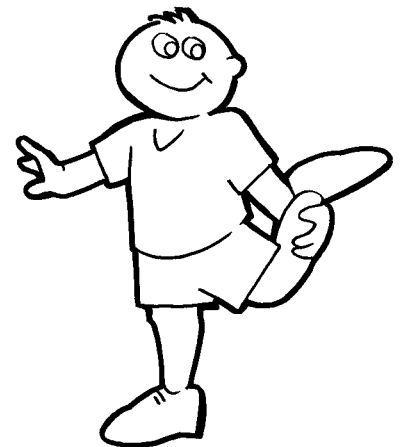


Introduction

- The Vision & The Challenge
- Purpose of Resource Manual
- Resource Manual Content
- Benefits of Sport & Physical Activity
- Warm-Up Activities



THE VISION

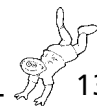
All sport programs for children 10 and under will be designed to:

- Emphasize broad-based skill development in a healthy, safe, and fun environment.
- Emphasize lifetime enjoyment from involvement in sport rather than short term successes in a specific sport.
- Modify competitive opportunities to match the ability levels so all participants are having fun, actively participating and getting opportunities to learn regardless of athletic talent.
- Encourage a philosophy that puts the holistic development of the child ahead of the athletic competition – focusing on process, not outcome.
- Include an adult/parent education component.



THE CHALLENGE

- Most entry-level team sport coaches are volunteer coaches with no training in child development; little, if any, coach education and limited time for preparation of activity plans (lesson/practice).
- Fundamental skill development takes place when children are given opportunities to get many repetitions – such opportunity rarely occurs for ALL children in traditional adult-like competitions.
- Many children are entering organized sport at very young ages, without enough creative play experiences with family and friends where motor skills, in the past, were learned incidentally. As a result, of this they don't have the pre-requisite skills required to be able to participate with enjoyment, success or safety. These learning opportunities now have to be provided in the organized sport scheduled time.
- Most team sport programs have traditionally offered programs focussing on competition where children *apply* skills learned outside the competition. Societal changes have resulted in children having limited skills to *apply*. Such programs offer limited opportunity to learn fundamental skills. Wanting to provide activities “for fun” does not abandon the responsibility to provide learning opportunities. In properly designed programs, children **learn while having fun**.
- Most team sport programs need increased competition modifications than what is currently offered to make them developmentally appropriate, especially those that provide programs for children under eight.
- Individual sports are often repetitive in nature offering little opportunity for diversity, unless there are creative interventions by coaches and/or program administrators.
- Some sports provide no opportunity to learn manipulation skills. If a child specializes in such a sport at a very young age they are unlikely to adequately learn these skills, which are extremely important to participating and enjoying athletic activities as teenagers and adults.
- Many sports are expanding the length of their seasons and/or identifying “stars” too young, encouraging specialization too young. Therefore, children are not learning a broad base of fundamental sport skills that would be advantageous for the long term development of athletic ability or for a lifetime enjoyment of sport and physical activity.
- Many sports seem challenged to create modifications, variety, and the repetitions necessary for skill acquisition in a “games-like” format that is active and fun for young children. This results in a large number of community programs offering a “competition model” program that is not conducive to maximizing action or learning skills.
- Community sport programs require the assistance and technical expertise of their sport leaders (PSGBs) to provide quality programs for children.
- Most parents don't understand child development and the learning process for skill development. Many also forget that the true value of sport activity is to benefit the child and “adult entertainment” should be placed a distant second.



CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

Games

Traditional use of the word “game” in team sports means playing an adult-like competition versus another team. Example: T-Ball, adult-pitch baseball, 6 on 6 hockey, soccer with slightly reduced team sizes. However, children can make a “game” out of almost anything - such as bouncing a ball against a wall or seeing how many times they can hit a target consecutively. These activities provide age-appropriate competition which studies have shown children enjoy. In this resource manual, when we talk of “games” or something being “game-like” it does **not** mean an adult-like competition. We are referring to what children may describe as a game. It may be a small group lead-up game which provides more opportunity for repetitions, or it may simply mean turning a repetitive drill activity into something fun for children. When we are referring to something closer to the adult version (although it may be modified a great deal) it will be called a competition versus another team.

