Age Appropriate Learning Activities (A-DAP)

To satisfy the training requirements for A-DAP on your Individual Development Plan (IDP), the following documents need to be reviewed and signed:

a. **Introduction to Ages and Stages Training Presentation Slides**

   Credit:
   IMCOM G9 CYS

b. **A-DAP Acknowledgement**
   (**Signature required**)

Introduction to Ages and Stages Training

Ages and stages training for children and youth is meant to provide staff with the information necessary to appropriately train all volunteer coaches on the characteristics and developmentally appropriate activities (physical, social, emotional, intellectual) of children and youth they may be instructing during their coaching experience with CYS Services.

Additionally, this presentation provides resources to better understand the appropriate methods of developing youth athletes as they progress through various ages and provides insight on the skills necessary toward appropriately moving youth into more advanced sport and fitness opportunities each year. This training was adapted directly from the following organization/individuals:

Long Term Athletic Development Model (Ages and Stages of Sport)

Istvan Balyi, Richard Way, Colin Higgs

Canadian Sport for Life Society

To learn more about the Long Term Athletic Development Model, visit **canadiansportforlife.ca/.../ltad-stages**

Active Start/First Skills Phase (3-5)

From 3-5 years, boys and girls need to be engaged in daily active play. Through play and movement, they develop the fundamental movement skills that will provide the foundation for learning fundamental sports skills at older ages.

Children this age need to develop the ABCs of movement – Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed. The ABCs are essential for developing fundamental movement skills, and fundamental movement skills will later provide the foundation for fundamental sport skills.

Encourage them to work on many skills in a variety of safe, play environments**.** Young children need regular, vigorous, physical activity – active play – to develop and grow properly. Physical activity means taking part in active play that uses the body's large muscles. Because children need to develop a range of body control, locomotor and sending and receiving skills, it's imperative that they experience a variety of activities. Change simple drills and activities frequently to keep attention of children and limit waiting in line for activities.

Whole-body play of almost any kind, provides the movement that children need. Play that uses the hands and fingers is important in developing fine-motor skills. Make activities game related and fun!

Kinds of activities:

Body control skills - like balance, moving the arms and legs in rhythmic ways to music, and developing coordination.
Locomotor skills - like crawling, walking, running, skipping, jumping, leaping, rolling. (Skipping may be challenging but kids love practicing it!)
Sending & receiving skills-Kicking, throwing overhand, throwing underhand, catching, punting, bouncing, striking a ball, stopping ball w/ foot.

Social and Emotional Considerations:

Learning to share and take turns

Emotions can be extreme and short lived

Needs encouragement and reassurance

Activities need to be fun, engaging and diverse

Intellectual Considerations:

Can begin to learn rules of game, practice drills

Can communicate their needs, ideas and questions

Can be very talkative

Begin to ask questions, "why" "how" "when"

Begin to develop reasoning skills

FUN-damental / Basic Fitness Stage (6-9)

During the FUNdamental stage children should develop fundamental movement skills, including the ABCs of Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed. Children should participate in a fun and challenging multi-sport environment. Students 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. Children in the FUNdamental stage are motivated primarily by the desire to have FUN. While they may participate in competitive sports where points are scored, they are far less concerned with competitive results than they are with having fun and being with friends.

Children should be exposed to a variety of sports and physical activities throughout the year, developing their interests and motivation while avoiding the danger of burnout through premature specialization. Children this age should not specialize in a single sport, unless they are participating in one of the few recognized early-specialization sports (e.g. gymnastics, figure skating, diving). This is a great age for children to take part in a wide range of sports.

