



**National
Coaching
Certification
Program**



Coaching
Association
of Canada



*Introduction to Community Coaching
Cross-Country Skiing*

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Introduction to Community Coaching Cross-Country Skiing

REFERENCE MATERIAL



“The principle of coaching responsibly carries the expectation that the activities of coaches will benefit society in general and participants in particular. Fundamental to the implementation of this principle is the notion of competence (i.e. coaches who are well prepared and current).”

NCCP Code of Ethics

Prepared under the authority of
Cross Country Canada’s
Coach and Athlete Development Committee



The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.

Partners in Coach Education and Training

The programs of this organization are funded in part by Sport Canada.



© This document is copyrighted by the Coaching Association of Canada (2008) and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Printed in Canada.



ATHLETE & COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

Athlete Age	LTAD Stage	NCCP Context
23 +/- males 23 +/- females	Training to Win (T2W)	Competition Coaching: High Performance (CCHP)
20 - 23 +/- males 19 - 23 +/- females	Training to Compete (T2C)	Competition Coaching: Development (CCD – T2C)
16 - 20 +/- males 15 - 19 +/- females	Learning to Compete (L2C)	Competition Coaching: Development (CCD – L2C)
12 - 16 males 11 - 15 females	Training to Train (T2T)	Competition Coaching: Introduction (CCI – T2T)
9 - 12 males 8 - 11 females	Learning to Train (L2T)	Competition Coaching: Introduction (CCI – L2T)
6 - 9 males 6 - 8 females	FUNdamentals	Community Coaching (CC)
0 - 6	Active Start	Community Coaching: Introduction (ICC)





Illustration by Doris Barrette



Table of Contents

Section 1 – Introduction and Setting the Scene

1.1	What is the National Coaching Certification Program?	1
1.1.1	The NCCP Philosophy	1
1.2	An Overview of Cross Country Canada	3
1.3	Athletes' Reasons for Being in Sport	4
1.3.1	Reasons Children Participate in Their Favourite Sport.....	5
1.4	What Parents Expect of Sport	6
1.5	What Parents Expect of Coaches	7
1.6	CCC Skill Development Program	8
1.7	Values and Ethics in Coaching	10
1.7.1	Fair Play	10
1.7.2	Ethical Issues in Coaching	10
1.7.3	NCCP Code of Ethics	11
1.7.4	CCC Coaches Code of Conduct Form (to sign)	13
1.7.5	CCC Coaches Code of Conduct Form (to keep)	15

Section 2 – Children and Their Sport Needs

2.1	Where Community Sport Fits in Athlete Development	19
2.2	Stages of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)	20
2.2.1	The LTAD Framework for Cross-Country Skiing	20
2.2.2	The LTAD Stages for Cross-Country Skiing.....	21
2.2.3	Active Start Stage of Development	23
2.3	Teaching Children in the Active Start Stage of Development	25
2.3.1	How Children Learn	25
2.3.2	Coaching Tips	25
2.3.3	Balance	26
2.3.4	Rhythm.....	27
2.4	Physical Literacy.....	28
2.4.1	Developing Physical Literacy.....	29
2.4.2	Fundamental Movement Skills	30
2.4.3	Fundamental Sport Skills	31
2.4.4	Other Skills.....	32
2.4.5	Key to an Active, Healthy Life and Sporting Excellence	32
2.5	Growth and Development Considerations.....	34
2.6	CCC Athlete Development Grid.....	39

Section 3 – Clothing and Equipment

3.1	Clothing for Cross-Country Skiing Activities	43
3.2	Dressing Appropriately for Skiing (Lesson Plan)	45
3.3	Tips for Keeping Warm.....	47
3.4	Ski Equipment	48
3.4.1	Know the Terms	48



3.4.2	Ski Equipment for Children.....	49
3.4.3	Ski Shops and Ski Swaps	51
3.4.4	Ski Care	52
3.5	Ski Preparation.....	53

Section 4 – Teaching Cross-Country Skiing

4.1	Ski Playgrounds and Terrain Parks	57
4.1.1	Ski Playgrounds	57
4.1.2	Building an Adventure Trail.....	60
4.1.3	Kid Magnet – A Ski Playground Primer	61
4.1.4	Roller-Coaster Dips and Bicycle Dips	64
4.2	The First Steps – Technique for Beginners	67
4.2.1	Skill Criteria - Active Start	67
4.2.2	Skill Evaluation Benchmarks - Active Start	69
4.2.3	Skill Criteria and Evaluation Benchmarks - Level 1	70
4.2.4	Skill Checklist - Level 1	74
4.3	Games for Teaching Technique.....	75
4.3.1	Equipment.....	76
4.4	Coach Education/Training	77
4.4.1	Ways to Improve Your Coaching Skills.....	77
4.4.2	Teaching Technique Through Example	78
4.4.3	Recommended Training Standards for Coaches.....	79

