



South African Hockey

SOUTH AFRICAN HOCKEY ASSOCIATION LONG TERM PARTICIPANTS DEVELOPMENT (LTPD)



SUMMARY GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Parents want to provide their children with the opportunities to excel to the best of their abilities and to succeed.

This summary is designed to give you the information you need on how athletes develop so that you can make informed choices about the activities that are most appropriate and beneficial for your young hockey player as they continue in the sport. It is based on the Long Term Participants Development Model that has been endorsed by SA Hockey, SASCOC and NDSR.

Kids are kids- not little adults. There is little to be gained and much to be lost, by attempting to force young players into the full game before they are physically, technically and mentally (emotionally) ready for the activity.



WHY IS CHANGE NEEDED?

In South Africa the concept of 'training to win' kicks well in advance of the suggested age ranges. That is part of the cultural problem in schools. Winning comes before development. Hence, it's a bottom line culture. Train to win before mastering the training to train and compete phases, is counterproductive. **The result?** Ill equipped players for the competition phase that follows.

“With the advance of electronic entertainment, more and more kids are not getting enough exercise, not learning fundamental movement skills and suffering from the effects of being overweight, or worse – obese. This means that kids who join sport for the first time often struggle from the outset. We must change our lifestyle habits starting with increased physical activity at the younger ages.”

Sport makes a major contribution to the health and development of individuals and the communities in which we all live. It provides an opportunity for kids and adults to be active when inactivity rates threaten the health and quality of life of South Africans. Sport also provides participants with valuable lessons on teamwork, fair play and the value of working towards goals. The existing sport system is generally falling short of its potential due to some of the weaknesses and challenges.

WHAT IS LTPD?

LTPD is a program for hockey player development, training, competition and recovery based on biological age (i.e. physical maturity) rather than chronological age. It is participant centred, coach driven and administration, sport science and sponsor supported.

Developing an elite athlete takes time.

The philosophy behind Long Term Athlete Development is that it takes 8-12 years of proper training and practice at the right time for an athlete to reach elite levels, and that success comes from training, practicing and competing well over the long term rather than focusing on winning in the short term. There is no short cut to success in athlete preparation. Many countries have started to put LTPD models into place to ensure that youth athletes are being developed according to sound training principles that take into consideration the physical, emotional and intellectual developmental levels of each athlete and their individual rate of maturation rather than just their chronological age.

THE LONG TERM PARTICIPANTS DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Why?

- Eliminate gaps in the player development system.
- Guides planning for optimal participant performance at all stages.
- Provides a framework for program alignment and integration, from volunteer school, club, provincial and national coaches.
- Follow scientific principle and practical coaching experiences.

Benefits for participants and parents:

- Better understanding of what makes a good hockey program.
- More players learning at their level and having fun.
- Appropriate game and league structures (e.g. size of sticks, goals, field etc.)
- More opportunity for players to realize their athletic potential.
- More coaches who are knowledgeable in leading safe, effective practices.

Benefits for coaches and clubs:

- Information and education on effective coaching and practise methods.
- Guidelines for appropriate games structures.
- Guidelines on appropriate competition levels.
- Established pathways for player development for all levels of ability and ambition.
- Affirmation of best practise for coaches and club administration.

Benefits for all:

- Participants, parents, coaches and administrators understand that players are unique and therefore different in interest and aptitude.
- Participants stay involve in the sport throughout their lives (as players, coaches, umpires or administrators - volunteers)
- Hockey grows, and lifelong participation is promoted for participants of all ages, genders and levels of ability.

Long-term Participant Development distinguishes seven stages of athlete development:

The diagram shows how LTPD model accommodates participants at all levels of interest, ability and achievement. After children enter at the Active Start and become physically literate, they can continue on a pathway towards excellence or choose to enter an "Active for Life" recreational stream. The model promotes maximum participant retention for both optimum wellness and sporting excellence.



Seven Stages of Long-Term Participant Development



STAGES

STAGE ONE: ACTIVE START

Ages: Birth to 6 years (female and male)

Objectives: The objective of the stage is to learn fundamental movements and link them together into play. Physical activity should be fun and a natural part of a child's daily life. Active, free play is the way young children are physically active.

Hockey does not have a direct role during the Active Start stage other than to support organizations that promote physical activity and physical literacy.

Where: Home, day care, clubs, community and recreation centres

Why: Provide early opportunities for children to learn basic movement skills.

Who: Technical leaders, parents, educators and caregivers

Coaching: Training in Physical Literacy

- **Physical** - Provide the environment for learning proper fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.
- **Technical** - unstructured (Free Play)
- **Tactical** - None
- **Mental** - Fun and enjoyment



STAGE TWO: FUNDAMENTALS (FUN WITH THE STICK)

Ages: Females 6-8, Males 6-9 years of age

Objectives: Introduction of the basic hockey skills in a fun, caring and safe coaching environment

Basic hockey related skills (technical skills) such as pushing, stopping and tackling must be promoted during this phase.

