Hockey Canada
Development Programs

Long Term Player Development Programming Framework

www.HockeyCanada.ca
Hockey Canada’s Mission Statement

“To Lead, Develop, and Promote positive hockey experiences.”

Challenge • Learn • Improve
Programming Goals – **Participant Centered**

- Establish the “Gold Standard” for all hockey programming
- Provide all participants with a positive experience focusing on building a strong skill base
- Adhere to the principles of Long Term Participant Development (LTPD) in the design and application of age-specific programs
Long Term Player Development

Simply put, a Long Term Player Development model (LTPDM) is a framework to maximize a player’s potential and long term involvement in sport over the course of their life.

This philosophy sets out a vision for hockey in Canada that takes advantage of the history and culture of the game to increase participation and to lay the foundations of international success long into the future.
Research has concluded that it takes a minimum of 10 years and 10,000 hours of deliberate training for a talented player to reach elite levels (Starkes and Ericsson, 2003).

This means before the 10 year or 10,000 hour rule comes into play:

1) A player must have developed the fundamental skills
2) Be physically literate

For a player and coach this translates into slightly more than 3 hours of training or competition daily for 10 years.
Long Term Player Development

- Is based on the physical, mental, emotional, and cognitive development of children and adolescents. Each stage reflects a different point in athlete development.

- Ensures physical literacy - upon which excellence can be built

- Ensures that optimal training, competition, and recovery programs are provided throughout an athlete’s career.

- Provides an optimal competition structure for the various stages of an athlete’s development.
Long Term Player Development

- Has an impact on the entire sport continuum, including participants, parents, coaches
- Integrates elite sport, community sport and recreation, scholastic sport, and physical education in schools.
- Supports the four goals of the Canadian Sport Policy — Enhanced Participation, Enhanced Excellence, Enhanced Capacity, and Enhanced Interaction — and reflects a commitment to contribute to the achievement of these goals.
- Promotes a healthy, physically literate nation whose citizens participate in lifelong physical activity
Long Term Player Development

This model for hockey has been developed based on the following principles:

- Doing the right thing for the player at the right stage in their development
- Adopting a player-centered approach and not treating the development of all players the same way.
- The broader the foundation of players the more successful the game of hockey will be in Canada
- Viewing player development as a long term process
Long Term Player Development

- Aligning player development resources with the right age and ability

- Coach development and education resources so that coaches are doing the right things at the right time. (skills manuals, DVD’s)

- A need to better educate parents on the hockey development of their child. It is okay for parents to want their kids to get to the highest levels but they need to know the best way to go about it.
Long Term Player Development

Drawbacks in our development system

- Over-competing & under training
- *Adult programs imposed on children*
- *Male training programs imposed on females*
- Chronological rather than developmental age is used in training and competition planning.
- Coaches largely neglect the critical periods of accelerated adaptation to training (ages 9 – 12)
Long Term Player Development

Drawbacks in our development system

- Fundamental movement skills and sport skills are not taught properly.
- Preparation geared to short-term outcomes
- Knowledgeable coaches at the elite levels
- Competition system interferes with athlete development
- Early specialization is demanded
- Parents are not educated about LTAD.
**Long Term Player Development**

**Consequences** - What are the results of these shortcomings?

- Poor movement abilities.
- Lack of proper fitness.
- Poor skill development.
- Bad habits developed from over-competition focused on winning.
- Undeveloped and unrefined skills due to under-training.
- Female athlete potential not reached due to inappropriate programs.
- Children not having fun as they play adult-based programs.
- No systematic development of the next generation of successful International athletes.
- Failure to reach optimal performance levels in international competitions.
Long Term Player Development

Consequences - What are the results of these shortcomings?

