem, but can you blame the players? Playing with the ball is much more fun than playing without, until now. Encourage the skills of playing without the ball and that the better a player becomes at moving away from the ball, the more they will have the ball. Play games that encourage getting to open space and reading what is happening on offense. Incorporate some tchoukball rules if need be! Encourage your players to abide with these three off-ball skills:

1. SPACING AND MOVEMENT

Spacing and movement are two crucial skills to learn when working without the basketball. If there is no spacing on the basketball court, then we will be back on the “swarming” problem. This is why JNYB emphasizes 3 on 3 game play. With 3 on 3, players have more space to move around and create for themselves.

2. PASS AND CUT WITH PURPOSE

Once a player passes a ball, encourage them to cut to open space afterwards, maintaining spacing. Cutting is one of the most effective ways to get open and also puts a player in the best position to succeed. Moving without the ball is the most important skill a basketball player can learn, at any level. Combining the two concepts of passing and finding open space will help players understand the basics of motion. However, to get to that open space, players need to cut hard, with a purpose.

3. SEPARATION & DECEPTION

Young athletes often struggle to get open for two reasons: 1) they stand in one spot, 2) they are too predictable in their movement. An inability to get open hurts the offense and limits the opportunity for an individual to develop their skills with the ball. Help players develop the movement and sports skills necessary to create separation from their defender using hesitations, fakes, and change of pace or direction.



DEFENSIVE CONCEPTS

ON-BALL DEFENSE

Being able to guard your check is the foundation of a good team defense. If every player is able to contain their own check in a 1-on-1 situation, then it makes the rest of the defense much better. Not getting beat on defense will allow other off-ball defenders to focus more on their player and less on off-ball defensive concepts like “stunting” or “helping”. Here are some on-ball defensive concepts players can focus on to be successful:

1. HANDS UP

Keep your hands up on defense. Have one hand mirror the ball and the other protect against a pass or a dribble. Keeping hands up on defense will allow players to contest shots quickly, but also react quickly should the player look to pass or put the ball down and dribble. Keeping your hands up and active will make it more difficult for the opposing player to make a play on offense.

2. CLOSEOUTS

When recovering to a defender, as you get 4 steps away, chop your feet, raise one hand at the ball and use the other to guard the passing lane. Closeouts are used in transition from playing off-ball defense to on-ball defense. As your player catches the basketball, recover and get hands up.

3. CONTROL PENETRATION

Just as we want to get to the rim on offense, we have to assume our opponent will want to do the same thing. Therefore, when we play defense, we need to stop them from getting to their spot. The best way to stop a player from penetrating is to play defense with our feet, moving them to stay in front of the defender, rather than trying to steal the ball.

4. STAY LOW

As a general rule of thumb, the player who is lowest to the ground between the offensive player and the defender, while still able to move, will have the advantage. Thus, the lower you are on defense, the better. Players who are low to the ground are able to react quickly and make easier plays on the ball. They can cover more ground with their feet and will be better balanced to react quickly to change of directions.

5. CHALLENGE SHOTS

Get hands up every time the player you are guarding shoots the basketball to make sure it is difficult on them. Regardless of where that player is on the floor or what kind of shot they are shooting, we want to make it as difficult as possible for them to make their shot. Having your hands up and being low will make the final challenge much easier.

DEFENSIVE CONCEPTS

OFF-BALL DEFENSE

Just like on offense, with defense, player will spend the majority of their time away from the ball and thus must learn how to defend away from the basketball. When you are guarding away from the basketball, the goal as a team becomes stopping the ball and preventing a basket. Developing strong off-ball defenders is essential to having a strong team defense. There are four main concepts that athletes need to focus on while playing defense. They are:

1. TRACK YOUR CHECK

When playing defense off-ball, it can be very easy to lose track of the player you are guarding and watch the ball. As coaches, we call this “ball watching”. Rather than watch the ball, we want to encourage our players to watch their check first and find the ball second. Regardless of where the ball is on the floor, players need to know where the player they are guarding is.

2. ONE PASS AWAY—GUARD 1 AND A HALF

On defense, when the player you are guarding is one pass away from the basketball, in other words, when there are no other offensive players between them and the ball, defenders are guarding “1 and a half”. This means taking one step laterally in the direction of the player with the ball. This is advantageous because if the defender guarding the basketball gets beat, and the offensive player penetrates to your side, you can step up and “stunt” and stop the defender in their tracks. Guarding 1 and a half, also allows players to be close enough to their check to recover and closeout if the ball is passes to them. This type of defensive stance is called Open Deny.

3. HELP

When the player you are guarding is two or more passes away from the ball, you are then encouraged to play “help” defense. For example, if the ball is in one corner, and you are defending a player in the opposite corner, you would move into help position halfway to the ball. In this case, under the rim. This is helpful because should that player guarding the ball get beat, the player in help will be the next line of defense.

4. COMMUNICATION

It’s said that when all players talk on defense, it’s as if they are playing with another defender with them on the floor. To start, encourage players to communicate their position on the floor. Players guarding the ball should yell “Ball”. Players guarding one pass away should be yelling “Open”. Players more than one pass away should be yelling “Help”. By communicating their position on the floor players can play better knowing that they have support from all angles.





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