Coach

Traditionally, the word “coach” has defined the person with the technical and coaching theory knowledge to prepare athletes for competition. For people working with children the words “play leader”, “teacher” or “instructor” more aptly describes the role. For simplification we refer to “coach” in broad terms, applying it to any adult who is responsible for planning and working with children in physical activity. This, too, requires special training. Therefore “coach education” refers to specialized training enabling adults to work at the age-appropriate level. For people working with 5-6 year olds it may mean a Play Leadership course, while for people working with 15-16 year olds it would mean Level 3 NCCP certification.



THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE MANUAL

1. To encourage and assist Provincial and Community Sport Governing Bodies (PSGBs) to:
 - Develop age-appropriate “play or game” activities, in user-friendly lesson plans, to assist instructors/coaches working with children aged 10 and under. Since coaches at the introductory level rarely have the time or experience to design effective practices, PSGBs can use their technical expertise to design **detailed, progressive lesson plans**, for an 8-10 week period, rather than just providing coaches with a number of drills from which to choose. Lesson plans will also include simple age-appropriate technical information on teaching specific-sport skills to children 10 and under.
 - Create innovative competition modifications to put the emphasis on the **process** of fun, action and learning by **all** participants, rather than on the adult model that focuses on outcome.
 - Establish age-appropriate guidelines and standards for community groups offering sport programs for children 10 and under to ensure quality and effectiveness.
 - Encourage the overall development of sport skills by incorporating activities and games into their program (perhaps just in the warm-up portion of the scheduled activity) that may not be used or used infrequently, in specific sport situations. Example: gymnastics/swimming/skating – manipulative skills; team sports – strength, flexibility, speed development or manipulative skills not used in that sport.
 - To provide a hierarchy of specific sport skills and the appropriate age level at which they should be practiced and learned.
 - Create resource materials for coaches and administrators that will assist them in providing a positive, healthy learning environment for children 10 and under.
 - Establish a delivery strategy to encourage implementation throughout the province.
2. To assist community sport and recreation associations offering programs for children under 10:
 - Assess current programs
 - Recognize appropriate standards and guidelines for effective children’s sport programs.
 - To access programs, created from the expertise of PSGBs, to provide competition modifications that are more developmentally appropriate than what is currently being offered.
 - Educate their membership on the characteristics of age-appropriate programs.



RESOURCE MANUAL CONTENT

- Self-assessment tool to help identify the sport’s current status in meeting standards for age-appropriate programs.
- Over 100 tag, lead-up games and activities that provide an opportunity to practice and learn a variety of sport skills.
 - Specific sport groups can select from these activities for warm-ups prior to competition.
 - Selections can also be made for inclusion in the lesson plans, which are provided to assist coaches in creating an effective, fun, “games-approach” to practices.
- Sample activity plan outline for each age division and suggestions that meet the guidelines.
- ONE sample activity plan for each age division (four different sports). The activities and modifications suggested meet the guidelines for age-appropriate sport programs. Specific sports may include different or additional rule modifications – but they should meet the guidelines for age-appropriate programs outlined in this resource manual. Only the names of the games are shown in the practice plans, while details can be found in the games modules. Designers of programs would be expected to show the details when designing sport specific resource material for coaches.
- Guidelines for effective, developmentally appropriate sport programs in three age categories to use as a guide when creating specific sport programs:
 - **Beginner** - age 5-6
 - **Novice**- age 7-8
 - **Rookie**- age 9-10
- Resource information that designers or organizations should include in sport specific resource material prepared for anyone working with children:
 - **Teaching cues** for various fundamental sport skills. Program designers are expected to include these in their specific sport resource materials for coaches to access in order to provide feedback on skills, used in warm-up games, that may not be familiar to them.
 - Suggestions to coaches/instructors on how to **communicate positively** with children.
 - Suggestions for creating an atmosphere where **self-esteem** can flourish, including sample achievement awards.
 - Sample **skills checklist** to be used for skill assessment and motivation.
 - Ideas to help coaches/instructors establish a **positive learning environment**.
 - Ideas to help coaches/instructors **work with difficult children**.
 - Sample **letter to parents** to explain the holistic development philosophy.
 - A “Treasure Chest” of **equipment** suggestions.
 - **Cultural** Awareness.
- Delivery strategy suggestions.



