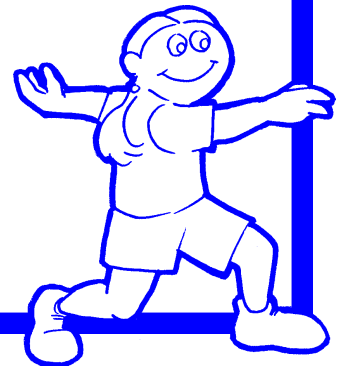
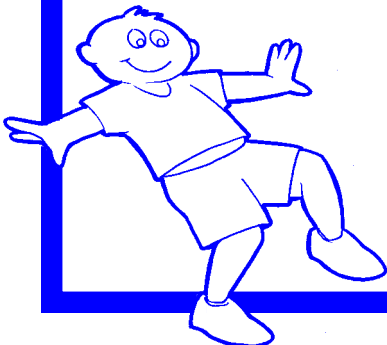
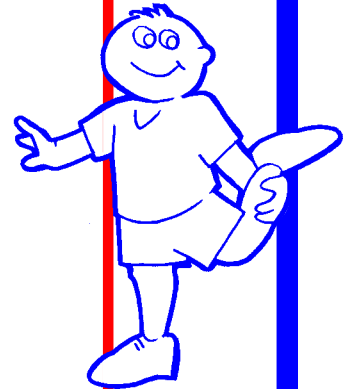
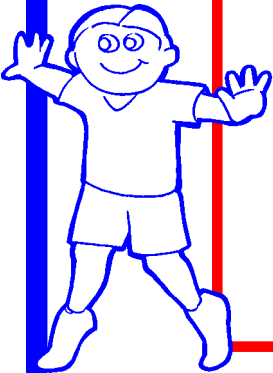


CHILDREN **in sport**

A fundamental skill development program

An Orientation Guide
for Sport Leaders



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Saskatchewan Archery Association	Saskatchewan Racquetball Association
Saskatchewan Athletics	Saskatchewan Rhythmic Sportive Gymnastics
Saskatchewan Badminton Association	Saskatchewan Provincial Rifle Association
Saskatchewan Baseball Association	Ringette Association of Saskatchewan
Basketball Saskatchewan Inc.	Saskatchewan Rowing Association
Saskatchewan Baton Twirling Association	Saskatchewan Rugby Union
Saskatchewan Blind Sports Association	Saskatchewan Sailing Clubs Association
Bowling Federation of Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Skeet Shooting Association
Bowls Saskatchewan Inc.	Saskatchewan Ski Association
Saskatchewan Amateur Boxing Association	Saskatchewan Provincial Small Bore Association
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Saskatchewan Curling Association	Saskatchewan Special Olympics Society
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Saskatchewan Figure Skating Association	Saskatchewan Table Tennis Association
Football Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Taekwon-Do Federation
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Saskatchewan Handball Association	Saskatchewan Triathlon Association
Saskatchewan Handgun Association	University of Regina
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Horseshoe Saskatchewan Inc.	Saskatchewan Water Ski Association Inc.
Judo Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Weightlifting Association
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Provincial Association of Zones	

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CHILDREN IN SPORT

INTRODUCTION

Throughout playgrounds, schoolyards, arenas and sporting facilities across the province, you can see kids enjoying sports and having fun with their friends. Sport is a fun, positive experience for children which allows them to make new friends, learn new skills and develop new interests.

The first step in providing a positive sport experience for children is acceptance by adults that the main goal of children and youth sports should be to foster the overall development of all the children involved. Positive sport programs for children and youth put the holistic development of the child ahead of an athletic competition – focusing on process – not outcome.

This Orientation Guide features a variety of resource materials including a skills resource manual, video and booklet. These materials include ideas for warm-up activities, principles for positive children's sport programs, ways for making play with children more positive, self-assessment tools, ideas for equipment and many other suggestions.

This *Orientation Guide* is designed to assist Volunteers and other sport leaders in organizing parent education programs for league or associations, coaches and parent groups. Please take a few minutes to read through this guide and learn first-hand how sport can be a terrific, life-long experience for our children.

Brought to you by the membership of Sask Sport Inc.

Children who participate in sports and the arts gain some protection from emotional and social problems. The advantages: better use of time, increased self-esteem, opportunities to bond with adults who can be role models.

(David Offord, Ellen Lipman and Eric Duku. October, 1998 by Human Resources Development Canada)

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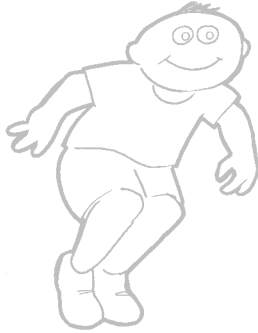
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Section I

Introduction



- Mission
- Orientation Co-ordinator



PARENT EDUCATION ORIENTATION

PARENTS ARE PART OF THE SPORT TEAM TOO!

MISSION

The purpose of this orientation is to provide resources that local organizations/teams/leagues can use to assist them in educating parents and other adults on what constitutes a healthy children's sport program as well as tips on how to be a "model" sport parent.

This orientation contains the following:

- *The "Children in Sport"* video. This 20 minute video describes how parents are part of the sport team and outlines roles and responsibilities. It also describes the characteristics of healthy sport programs to help parents recognize and select sport programs for their children.
- *A Resource Guide for Parents*. This booklet supports the messages in the video.
- An *Orientation Guide*. To assist volunteers and other sport leaders in organizing parent education programs for league or associations, coaches and parent groups.

Content:

- Duties of orientation coordinator
- Sample invitation letter to parents for organizing and promoting orientations
- Sample agenda for a welcome night
- Suggestions for use of *A Resource Guide for Parents* booklets
- Commonly asked questions and answers
- Sample codes of conduct for players, parents, coaches
- Guidelines for age appropriate programs for children 10 and under.
- List of additional education resources
- Sample letters to parents for each of the three age divisions for ages 10 and under. These are covering letters with general information only and should be **accompanied by specific rule modification** leagues or what organizations have implemented
- Sample Parent contract
- Sample Coach contract

ORIENTATION COORDINATOR DUTIES

ENSURE THAT A PRE-SEASON MEETING IS HELD!

The Orientation Coordinator is the key to success. Quality resource materials are of little value without effective implementation. Detailed preparation for the orientation will be the first step to ensure a successful sport program for children.