Where: Home, school, clubs

Why: Provide opportunities for children to learn basic hockey skills

Who: Physical education educators, parents and club coaches.

Coaching: Training in Physical Literacy and the 5 fundamental hockey skills.

- **Physical** - Develop the ABCs of movement: agility, balance, co-ordination and speed, as well as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.
- **Technical** - Focus on the fundamental technical skills running with the ball, pushing, tackling, receiving & goal scoring.
- **Tactical** - Small children are egocentric – playing the ball is the most important objective. However, they now need to be introduced to co-operate between players. They gain understanding of the game through playing situations.
- **Mental** - Basic awareness of environment to build game intelligence and decision making.



STAGE THREE: LEARN TO TRAIN

Ages: Females 8 - 11, Males 9 – 12 years of age

Objectives : Learning of the fundamental sports skills

As the players grow and develop they enter the Learn to Train stage. Towards the end of this phase children will likely be playing some formalized hockey matches.

Where: Primary school physical education classes and community based hockey clubs.

Why: To build on the fundamental skills of hockey and expand an athlete's exposure and love for the games.

Who: School and club coaches

Coaching : Leadership and Level 1

- **Physical** - This is an optimal window for trainability of speed, flexibility and skills.
- **Technical** - Developing the skills- continued emphasis on refinement of the Five FUNdamentals Principles of Hockey and the expansion of these starts to occur within game related situations.
- **Tactical** - Create awareness of the importance of team work, decision making and promote constructive communication.
- **Mental** - Golden age of learning, intrinsic motivation is developed by the FUN and Enjoyment that foster desire to play; imagination and creativity.

STAGE FOUR: TRAIN-TO-TRAIN

Ages: Females 11 – 15, Males 12 - 16 years of age

Objective : Building fitness and sport specific skills.

This is a critical stage of LTPD. Many of the important physical attributes will be shaped over the next 4 or 5 years. The sensitive period of opportunity (refer to Trainability diagram) to train stamina, speed, and strength exists during the Train to Train phase in addition to maintaining the ABC's and exploring further more specific hockey skills. This stage is about "Building the physical and mental Engine".

Where: Schools and clubs

Why: To develop a passion for hockey and to pursue focused training with peers. Athlete identification begins.

Who: School and club coaches

Coaching: Level 1

- **Physical** - Flexibility, discipline warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, core strength and stability, balance, nutrition proper diet, prevention and care of injuries, importance of rest/recovery. Personalized programs needed in order to respect the growth spurt.
- **Technical** - Improving the skills – fundamental skills are progressively developed and refined. Testing of skills – successful use of the skills in mini and modified games start to build confidence
- **Tactical** - Basic team and individual tactics are introduced and developed. Work on consistency of performance under a variety of situations. Recognition of game play and decision making is fostered.
- **Mental** - Pre-competition routine, introduction to mental preparation, goal setting, coping with winning and losing.

STAGE FIVE: TRAIN TO COMPETE



Ages: Females 15 – 21 +/-, Males 16 – 21 +/-, years of age

Objectives : Refining skills for a particular events and competition.

By the age of 16 for boys and 15 for girls, the players will enter the Train to Compete stage. During this stage they will further develop their hockey skills, including technical and tactical work in competitive situations.

Where: High school, universities, clubs and provincial and national training programmes.

Why: Continue to monitor identified talent. Begin to prepare the elite athlete for high performance competition.

Who: Club, provincial and national coaches

Coaching: Level 2 &3

- **Physical** - Flexibility, discipline warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, core strength and stability, balance, nutrition proper diet, prevention and care of injuries, importance of rest/recovery.
- **Technical** - Improving the skills: Advance ball and stick skills performed at speed. This is the critical stage for the development of the High Performance athlete. Specific skills are integrated and high proficiency level for both attacking and defending play.
- **Tactical** - Decision-making in game play, i.e. focus on ability to read the game Use of space. Creating numerical advantage. Transition of play in attack and defence. Creating or preventing goal scoring opportunities
- **Mental** - Critical evaluation of training and competition. Competitor mind-set: Confidence, focused, determined. Personal responsibility and involvement in decision making.



IX: TRAIN TO WIN

Ages: Females 21 +/-, Males 21 +/- years of age

Objectives: Maximising performance in competition

The Train to Win stage should see players have most of the capacities in place to perform at a high level. There should be a focus on team dynamics. The maintenance of physical attributes appropriate to the performer's skill requirements and further development of match specific skills take place. For top provincial players the training year will be divided into a double periodization while an international calendar may result in triple periods of periodization for the national team program.