Physical Considerations:

Girls begin to mature faster than boys
*Avoid competitions between boys and girls

Increase in muscle development, strength, balance & coordination

More apt to increase aerobic and muscle power at this phase

Hand and foot speed can be developed especially well during this stage

Strength, endurance and flexibility need to be developed, but through games and fun activities rather than a training regimen.
*Plan activities that allow youth to move and use their full body

Social and Emotional Considerations:

Enjoy group activities and feel loyal to a group or club
*Emphasize group learning & plan activities together

Prefer to be with members of the same sex
*Plan activities that allow youth to work with members of the same sex and also work with members of the opposite sex

Need guidance from adults and admire & imitate older youth
*Enlist older youth to help teach and mentor

Comparisons between youth are often and can erode confidence and prefer praise and recognition
*Praise all equally and identify talents of all participants

Intellectual Considerations:

Eager to try new things and easily motivated
*Provide a variety of games, drills, etc.

Vary greatly in academic abilities, interests and reasoning skills
*Provide activities that allow all children to succeed.

Children this age have a strong sense of what is “fair” and should be introduced to the simple rules and ethics of sports.

*Basic rules, tactics, decision making and ethics of sport can be introduced.

*Children can begin learning to “read” the movements going on around them and make sound decisions during games

Learn to Train (females 8-11, males 9-12)

Learn to Train

During the Learn to Train stage, children should be converting their fundamental movement skills into fundamental sport skills.
Children are ready to begin training according to more formalized methods however, the emphasis should still be on general sports skills suitable to a number of activities. A greater amount of time should be spent training and practicing skills versus competing. It may be tempting to specialize at this age through excessive single sport training or early position specialization in team sports but inappropriate or premature specialization promotes one-sided development and increases the likelihood of injury and burnout.

The Learn to Train stage is the most important stage for the development of sport-specific skills. This stage represents a sensitive period of accelerated adaptation to skills training and fine motor control. It is also a time when children enjoy practicing their skills and seeing their own improvement. This is the time to develop and refine all fundamental movement skills and learn overall sport skills. The brain is approaching adult size and complexity, and refined skill performance is easier to develop

Physical Considerations:

Muscle strength fall short of what it will be during main growth spurt, lack nervous connections necessary to activate full force of muscles

Wide variations of muscle strength and power (girls develop faster than boys)

Significant gains in height and weight
*This is an important time to work on flexibility. Stamina and strength should be developed through games, relays, and own-body weight exercises as opposed to more formalized physical training

While most children naturally enjoy healthy competition, skills training and practice should be the focus at Learn to Train – not winning. 70% of time in the sport should be spent in practice, and no more than 30% of time spent competing in formal games and competitions

Social and Emotional Considerations:

Can begin to become self conscious and have mood swings

Concerned with being liked by peers and susceptible to hero worship

Can become “bored” sitting on the bench

*Develop activities that provide both teaching leadership and also teaching how to follow as both are important at this stage

Kids are told they are not “good” Avoid negative assessments but focus on talents and areas of improvement

Dropout rates begin (especially with female participants)

Intellectual Considerations:

By this stage, children have developed clear ideas about the sports they like. Their enthusiasm and personal sense of success should be encouraged

Familiar with teamwork and able to understand importance and meaning of rules

Can accept responsibility for their actions and more cognitive thinking occurs

Begin to think more rationally and logically

Train to Train (females 11-15, males 12-16)

At this stage, athletes are ready to consolidate their basic sport-specific skills and tactics. It is also a major fitness development stage. Athletes may exhibit special talent, play to win, and do their best, but they still need to allocate more time to training skills and physical capacities than competing in formal settings and winning should remain a secondary emphasis. This approach is critical to the long-term development of top performers and lifelong participants.

Training programs need to be designed to account for these rapid changes and the various advantages and disadvantages that they present in athlete development. Athletes must be constantly monitored in order to understand how their growth and maturation is affecting their training and vice versa. During the growth spurt, especially if the growth spurt happens exceptionally quickly, athlete skills and movement abilities may be significantly impeded. Coaches may need to explain to the athletes why their motor skills and movement abilities have been negatively affected, so the athletes can understand that this is a natural event that will pass with time.