- Athletes pulled in different directions by school, club, and provincial teams because of the structure of competition programs.
- Remedial programs, implemented by provincial and national team coaches, to counteract the shortcomings of athlete preparation.
- Fluctuating national performance due to lack of a developmental pathway.
- Athletes failing to reach their genetic potential and optimal performance level.
Long Term Player Development
The minor hockey player in Canada needs to experience a wide variety of learning activities that correspond to his or her level of abilities and capacities. Hockey Canada’s Long Term Player Development model has 9 stages. This could also be referred to as the Hockey Player pathway or progression. The following diagram outlines this progression in generic terms.
The following age specific charts are guidelines for developing a seasonal structure that is more conducive to player development.
### LTPD – Initiation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season</th>
<th>Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season</th>
<th>Playoff Season</th>
<th>Tournaments</th>
<th>Number of Games total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>35 - 40</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>N / A</td>
<td>2 tournaments</td>
<td>15 - 20</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>20 practices</td>
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<td>10 games</td>
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### Initiation Program

**LENGTH OF SEASON:** 28-32 weeks
- Week 1-4: Practice and Skill Development
- Week 5-8: Practice and Game Play
- Week 9-12: Tournaments/Games Season

**FREQUENCY PER WEEK:** 1-2 times

**NUMBER OF GAMES PER SEASON:** 20-30 total, 6-10 skill

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**
- Make the first impression of hockey a positive one for players and parents.
- Play games exist mostly in modified forms, with limited number of formalized games.
- Practice sessions focus on the ABC’s (Agility, Balance and Coordination).

### Practice Breakdown for the Season – Initiation

- **September**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **October**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **November**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **December**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **January**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **February**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **March**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

- **April**
  - Technical Skills: Introduce - Develop

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### LTPD – Novice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season</th>
<th>Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season</th>
<th>Playoff Season</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Ideal</td>
<td>40 - 45</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>14 weeks</td>
<td>N / A</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20 practices</td>
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<td>28 practices</td>
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<td>2 ex games</td>
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</table>

**NOVICE PROGRAM**

- **Length of Season**: 28-32 weeks;
  - 3-4 weeks; Practice and Skill Development Season
  - 20-24 weeks; Practice and Game Play Season
  - 3-4 weeks; Tournament Season
- **Frequency per Week**: 2-3 times
- **Number of Games per Season**: 15-20 modified, 20-30 full ice
- **Guiding Principles**: Make the first impression of hockey a positive one for players and parents. Play/Games exist primarily in a modified form – formalized games introduced late in season.
  - Some streaming of the players’ goal is to have players working with players of like skills to develop confidence and self-esteem.

**PRACTICE BREAKDOWN FOR THE SEASON – NOVICE**

- **SEPTEMBER**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce

- **OCTOBER**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop

- **NOVEMBER**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce

- **DECEMBER**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce

- **JANUARY**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce

- **FEBRUARY**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce

- **MARCH**
  - Technical skills - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce
  - Individual Tactics - Introduce - Develop - Reinforce

- **APRIL**
  - Tournaments Playoffs

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**CANADA**

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**LTPD – Atom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season</th>
<th>Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season</th>
<th>Playoff Season</th>
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<td>Atom</td>
<td>45 - 50</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
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<td>4 tournaments</td>
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<td>20 games</td>
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</table>

**ATOM PROGRAM**

**Length of Season:**
- 24-30 weeks:
  - 3-4 weeks: Practice and Skill Development Season
  - 20-24 weeks: Practice and Game Play Season
  - 4 weeks: Tournament/Playoff Season

**Frequency per Week:**
- 3-4 times

**Number of Games per Season:**
- 35-40

**Guiding Principles:**
- At this stage, children are developmentally ready to acquire the general sport skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development. Hockey Canada recommends that players in the Learning to Train stage continue to focus on the development and refinement of individual skills and individual tactics.

**Process Training:**
- Other sports to further develop the ABC’s (Agility, Balance and Coordination).

**PRACTICE BREAKDOWN FOR THE SEASON – ATOM**
## LTPD – Peewee

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season</th>
<th>Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season</th>
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</table>

### Peewee Program

**Guiding Principles:**
- At this stage, children are developmentally ready to acquire the general sport skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development. Hockey Canada recommends that players in the Learning to Team stage continue to focus on the development and refinement of individual skills and individual tactics.