Section 5 – Seasonal Plan and Activity Plan

5.1	Designing a Seasonal Plan for a Skill Development Program	81
5.1.1	Seasonal Plan Checklist	81
5.1.2	Seasonal Plan Chart	84
5.1.3	Seasonal Plan Worksheet.....	85
5.2	Designing an Activity Plan.....	87
5.2.1	Choosing Activities.....	87
5.2.2	Activity/Practice Planning Checklist	88
5.3	Activity Plans: Active Start Stage of Development	89
5.4	Practice Plans: FUNdamentals Stage of Development	103
5.5	Special Activities	135
5.5.1	Nature and Environment	141

Section 6 – Sport Safety

6.1	Sport Safety Through Risk Management	143
6.2	Strategies for Managing Risk	144
6.3	Cold as a Risk Factor	147
6.4	Trail Safety	151
6.5	Winter Safety.....	162
6.6	Hypothermia	154



6.7	Emergency Action Plan (EAP).....	158
6.7.1	Emergency Action Plan Checklist	159
6.7.2	Sample Emergency Action Plan.....	160
6.7.3	Steps to Follow When an Injury Occurs	161
6.7.4	Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Worksheet	163
6.8	Coach Liability	166
6.9	Risk Management	168
6.10	Legal Questions and Answers (FAQ)	170

Section 7 – Practice Coaching Session

7.1	Self-Assessment Sheet.....	175
7.2	Effective Communication.....	179
7.3	The Steps to Coaching an Activity	181
7.3.1	Key Points for Each Step of a Coaching Activity	182
7.3.2	Additional Comments on Giving Feedback	184
7.4	Facility Safety Checklist.....	185
7.5	Emergency Information Chart	188
7.6	CCC Accident Report Form.....	189

Section 8 – Understanding the Coaching Environment

8.1	The Support Structure.....	191
8.1.1	The Club	191
8.1.2	The Ski Facility.....	191
8.1.3	A Progression of Athlete Development Opportunities	192
8.1.4	Club Coaches	192
8.1.5	SDP Programmer.....	194
8.1.6	Parents.....	195
8.2	Common Tasks of Community Coaches	197
8.3	Full Service Clubs	198
8.3.1	Example Full Service Club Infrastructure	199

Section 9 – Evaluation

9.1	Community Coaching Certification Process.....	201
9.2	Community Coaching Flowchart	205
9.3	Self Test	206
9.4	NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form	211
9.5	Evaluation Form	213





SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION AND SETTING THE SCENE



Coaching Tip: Physical activity programs and initiatives face the challenges of a highly technological society that makes it increasingly convenient to remain sedentary and that discourages physical activity in both obvious and subtle ways. To increase physical activity in the general population, it may be necessary to go beyond traditional efforts.

Source: 1996 US Surgeon General's Report of Physical Activity and Health



1.1 What is the National Coaching Certification Program?

The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) is a coach training and certification program offered in over 65 sports in Canada. The principal objective of this program is to develop the abilities of coaches working with athletes at all levels, from the community level through to high-performance sport.

More than 1,000,000 coaches have taken part in training, education and certification activities offered by the NCCP since its inception. This has enabled them to acquire coaching knowledge and skills aimed at:

- providing athletes with a positive sport experience;
- meeting the needs of athletes; and
- providing athletes with opportunities to achieve their potential in and through sport.

The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.

1.1.1 The NCCP Philosophy

In the NCCP, coaching is about helping other people improve and achieve their goals in and through sport; it is also about creating an environment in which this can take place.



The aim of the NCCP is to:

- provide every athlete in a sport program with a positive experience;
- provide an opportunity for athletes to achieve their full potential through sport; and
- use sport as a personal development tool.





Provide Every Athlete In a Sport Program With a Positive Experience

Every individual who chooses to participate in a sport program must have the opportunity to have a positive experience. The benefits and satisfaction must be such that he/she will be motivated to keep participating.

