



**YOUR GOALS. OUR GAME.**



**WOMEN'S  
EXCEL  
PROGRAM:  
A GUIDE FOR  
PLAYERS AND THEIR PARENTS**





**CANADA SOCCER  
BELIEVES EVERY YOUNG  
PERSON DESERVES THE  
BEST POSSIBLE SOCCER  
EXPERIENCE.**

Whether they dream of playing for Canada's National Teams or simply want to achieve their own personal performance goals, taking the right approach with the country's most advanced players during their crucial development years will help them maximize their potential.

## **WOMEN'S EXCEL PROGRAM**

As part of the Canada Soccer Pathway, the **Women's EXCEL Program** is designed to ensure more of Canada's exceptional young players find their way into the best competitive

environments, so that our Women's National Team is provided with a steady stream of players meeting high standards to keep us competitive on the world stage. In other words,



**THE PROGRAM AIMS  
TO DEVELOP MORE  
SINCLAIRS, MORE  
OFTEN. BY DESIGN  
AND NOT BY CHANCE.**



# WHAT IS EXCEL?

The *Women's EXCEL Program* is a new approach being adopted by Canada Soccer to unite and strengthen the ways that we identify and develop our most promising young athletes from across Canada to help drive elite women's soccer forward. It has three primary goals:

## GOAL 1

To achieve consistent podium performances by our Women's National Team.

## GOAL 2

To create an aligned talent structure and system that progresses more top players to the Women's National Team and more often.

## GOAL 3

To align community, regional and provincial/territorial talent development programs with the EXCEL talent pathway.



Underpinning the **Women's EXCEL Program** is a constant drive to achieve the highest international standards, which can be understood as a series of world-class player and team attributes that provide a guiding

framework to continually assess, monitor and track performance. These standards provide coaches and administrators with clear guidelines for developing talented Canadian players.

## THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS UNDERPINNING EXCEL ARE COMPRISED OF TWO ELEMENTS:

- 1. COMPETENCIES**, which define the set of skills and behaviours characteristic of high performing soccer players
- 2. PERFORMANCE MEASURES** which objectively assess players' performance through testing and analysis.



# WOMEN'S EXCEL PROGRAM GUIDING PRINCIPLES

While the Women's EXCEL Program is still in its early stages, the result will be a research-based, coordinated system that focuses on achieving technical perfection while developing the whole player across four corners of development: physical, mental, technical/tactical, and social/emotional. This "four corner" approach is one of the Women's EXCEL Program's guiding principles. It is built around:

## PHYSICAL

Physical development, which emphasizes soccer-specific fitness so that players can meet the physical demands of every position at the highest levels of the game, while at the same time preventing injuries.

## MENTAL

Mental development, which allows a player to directly impact their personal performances in training and matches by learning to cope effectively under pressure.

### 4 CORNER APPROACH

## TECHNICAL/TACTICAL

Technical/tactical development, which takes a process-oriented approach to developing players who can execute technical skills proficiently under pressure and with the tactical flexibility to adapt to any top opposition.

## SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

Social/emotional development, which has an indirect impact on a player's performance and the performance of others through leadership, communication and other skills that promote a culture of growth and high performance.





# WHERE WILL THE WOMEN'S EXCEL PROGRAM TAKE ME?

The Women's EXCEL Program provides a clear and continuous pathway for Canada's most promising players, beginning with:

## WOMEN'S REGIONAL EXCEL CENTRES

Licensed by Canada Soccer and delivered through Provincial/ Territorial Member Associations and partners, **Women's Regional EXCEL Centres** provide talented U-13 to U-18 players with a year-round, comprehensive program

based on a standardized national curriculum. This allows them to accumulate high-quality training hours on a par with leading European nations and begin to develop world-class attributes in the four corners of development.

