



TRUE SPORT  
lives here

# Player Selection Process for Team Sports

A values-based and principle-driven guide to player selection

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# Introduction

The *<insert Club name>*'s mission is to "*<insert Club mission statement>*" OR *<provide a competitive <insert sport> experience that inspires excellence, promotes good health, develops character and builds strong relationships that strengthen our community. We recognize a broad range of abilities and commitment among our athletes. We strive to provide age-appropriate instruction and competition within the constraints of time and additional resources.>*

The *<insert Club name>* does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin or religious affiliations. We seek to place athletes, with similar desires and objectively assessed abilities, together to maximize their enjoyment and development.

In the right environment, sport comes closer than almost any other cultural activity in delivering equal opportunity for all. This environment – one that is fair, safe and open to everyone – creates a sport experience that will teach the right lessons and will celebrate physical and ethical achievements. This is what we know as good sport. It is with this intent that we are committed to a fun and fair environment that develops self-confidence and leadership skills. This commitment begins with our Coach Selection Process and continues with our Player Selection Process.

Our sport and its coaches teach skills and strategy, and also contribute to building character in youth. Although competition and the desire to win is an important element of any sport, when good sport is sacrificed for winning at all costs, the sport, the athletes, the coaches and the community lose something special. The future of our sport lies with great coaches and, as such, we are committed to recruiting, developing and mentoring the best coaches available and to ensuring they deliver programming that is fair, safe and open to everyone.

To achieve these goals, the *<insert Club name>* is committed to creating an atmosphere where the True Sport Principles work in balance with one another at all times. The objectives of the *<insert Club name>* are:

- To develop *<insert sport>* skills and teach athletes how to compete to the best of their abilities (**Go For It**);
- To develop sportsmanship, fair play, pride and achievement through involvement in *<insert sport>* (**Play Fair**);
- To teach athletes, coaches and parents the importance of respecting all those who come to play including respect for teammates, coaches, opponents, referees and officials (**Respect Others**);
- To provide a competitive sport experience that is enjoyable and rewarding for the athletes (**Keep It Fun**);
- To ensure that the athletes are developed in a way that promotes and protects their safety and wellbeing (**Stay Healthy**);
- To create opportunities for everyone to play regardless of ability, gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin or religious affiliations (**Include Everyone**);
- To foster an understanding among our athletes that their community supports their *<insert sport>* dreams and the importance therefore of behaving as positive role models and in ways that contribute to improving the quality of life in their community (**Give Back**).

The *<insert Club name>* is committed to the True Sport Principles. By promoting sport at its best—good sport—we seize the opportunity to instill character in our kids, strengthen our communities and increase our opportunities for excellence.

We welcome you to join us on this journey!

*<insert Club name and logo>* Technical Committee

# Glossary of Terms

**Board of Directors (BOD):** A transparent and unbiased body of elected or appointed members who jointly oversee the activities of a sport organization. The duties of the BOD are set by the organization's bylaws. These members understand their legal and fiduciary responsibilities, exercise due diligence that is consistent with their duty of care, are familiar with the club's activities and are fully informed of the financial status of the club.

**Technical Director Selection Committee (TDSC):** A committee representing the BOD who recommends Technical Director (TD) candidates to be interviewed by the BOD in a consistent, fair, transparent way using a standardized approach that is free of conflict of interest and executive interference.

**Technical Director (TD):** A paid, full-time or part-time position responsible for managing the sport's operations, including but not limited to coach selection, athlete/player evaluation and athlete/player development. This position is also referred to as Head Coach (HC) or Director of Coaching (DOC).

**Coach Selection Committee (CSC):** A four to six-member committee established to select coaches in a consistent, fair, transparent way using a standardized approach that is free of conflicts of interest and executive interference. This committee develops, reviews and implements an annual application and nomination process and is responsible for evaluating and assessing coach performance.

**Athlete/Player Selection Committee (A/PSC):** A four to six-member committee established to select athletes/players for teams at all levels of play in a consistent, fair, transparent way using a standardized approach that is free of conflict of interest and executive interference by coordinating coaches and a pool of independent evaluators for the evaluation period.

**Independent Pool of Evaluators (IPE):** A group of coaches selected from the current pool of club coaches to conduct independent evaluations of athletes within a specific age group using the same criteria as the club coaches. The IPE is determined by the Director of <insert sport> Operations (or equivalent position on the BOD) and/or the TD.

**Director of <insert sport> Operations:** A member of the BOD appointed to oversee technical programs and the implementation of **Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)**. The Director of <insert sport> Operations serves as the Chair of the Technical Committee (if applicable) and is the liaison between the TD and the BOD.