Provide an Opportunity for Athletes to Achieve Their Full Potential Through Sport

Each individual has unique interests, abilities, and talents. Each athlete must have an equal opportunity to explore his or her interests and to develop his or her skills and abilities. Sport programs must represent a suitable challenge to each athlete, given his or her goals and capabilities.

Use Sport As a Personal Development Tool

Sport enables athletes to challenge themselves, the environment and others. It also gives athletes an opportunity to interact with others. While sport in itself is neither good nor bad, it can be a vehicle for good.





1.2 An Overview of Cross Country Canada

Cross-country skiing is governed within Canada by three levels of organization: clubs (i.e. local); divisions (i.e. provincial/territorial); and Cross Country Canada (i.e. national). All of these levels need to function in harmony if the potential of cross-country skiing is to be harnessed effectively for Canadians. In this respect, our sport operates as a “community of communities”, with enjoyment of the sport being the common denominator that links and motivates skiers within communities and local or regional communities within a national structure.

Clubs – The Foundation

Clubs are created by cross-country skiers at the community level in order to provide for their immediate needs. Clubs are the foundation of Cross Country Canada (CCC). They offer a social and/or competitive environment in which members can enjoy the sport; they attract skiers; they deliver programs for children, youth, adults, racers, officials and coaches; frequently they offer access to trails; and they create a national footprint. When clubs prosper, the sport flourishes. Clubs can be costly to operate, and their major source of revenue is the fee they charge their members. Thus by paying club fees, individual members are both paying for the services they receive locally and helping to build the sport more universally. However, most clubs cannot exist in isolation. To achieve their goals, they need the benefit of provincial and federal funding; they need to cooperate with other clubs to create critical mass and flexible experiences; they need an external system which can continue to support and develop the competitive skiers who outgrow the club environment; and most of all they need access to the properly designed, structured and standardized cross-country ski programs for which they are the delivery vehicle.

Divisions

Divisions are provincial/territorial sport organizations (PSOs/TSOs) that are created by individual members and their clubs to serve their collective needs at this level. In general, divisions integrate and coordinate the efforts of clubs in order to create a critical mass and economies of scale. Divisions interface with, and in some respects are accountable to, provincial/territorial governments. They provide provincial coordination for the delivery of national and/or division programs to the club level, and develop and manage provincial programs to further their mission and mandate (e.g. competitive programs and events beyond the club level).

Cross Country Canada

CCC is the national sport organization (NSO) that has been created by individual members, through decisions taken by their respective clubs and divisions, to provide for the needs of cross-country skiing at this level. In general terms, CCC provides connectivity to the broader international world of cross-country skiing and makes local activities more relevant and productive by applying economies of scale to create services of value to the membership at large. CCC is responsible for establishing national standards and creating programs for achieving these standards in areas such as skill development, coaching, event rules and organization, and officiating. CCC also fulfills certain roles that are unique to the national level, such as operating the National Cross-Country Ski Team program.





1.3 Athletes' Reasons for Being in Sport

Participants come into a sport situation with their own needs, interests and reasons for being involved. Some spend more time with their coach than they do with a teacher or even with their parents. Because of the significant influence coaches have on the development of athletes, from an athletic and a human point of view, coaches must ensure that their reasons for coaching are consistent with what athletes want or need.

This section provides a brief overview of the main reasons why people are involved in sport and of the expectations athletes and parents may have of sport and of coaches. Coaches must recognize and respect individual differences in this area because athletes drop out when programs do not match their reasons for being in sport. In other words, coaches need to be fair to athletes — *either work to give them the program they want OR recommend a program that will better meet their needs.*

In general, people participate in sport for one or more of the following four reasons:

- A desire for achievement** — A wish to improve, master new skills, and pursue excellence.
- A need for affiliation** — A desire to have positive and friendly relations with others.
- A desire for sensation** — A desire to experience the sights, sounds and physical feelings surrounding a sport or the excitement in a sport.
- A desire for self-direction** — A wish to feel a sense of control, to feel in charge.

Since people participate in sport for different reasons, sport programs need to satisfy these various motives. In other words an approach that allows for personal achievement and meets athletes' needs for affiliation, sensation and self-direction is necessary.

In a study of 2,000 boys and 1,900 girls in the 7th to 12th grades, Ewing & Seefeldt (1987) asked the children to rank what motivated them to participate in their favorite sport in school. The reasons children participate in their favourite sport, based on that study, are outlined in the chart on the following page.