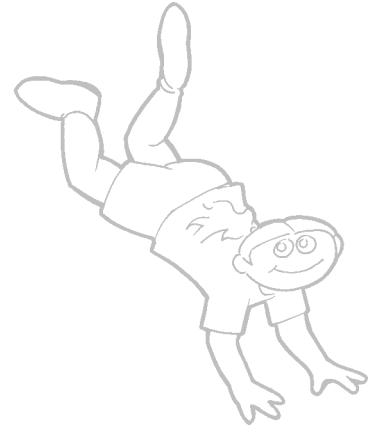
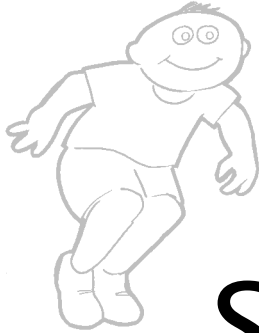
PRE-ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

- Schedule (date/reserve facility/time) the orientation. This may take the form of:
 - Team meetings, set by coaches, for parents of players on separate teams
 - League or association meetings for larger groups of parents as well as sport leaders
 - Parent meetings in conjunction with other events, like jamborees, tournaments, annual general meetings, conferences, registration, opening day, teams socials
- Draft and send out invitation letters – sample provided in Appendices section (pages 33-49).
- Select and provide copies of handouts for those in attendance
 - Educational information in this orientation guide
 - Specific league or organization information.
 - Schedules
 - Special rules
 - Contact numbers of coaches and administrators
 - Insurance information
 - Volunteer sign up forms
- Ensure equipment and supplies – booklets, video, TV/VCR, tables/chairs, microphone if for a large group, handouts, prizes, refreshments, attendance forms, agendas, masking tape
- Promote the orientation – see Promotion Tips on page 11
- Secure door prizes and/or giveaways – sponsored if possible
- Provide a meeting agenda

ORIENTATION DAY CHECKLIST

- Arrive 30-45 minutes prior to start time
- Check facility and set up equipment – arrange seating if necessary, prepare refreshments, TV/VCR set-up
- Prepare for distribution of educational handouts, giveaways, prizes
- Greet parents or others as they arrive – ensure they receive handouts
- Start meeting on time
- Follow meeting agenda





Section II

How To Set Up An Orientation



- Promotion Tips
- Welcome Night Agenda
- Invitation to Welcome Night



PROMOTION TIPS

HELP MAKE CHILDREN'S SPORT HEALTHY, SAFE AND FUN!

TO MAXIMIZE ATTENDANCE

- Organize it around an event parents are already likely to attend
 - Competitions
 - Registration nights
 - Opening day
 - Team socials
 - Distribution of schedules or uniforms
 - Team pictures
 - Jamborees
- Call it a “Welcome to ...” night, if done at the beginning of the season
- “Value added” incentives for attendance:
 - Reduced fees
 - Coupons
 - Award points toward fundraising or “volunteer” time
- Secure prizes or giveaways – coupons, door prizes, stickers, buttons (“I am a positive sport parent” or “Good sports – make good sports” or “Good sports are winners”.)
- Get endorsements from local celebrity athletes

PROMOTION TOOLS

- Newsletters
- Personal invitations
- Flyers – schools, libraries, sport facilities, community recreation centres
- Posters
- Banners
- Media releases
- Public service announcements for cable TV or radio
- Talk shows
- Consider feasibility of making it mandatory for first-time parents in the organization



SAMPLE WELCOME NIGHT AGENDA

GOOD SPORTS MAKE GOOD SPORTS!

45 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR

1. Welcome and introductions – **5 minutes**
 - Introduce yourself and leader(s) for the evening
 - Association/league or team sponsors if applicable
 - People in attendance if group is small enough
2. Review objectives of meeting – **5 minutes**
 - Introduce adults to philosophy and guidelines for healthy children’s sport programs to ensure your child’s participation is FUN and they develop new sport and life skills
 - Provide informational handouts
 - Cover special league and/or team rules
 - View the “Children in Sport” video
 - Share ways parents can assist to help make the program healthy, safe and fun
 - Answer questions
3. View video – approximately **20 minutes**
4. Questions and answers – **10-15 minutes.**

Most of the information parents want should be covered during the watching of the video. Anticipate parents wanting additional information on:

 - Insurance coverage
 - Specifics on how they can assist
 - Contact people and phone numbers
 - Procedures if they have concerns of any kind
5. Socialize

SAMPLE INVITATION TO WELCOME NIGHT

LIFE LONG LEARNING BEGINS WITH A CHILD'S PLAY!

Dear Parents,

We are delighted to have your child in our organization this year. You are invited to a Parents' Welcome Night on _____ at _____.
We hope you will attend in the best interests of your child.

It is our intention to provide your child with a positive sport experience. We recognize that the primary goals of children in sport are to have fun, learn skills, and meet and play with friends. Therefore, our program provides an environment where learning will take place through fun, action and fair play with age-appropriate activities.

We hope to build a strong relationship with parents in order to provide a positive atmosphere for everyone involved. Parent attendance at the welcome night will be a first step in providing an excellent sporting experience for all the participants.

The welcome night will cover the following topics:

1. Philosophy of healthy children's sport programs
2. The "Children in Sport" video
3. Information package – schedules, responsibilities, expectations, organization and team rules
4. Safety concerns
5. Opportunity for questions

We look forward to meeting with you and having the opportunity to exchange ideas and/or concerns. If you are unable to attend, please contact me at _____.

Sincerely,

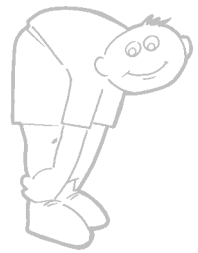




Section III



Suggestions For Parent Booklet Use



SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOKLET DISTRIBUTION

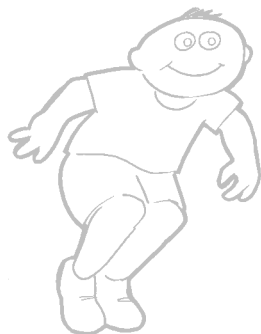
SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES ENHANCE FEELINGS OF COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN.

A *Resource Guide for Parents* booklet is a valuable tool for adult education. It can be used to inform and remind adults of how they can enhance a child's sport experience.

