



# Parent's Role in Creating a Positive Sports Environment

Basketball New Brunswick




# Parent's Roles in Youth Sports

Understand the  
impact that parents  
can have in youth  
sports



Being a Good Role  
Model for Athletes

# Athlete's Motivations

- Reasons young athletes get involved in sports:
  - To have fun
  - To hang out with and meet new friends
  - To do something they are good at
  - To improve and learn new skills

# Parent's Motivations

Are not always in line with the athletes



Can include:

- An emphasis on winning
- Promoting specialization at a young age
- Comparing athletes

# Long Term Athlete Development



- Identifies stages of training and competition based on the age of the athletes participating.

# Active Start – Girls and Boys 0-6

## 1. Active Start

From ages 0-6 years, children need to be introduced to relatively unstructured play that incorporates a variety of body movements. An early active start enhances development of brain function, coordination, social skills, gross motor skills, emotions, leadership, and imagination. It also helps children build confidence, develop posture and balance, build strong bones and muscles, promote healthy weight, reduce stress, improve sleep, learn to move skillfully, and learn to enjoy being active.

# Active Start – Girls and Boys 0-6

## 1. Active Start - girls and boys 0-6

- Provide organized physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day for toddlers and at least 60 minutes a day for preschoolers.
- Provide unstructured physical activity – active play – for at least 60 minutes a day, and up to several hours per day for toddlers and preschoolers. Your toddler or preschooler should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at one time except while sleeping.
- Provide physical activity everyday regardless of the weather.
- Promote key values: fun, inclusion.

# Fundamentals

## Girls 6-8

## Boys 6 - 9

### 2. FUNdamentals

From ages 6-9 in boys and 6-8 in girls, children need to participate in a variety of well-structured activities that develop basic skills. However, activities and programs need to maintain a focus on fun, and formal competition should only be minimally introduced.



# Fundamentals

## – Girls 6-8, Boys 6-9

### 2. **FUNDamentals** - girls 6-8, boys 6-9

- Consider enrolling your child in a variety of seasonal sports activities.
- Be sensitive to your child's preferences for activities. For example, don't insist they play basketball if they show an interest in gymnastics or dance.
- Ask coaches and activity leaders about their training program and if they follow LTAD principles.
- Find out if the physical education program at your child's school is supporting LTAD principles and the teaching of FUNDamental skills. (See page 11 for more information or visit [www.cahperd.ca](http://www.cahperd.ca))
- Check if your child's activities address the ABC's of athleticism: agility, balance, coordination, and speed.
- Your child should be active in several physical activities or sports each year.
- Continue to encourage your child in unstructured play outside of formal activities.
- Turn off the TV, computer, and video games!
- Promote key values: fun, inclusion, fairness.

# Learning to Train

## Girls 8-11

## Boys 9 -12

### 3. Learning to Train

From ages 8-11 in girls and 9-12 in boys, to the onset of the growth spurt (usually around the ages of 11-12), children are ready to begin training according to more formalized methods, but the emphasis should still be on general sports skills suitable to a number of activities. While it is often tempting to over-develop "talent" at this age through excessive single sport training and competition (as well as early positioning in team sports), this can be very detrimental to later stages of development if the child is playing a late specialization sport: it promotes one-sided physical, technical, and tactical development and increases the likelihood of injury and burnout.

# Learning to Train

## Girls 8-11 Boys 9-12

### 3. Learning to Train - girls 8-11, boys 9-12

- Identify sports and activities where your child has fun and experiences success: narrow the focus to 3 sports or activities through the year.
- If your child has taken a special interest in a late specialization sport such as soccer or baseball, monitor the activity and training program to make sure your child is not over-training, over-competing, or specializing too early. Talk to the coach or teacher if you have concerns.
- Training should occupy about 70% of the time your child participates in a given activity or sport. Formal competition (e.g. league games) should occupy about 30% of the time.
- Find out if your child's training and development is being supported by quality physical education programs at school.
- Check whether the coach is trained or certified ([www.coach.ca](http://www.coach.ca)).
- Continue to encourage your child in unstructured play outside of formal activities.
- Promote key values: fun, inclusion, fairness.

# Training to Train

Girls 11-15  
Boys 12 - 16

## 4. Training to Train

The ages that define this stage for boys and girls are based on the onset and end of the growth spurt, which are generally ages 11 to 15 for girls and 12 to 16 for boys. At this stage, they are ready to consolidate their basic sport-specific skills and tactics. These youths may play to win and do their best, but they still need to focus more time on skill training and physical development over competition. This approach is critical to the development of top performers and maintaining activity in the long-term, so parents should check with their national organization to ensure their child's program has the correct training-to-competition ratio.

# Training to Train

## Girls 11-15

## Boys 12 - 16

### 4. Training to Train - girls 11-15, boys 12-16

- In late specialization sports, it is acceptable for coaches or teachers to begin identifying and encouraging "talent" at the Training to Train stage, but caution should still be shown against premature specialization. Children mature at different rates, so your child may still have undiscovered capacities in other sports. As well, parents should be cautious that their children are not pushed to over-train or over-compete as injury and burnout can result.
- WARNING: This is the stage when many young athletes quit their sport or activity due to burnout or excessive pressure from coaches and parents.
- Team sport coaches should individualize training based on maturation.
- Promote key values: fun, fairness, respect.

# Train to Compete Girls 15 -21+ Males 16-23+

## 5. Training to Compete

Depending on the sport, for females ages 15-21+/- and males ages 16-23+/-, this is where things get "serious." They can either choose to specialize in one sport and pursue a competitive stream, or they can continue participating at a recreational level and thereby enter the Active for Life stage (see 7 below). In the competitive stream, high volume and high intensity training begins to occur year-round.