- Emphasize (flexibility) training to accommodate the rapid growth of bones, tendons, ligaments, and muscles.
- Athletes need to learn to cope with the physical and mental challenges of competition.
- For all athletes, the use of body-size and skill-level appropriate equipment remains important.
- Too much competition wastes valuable training time; too little competition reduces the practical application and development of technique, tactics, and decision-making skills under realistic competition conditions.
- During training, include competitive situations in the form of practice matches or competitive games and drills.
- A key reason why many athletes hit a plateau during later stages of their development has to do with too much competition and not enough training
- Competition is most valuable when it is used to develop strategic and tactical understanding. The focus must be on the learning process and not the outcome.

Physical Considerations

Experience rapid changes in growth and appearance

Major height and weight gains

Puberty onset

Physical strength and ability develop between male and females

Social and Emotional Considerations

Girls can feel inadequate when competing with boys and therefore quit

Large sport drop out in female athletes

Dependence upon parents shifts to dependency of peer opinions

Desire independence but still need parents

Opinions of sport and fitness become fixed!!

Intellectual Considerations

Begin to reject adult solutions in favor of their own
*Allow youth to create their own games and work together to officiate, solve problems on the field

Take more responsibility for planning and outcome
*Involve youth in practice planning and activities

Begin to think abstractly and hypothetically and use reason, logic and cause and effect
*Involve youth in rule setting and team philosophy

Train to Compete (females 15-21, males 16-23)

At the Train to Compete stage, this is where competition becomes "serious." Athletes begin to commit to high-volume and high-intensity training throughout the year. Instruction in topics such as nutrition, sport psychology, recovery and regeneration, injury prevention, and injury management also become very important. Formal competition becomes more prominent.

Train to Compete maximizes all of the physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional capacities of the athlete. It also teaches the athlete how to handle the distractions of elite sport, such as travel, weather, different competition venues, media, spectators, and difficult opponents. Winning becomes a major focus during Train to Compete. However, coaches should help their athletes to select specific competitions that support strategic athlete development.

General considerations during Train to Compete

- Provide year-round, high intensity, individual event and position-specific training.
- Have athletes perform their skills under a variety of competitive conditions during training.
- Place special emphasis on optimum preparation by modeling high-level competition in training.
- Continue to tailor and refine individual fitness programs, recovery programs, psychological preparation, and technical development.
- Emphasize individual preparation that addresses each athlete's individual strengths and weaknesses.
- Athletes must strive to deliver consistent high performance results in both training and competition.
- Coaches and athletes must plan for tapering and peaking for competition, to accommodate the large increase in training volume.
- Tapering means reducing both intensity and volume in training as athletes approach the date of major competition events. Tapering allows athletes to peak for major competitions, ensuring that they will perform at their best.

Physical Considerations

Most have overcome awkwardness of puberty but many are still growing.

Body image concerns are enhanced
*Avoid comments that criticize stature, size or shape

Muscular strength apparent and organs reach size of adult

Physical strength characteristics between male and females evident

Social and Emotional Considerations

Strong desire for status within peer groups

Desire for independence and adult leadership roles

Want to be recognized as unique individuals

Have formulated their opinions on importance/desire for continuing in sports and fitness

Intellectual Considerations

Increase of self knowledge, personal philosophies begin to emerge

Reach high levels of abstract thinking and problem solving

Able to determine their athletic abilities and future sport and fitness desires

Develop community consciousness and concern the well being of others

REFERENCES

Long Term Athletic Development Model (Ages and Stages of Sport)
Istvan Balyi, Richard Way, Colin Higgs
Canadian Sport for Life Society

Development Stages of Youth
Army CYS Services, Sports and Fitness Director's Handbook, Version One, 2008

NAFTA Kids Fitness Study Guide
National Alliance of Fitness Trainers of America, 2015

Youth Sports and Fitness Program

Training Date:

Training Material: Introduction to Ages and Stages Training PowerPoint, IMCOM G9 CYS

Purpose: Training to meet annual Developmentally Appropriate Practices/Youth Development and Programming (A-DAP) requirement

Name	Signature/Date