Some suggestions for distribution of this booklet include:

- Parent welcome night
- Coaches orientation night
- Officials orientation programs for those that work in this age group
- Associations office





Section IV

Suggestion For Video Use



SUGGESTIONS FOR VIDEO USE

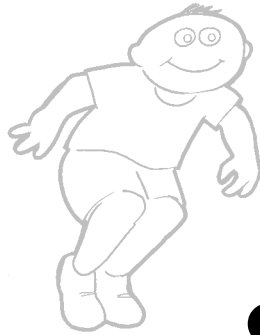
MAINTAIN OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILD.

The *Children in Sport* educational video is an excellent resource for parents, coaches and adults on how to be part of the sport team. The video identifies key components of healthy sport programs for children; describes how parents and adults in the sport system can support the child's priorities in sport; and how to ensure that the sport experience for our children is enhanced so that they develop a passion for physical activity for life and learn the valuable lifeskills that sport can teach.

The video can be used at:

- Parent welcome nights
- Tournaments
- Award nights
- Annual general meetings
- Coach orientation programs
- Officials orientation programs
- Registration nights



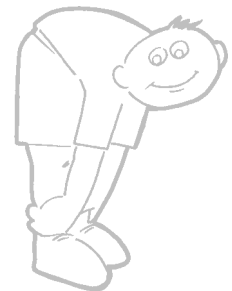


Section V

Informational Support



- Healthy Sport Guidelines for Children 10 & Under
- Commonly Asked Questions and Answers



HEALTHY SPORT GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN 10 AND UNDER

GOOD EXPERIENCES IN SPORT WILL MAKE US WANT TO
KEEP SPORT AS A LIFE LONG FRIEND!

The best children sport programs need to focus on fun, fairplay, skill development, best practices for teaching and educating children and “promoting positive sports”. The following messages are most appropriate in the development of your child's sport experience.

- Maximum involvement for ALL participants – learning through “play”.
- Emphasis is on **process** – not outcome (learning opportunities – not competitions).
- Focus is on the overall physical, psychological and social development of ALL participants rather than on competition – fun, active learning opportunities rather than “adult-like” games.
- Positive learning environment where children receive a lot of encouragement.
- Positive, non-threatening experiences in a **variety** of fundamental movement and sport skills.
- Simple age-appropriate activities provide many opportunities to be successful, resulting in feelings of competence and self-esteem.
- Simple instruction and feedback.
- Officials receive specialized training to work with children.
- Coaches receive specialized training to work with children.
- Positive role models – all adults, including parents, are committed to a healthy philosophy.
- Equipment, rules and size of play area are modified for safety and to match size and ability level of participants.
- Specialization to sport or position is discouraged.
- “Equal play” philosophy is adopted and firmly established.
- Achievement reward programs are established to promote development of skills.
- Adults at children’s events are drug, alcohol and tobacco free.
- Includes a parent education process.



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EMPHASIZE PROCESS – NOT OUTCOME!

Why do children need to practice?

Children are more likely to stay involved in sport if they feel competent in their abilities. Feelings of competence come when they get enough repetitions to be able to execute skills proficiently. Practice time, whether in an organized structure or during free play with family and friends, is necessary so children have skills to apply during a competition. Expecting them to compete without learning fundamental skills is like expecting them to write a book before they can write their name.

Why can't they just go and play "the game" for practice?

In adult competitions, children don't get enough quality repetitions to learn skills properly. When the emphasis is on "end result" (scoring; getting the ball to 1st base) little attention is paid to "how" it was done, ultimately resulting in techniques that are ineffective in older age groups when the quality of competition improves. Team sport competitions are very complex, making it difficult for children to process all the relevant information and perform skills effectively, even when they can perform them individually. Team sport competitions are often dominated by early maturing children, leaving little or no opportunity for others to develop skills.

My child is six. How is she/he going to have fun if she/he doesn't compete in the "real" game?

*They will play "games" – child-centred games. To adults, the activities may seem like "just practice" but to the child, actively participating in a game that has been modified to match the ability level of the children involved, means she is just having **fun** while **learning**. Both of which are at the top of the list of reasons why children participate in sport! When coaches use well-prepared lesson plans to maximize activity and participation, and simplified competition, children usually have more fun than during a regular competition where they often have to spend a lot of their time, inactive, on the bench.*

At what age should children become involved in competitive sport?

Very young children should be introduced to co-operative play experiences prior to being introduced to competition. Competition for children under age 11 should be very "child-centred" (the type children would create if left on their own without adult intervention/influence). Children would use creative modifications to match maturity and ability levels – smaller teams, modified equipment, modified/flexible rules, equal play, adjustments so ALL have opportunities to score/touch the playing object often, process emphasized – outcomes de-emphasized, and close scores. The Coaching Association of Canada recommends that children can begin suitable competitive sports after about age 11.

The coach can't possibly see everything that is happening during the competition. Why is it inappropriate for me to help by yelling instructions to my child and others from the sidelines?

Children are incapable of dealing with a lot of information at one time. Team sports, especially, require a lot of decision making and a wide variety of skills. Children are easily distracted and additional information from the sideline makes it even more difficult for them to perform. It is much better for adults on the sideline to shout encouragement “way to go”, “ way to hustle”, “that’s the way to work”, rather than instructions.

How will I know if the coach (teacher) is competent?

Check the “Resource Guide for Parents” booklet on what to watch for in a practice or game as well as the characteristics of healthy children’s sport programs. Challenge sport organizers to implement coach education policies. Attend parent/coach meetings to hear the coach’s philosophy. Discuss concerns with the coach away from the playing area and away from participants.

Giving my child a reward makes him/her try harder so I give a loonie for every goal and 50 cents for every assist and stop for a slush drink when they win. Why is that inappropriate?

When success is defined in terms of winning and losing, children start to associate self-worth with “winning”. Often children perform to their potential and lose the competition because of other factors. Rewarding children for individual outcomes undermines team play, which is already a difficult concept for children to understand. Children need unconditional love whether they perform well or not. It is much healthier to focus on the process of learning proper skills, co-operating with teammates, and trying hard, rather than on outcomes.

Should I support my child by finding ways to deflect the responsibility on to someone or something else so my child won't feel too badly after a loss?

Children need to learn how to accept disappointments and responsibility. Successful people learn how to use failures as learning experiences so they improve next time. By laying blame on officials, coaches, other players or making excuses for your child’s performance, you are denying your child a learning opportunity.