1.3.1 Reasons Children Participate in Their Favourite Sport

The ten most important reasons I play my favourite sport are:

1. To have fun
2. To improve my skills
3. To stay in shape
4. To do something I am good at
5. For the excitement of competition
6. To get exercise
7. To play as part of a team
8. For the challenge of competition
9. To learn new skills
10. To win

The 11 most important reasons I stopped playing a sport are:

1. I lost interest
2. I was not having fun
3. It took too much time
4. The coach was a poor teacher
5. Too much pressure (worry)
6. I wanted a non-sport activity
7. I was tired of it
8. I needed more study time
9. The coach played favourites
10. Sport was boring
11. Over-emphasis on winning

I would get re-involved in a sport I dropped if:**Boys**

1. Practice was more fun
2. I could play more
3. The coach understood players better
4. There was no conflict with studies
5. Coaches were better teachers
6. There was no conflict with social life

Girls

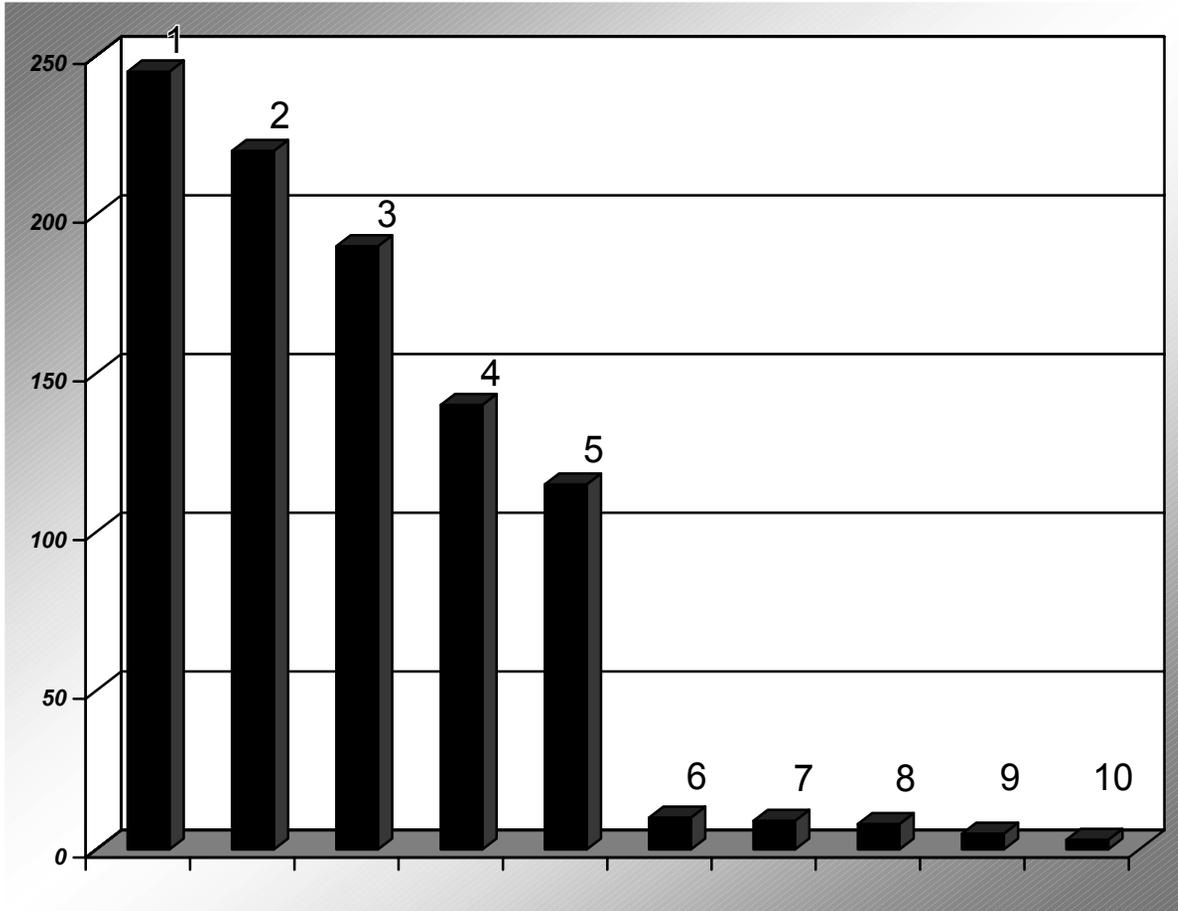
1. Practice was more fun
2. There was no conflict with studies
3. The coach understood players better
4. There was no conflict with social life
5. I could play more
6. Coaches were better teachers