## WOMEN'S NATIONAL EXCEL PROGRAM

presented by **Bell**

Players within a Women's Regional EXCEL Centre who demonstrate their ability to meet the highest standards may move into the **Women's National EXCEL Program**, presented by Bell. Designed around two phases—U-14 to U-17 and U-18 to U-20—the six-year

**Women's National EXCEL Program** is intended to maintain a “conveyor belt” of players demonstrating the program's

highest standard attributes towards the Women's National Team. While youth FIFA World Cup competitions are not the objective of the program, the FIFA Women's U-17 and FIFA Women's U-20 World Cups represent important opportunities for learning and benchmarking, so the two phases of the **Women's National EXCEL Program** are structured with these in mind.

## EXCELERATION

Along the way, top players may be targeted for **EXCEleration** activity to help refine their skills with supplemental training prior to being called to the Women's National Team.

## UNIVERSITIES

Others may pursue additional training at the university level, ideally at an EXCEL school. \*

Only players who achieve “four-corner” standard attributes—the best of the best—are chosen for the Women's National Team and presented with opportunities to qualify and participate in the FIFA Women's World Cup and Women's Olympic Football Tournament. Ultimately, they will have been exposed to the program's comprehensive four-corner programming throughout their EXCEL development with the goal of helping every player reach and maintain their maximum potential.



\* Universities and colleges recognized by Canada Soccer as being committed to the support and delivery of training at EXCEL Program standards. A University Selection guide to assist players considering this path is available.



# THE WOMEN'S EXCEL PROGRAM:

## DEVELOPS A NEW CANADIAN SOCCER DNA

The Women's EXCEL Program will help develop a new Canadian soccer DNA, where players demonstrate a perfect blend of control, precision and power that culminates in consistent winning performances at pinnacle events.

## ALLOWS FOR CONTINUOUS GROWTH

The Women's EXCEL Program delivers consistent contacts both regionally and nationally for players meeting the program's standards from the age of 13 until they reach the Women's National Team or exit the program having attained their optimal potential, allowing for continuous growth, support and monitoring of future Women's National Team players.

## PUTS THE BEST WITH THE BEST

The Women's EXCEL Program puts the best with the best, allowing the most talented players regionally and nationally to train with each other and be challenged by their peers, while giving them access to the best youth talent specialists in Canada.

## A PLAYER-CENTRED APPROACH

The Women's EXCEL Program takes a player-centred approach to coaching, empowering players to become responsible for their own development, and encouraging them to become self-aware, self-sufficient and able to make informed decisions around their individual growth.



**GIVING CANADA'S  
BEST SOCCER PLAYERS  
EVERY OPPORTUNITY  
TO REACH THEIR  
PERFORMANCE POTENTIAL**

is at the heart of achieving consistent success on the world soccer stage. The systematic and coordinated approach to talent development provided through the Women's EXCEL Program will help us get there.





YOUR GOALS. OUR GAME.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CANADA  
SOCCER PATHWAY AND WOMEN'S EXCEL  
PROGRAM, PLEASE VISIT**

**CANADASOCCER.COM/W-EXCEL**



**Own the Podium**  
ownthepodium.org

**Canada**  
Sport Canada  
pch.gc.ca



**BC SOCCER**  
British Columbia  
Soccer Association  
bcsoccer.net



**Alberta Soccer Association**  
albertasoccer.com



**Saskatchewan Soccer  
Association**  
sasksoccer.com



**Manitoba Soccer  
Association**  
manitobasoccer.ca



**Ontario Soccer Association**  
ontariosoccer.net



**Fédération de soccer  
du Québec**  
federation-soccer.qc.ca



**Soccer New Brunswick**  
soccernb.org



**Soccer Nova Scotia**  
soccerns.ns.ca



**Prince Edward Island  
Soccer Association**  
peisoccer.com



**Newfoundland and Labrador  
Soccer Association**  
nlssa.ca



**Northwest Territories  
Soccer Association**  
nwtkicks.ca



**Yukon Soccer Association**  
yukonsoccer.yk.ca



**Nunavut Soccer Association**  
facebook.com/Nunavut  
SoccerAssociation



**CANADA SOCCER PATHWAY PARTNERS**