How will I recognize when I am becoming “too” involved in my child’s sporting experience?

Keep in mind that the activity is for your child’s fun and enjoyment – not yours. There is a probability of over-involvement if you find yourself: using the term “we” or “our” when talking about your child’s sport (“we” are having trouble with “our” pitching technique; “our” win-loss record); dwelling on the competition on the way to or from the event; your disappointment in setbacks seems greater than your child’s; you verbally abuse coaches/officials/opponents. If you are overly involved there is a possibility the child is performing because of the rewards and “bonuses” that you give; that their aspirations are really yours not theirs; that they are participating because they don’t want to disappoint you or because it will make you proud.



My child is eight and it costs me a lot of time and money for her/him to participate. Why is it inappropriate to use guilt or threats, such as withdrawal from the sport, as motivation if 100 per cent effort isn't shown?

Threats take the “fun” out of participating. Even if they appear to work in the short term, the long-term effect on the psychological health of the participant can be devastating. The child may interpret the threat as you not believing they can do it without being threatened, which can lead to low self-esteem and ultimately, to poor performances. Everyone has days when they don't feel up to par, and can't give 100 per cent. The additional anxiety caused by participating under duress will have negative consequences on the sport experience. When the sport experience becomes too serious, the fun is lost.

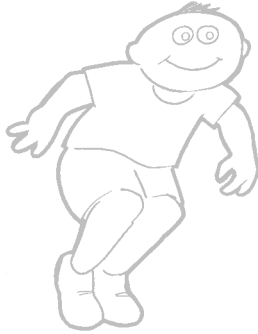
Won't my child be left behind if he/she doesn't specialize in a sport at a young age to become involved in intensive training and competition?

Research doesn't support the benefits of early specialization. The long-term benefits to athletes come from being introduced to a wide variety of sport skills early in their sporting life. Many fundamental movement and sport skills are transferred from one sport to another. Specializing too young may deny a child an opportunity to learn fundamental skills that would be beneficial to their long-term development as an athlete. Promoting early specialization means toying with the possibility of “burnout” from stress/pressure and boredom or physical exhaustion from constant repetition, just at the age when an athlete would start to benefit from training intensively. Early specialization in sports where the peak-age is the mid-20s or later is of little value and often leads to a “been-there-done-that” attitude, with little left to look forward to or enjoy. Long competitive seasons and off-season training for children often does more harm than good in the long-term development of an athlete – even though there may appear to be short-term benefits. Early success in sport is often due to early maturity and children who experience early success often have difficulty dealing with athletic failure later in life.

Sport programs that minimize competition, de-emphasize winning, and emphasize motor skill development are the most appropriate for children under 12 years of age.

(Nelson, M.A. 1992)

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Section VI

Resource Material



RESOURCE MATERIALS

SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY – NOT A DESTINATION!

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT CHILDREN IN SPORT

By Janet LeBlanc and Louise Dickson

This is a “must read” book for everyone involved with children in sport. It is an easy-to-read, comprehensive book on how 6-12 year olds can get the most from their sport experience. It answers many questions for coaches, parents and administrators. How can sport be more fun? How can coaches and parents keep sport in perspective? When should children specialize? At what age should children become involved in competitive sport? Is there too much adult domination in children’s sport?

Available for purchase from Coaches Association of Canada www.coach.ca Phone (613) 235-5000
Coaches Association of Saskatchewan www.members.home.com/saskcoach Phone (306) 975-0898

The following books are available to borrow from the Resource Centre of Sport, Culture, and Recreation www.spra.sk.ca 1-800-563-3555 or (306)780-9424

GIVE YOUR KIDS A SPORTING CHANCE

By Kevin Spink

This is an excellent, easy-to-read book on how parents can support their child’s sport experience in a positive manner. It has something to offer for parents of both aspiring athletes or recreational participants on how obvious and subtle off-field behaviours can enhance or have a negative effect on the child’s sport experience.

SPORT PARENT

By Tom Hanlon

A guide to help parents understand how to help their children gain the most from sport. It is part of the Sport Parent Education Program developed by the American Sport Education Program (ASEP).

PARENTS COMPLETE GUIDE TO YOUTH SPORTS

By Nathan Smith, Ronald Smith, Frank Smoll

Provides helpful information on parenting young athletes at all levels. It offers suggestions on what role parents should assume from entry level into sport to the elite level.

The following are available to purchase from the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport
www.cces.ca or email: order@cces.ca or (613) 521-3340 or 1-800-672-7775 or fax (613) 521-3134

FAIR PLAY – IT'S YOUR CALL – A RESOURCE KIT

This kit helps anyone working with children 8-14 years old that fair play is the only way to play. Each manual contains an introduction to fair play, fair play tips and tools, and creative ideas for building awareness about fair play. A brochure for parents is also included. Manuals can be purchased separately.

FAIR PLAY FOR KIDS – A HANDBOOK OF ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING FAIR PLAY

This resource includes more than 40 activities that teachers can use to teach children the importance of integrity, fairness and respect in sport and life. Intended for use with children 8-12 years old, the handbook includes worksheets and background information to support the student activities.

Children who are regularly active are less susceptible to stress, perform as well or better academically, exhibit positive attitudes about school and themselves, are less aggressive and play better with other children.

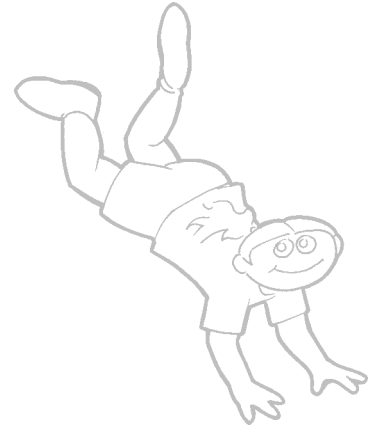
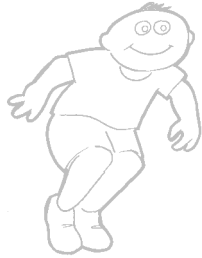
(The Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1992).

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Section VII

Appendices

- A- Sample Letter to Parents
- B - Sample Parent Contract
- C - Sample Coach Contract
- D- Coaches Code of Conduct
- E - Fair Play Code for Parents
- F - Children's Sport –
Players' Rights and Responsibilities
- G- Self-Assessment Questionnaire



Appendix A

TO PARENTS

AGE 5-6 Participants

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to an exciting year of fun, enjoyment and learning in our sport.