**\*Assessments and Evaluations:** A consistent, fair and transparent process that identifies the level of play that is most suited to players **at this moment in time** in order to place them on an appropriate team that is best suited to their abilities, level of commitment and social needs. Assessment periods are generally used in the **Learn to Train** stage and evaluations are more prevalent in the **Train to Train** stages and older.

\*The term **tryout** is not used for two reasons:

1. It infers that the goal is to try and make a particular team rather than the ultimate goal of keeping kids in sport by challenging them appropriately and finding a level of play that suits their abilities, their commitment level and their social needs. Players who play on teams that exceed their technical abilities, speed and desired level of commitment are much more likely to have a negative experience and leave sport. While kids may be upset in the short term if they have not made a 'higher level' team, it is generally a safer bet that in the long run it will facilitate their continued love of, and participation in sport.

2. The term tryout also infers that team selection is based solely on how well players do in evaluated, on-field sessions. This methodology is becoming obsolete. Some players may over-perform in this kind of an environment while others get 'stage fright' and under-perform. Too often, this process does not provide an accurate picture of a player's overall capabilities. As such, 'tryouts' can result in unbalanced and skewed team formations.

An **assessment** is more focused on measuring a performance or skill in order to offer feedback to document strengths and growth and to provide directives for improving future performance. It provides information for improving learning and teaching. Assessments are nonjudgmental and are designed and intended to be helpful to produce improvement. This information is learner centered, curriculum based, frequently anonymous and not graded.

An **evaluation** is more focused on making a judgment or determination concerning the quality of a performance or use of skills against a set of standards. Evaluations are designed for and intended to document the level of achievement that has been attained by judging it and of determining its "value," either by comparison to similar things, or to a standard. It focuses on marks/grades and may reflect skill components plus game scenarios.

Here are some criteria to consider for effective assessments and evaluations:

- Effective assessment is a continuous, on-going process; a way of gauging learning over time.
- Effective assessment and evaluation are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum, providing coaches, athletes and parents with relevant, useful data to gauge progress and determine the effectiveness of the program.
- A variety of evaluative tools are necessary to provide the most accurate assessment of athletes' learning and progress.
- Evaluation must be a collaborative activity between coaches and athletes. Athletes must be able to assume an active role in evaluation so they can begin to develop individual responsibilities for development and self-monitoring.
- Evaluation needs to be authentic. It must be based on the natural activities of *<insert sport>* and the skills those athletes demonstrate in their game.
- The growth and maturity characteristics of young athletes may influence the processes of exclusion and inclusion, that is, some athletes will be excluded from participation and others will be included on the basis of their growth and maturity status.

Programming should be directed at providing the best possible training throughout childhood and adolescence to all individuals interested in participating in *<insert sport>* and to encourage them to continue to play irrespective of how successful they might be during their childhood years. This approach should lead to a broader base of individuals participating in *<insert sport>* through adolescence into adulthood, thus reaping the health-related benefits of their sport. It should also provide a larger pool of individuals and therefore may include a greater number who could potentially excel in the sport.

## An Approach to Player Selection

The ultimate goal of this player selection process is to provide players with the best possible experience in an environment where they can grow as athletes and people. This process helps to identify the level of play that is most suited to players at this moment in time.

It is important to recognize that the *<insert Club name>*'s goal is to keep players in the game and to ensure they have a good sport experience. The best way to do so is to find a level of play that suits their abilities, desired level of commitment and social needs.

Children develop physically, emotionally and mentally at different rates and this needs to be taken into consideration when placing them on a team. Players who play on teams that exceed their technical abilities, speed and desired level of commitment are more likely to have a negative experience and leave the sport. While players (and parents) may be upset in the short term if they are not placed on a team at their desired level, in the long run, it will facilitate their continued love of, and participation in, the sport if they play with others of a similar ability.

The *<insert Club name's>* Approach to Player Selection is designed to promote excellence and to inspire and develop all athletes in a way that is consistent with the *<insert Club name>* objectives. Furthermore, we are committed to developing a *<insert sport>* club for the entire community that supports and develops all players fairly.

## Evaluation Process – An Overview

The *<insert Club name>* evaluates athletes in two phases to ensure they are placed on a team or in a program that is suited to both their abilities and level of commitment.

**Phase one:** Athletes are evaluated at the end of season when they are at their peak, allowing evaluators and coaches to get a general sense of where athletes may be placed for the following season. In some cases, there may be evidence that supports confirming the placement of an athlete after the end of season evaluation period.

**Phase two:** Athletes are assessed for whichever level they wish within a *<7-14>* day window to demonstrate their physical and technical abilities.

