

STAGE 1:

Active Start

Discovering Movement (Children up to 6 years old)

Children learn to move through play. Encourage them to participate in fun and stimulating activities that introduce basic movements.



GO FOR IT

Rise to the challenge—always strive for excellence. Be persistent and discover how good you can be.

- › Encourage fun, safe, child-led activities to help develop physical literacy.
- › Introduce new experiences that are age appropriate, safe, and fun.
- › Encourage participants to try their best, whatever their best happens to be that day.
- › Use [True Sport Awards](#) to recognize and support the active involvement of parents/caregivers.
- › Complete the [NCCP Fundamental Movement Skills workshop](#).

PLAY FAIR

Understand, respect, and follow the rules. Play with integrity—competition is only meaningful when it is fair.

- › Use physically active games to help develop the skill of processing verbal directions (focus on one direction at a time reinforced by visual cues and progress to two then three bundled directions when ready).
- › Using the [True Sport Team characters](#), introduce the concept of being a good sport and ask participants how they want to show it (e.g., high fives, shaking hands, waves, cheers).
- › Help develop self-regulation by creating opportunities to practice waiting for turns, based on the current ability of each participant (using a ‘wait here’ sign or special place to stand while waiting can help).

RESPECT OTHERS

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

- › Introduce co-operative games and activities.
- › Encourage participants to share access to equipment and to help clean up.
- › Model the use of appropriate language and tone so that young participants learn that the words we choose and how we use them are important.
- › Model the importance of respecting the space where you play by leaving it cleaner than you found it.

KEEP IT FUN

Find the joy in sport and share it with others. Remember what you love about sport and why you play.

- › Encourage both child-led and parent/caregiver-led activities.
- › Invite children to explore their imaginations and make up their own games.
- › Carefully observe participants, looking for signs of enjoyment.
- › Introduce new activities to maintain interest and energy.
- › Choose activities that keep participants engaged. Try to avoid lineups and long waits between turns.

STAY HEALTHY

Always respect and care for your mind and body. Advocate for the health and safety of yourself and those around you.

- › Foster active play.
- › Use age-appropriate equipment.
- › Model healthy behaviour (e.g., proper hydration, being physically active).
- › Encourage families to be active with their children for a minimum of 60 minutes every day.
- › Develop emotional and social skills by inviting and encouraging respectful and creative expression of feelings.
- › Complete [Safe Sport Training](#).

INCLUDE EVERYONE

Recognize and celebrate strength in diversity. Invite and welcome others into sport.

- › Create participation opportunities for participants from all backgrounds.
- › Modify activities to make them more accessible and inclusive.
- › Encourage participants to play with someone they haven’t played with before.
- › Encourage and engage participants and parents/caregivers to create fun and inclusive ways to welcome new participants and their families.

GIVE BACK

Say thanks and show gratitude. Encourage your sport group to make a difference in the community.

- › Create opportunities to give back by supporting junior athletes as role models and coaches in programs at this stage.
- › Encourage all participants to show appreciation for the spaces in which they play by properly disposing of garbage and recycling.
- › Encourage the team responsibilities to be shared among all parents/caregivers (e.g., co-coaching, setting up or taking down equipment).
- › Encourage expressions of gratitude (e.g., saying “thank you” to volunteers, officials and coaches).