Knowing that children in this age group want ACTION, FUN, and an opportunity to LEARN, we are offering a program that is child-centred. We will be playing games that will give ALL children more opportunity to receive the repetitions required to develop the skills necessary for enjoyment. You will notice modifications to team size, rules, and equipment that will result in more action for more children, thereby providing more opportunity to learn, be successful, improve skills, while having fun in a healthy, safe and fun environment. The games are designed for very young children. Adult-type competitions don't provide the environment children need to have fun, learn and be successful.

Modifications are made to address the common characteristics of children this age:

- Short attention span
- Love of action
- Different maturing rates
- Low ability to think abstractly
- Low ability to cope with stress
- Low level of fine co-ordination
- Low ability to do complex tasks
- Need for approval and praise
- Low ability to anticipate
- Low ability to make quick decisions

Since the children are so young, with limited fundamental motor skills, we will be including numerous fun opportunities to develop a variety of motor skills in our warm-up activities. Some may appear to have little relevance to our sport, but are important to overall development in order to enjoy a lifetime of sport and physical activity.

The philosophy of our program is to focus on process – not outcome. We will therefore be rewarding what should be valued most in sport – self-improvement, effort, fair play, co-operation, positive attitudes and behaviour.

The success of the program will depend on your help and support. We will require your assistance (or substitute) in many of the activities to get the proper adult to child ratio for a good learning environment. It is not necessary to be knowledgeable about our sport. All you need is a smile and enthusiasm. It will also be beneficial if you encourage your child to use creative play at home with family or friends to develop fundamental sport skills.

The parent booklet you have been provided with will offer additional ideas on how you can be part of the sport team and support your child in having a positive sport experience.

If you have questions, the coaches will be very happy to talk with you.

Here's to a FUN, ACTION-PACKED enjoyable year for your child!



TO PARENTS

AGE 7-8 Participants

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to an exciting year of fun, enjoyment and learning.

Knowing that children in this age group want ACTION, FUN, and an opportunity to LEARN, we are offering a program that is child-centred. We will be playing games that will give ALL children more opportunity to receive the repetitions required to develop the skills for enjoyment. Modifications to the adult version of competition will result in more action for more children, thereby providing more opportunity to learn, be successful, improve skills, while having fun in a healthy, safe environment. The following age-appropriate modifications will be used:

- Reduced team numbers to provide more action for more children
- Reduced equipment size and play area to match size of participants
- Softer equipment to encourage proper use of skills and for safety
- Modified rules to provide more scoring opportunities for more children, keep scores close, and reduce the dominance of highly skilled players
- No substitutions necessary – all children participate all the time
- Coach will be allowed on the play area to help direct play and provide immediate, positive feedback
- Flexible player rosters – to address inequities in player ability if necessary and to allow borrowing of players in case of absentees. Total team size can then be kept smaller.

The philosophy of our program is to focus on process – not outcome. We will therefore be rewarding what should be valued most in sport – self-improvement, effort, fair play, co-operation, positive attitudes and behaviour.

Since children this age have not fully developed their fundamental motor skills, we will be including numerous fun opportunities to develop a variety of motor skills in our warm-up activities. Some may appear to have little relevance to our sport, but are important to overall development in order to enjoy a lifetime of sport and physical activity.

Prior to playing a modified competition versus an opposing team, we will be spending a portion of the scheduled time playing various sport-specific, lead-up games that will best develop the fundamental skills necessary in our sport.

The success of the program will depend on your help and support. We will require your assistance (or substitute) in many of the activities to get the proper adult to child ratio for a good learning environment. It is not necessary to be knowledgeable about our sport. All you need is a smile and enthusiasm. It will also be beneficial if you encourage your child to practice at home with family or with friends to develop fundamental sport skills.

The parent booklet you have been provided with will offer additional ideas on how you can be part of the sport team and support your child in having a positive sport experience.

If you have questions, the coaches will be very happy to talk with you.

Here's to a FUN, ACTION-PACKED enjoyable year for your child!

TO PARENTS

AGE 9-10 Participants

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to an exciting year of fun, enjoyment and learning.

Knowing a child's primary purpose in sport participation is for FUN, ACTION and to LEARN, the philosophy of our program is the **holistic development** of the child rather than competition. We will be playing similar to adult competition, but have made age-appropriate modifications to address the needs of children this age. The following age-appropriate modifications will be used:

- Reduced team numbers to provide more action for more children
- Reduced equipment size and play area to match size of participants
- Modified rules to provide more scoring opportunities for more children, keep scores close, and reduce the dominance of highly skilled players
- Flexible player rosters – to address inequities in player ability if necessary and to allow borrowing of players in case of absenteeism. Total team size can then be kept smaller.

Specific competition rule modifications are attached.

The philosophy of our program is to focus on process – not outcome. We will therefore be rewarding what should be valued most in sport – self-improvement, effort, fair play, co-operation, positive attitudes and behaviour. To accomplish this we will have more practices than competitions. The practices will be fun, active and varied and many children will find them more fun than the competitions versus an opposing team.

Since children this age have not usually fully developed their fundamental motor skills, we will be including numerous fun opportunities to develop a variety of motor skills in our warm-up activities. Some may appear to have little relevance to our sport, but are important to overall development in order to enjoy a lifetime of sport and physical activity.

Players are expected to arrive 30 minutes prior to competition time for a pre-game warm up that will develop fundamental skills, and a competition warm up.

The success of the program will depend on your help and support. We may require your assistance (or substitute) in some of the practice and warm-up activities to get the proper adult to child ratio for a good learning environment. It is not necessary to be knowledgeable about our sport. It will also be beneficial if you encourage your child to practice at home with family or with friends and to participate in other sports to develop a broad base of fundamental sport skills.

The parent booklet you have been provided with will offer additional ideas on how you can be part of the sport team and support your child in having a positive sport experience.

If you have questions, the coaches will be very happy to talk with you.

Here's to a FUN, ACTION-PACKED enjoyable year for your child!