# Train to Compete Females 15 - 21+ Males 16-23+

## 5. Training to Compete - females 15-21+/-, males 16-23+/-

- At this stage, your child needs the most skilled and qualified coaches to ensure their physical, mental, and emotional needs are correctly addressed within their activity.
- The role of the parent is to seek the best training situation for their child, and to support the training guidelines as prescribed by coaches and teachers who are aligned to LTAD principles.
- Your child's certified coach should be supported by a Performance Enhancement Team.
- Promote key values: fun, fairness, excellence, respect.

# Train to Win

## Females 18+

## Males 19+

### 6. Training to Win

At ages 19+ in males and 18+ in females, elite athletes with identified talent enter a stage where they may pursue the most intense training suitable for international winning performances. At this stage, both world-class athletes with a disability and able-bodied athletes require world-class training methods, equipment, and facilities that meet the demands of the sport and the athlete.



# Train to Win

## Females 18+

## Males 19+

### 6. Training to Win - females 18+, males 19+

- Celebrate that your child has become an international champion.
- Encourage your child to give back to other kids and act as a positive role model.
- Recognize that other parents will now “look up” to you; therefore, help them by directing them to become aware and informed.
- Promote key values: fun, fairness, excellence, respect.

# Active for Life Any Age

## 7. Active For Life

Young athletes can enter this stage at essentially any age. According to LTAD, if children have been correctly introduced to activity and sport through Active Start, FUNDamentals and Learning to Train programs, they will have the necessary motor skills and confidence (physical literacy) to remain Active for Life in virtually any sport they like. They may decide to continue playing their sport at the recreational level, or they may become involved in the sport as a game official or coach. They might also try new sports and activities: examples could be a hockey player taking up golf or a tennis player starting to cycle.

# Active for Life Any Age

## 7. Active for Life - any age

- You might encourage your child to enter this stage at any age, especially if you sense an aversion to competition.
- To help your child make the transition to non-competitive involvement in physical activity, you should provide a positive example by practicing your own activity.
- You should also explore and expose your child to new activities.
- The active parent is the best role model!
- Promote key values: fun, fairness, staying healthy, giving back.

# Interacting With Officials

Officials are Necessary  
for games to be played



Recruitment and  
retention of officials is  
difficult due to the  
behaviour of players,  
coaches, family members  
and fans

# Promoting a Positive Experience for Officials

1

Set a good example



Address  
inappropriate  
comments or  
behaviour

3

Thank an official for  
being there

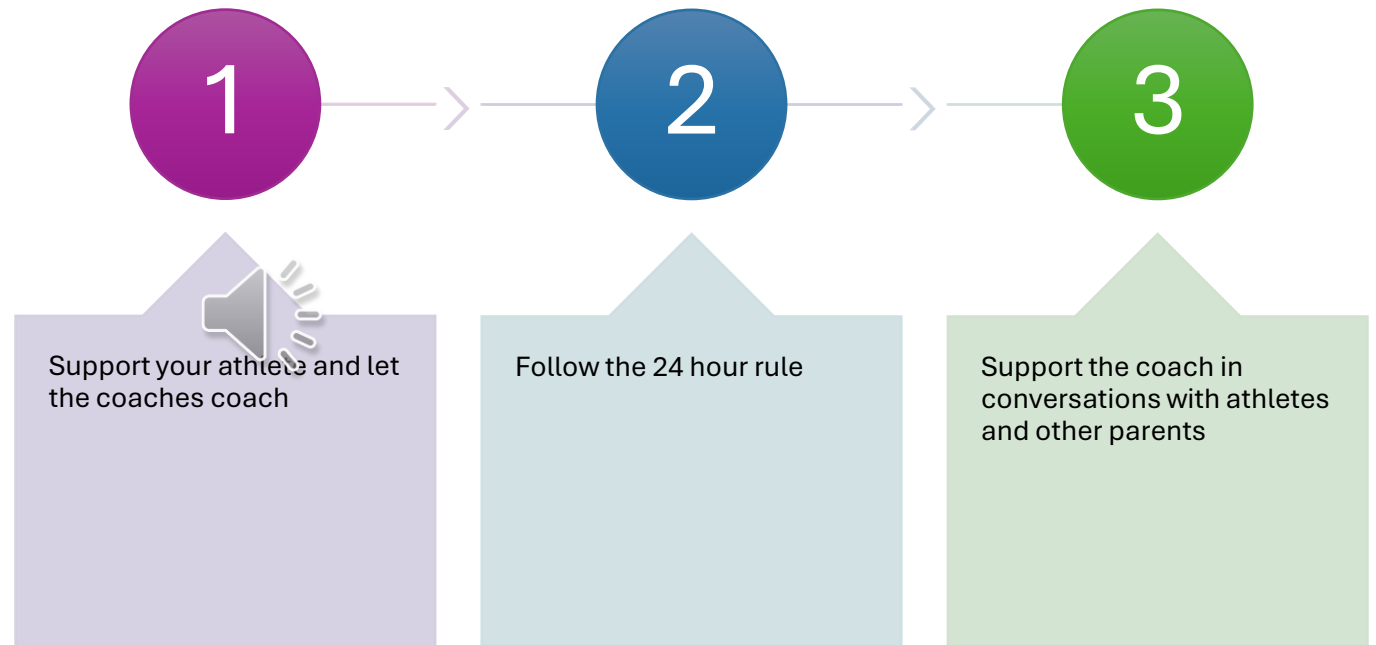
## Interacting with Coaches

Remember, coaches are volunteers who are giving up their time to work with your young athlete.



Coach/parent interactions can play a large role in shaping the experience of volunteer coaches

# Creating a Positive Experience for Coaches



# References

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