Ewing, M.E. & Seefeldt, V., Reasons Children Participate in Their Favourite Sport





1.4 What Parents Expect of Sport



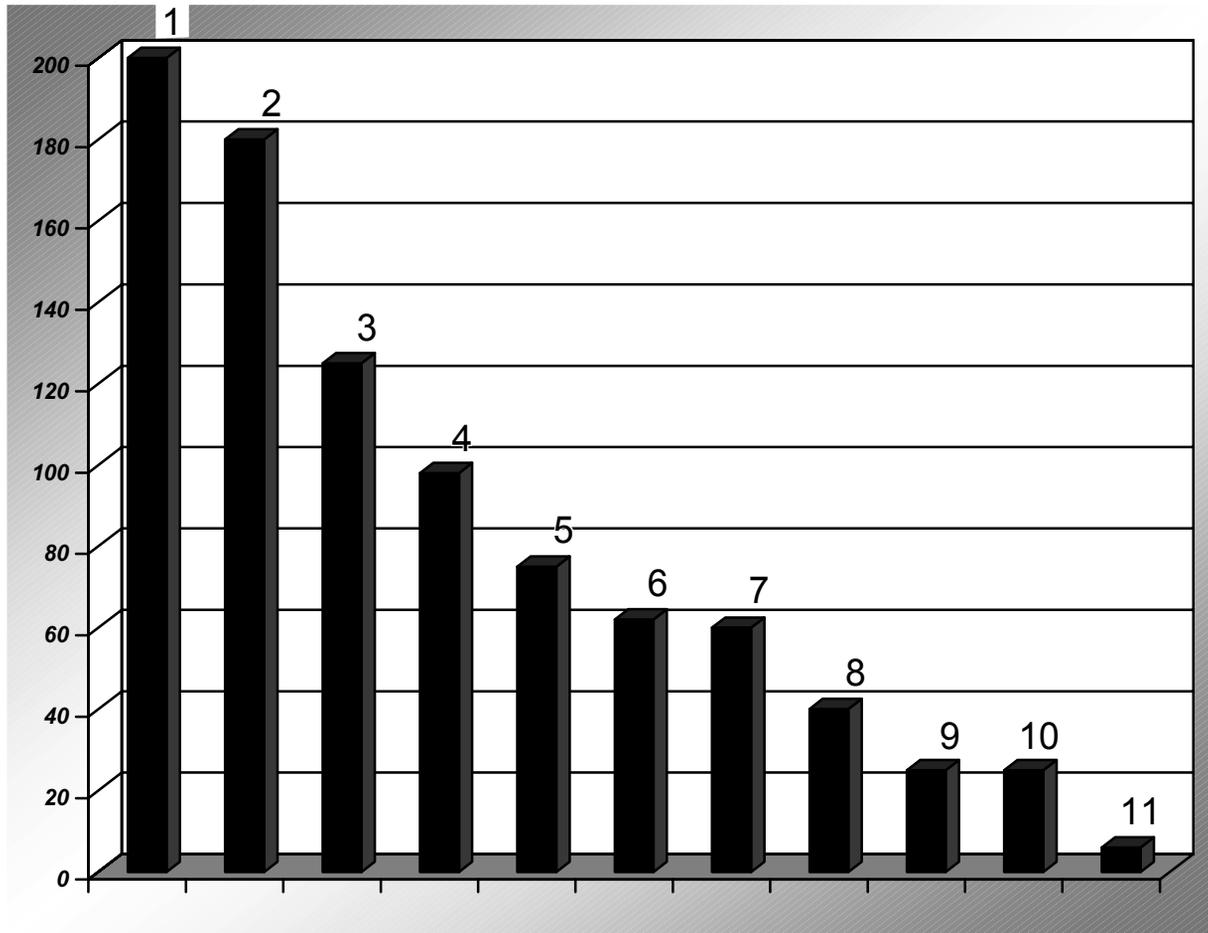
Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. To build self-esteem | 6. Other |
| 2. To have fun | 7. To have a professional career |
| 3. To develop skills | 8. To play on a winning team |
| 4. To increase fitness | 9. To win awards |
| 5. To make new friends | 10. To go to the Olympics |