**Preseason Training:**
- Other sports to further develop the ABC’s (Agility, Balance and Coordination).

**Practice Breakdown for the Season – Peewee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
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<td>- develop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PEEWEE PROGRAM

**Length of Season:**
- 28-32 weeks:
  - 3-4 weeks: Practice and Skill Development Season
  - 20-24 weeks: Practice and Game Play Season
  - 3-4 weeks: Tournament Season

**Frequency per Week:**
- 3-4 times

**Number of Games per Season:**
- 40-45

- 16 games

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## LTPD – Bantam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season</th>
<th>Playoff Season</th>
<th>Tournaments</th>
<th>Number of Games total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bantam</td>
<td>55 - 60</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>20 wks</td>
<td>3 tournaments</td>
<td>50 - 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>12 practices</td>
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<td>12 practices</td>
<td></td>
<td>28 games</td>
<td>12 games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 ex games</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### BANTAM PROGRAM

**Length of Season:**
- 20 weeks
- 4 weeks: Practice and Skill Development Season
- 12 weeks: Practice and Game-Play Season

**Frequency per Week:**
- 4-5 times

**Number of Games per Season:**
- 50-55

**BANTAM PROGRAM**

- **General Objective:** Develop consistency of the basic technical Skills of the Game
- **Increased focus on hockey with a reduction in the number of other sports played to 1-2**
- **Indoor and outdoor practice:**
- **Regular Tournaments:**
- **Playoff Season:**
- **Number of Games total:**
- **MARCH:**
  - 3 tournaments
  - 12 games
- **APRIL:**
  - 50 - 55

### PRACTICE BREAKDOWN FOR THE SEASON – BANTAM

#### SEPTEMBER

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop

#### OCTOBER

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop
- Team Tactics: introduce, develop

#### NOVEMBER

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop
- Team Tactics: introduce, develop

#### DECEMBER

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop
- Team Tactics: introduce, develop

#### JANUARY

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop
- Team Tactics: introduce, develop

#### FEBRUARY

- Technical Skills: develop, refine
- Individual Tactics: introduce, develop
- Team Tactics: introduce, develop

- **Tournaments:**
  - March
  - April

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## LTPD – Midget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Start date for Practices</th>
<th>Development Season Start date for Games</th>
<th>Development &amp; regular Season Start date for Games</th>
<th>Playoff Season</th>
<th>Tournaments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midget</td>
<td>55 - 60</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>20 weeks</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>55 - 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>40 practices</td>
<td>32 games</td>
<td>12 games</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 tournaments</td>
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### Midget Program

- **Length of Season**: 20 weeks minimum
  - 4 weeks: Practice and Skill Development Season
  - 20 weeks: Practice and Game Play Season
  - 2 weeks: Playoff Season
  - 3 tournaments: 12 games

- **Number of Games per Season**: 55 - 60

### Practice Breakdown for the Season – Midget

- **September**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: develop
  - Team Tactics: introduce

- **October**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: introduce
  - Team Tactics: develop

- **November**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: introduce
  - Team Tactics: refine

- **December**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: develop
  - Team Tactics: develop

- **January**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: develop
  - Team Tactics: develop

- **February**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: develop
  - Team Tactics: develop

- **March**
  - Technical Skills: develop
  - Individual Tactics: develop
  - Team Tactics: develop

- **April**
  - Playoffs - tournaments

Develop basic psychological attributes: concentration, attention, visualization, motivation, positive internal dialogue

Develop training routines to complement the main part of the season: warm-up, hydration, and diet, nutrition, etc.
Programming Goals – MHA Centered

What an MHA needs to do to improve:

- Focus on supporting the complete athlete not just the athlete training and competition.

- Introduce athletic skills in a systematic and timely way

- Recommend other sports, cross training methods to get away from hockey and avoid burn out

- Remove the focus of winning at all levels and age
Programming Goals – MHA Centered

The most important aspects of Minor Hockey Association development are:
1) Consistency in the coaching philosophy
2) Consistency in what the coaches are teaching.
Programming Goals – MHA Centered

A Minor Hockey Association’s success from a coaching / player standpoint will be based on 3 main aspects:

1) Enjoyment of players coming to the rink everyday
2) Improvement of players’ skills
3) Developing of players to play at the next level
Key Steps to Building a Programming Model

What is your ideal player?