BENEFITS OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

“If the physical, psychological and social benefits available through sport are to occur, they must be purposely planned, structured and taught as well as positively reinforced.” (Weiss – Children in Sport - an Educational Model)

Organized sport programs have the potential to provide many benefits for all children. If that potential is to be reached, the programs must be properly structured with a philosophy that the **overall** development of ALL the children is the number one priority.

Organized sport does not automatically “build character” but it can *if* we provide the proper environment. Organized sport learning opportunities through “play” can provide, if properly structured, many opportunities to develop the psychological and social skills of children.

Sport and physical activity provides opportunities to develop the following:

- **Strength, endurance and flexibility necessary to develop healthy bodies.**
If we provide a broad base of activities that include these skill components.
- **Fitness and appreciation for an active, healthier lifestyle.**
If the goals of children’s sport are fun, learning skills, being with friends in physical activity so they are having fun by being actively involved, which results in a positive sport experience.
- **Competence in physical skills and abilities resulting in positive self-image.**
If they are challenged at the level of their ability so they can be successful and not put into competitive situations where failure is imminent because of a lack of skills. If they are welcomed and made to feel an important part of the team regardless of ability. If they are reinforced positively. If they are taught that losing is not a reflection of who they are as a person – that mistakes are not synonymous with failure.
- **Fundamental motor skills.**
If they do not specialize too soon. If they are given enough opportunities for the repetitions necessary to learn. If they are given positive, constructive feedback on how to improve skills.
- **Improved mental skills like concentration; listening; critical and creative thinking; readiness to learn and enthusiasm for learning.**
If they are allowed and encouraged to be creative in child-appropriate play activities where such skills can be learned with minimal adult intervention. If learning is fun. If there is a balance between skill level and the challenge. The best challenges come from within – what the child wants.
- **Improved emotional skills like emotional control; confidence.**
If they are taught how to handle frustration appropriately. If they are challenged to learn new skills and overcome fears. If they are taught to handle embarrassing situations with grace and humour.



- **Improved social skills like co-operation, team-work, self-discipline, responsibility, respect, communication, interaction, support for others, tolerance/empathy, leadership, acceptance of rules, making choices and living with consequences of those choices.**

If they have positive adult role models and if the important values of sport are taught and reinforced in the process. If bad behaviour is not excused just because a child has been blessed with athletic ability. If they are taught that individual sacrifices sometimes occur for the good of the team.

- **Cognitive abilities as children learn to analyze, create, problem solve and make decisions.**

If they are given choices about participation or level of participation. If they are given some feelings of self-determination and empowerment. If they are allowed to learn through “play” rather than in over-structured adult-like competitions.

- **Management of disappointment.**

If they are taught to take ownership of setbacks and not to lay blame on others when disappointments occur. If they are taught to set realistic goals to challenge themselves. If they are taught that adversity is an opportunity to improve. If they learn to accept that adjustments in expectations or approaches are necessary to handle situations effectively. If they are taught that losing should not be personalized.

- **Management of success.**

If they are taught to respect opponents and deal with successes with class. If “trash talk”, as often seen in the professional sport model, is prohibited. If they are taught that even though they “may be on top of the heap they are still a part of it” – it is unacceptable to demean the opposition. If they learn to measure success by how well they performed rather than by whether they won or lost.

- **Assist in moral development (right from wrong – fair play).**

If the sport program facilitates co-operation rather than just competition. If coaches and parents consistently teach and abide by both the rules and the spirit of the rules. If it is instilled early that positions, time, and accolades must be shared. If children are given opportunities to be their own officials. If the personal conduct of adult role models is consistently exemplary. If children are taught to respect opponents with the understanding that without co-operation there would be no competition. If coaches and parents take advantage of “teachable moments” to reinforce the “whys” of right and wrong. If children have to accept responsible for their actions and are not allowed to lay blame or make excuses.