*<Insert club name>* is responsible for developing and approving club guidelines in relation to evaluation criteria/athlete development and their implementation. This ensures that athletes are assessed based on age-appropriate club curriculum developed in accordance with *<insert National Sport Organization>* Guidelines (p. 12), the Four Corners Development Model (pg. 14) and Long-Term Athlete Development (pg. 15). The criteria will include assessing an athlete's competency in the following areas:

**Technical-Tactical | Social-Emotional | Physical | Psychological-Mental**

The weighting of each criterion shall be determined by the Athlete/Player Selection Committee (A/PSC).

This process requires all coaches from every level, and their assistants, to work together throughout the evaluation period:

- Evaluations by **all coaches** count throughout the assessment period;
- All coaches are required to participate in every evaluation session for their respective age group;
- A coach will be identified by the A/PSC to lead the evaluation sessions under guidelines provided by the A/PSC.

## Evaluation Process

### Pre-Evaluation Period

**1. Age Group Meeting:** Current coaches for the age group, the Director of *<insert sport>* Operations and/or TD, and independent pool of evaluators (if possible) meet to:

- Discuss potential challenges and solutions to team formation and player selection within the age group;
- Review coach viability for the following season;
- Review team viability/appointments and levels of competition for the following season;
- Discuss and agree upon parameters for the evaluation process:
  - A schedule, including pre-evaluation meetings, evaluation sessions, ranking meeting(s), communication timelines, review day, etc.;
  - Identify coaches who will lead evaluation sessions, participate in review day, lead communications, and represent coaches/evaluators in the appeal process;
  - Discuss and agree upon age-appropriate evaluation curriculum; and
  - Review evaluation criteria and proposed weighting.

**2. Evaluation Information Meetings:** To be led by the TD or Director of *<insert sport>* Operations. Parents and coaches are invited to learn more about the evaluation process, schedule, and criteria providing an opportunity outside of the evaluation period to address questions and concerns. \*

*\* It is recommended that evaluators be given an area designated as an inquiry-free zone during evaluations to focus on player assessments. A staff or volunteer should be available on-site to address questions and concerns about the process – not decisions and outcomes. The Review/Appeal process is in place to address questions and concerns related to decisions and outcomes.*

## Evaluation Periods

### Phase 1 – End-of-Season Player Evaluations

#### Rationale:

- Players are at their peak
- Coincides with the re-appointment of coaches
  - Exposes and introduces players to new coaches
  - Allows for year-round programming
- Reduces the volume of pre-season evaluations
  - Fewer players to evaluate
  - Allows more time for player feedback
  - Establishes standards for players to aspire to

#### Format:

- Three games, mixed pool of players, evaluation fee of *<insert amount>*
- Primarily determines the players at the highest level in each age group
- Up to a maximum percentage of players selected
  - To be determined by each sport based on roster sizes, age and stage of development
  - Each age group will have different needs
  - Needs to be determined by the A/PSC and subsequently recommended to the Board of Directors
  - Children of coaches and executives shall be independently assessed by the A/PSC

### Phase 2 - Pre-Season Player Evaluations

#### Process:

- Allow players to be evaluated for the level of their choice
- Evaluation period – seven to 10 days, beginning as early as possible and avoiding major holiday weekends, when possible
- Stagger evaluations within club
  - Largest age group first (in quantity),
  - Youngest first
- Process is pre-approved by Technical Director and Director of *<insert sport>* Operations
- Process is monitored by the A/PSC
- Coaches identified by the A/PSC lead individual sessions, based on club guidelines



- Coaches of each age group are responsible for managing player rankings
  - Three independent evaluators for each age group, assigned by the PSC
  - Three head coaches at each age group, or a coach representing each team
  - “Ranking Meeting” with all evaluators and coaches before team selections occurs
    - After first selection period (3-4 sessions), all evaluators meet together to discuss the players and provide constructive feedback
    - Coaches do not evaluate their own children but listen to the marks of all assessors

**Format (for a three-tier age level):**

**Day 1 to 5:** Four sessions plus one day, to complete evaluator’s group review

- Goal is to establish top <36-45> players for the pool representing the two highest tiers of play
- Tier 3 (lowest level) players not required, but could be invited to fill out the roster if needed (Appendix 1 provides notification template)

**Day 6 to 11:** Four sessions, plus two days, to complete evaluator’s group review

- To divide top <17> players for tier 1 and the next <17> players for tier 2

**Day 12:** Release process begins

- Standard Club Letter of Acceptance/Status (Appendix 1) is sent to players to identify status
- Include an option for meeting request with coaches regarding player feedback (meeting requests to be fulfilled 24 hours after the letter has been received by the player)
- Send the Player Evaluation Form (Appendix 2) to the player at their request