Appendix B

SAMPLE PARENT CONTRACT

SPORT IS FOR CHILDREN'S ENJOYMENT - NOT THE ADULT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

I will:

- Be a good role model for my child. While my child is participating I will demonstrate support for the "Fair Play" principles of sport:
 - Respect for both the letter and spirit of the rules of the game.
 - Respect for officials – by not making derogatory remarks and accepting decisions.
 - Respect for opponents – by keeping all cheering positive.
 - Equal opportunity to participate – by supporting equal-play and rotating positions.
 - Maintain dignity and control at all times, displaying sportsmanship.
- Make every effort to watch at least some of my child's activities, and when I can't attend, I will later ask – "did you have fun?" NOT "did you win?"
- Take advantage of opportunities to learn about the philosophy and characteristics of healthy children's sport programs.
- Provide encouragement and support for the learning process, not just the outcome.
- Become familiar with the sport – philosophy, rules, skills and strategies, so I am a knowledgeable supporter.
- Let the coach do the coaching, remain a spectator, and not yell instructions to my child from the sidelines. I will be available to discuss my child with the coach, but will not interfere during practices or competitions or in the car to and from the activity.
- Respect that sport participation is for my child's benefit, remembering that it is primarily for my child to have fun and learn skills and not to provide my entertainment.
- Encourage my child to practice sport skills and participate in physical activity outside scheduled sport times.
- Accept my child's triumphs. I will not emphasize minor mistakes, noting others performed better or brag about my own accomplishments.
- Accept my child's disappointments by not making excuses or laying blame. I will help her/him see the positive side of the situation or see it as a learning opportunity. I will not be overly protective.
- Let my child, within reasonable limits, make his/her own decisions. I will suggest and guide, but not pressure, intimidate or bribe my child into playing. By allowing my child to make some of his/her decisions I am helping him/her to grow up.
- Provide proper nutrition and teach healthy living habits in order to provide the best opportunity for my child to participate successfully.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

SAMPLE COACH CONTRACT

ACCEPT YOUR OBLIGATION TO ENSURE A SAFE AND
RESPECTFUL SPORT ENVIRONMENT!

I will:

- Be a role model to the participants displaying positive behaviour toward healthy living and sportsmanship, demonstrating support for the principles of “Fair Play”:
 - Respect for the both the letter and spirit of the rules of the game.
 - Respect for officials – by not making derogatory remarks and accepting decisions.
 - Respect for opponents – by keeping all cheering positive.
 - Equal opportunity to participate – by supporting equal-play and rotating positions.
 - Maintain dignity/control at all times – with displays of sportsmanship and self-discipline.
- Treat everyone fairly, providing equal opportunities and support for ALL participants regardless of their abilities.
- Be responsible:
 - Learning the characteristics of healthy children’s sport programs at the level I am coaching.
 - For my actions and the impressions I convey to others.
 - For detailed, well-planned, varied, fun, practice activities that allow for maximum participation and repetitions to enhance learning opportunities.
 - For coaching education that will assist me in being an effective “teacher” in technical and social skills at an age-appropriate level.
 - For communicating (verbally and listening) with participants and parents to enhance positive sport experiences.
- Focus on the value of the “process” over competitive outcomes in children’s sport.
- Help participants learn responsibility by not allowing them to lay blame or make excuses for negative outcomes.
- Ensure a physically and psychologically safe environment for ALL participants.
- Provide positive feedback and encouragement.
- Adjust the activities to ability levels of the individual so all develop feelings of competence and self-esteem from being successful.
- Treat all participants with dignity and respect.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Appendix D

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- **TREAT EVERYONE FAIRLY**, within the context of his or her activity, regardless of gender, ethnic background, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.
- **UPHOLD** the **RULES** and **REGULATIONS** and **POLICIES** of the sport organization you represent.
- Direct comments at the **PERFORMANCE** rather than the person.
- Consistently **DISPLAY HIGH STANDARDS** and project a **FAVOURABLE IMAGE** of your sport and coaching.
- **REFRAIN** from **PUBLIC CRITICISM** of fellow coaches.
- **ABSTAIN** from and **DISCOURAGE** the use of **DRUGS, ALCOHOL** and **TOBACCO** products in conjunction with sport.
- Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise **OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE** while coaching.
- **ENSURE** the **ACTIVITY** being undertaken is **SUITABLE** for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**.
- **CO-OPERATE** with registered medical practitioners in the overall management of your athletes' medical and psychological needs. Consider the athletes' future health and well-being foremost.
- **RECOGNIZE** and **ACCEPT** when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over your own.
- Regularly seek ways of **INCREASING YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** and self-awareness.
- Treat opponents and officials with **RESPECT** both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly.
- Be aware of the academic pressures placed on student athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner so as to allow **ACADEMIC SUCCESS**.

YOU MUST:

- Ensure the **SAFETY** of the athletes with whom you work.
- At **NO TIME** become **INTIMATELY** and/or **SEXUALLY INVOLVED** with your athletes. This includes requests for sexual favours or threat of reprisal for the rejection of such requests.
- **RESPECT** athletes' **DIGNITY**. Verbal or physical behaviours that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable.
- **NEVER ADVOCATE** or **CONDONE** the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
- **NEVER** provide **UNDERAGE** athletes with **DRUGS, ALCOHOL** or **TOBACCO** products.



Coaches Association of Saskatchewan
www.members.home.com/saskcoach
(306) 975-0898

Physical activity among children may be increased by promoting regular physical activity for parents. Children who have physically active parents are more likely to participate in physical activity, than children who do not have physically active parents.

(Freedson, P.S. and Evenson, S. (1991).
"Familial Aggregation in Physical Activity".
Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport.
62 (4):384-389).



Appendix E

FAIR PLAY CODE FOR PARENTS

1. I will **NOT FORCE** my child to participate in sports.
2. I will **REMEMBER** that my child participates for **HIS/HER ENJOYMENT**, not for mine.
3. I will **ENCOURAGE** my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
4. I will **TEACH** my child that doing **ONE'S BEST** is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game/event.
5. I will **MAKE** my child **FEEL LIKE A WINNER** every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
6. I will **NEVER RIDICULE** or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
7. I will **REMEMBER** that children **LEARN BEST BY EXAMPLE**. I will applaud good plays/performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
8. I will **NEVER QUESTION** the officials' judgement or honesty in public.
9. I will **SUPPORT** all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sporting events.
10. I will **RESPECT** and **SHOW APPRECIATION** for the volunteer coaches who give their time to provide sport activities for my child.