Where: National and International

Why: High Performance

Who: Club , provincial, national and international coaches

Coaching: Level 2 &3 and FIH

- **Physical** - Flexibility, discipline warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, core strength and stability, balance, nutrition proper diet, prevention and care of injuries, importance of rest/recovery. Multiple periodization- taper and peak periods are key.
- **Technical** - Improving the skills: Advance ball and stick skills performed at speed. This is the critical stage for the development of the High Performance athlete. Specific skills are integrated and high proficiency level for both attacking and defending play. High degree of decision-making, leadership and game analysis.
- **Tactical** - Decision-making in game play, i.e. focus on ability to read the game Use of space. Creating numerical advantage. Transition of play in attack and defence. Creating or preventing goal scoring opportunities
- **Mental** - Competitive attitude and will to win is solidified. Focus on individualized mental strategies used to prepare and perform consistently under a variety of competitive situations. Increased emphasis on personal responsibility and player involvement in decision-making.



STAGE SEVEN: ACTIVE FOR LIFE

Enter at any age

Age: This is when an individual makes the transition from competitive sport to lifelong physical activity, and it may occur at any age.

Objective: Continue to be physically active in hockey or in any other sport. Continue to be involved in the hockey community at different capacities.

This stage describes the transition from competitive sport to lifelong physical activity. The sport system should encourage participants to move from one sport to another with ease and from one aspect of sport to another.

Active for life may also involve moving from competitive sport to:

- Recreational activities such as running, swimming, hiking, cycling, etc.
- Lifelong competitive sport through age group competition such as Master's Games
- Sport-related careers, such as coaching, officiating, sport administration,
- small business enterprises, or media
- Volunteer positions, as coaches, officials, or administrators.

Where: Community based clubs and relative age-group competitions and festivals.

Why: For the love and enjoyment of the game at any level.

Who: Coaches of all ages and genders.

Coaching: Training based on level of play. Active for life or competition stream.

- **Physical** - Maintain aerobic fitness by walking or jogging at least 3-4 times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes each.
- **Technical** - Perfecting existing skills and learning new ones.
- **Tactical** - Exchange varied tactical knowledge for incorporation into game situations. Provide knowledge, ideas and experience to promote the game
- **Mental** - **Focus on having fun, in addition to stress release and fitness discipline.**



SA HOCKEY LTPD PARTICIPANTS PATHWAYS

STAGE CHRONOLOGICAL AGE		COACHING LEVEL METHOD	MODIFIED FULL FIELD	FOCUS CHARACTERISED BY
ACTIVE START	0-6 YEARS			Unstructured (free) play Building confidence of physical literacy in a positive surrounding
	FUNDAMENTAL	LEADERSHIP LEVEL 0 GUIDES	Under 6 Modified 3vs3	Generic movement skills Fun & Safety ABC's of Athleticism
	Under 8 Modified 6vs6		Participation Fun & Safety	
	Under 10 Modified ¼ field 8vs8		Participation Fun + Safety Physical activities Technical Skills Zonal	
LEARN TO TRAIN	Under 12	LEVEL 1 TEACHES	Modified ½ field	Participation Fun + Safety More structured Technical skills Zonal Talent Scouting (Detection)
	Under 13		Full field	More structured Participation Zonal + Regional Technical skill & T actual awareness Talent Identification
TRAIN TO TRAIN	Under 14	LEVEL 2 CHALLENGES	Full field	Participation Enjoyment Talent Identification Zonal + Regional
	Under 16		Full Field	Participation High Performance(Regional) Zonal/District/Provincial
TRAIN TO COMPLETE TRAIN TO WIN	Under 18	LEVEL 2 LEVEL 3 FACILITATES EMPOWERS	Full Field	Participation High Performance(National) Zonal/District/Provincial
	Under 21		Full Field	Participation High Performance Zonal/District/Provincial/International
	Seniors		Full Field	Participation High Performance Zonal/District/Provincial/International
ACTIVE FOR LIFE ENTER AT ANY STAGE			Full Field	Social ENJOYMENT VOLUNTEERS





REFERENCES

FIELD HOCKEY CANADA

ENGLAND HOCKEY

SA BASEBALL LTPD

SPORTS LEADER COACHING MANUAL

LEVEL 1 ; LEVEL 2 & LEVEL 3 COACHING MANUAL

Summary

This document is designed to give you the information you need on how athletes develop so that you can make informed choices about the type of activities that are most appropriate and beneficial for the young hockey player as they continue to grow and develop in the sport.

The LTPD Model forms the cornerstone of SA HOCKEY'S strategic plan and our education & training is aligned to the LTPD model.