**Day 13:** Rest day

**Day 14:** Review day with coaches and players/parents

- Standard club evaluation form is reviewed with players and parents that covers the criteria being assessed
- Highlights the positives and makes recommendations for areas of improvement
- A central location should be booked to accommodate the club’s need for privacy
- Allow for a 24-hour appeal process to the player selection committee

**Day 15:** Tier 3 tryouts; three more sessions

**Day 15:** Appeal Day

- A central location should be booked to accommodate the club’s need for privacy
- A fee of <insert amount> to cover time and expenses to be applied
- All key figures are expected to be available (coaches, A/PSC, directors)
- If appeals occur outside of this timeframe, an additional fee can be applied

## Evaluation Criteria

An age-appropriate evaluation curriculum of drills, activities and games will be established for each age group based on guidelines established by the A/PSC. Players will be ranked according to their performance in four key areas outlined in the Four Corner Development Model (p. 15).

Players will be evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest possible ranking.

### Technical - Tactical and Physical Criteria:

5 – Absolutely superior relative to others in terms of *<insert sport specific skills>*. Physically dominant in terms of speed, strength and work rate. Shows great understanding of basic tactical elements of the game. Can make early decisions that are appropriate for the circumstance and quickly employ the correct skill in an effective, constructive manner. A score 5 is reserved for the top one or two players.

4 – Technically excellent and physically capable of handling expected speed and work rate, relative to others. Easily good enough for the team they are being evaluated for. Skills are sufficient to ensure they will consistently control the *<ball, puck, ring, etc.>* and make passes that will help the team maintain possession, create or deny scoring chances. Strength and speed are commensurate with this level of play and the player is open to feedback and committed to becoming a better player.

3 – Strong basic skills but perhaps deficient in one or two areas, relative to others. Can control the *<ball, puck, ring, etc.>*, make an early decision and act on it consistently. Mobile and aware of what is happening around them. Will likely be a bubble player with players having a 3.0 average being more likely to be placed on tier 2 teams rather than tier 1.

2 – Does not have the skillset necessary for this level, relative to others. Cannot control most passes directed to them or consistently control the *<ball, puck, ring, etc.>* in movement. Does not pass or shoot properly. Consistently relinquishes possession of the *<ball, puck, ring, etc.>* and has little ability to regain possession. Lacks pace, strength and has limited work rate. Tends to only become active in proximity to the *<ball, puck, ring, etc.>*.

1 – Should be directed to tier 3 level of play.

### Character Criteria (Social - Emotional and Psychological - Mental):

5 – Possesses superior leadership skills and is respectful to his/her surrounding peers and environment. Goes out of his/her way to include everyone and makes it a priority to form connections with others. Shows great mental toughness and is not affected by distractions. Team captains usually receive a score of 5 in their character assessments.

4 – Demonstrates strong communication skills and is very coachable. Consistently respectful and willing to learn. Committed to building relationships with others.

3 – Liked by teammates, but does not possess the skills to be a leader. Shows signs of mental toughness, but has no desire to improve and work on the mental aspects of the game.

2 – Has limited interaction with teammates and is not coachable. Lacks responsibility and has a negative behaviour most of the time. There may be other factors affecting a score of 2 and they should be addressed with a conversation between the coach and player.

1 – Does not possess the character that is fit for a team environment. There may be other factors affecting a score of 1 and they should be addressed with a conversation between the coach and player.

# Player Selection Process

Because good sport can make a great difference, the *<insert Club name>* is committed to creating a sport experience that is fair, safe and open; one that brings out the best in everyone involved in the game, that helps athletes discover their potential and compels them to be the best they can be, both physically and ethically. In doing so, we not only strengthen the character of our athletes, and increase opportunities for excellence, but also strengthen our community as a whole.

By creating an appropriate development path for our players, avoiding a win-at-all-cost mentality and embracing and balancing the True Sport Principles, the *<insert Club name>* will make a great difference by providing a good sport experience for all.