From – “fair play – it's your call”
Fair Play Commission of Canada

1-800-672-7775 (toll free in Canada)
website: www.cces.ca

Appendix F

CHILDREN'S SPORT – PLAYERS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be treated fairly. • To express my ideas and to be listened to. • To participate in the game as a unique person and athlete. • To have good coaching. • To be safe. • To be treated with respect. • To have personal equipment safe and unharmed. • To share in making decisions for the team. • To play and not be “cut”. • To be a member of the team. • To have good equipment. • Not to be embarrassed or insulted. • To experience the “Joy of Playing”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To treat others fairly. • To listen to others and consider the worthiness of their ideas. • To do my best. • To co-operate with my coach. • To follow safety rules; and the responsibility not to endanger others. • To treat others with respect; including teammates; opponents; coaches; officials. • To leave other people’s equipment alone unless I have permission. • To act and think in a responsible manner and to allow others to have a share in decision making. • To attend practices/games; perform the best I can and be a constant learner. • To be a reliable, trustworthy member. • To take care of equipment – mine/team. • To not embarrass or insult others. • To make the best of my experience by trying hard and being positive.

Appendix G

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

QUALITY PROGRAMS – PROVIDE QUALITY EXPERIENCES!

Overview

Sport is a “tool” to provide opportunities for children to learn valuable life skills as well as technical skills. Whether this opportunity turns to fruition depends solely on how adults manage the sport programs, which directly affect the experiences of the children. It is beneficial to look critically at children’s sport and identify some areas that could be improved to provide more positive experiences.

Thinking about the children’s sport program you currently deliver **for children 10 and under**, rate on the **1-5 scale** how it meets the standard described.

- **5** – definitely meets standard
- **4** – minor adjustments needed to meet standard
- **3** – partially meets standard
- **2** – requires many changes to meet standard
- **1** – definitely does not meet standard

<p>Children’s movement experiences are intimately connected with their intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, social, physical, and motor development.</p> <p><i>(Fishburne, 1992)</i></p>	SPORT	IT'S MORE THAN A GAME
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TM

CHILDREN'S SPORT PROGRAMS – ADMINISTRATORS/COACHES

Adult Education – Organization Responsibility

Positive sport experiences for children depend on adult leaders accepting the philosophy that the main goal of children's sports should be to foster the overall development of all the children involved. Recognizing that few parents or coaches have received training in or understand child development, adult education becomes a key component in the delivery of quality sport programs for children.

“Parental influences have consistently been linked to children's emotional outcomes in sport.”
(*R. Brustad, 1996*)

- We are aware of resources in age-appropriate programs provided by our sport leaders. 1 2 3 4 5
- Coaches/instructors are trained and certified to work at an age-appropriate level. 1 2 3 4 5
- Coaches/instructors are asked to sign a Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct. 1 2 3 4 5
- Parents are provided an educational orientation session on age-appropriate programs for children and what exemplifies model sport parent behaviour. 1 2 3 4 5
- Parents are given a Parent Code of Ethics (perhaps asked to sign it). 1 2 3 4 5
- Officials are given special training in working with children 10 and under. 1 2 3 4 5
- Administrators are provided educational opportunities to assist them in organizing age-appropriate programs. 1 2 3 4 5
- We provide funding to coaches and/administrators to take advantage of educational opportunities in age-appropriate programming. 1 2 3 4 5

General Program Guidelines for Children 10 and under (apply to all three age categories)

It is the responsibility of sport leaders to provide programs that allow **all** participants to develop their skills, physically, socially, psychologically and technically in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

“At the most basic level, providing children with many experiences involving fundamental motor skills is important. Fundamental skills include locomotor skills such as running, jumping, hopping; manipulation skills, such as throwing, catching, striking and kicking. Experience with these fundamental skills is essential for the later development of more specific sport skills.” (R. Magill, D. Anderson, 1996)

The focus is on the process of learning skills while having fun rather than on providing adult competitive opportunities (ie: games vs another team in team sports). 1 2 3 4 5

Includes an opportunity to learn a broad base of sport skills, either as an inherent component of the sport or part of the warm up activities prior to practice/competition. 1 2 3 4 5

Children are given an opportunity to learn pre-requisite fundamental skills prior to being put into adult competitions similar to adults. 1 2 3 4 5

Activities are modified and adjusted so ALL participants are challenged while being given an opportunity for high success rates. 1 2 3 4 5

Practice and competitive situations are modified to provide an opportunity for ALL participants to get a large number of repetitions (ie. touch the puck, ball; score). 1 2 3 4 5

Encourage participation and success of all children regardless of ability level, religion, gender, ethnic background or socio-economic status. 1 2 3 4 5

Both boys and girls are encouraged to participate, are supported and socialized to be successful. 1 2 3 4 5

Select or “rep” teams are avoided. 1 2 3 4 5

All-star, MVP, awards for most points or emphasizing just winning are avoided. 1 2 3 4 5

Children are encouraged to participate in other sports (specialization discouraged). 1 2 3 4 5

Children are given opportunities and encouraged to participate in a variety of positions or events. 1 2 3 4 5

Individual performances by children under 10 are not given media attention. 1 2 3 4 5

Team sport programs are organized within two year age ranges starting no younger than age five. 1 2 3 4 5

Elimination tournaments or competitions are avoided. 1 2 3 4 5

Competitive seasons are 8-10 weeks in duration. 1 2 3 4 5

Off-season training in specific sport skills is avoided. 1 2 3 4 5

Sport programs that minimize competition, de-emphasize winning, and emphasize motor skill development are the most appropriate for children under 12 years of age.