**Forwards**
- Highly skilled, competitive, and intelligent on the ice.
- Agile on their skates north, south, east, west
- Creative – willing to try things

**Defence**
- Willing to try and make a play
- Good passers, quick thinkers and agile skaters

**Goaltenders**
- Makes the saves they need to
- Technically sound and athletic

Regardless of what the “ideal player” is, the MHA and the coaches have to be on the same page as far as what and how to develop it.
Key Steps to Building a Programming Model

By implementing a standardized technical curriculum and methodology for instruction, your association is building a foundation for athletes to enjoy the game of hockey and reach their potential. While it should be the goal of each team to be successful in their league, the player development process should be at the forefront of each team and this development component must not be compromised.
In an era when all too many leading professional football clubs favor the “quick fix” approach to squad-building – the philosophy of FC Barcelona can sometimes seem like the rationale of a bygone age.

While other sides spend their cash in an effort to secure the best players, Barça continue to place heavy emphasis on a development program which has succeeded in carrying a remarkable number of boyhood talents all the way to the Barcelona first team and beyond.

Although many other top clubs have long-established youth set-ups, none in recent times has been able to match the success rate of Barça’s La Masia academy.
FC Barcelona – Proof of a System

- FIFA Ballon d’Or - Messi, Iniesta and Xavi (the first time ever that the world’s best player award had been contested by three graduates of the same youth program), the academy’s incredible level of achievement was also clear for all to see during Spain’s successful 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™ campaign.

- Seven graduates of La Masia were part of Spain’s World Cup-winning side in South Africa - six of them in the starting 11.

- “It is not a specific objective, but we do aim to have as many players as possible from the academy reaching the highest level
While the number of La Masia graduates is perhaps the most striking indication of Barça’s success, effectiveness in honing raw talent of the young athletes is the key behind the scenes.

Now that Barcelona are reaping the rewards from their long-term investment in youth, there is unsurprisingly plenty of talk about other clubs wanting to copy the methods and philosophies of La Masia.

“Most teams always rely on the first team coach, on the president. The changes that take place in clubs every two or three years mean that ideas change, but Barça has always maintained the same philosophy for youth football and that’s the main difference between us and other clubs. That’s the key to our success.”
Decades of investment
La Masia’s success has not developed overnight, but is instead the result of more than three decades of ambitious youth football development by the club.

The philosophy of believing in youth players and weaning them on a doctrine of short passing and possession play was literally a foreign concept when it was introduced to the club in the 1970s.

What has been important over the years, is the manner in which the youth academy has been forced to mirror the prevailing strategies and formations of the Barcelona first team.
The style of possession play was introduced systematically at the same time the same philosophy was applied to the youth teams – everyone is currently trained in the skills, tactics and philosophy of the current 4-3-3,”

While members of the coaching staff continued to follow Michels’ approach, it was Cruyff who decided that all the Barcelona teams would play in the same way to facilitate the transition to consistency
“We take great pride and satisfaction in what’s happening at the moment,” this is down to the work of a lot of people who stuck with the same approach for many years to get to this great moment, where the three best players in the world are graduates of our youth academy.”

“For Barcelona to have the three FIFA Ballon d’Or finalists within the squad demonstrates the club’s excellence as an institution. Of course, Barcelona are admired for their success, but the social and sporting recognition which the club enjoys goes beyond simply winning matches. It has do with the footballing model we project, showing that you can be competitive and win, but also make it enjoyable for the spectators.”
Use the resources on the following pages to help support your coaches, and provide them with all of the tools necessary to develop their players.
Resources / Programs

1. Skills Manuals
2. Skills of Gold DVD’s
3. Coach Mentorship
4. Specialty Clinics
5. Drill Packs
6. Program of Excellence
7. Skills Development Camps
Long Term Player Development

- Integrated into Hockey Canada Skills Development Manuals starting in 1996
- Skills Development Manuals available for all ages since 1999.
- Each manual contains 32 Practice Plans that progress from simple to more complex

- Initiation - Novice - Atom
- Peewee - Bantam - Midget
- Half Ice - Goaltending
A series of Specialty Clinics have been developed to offer coaches a practical session on teaching various skills, tactics & systems. This proactive approach will also open the doors of communication for coaches to further pursue a mentor.

The Specialty Clinic modules include:

1. Skating
2. Puck Control
3. Small Area Games
4. Checking
5. Developing Defencemen
6. Shooting & Scoring
Resources / Programs