The following research and initiatives have contributed to the development of the *<insert Club name>*'s Player Selection Process:

- *<insert National Sport Organization>*'s Player Development Guide
- Winning versus Development Objectives (Horst Wein)
- Four Corner Development Model (OSA)
- Impact of Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)
- True Sport Principles

## <insert National Sporting Organization> Player Development Guide

*<insert relevant National Sport Organization player evaluation and selection information – see example below from Hockey Canada’s Minor Hockey Development Guide – Player Evaluation and Selection>*

- Player evaluation can be one of the most difficult tasks for a Minor Hockey Association to deal with. It can also be the foundation for which an association is built upon. The ultimate goal of this process is to **provide players with the best possible experience in an environment where they can grow as hockey players and young people.**
- The level of success that an association enjoys from the player evaluation process will not result primarily from the use of this document. Associations must ensure that they are **managing the local situation to make the process as transparent** as possible. Evaluator objectivity, clear and concise lines of communication, effectively run ice sessions, definitive roles and a succinct reflection and feedback mechanism will all play a vital role in developing and building an effective player evaluation process.
- Player evaluation and placement, like player development, is a process - **effective management of the process** will make a young players experience in hockey a more positive one.
- Having a solid player evaluation process in place can help make the process much easier. Not only will it give the association **a reference point in dealing with parents**, it will also give you and your coaches a starting point to **determine where your players are at skill wise**, thus beginning the process of utilizing the various Hockey Canada programs to educate parents, and coaches, on the importance of developing skills.
- The process needs to be considered: **fair, consistent, with a standardized approach**, with a **developmental focus** and **effective parent communication**
- **A well-defined process includes:** selection policy, selection camp meeting, selection criteria, timeline for selection, selection interviews, players’ rights
- Through clear and concise communication, well-planned ice sessions, and evaluator objectivity, every player will receive a **fair and meaningful evaluation**
- Another key point is to **post the criteria** of what the evaluators are looking for so that parents can see what the players are being judged on. These criteria must be clearly defined, objectively assessed and justifiable
- What should you evaluate? **Individual skills, team skills, mental qualities, physical qualities, emotional characteristics**
- Releasing players: individual meetings, invite questions, redirect players, leave on a positive note, **avoid public announcements**
- Provide a fair, consistent and comprehensive evaluation that will result in **players participating at a level that is based upon their skill level** when comparing them to athletes of the same age and category.

## Winning vs. Development Objectives

Good sport should never be sacrificed for winning at all costs. The following are guidelines aimed at making player development a priority. (Horst Wein, University Lecturer and coach from Germany)

<b>Winning At All Costs</b>	<b>Player Development</b>
If the more physically advanced players can guarantee a win, their behaviour and practice attendance are seen as less important than their performance.	Everyone is held to the same standard and given equal opportunity. Effort and behaviour on and off the field of play are key selection factors.
Underdeveloped, younger and less skilled players are forgotten.	Everyone has the right to play, regardless of physique and ability.
The focus on tactics is overemphasized.	Players can gain tactical experience in games.
Players must obey the coach's orders because winning is the only thing that matters.	A participatory environment is encouraged. The focus is less about winning, and more about improving performance.
Winning only happens when players are taught to be dishonest, create traps and deceive opponents and referees.	Win or lose, players are taught the values of sportsmanship, honesty and respect for rules.
Players do as the coach's game plan says, without any room for improvisation.	Improvisation, creativity and imagination from the players is encouraged by the coach.
Players specialize in their roles prematurely.	Coaches give the players the opportunity to experience different positions.
Some players aren't provided with opportunities to play.	Everyone plays, regardless of ability.
Physical skill is overemphasized because these factors get results most quickly.	Players gain coordination and the ability to play under different conditions when they are exposed to various competitions each season.
Younger players are prematurely exposed to competition that is not age-appropriate.	Younger players are exposed to age-appropriate competition (i.e. 3 vs. 3 for 6 yr. olds), which makes for a more efficient learning environment.
In the interest of winning, training relies primarily on traditional methods of teaching.	In the interest of understanding the game and making fewer mistakes, training emphasizes the discovery of skills and capacities in simplified games.
Everything connected to the sport is valued over the individual. Dubious behaviour is frequently accepted.	Priority is given to personal development through sport. Sport is regarded as "training for life".

## Four Corner Development Model

The Four Corner Long-Term Player Development model consists of technical/tactical, psychological/mental, physical and social/emotional components. Each corner of the model reflects an aspect of a player's development that has to be considered. The gradual progressive development of players is fundamental to the enjoyment, technical competency and retention in the game. The Four Corner approach ensures the sport experience meets the four key needs of the athlete.

Although priorities will vary during the player's different ages and phases of maturity, the model provides a basic framework for coaches to work within. In addition to the four main components, there are a number of additional 'contributions' from a large number of people, such as parents, teachers, schools and local clubs. The model is deliberately interlinked, which means that activity in any one corner will produce a reaction throughout all aspects of the model. For example, a practice technique may impact physical balance and co-ordination while producing increased confidence and enhanced social standing within the group. The key message to coaches is not to consider any of the program's aspects in isolation.