Additional Benefits to Children:

- Children love the sensation of movement and want to learn.
- Introduces children to competitive situations without the burden of mistakes resulting in major consequences.
- Possession of physical skills is advantageous to being accepted into peer groups. Research has shown a significant relationship between physical competence, interpersonal skills and peer acceptance (Wiess and Duncan, 1992)
- Positive self-esteem makes it easier to resist the temptations and pressures of youth. It is cheaper to run a sports program than it is to detain a young offender in the future.
- Reduced health costs to society when more people develop healthier lifestyles.
- There is a positive relationship between mood and physical activity.

Benefits to Community:

- Sport creates jobs and pumps money into the economy.
- Healthy lifestyles reduce the cost of medical care.
- Sport contributes to a sense of “community” and brings people together.
- Sport helps people cope with stress and better deal with life issues, often saving the employer money.
- Sport helps communities grow and develop.
- Major sporting events have a positive long-term economic impact on the community.



Provincial Sport Governing Bodies and other associations offering children’s sport programs can assist in ensuring that they are developmentally appropriate. Simply offering competition in team sports, where there are limited opportunities to learn or enough action to provide fun for all participants, is no longer acceptable.



WARM UP ACTIVITIES

A variety of age-appropriate “play” learning opportunity ideas are provided in the warm-up activity modules. These activities follow guidelines that encourage variety, action, creativity and avoid elimination.

These activities are provided in the following modules:

- Balance/jumping/games/quick feet/landing games
- Manipulation games
- Miscellaneous movement games
- Tag games
- Manipulation tag games

Activities will be designated to indicate most appropriate age level. **B** – beginner (age 5-6); **N** –Novice (age 7-8); **R** – Rookie (age 9-10). These names have been selected to categorize the activities for this resource manual. They are not intended to be used universally if sports already have names assigned to specific age groups.

Some activities will be introduced via educational games and others through gymnastic-like activities. Many gymnastic activities provide opportunities to develop upper-body strength, which is often neglected if only specific sport activities are offered. It is expected that designers of specific sport lesson plans will choose warm-up activities that would not normally be used in sport specific practices. Children will get plenty of opportunity to practice sport-specific skills in the remainder of the lesson plan. Most sports are made up of combinations of movement patterns. It is critical that children learn a variety of fundamental movement skills that will then be applicable to a variety of sport situations. Including movement skills in the warm-up of sport specific programs provides opportunities the children may not otherwise receive.

Some of these activities can also be used for pre-competition warm-ups at the rookie level.

Designers of programs should encourage the development of a variety of locomotion skills and movement directions. This can easily be accomplished by taking a simple game from the warm-up activities and changing the method of locomotion at brief intervals during play. Example: skip, gallop, or side step as the method of locomotion in tag games.

When learning a new manipulation skill, it is often beneficial to start the action without the object to get the kinesthetic feel of the movement first. It also taps into the creativity and imagination of the child. Playing “imagination ball” is a useful method of getting children to perform the correct action because worrying about the outcome does not hinder them. Progressing from slow motion to full speed is another progression that is effective.

Warm up activities fall under the following themes:

LOCOMOTION	MOVEMENT	MANIPULATIVE	COGNITIVE	SOCIAL
Running	Body Awareness - Evading - Faking - Agility	Receiving - Catching - Collecting	Problem Solving	Co-operation Teamwork
Jumping	Space Awareness - Personal - General - Level/hi,med,lo - Direction - forward/back - left,right - Pathways -straight,curved, zig zag	Sending - Throw - roll - underhand - overhand - backhand - accuracy - Striking - Kicking - Punting - Passing/volley	Categorizing	Discipline
Hopping	Statics - Balance - Support - Flexibility	Accompanying - Dribbling - Carrying	Analyzing	Inclusiveness
Skipping	Effort Awareness - Fast, slow - Strong, easy		Inventing Creativity	Responsibility
Galloping	Springs - From legs - From arms		Decision Making	Positive Mental Attitude
Rolling	Landings - On feet - On hands - Rotating		Contrasting/ Comparing	Support for others Respect/Caring
Crawling	Rotations - Long - Lateral		Imagination	Interaction
Leaping			Concentration	Listening
Cross-over step				Independence
				Accept feedback
				Accept rules
				Sharing
				Emotional Control