(Nelson, M.A. 1992)

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Beginner Programs

(ages 5-6)

“No child should be expected to successfully compete in a sport without first achieving a certain level of competence in the components of that sport.” (*R. Magill, D. Anderson, 1996*)

“For children under 8, the emphasis in organized programs should be exclusively on individual skill development. Competition is generally irrelevant to the experiences of participants this age.” (*Jay Coakley – When Should Children Begin Competing? A Sociological Perspective*)

Practice, competitive situations are provided in lead-up type games not organized for league competitions or tournaments. Emphasis is on action and opportunity for repetitions through “play” in small groups activities. 1 2 3 4 5

Children are given many creative and imaginative play opportunities. 1 2 3 4 5

Activities include a broad range of motor skills. 1 2 3 4 5

Activities are limited to one hour no more than twice per week. 1 2 3 4 5

Co-ed participation. 1 2 3 4 5

Adult to child ratio is small to provide opportunity for quality repetitions. 1 2 3 4 5

Uniforms are minimal. 1 2 3 4 5

No travel outside community is required. 1 2 3 4 5

Equipment is modified to match ability level of participants:

- Smaller to match size of participants 1 2 3 4 5

- Softer to encourage proper use of skills and for safety 1 2 3 4 5

- Size of play area is reduced 1 2 3 4 5

Programs are 8-10 weeks long. 1 2 3 4 5

Novice Programs

(ages 7-8)

“The child who is maturationally ready to learn a skill but has not acquired the pre-requisite skills for that skill will have difficulty learning.” (*R. Magill, D. Anderson, 1996*)

“Success or failure in sport can be viewed as dependent upon the balance between the child’s ability and the task demands of a sport.” (*R. Molina, 1996*)

Adult type competitions are modified in the following ways to emphasize action and opportunity for skill development for ALL participants:

Overall team size is reduced.	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment is modified to match size of participants.	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment is softer to encourage proper use of skills.	1	2	3	4	5
Size of play area is reduced.	1	2	3	4	5
Scoring opportunities are maximized for ALL participants.	1	2	3	4	5
Flexible rules to increase possibility of close scores.	1	2	3	4	5
Action for ALL participants is maximized (ie: small groups - total scores).	1	2	3	4	5
Nobody sits on the bench in team sports (more of a scrimmage-like atmosphere).	1	2	3	4	5
Flexible rules to discourage dominance by highly skilled children.	1	2	3	4	5
No tiering in team sports.	1	2	3	4	5
No specialization within the sport. Players rotate positions in team sports.	1	2	3	4	5
“Practice” time is incorporated into the scheduled sport time. (Perhaps as combination of lead-up game activities and competition against an opponent, or competition modified to the point where it becomes an effective practice activity.)	1	2	3	4	5
Practice time incorporates repetitions in a “play/lead-up” game atmosphere rather than on drill work.	1	2	3	4	5
Travel is kept within city, or in the case of rural areas, within a few nearby towns.	1	2	3	4	5
Practice/competition times are limited to 1¼ hours no more than three times per week.	1	2	3	4	5



Rookie (ages 9-10)

“Play is the most important business of childhood, especially in the so-called Age of Social Comparison from 6-12. The proper need for fun has not changed for this age group and must be recognized as the most important goal of all the highly structured and adult-dominated youth sports programs. (*Nathan Smith, 1986*)

“For children between the ages of 8-12, an emphasis on individual skill development should be **gradually** balanced with an emphasis on rules, structured relationships, and both offensive and defensive strategies. However, until children reach 12 years, it is unrealistic to have competitive reward structures and competitive relationships as the primary focus of a program.” (*J. Coakley, 1988*)

Modifications to encourage close scores and action for ALL participants.	1	2	3	4	5
No out-of-province travel.	1	2	3	4	5
No Provincial or National Championships in team sports.	1	2	3	4	5
No National Championship in individual sports.	1	2	3	4	5
Uniforms kept to a minimum (no warm up suits, jackets, bags, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
Practice to competition ratio is a minimum of 3:1.	1	2	3	4	5
Practice times are maximum 1½ hours no more than three times per week.	1	2	3	4	5
Equal playing time rules in team sports.	1	2	3	4	5
Limited ability grouping.	1	2	3	4	5
Starting line-ups, captains, positions rotated.	1	2	3	4	5
Team sport tournaments are in the round-robin format.	1	2	3	4	5

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR PROVINCIAL SPORT GOVERNING BODIES

In addition to assessing the standards listed under the community programs, please assess how you have taken a leadership role in providing quality programming for children 10 and under.

Quality programming at the community level is dependent on good resources and leadership.

We provide the following resource materials to enable community groups to deliver quality programs:

User-friendly lesson plans for 8-10 week programs to assist entry level coaches. 1 2 3 4 5

Lesson plans include some general motor skill development activities in addition to specific sport skills. 1 2 3 4 5

Established guidelines for modifications to competitions in each of the three age categories to ensure they are developmentally appropriate. 1 2 3 4 5

Code of Ethics or Conduct for Coaches/Instructors. 1 2 3 4 5

Code of Ethics or Conduct for Parents. 1 2 3 4 5

Educational resources for parents on characteristics of quality programs for children. 1 2 3 4 5

We have taken a pro-active approach and have a strategic plan to improve the quality of programs delivered at the community level. 1 2 3 4 5

Adults working with children 10 and under require specialized training.

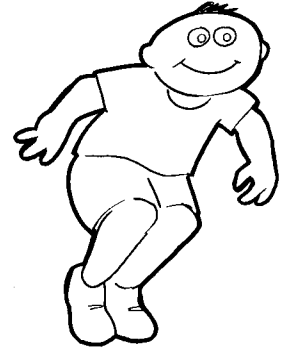
We provide special (play leadership) coach/instructor training courses for adults working with children 10 and under. 1 2 3 4 5

We provide special training for officials in competitions in these age categories to ensure they understand age-appropriate officiating. 1 2 3 4 5

We provide educational opportunities for administrators to educate and assist them in designing or delivering age-appropriate programs. 1 2 3 4 5

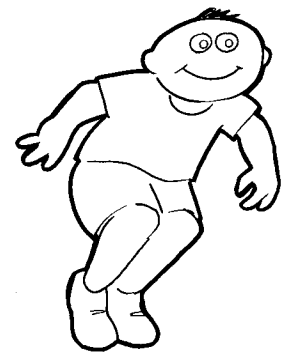


NOTES





NOTES



Keep Sport

HEALTHY, SAFE & FUN!

As a general rule, harassment can be considered a comment, conduct, or gesture directed toward an individual or group which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive.

If you're a PARENT OR GUARDIAN, you can help prevent harassment.



✓ **Inquire whether the coach is certified** and a member of a Provincial Sport Governing Body with a code of ethics and harassment policy.

✓ **Ensure that a pre-season meeting is held** with parents, athletes, coaches and board members to discuss acceptable boundaries of behaviour for everyone involved.

✓ **Maintain open and honest communication with your child** to discuss acceptable boundaries of behaviour and with the coach to ensure that any concerns are addressed.

✓ **Try to attend practices and games whenever possible;** if private practices are held, ask for an explanation; be aware of extra time that the coach may be spending alone with your child.

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