As the development pathway for individual players is unique and diverse, the needs of each player will ebb and flow in all of the four corners. And, whilst the need for added support for some players will be minimal, others will require much more applied and specific support.

A player's performance in practice and matches can be influenced by the following factors, nearly all of which need to be considered when forming an opinion of a player's progress and true ability: date of birth relative to the rest of the group; body type; adolescent growth spurt in all four corners; physical maturity; psychological maturity; social maturity; previous experience; opposition; position suitability; instructions given to the player; and recent playing activity.



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## Long-Term Athlete Development

**Sport for Life (S4L)** is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada. S4L links sport, education, recreation and health through the alignment of community, provincial and national programming.

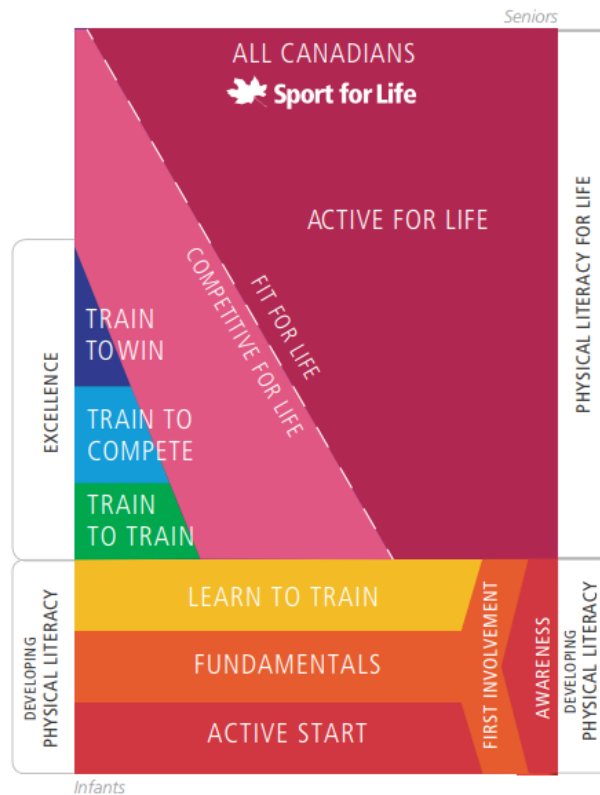
**Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)** is a multi-stage training, competition and recovery pathway guiding an individual’s experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood.

LTAD is a framework for developmentally appropriate programs that increase participation and optimize performance. LTAD uses a holistic approach that considers mental, cognitive and emotional development combined with physical development, ensuring each athlete develops as a complete person.

The seven stages of LTAD are Active Start, Fundamentals, Learn to Train, Train to Train, Train to Compete, Train to Win and Active for Life. The first three stages combined form the **physical literacy** base upon which the excellence stream (Train to Train, Train to Compete and Train to Win) and lifelong engagement in physical activity (Active for Life) are built.

**S4L, with LTAD, represents a paradigm shift in the way Canadians lead and deliver sport and physical activity in Canada.**

Figure 2: The Progression of the Long-Term Athlete Development Framework



Reprinted with permission from Sport for Life.

## True Sport – because good sport can make a great difference

**True Sport is...** designed to give people the inspiration and means to leverage the many benefits of sport to instill character in our kids, strengthen our communities and increase our opportunities for excellence. It exists to not only create the right conditions for people to promote good sport in their community, but also to identify and connect with others looking to do the same.

**Why True Sport...** At the heart of True Sport is the belief that good sport can make a great difference. Good sport – sport that is values based and principle driven – often happens on its own; but too often it does not. True Sport exists to help individuals, communities and organizations make certain that good sport happens by design.

People know what good sport looks like. They feel the buzz of excitement. They witness the camaraderie among children of all shapes and sizes. And they see the group dynamics of sport – and the competition that’s associated with it – bring individual behaviour, conduct and ethics continually into play.

True Sport recognizes that while good sport gives our kids joy, it also gives them opportunities to learn about themselves, about interacting with others and about the achievements and disappointments that are a natural part of life. True Sport seeks to help people across Canada to consistently create sport experiences that will teach the right lessons, celebrating physical and ethical achievements.

**When good sport turns bad...** Every child deserves the opportunity to experience sport that is pure, joyful and true. Every parent wants to see their child take part in sport that helps them discover their potential, teaches them to work well with others and compels them to be the best they can be. Whether we’re playing, coaching or just watching, we all know that when sport is good, it has a positive impact on us all.

But when sport becomes solely about winning, it turns bad. It becomes the premeditated check into the end boards. It becomes the calculated decision to sit less talented kids on the bench. It becomes the abusive coach, the argumentative parent, the bullying kid and the kid who drops out of sport prematurely because it stopped being fun.

Competition and the desire to win are an important element of sport and what distinguishes it from pure exercise. However, when good sport is sacrificed for winning at all costs, we lose something special. But we don’t have to; True Sport can help our kids and our communities have the kind of sport experience they deserve and Canadians desire.

By promoting sport at its best — sport that is fair, excellent, inclusive, and fun — communities seize an opportunity to model positive values to citizens of all ages. When sport facilities are welcoming and safe, people feel good about sharing public space. When the contributions of volunteers, officials, coaches, and organizers are valued, people feel good about sharing their time and talent with their community. When ethical conduct is championed on the field, rink, and court, it reinforces honesty and respect in the classroom, in the workplace, and on the street.

**Good sport can make a great difference...** True Sport is not in the business of getting individuals to believe in the power and value of sport. They already believe. What they need, and what they have been asking for in ever-greater numbers, is a way to influence their sports community to safeguard and promote good sport. It is as if parents, coaches, officials and supporters lack the equipment to participate in a competition where the prize is the future of good sport. True Sport wants to give them that equipment.



True Sport is seeking to give individuals and communities the capacity to act on their positive beliefs about what good sport can do. We seek to instill character in our children, strengthen our communities and spur the healthy competition that makes athletes perform to the very highest standards. Taken together, these three areas create a powerful foundation from which good sport can be developed and thrive.

**The True Sport Principles...** True Sport is dedicated to the notion that good sport can make a great difference. It is our mission to deliver programs and initiatives that:

- Enable participants, parents, coaches and officials to articulate and act upon their deeply held belief in the virtues of good sport.
- Enable participants, parents, coaches and officials to identify with others holding similar values.
- Create a fair, safe and open atmosphere where good sport can grow stronger through inclusive competition at all levels.

To achieve these goals, we promote the following True Sport Principles, which Canadians believe represent a good sport experience. For sport to be truly good and have the opportunity to make the greatest difference, all seven of these principles need to be in play at all times, working in perfect balance with one another.

### **Go For It**

Rise to the challenge – always strive for excellence. Discover how good you can be.

### **Play Fair**

Play honestly – obey both the letter and spirit of the rules. Winning is only meaningful when competition is fair.

### **Respect Others**

Show respect for everyone involved in creating your sporting experience, both on and off the field. Win with dignity and lose with grace.

### **Keep It Fun**

Find the joy in sport. Keep a positive attitude both on and off the field.

### **Stay Healthy**

Place physical and mental health above all other considerations – avoid unsafe activities. Respect your body and keep in shape.

### **Include Everyone**

Share sport with others. Ensure everyone has a place to play.

### **Give Back**

Find ways to show your appreciation for the community that supports your sport and helps make it possible.

# Additional Resources

## **Active for Life Checklists**

Individual checklists for schools, coaches and sport organizations are available. These are terrific resources to use in a workshop setting:

- ✓ [ASK YOUR SCHOOLS & COACHES](#)
- ✓ [QUALITY INDIVIDUAL SPORT CHECKLIST](#)

## **The True Sport LTAD Matrix**

The True Sport LTAD Matrix identifies ethical literacy as a key component of the overall Canadian Sport for Life (S4L) LTAD model. It is based on the fundamental principles of True Sport and provides guidelines for developing ethical literacy in children and youth; an essential element of well-rounded athletes and citizens.

## **Long-Term Athlete Development Information for Parents**

As parents, we recognize that sport and physical activity play an important role in children's healthy growth and development, but in recent times physical activity has suffered serious decline among Canadian children. This resource helps users understand the needs of young athletes and what may be done to promote their best interests in staying active and healthy.

- ✓ [SPORT PARENTS GUIDE](#)
- ✓ [INFORMATION FOR PARENTS](#)

## **Team Selection Policy Checklist - Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada**

Responsible sport organizations [recognize](#) the importance of a sound team selection policy to ensure that the best athletes are selected for optimal performance of the team. It is therefore the responsibility of the sport organization to make the selection criteria public so that its athletes have access to accurate information regarding what is expected of them in order to be selected.

# Appendix 1 – Standard Letter of Acceptance/Status

*<Insert your club logo here> or <copy this letter onto your club letterhead>*

*<Insert date>*

On behalf of all the coaches in the *<insert age group>*, we would like to thank you and your child for participating in the *<insert club name>* Player Selection Process. It is always wonderful to see so many enthusiastic players with the desire to play *<insert sport>* - this year was no exception.

Every year, it is a difficult task to evaluate all of the players and to form teams at each level of play. With every athlete developing at his/her own rate, this task becomes even more challenging as the player we see today, may be a whole new player in six months. That said, it is our responsibility to place players on teams that are suitable to their abilities, level of commitment and social needs at this moment in time.

*<We are pleased to offer your child a place on our <insert sport specific level of play, e.g. Tier 1, 2 or 3; AA, A, B or Gold, Silver, Bronze> team for the <insert year> season. This team will be coached by <insert coach names>. The team officials will be in touch with you shortly with information about the upcoming season.>*

or

*<We are pleased to invite your child to the next phase of evaluations for the <insert sport specific level of play, e.g. Tier 1, 2 or 3; AA, A, B or Gold, Silver, Bronze> teams. The sessions are scheduled as follows: >*

Please be assured that all team selection decisions were made in accordance with the *<insert club name>* Player Selection Process and with the input of the coaches and an independent pool of evaluators.

If you have any questions about this decision, would like to schedule a meeting to review your child's evaluation or would like to request a copy of your child's evaluation form, please contact me by email by *<insert date>*. All review meetings will be scheduled for *<insert date>* at the *<insert location>*.

I look forward to a great season!

*<Insert signature>*

*<Insert Technical Director name>*

*<Insert contact information>*

# Appendix 2 – Player Evaluation Form

Name of Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Players will be evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest possible ranking.*

<b>Technical</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Tactical</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Movement</b> - speed, quickness, technique		<b>Positional Play</b> - vision, support, judgement, anticipation	
<b>Passing</b> - technique, control, vision		<b>Awareness</b> - offensive, defensive	
<b>&lt;insert ball, puck ring, etc.&gt; control</b> - technique, open space, confined spaces		<b>Game Understanding</b> - principles of offence and defense	
<b>Shooting</b> - technique, accuracy, velocity			
<b>Average</b>		<b>Average</b>	
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Character</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Agility</b>		<b>Dependability</b> - reliable, punctual, integrity	
<b>Balance</b>		<b>Resourcefulness</b> - initiative, originality, adaptability	
<b>Coordination</b>		<b>Self-Control</b> - poise, dignity, tact, control of emotions	
<b>Speed</b> - speed endurance, acceleration		<b>Cooperation</b> - ability to work with others, loyalty	
<b>Fitness</b>		<b>Leadership</b> - well-liked, friendly, aggressive, responsive	
<b>Power</b>		<b>Coachability</b> - respectful, listens, attentive, takes direction	
<b>Average</b>		<b>Average</b>	
		<b>Overall Average</b>	

**Additional Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3 – Pre-Season Letter to Members

*<Insert your club logo here> or <copy this letter onto your club letterhead>*

Dear *<insert contact information>*,

On behalf of the *<insert club name>*, I would like to share some important information relating to the sport experience of your child. As a *<Group/Club>*, we are committed to providing a fun, safe and rewarding environment for all of our athletes. To demonstrate this commitment, we have joined True Sport.

True Sport is designed to give people the inspiration and means to leverage the many benefits of sport, to instill character in our kids, strengthen our communities and increase our opportunities for excellence. It exists to not only create the right conditions for people to promote good sport in their community, but also to identify and connect with others looking to do the same. It is up to us to ensure that we provide a positive sport experience by ensuring the True Sport Principles are in play at all times in perfect balance with one another.

Throughout the season, *<insert Club/team or both>* will be highlighting our commitment to True Sport in various ways *<if applicable insert examples>*. In doing so, we will be educating your child on behaving and participating as a True Sport athlete and adhering to the True Sport Principles: Go for it, Play Fair, Respect Others, Keep it Fun, Stay Healthy, Give Back and Include Everyone. As a parent, please reinforce these principles with your child by providing them with a positive example to emulate, and congratulating them when they demonstrate these principles, both on, and off the field of play.

Together, we can make a difference in our children's sport experience. To learn more about *<insert Club/team name>*'s commitment to True Sport please visit [www.truesport.ca](http://www.truesport.ca) or talk to me at any time.

I look forward to a great *<insert sport>* season!

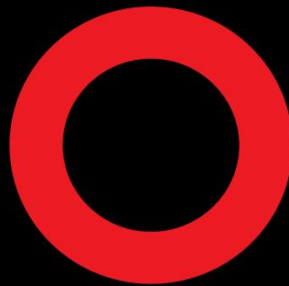
*<insert your signature>*

*<insert your name><insert your contact information>*

*<insert your title>*

*<insert your Club name>*

go for it    play fair  
respect others    keep it fun  
stay healthy  
include everyone  
give back



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