1.5 What Parents Expect of Coaches



Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Make sport enjoyable | 7. Respect rules and officials |
| 2. Respect children as individuals | 8. Give equal opportunity for playing time |
| 3. Be a knowledgeable leader | 9. Plan activities effectively |
| 4. Be safety conscious | 10. Be approachable |
| 5. Act in a mature and adult manner | 11. Strive to win |
| 6. Be fair | |





1.6 CCC Skill Development Program

Cross Country Canada provides its member divisions and clubs with a progression of Skill Development Programs (SDP) for children that encourage physical literacy and cross-country skiing for all. These programs provide a vertically integrated continuum of skier development opportunities, beginning with Bunnyrabbits, followed by Jackrabbits and concluding with Track Attack.

Bunnyrabbit Program

The Bunnyrabbit Program, which is directed at children in the “Active Start” stage of development (five years of age and younger), is the first level of the program. The objective is to introduce cross-country skiing and the healthy lifestyle associated with it through organized activity and active play. In addition, the program is designed to:

- Help children develop a positive self-image.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to make ski-friends.
- Develop fundamental movement skills.
- Help the child develop an awareness and appreciation of our natural environment.

Jackrabbit Program

The Jackrabbit Program, which is directed at children in the “FUNdamentals” stage of development (six to nine years of age), is the second level of the program. The objective is for children to learn basic cross-country ski skills (both classic and skating) and to instill a lifelong interest in the sport, thereby enhancing their quality of life and health. In addition, it is designed to:

- Help children develop confidence.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to ski and socialize with their ski-friends.
- Develop fundamental movement skills and build overall sport skills.
- Develop outdoor winter safety skills.

Track Attack Program

The Track Attack Program, which is directed at children in the “Learning to Train” stage of development (10 to 12 years of age), is the third level of the program. The objective is for the participants to become technically competent cross-country skiers and to utilize those skills to explore a wide range of cross-country ski activities, from backcountry ski excursions to Ski Tournaments. In addition, it is designed to:





- Develop fitness through active play, games and other activities.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to be part of a sport “team”.
- Introduce dryland ski techniques such as ski walking, ski striding and roller skiing.
- Expose children to a variety of “adventure-based” cross-country ski activities.





1.7 Values and Ethics in Coaching

1.7.1 Fair Play

There are four main groups of people involved in community sport competitions: the participants, their parents, the coaches and the officials. How these groups interact and treat each other before, during and after each activity/event will greatly influence whether the sport experience for the participant is a positive or a negative one.

At the beginning of the season many clubs take time to outline how the four groups involved will act, and then to describe these behaviours in their own fair play charter or team code of conduct. It is important to involve everyone in developing such a code and then have everyone sign it.

Committing to fair play will not detract from the competitiveness of a participant or a team. In fact, teams and competitions are enhanced when all groups agree to adhere to fair play statements that outline the do's and don'ts in a very clear way.

Some examples of fair play behaviors include:

- following all the rules and never seeking to deliberately break a rule;
- refusing to win by cheating;
- respecting the officials (e.g. not yelling at them or harassing them in any way);
- demonstrating self-control;
- recognizing good performances by the opponent; to get the best out of you, you need your opponents to play their best too; and
- cheering your team without verbally abusing opponents.

1.7.2 Ethical Issues in Coaching

Many people can identify the most obvious ethical issues in sport. Examples of these situations, such as the following, are frequently broadcast on television and radio reports:

- Encouraging the use of performance enhancing drugs.
- Sexual involvement with an athlete.

Most people are unaware, however, that unethical coaching includes many more issues than this. A more complete list of unethical coaching practices would include:

- directing comments or criticism at the athlete rather than the performance;
- failing to ensure that the activity undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athlete;





- ❑ criticizing another coach's teaching methods, techniques or opinions, especially to other athletes;
- ❑ allowing one's own goals to take precedence over those of an athlete's parents or legal guardians in management decisions pertaining to their child's development;
- ❑ projecting an unfavorable image of sport and coaching; and
- ❑ failure to seek ways to improve your coaching skills.

All leaders in sport have a responsibility to ensure that athlete development programs are implemented in an ethical environment. Where does your club stand on the active promotion and encouragement of ethical coaching?

1.7.3 NCCP Code of Ethics

The NCCP Code of Ethics is based on four fundamental principles:

1) Respecting Participants. The principle of respecting participants challenges coaches to act in a manner respectful of the dignity of those involved in sport. The cornerstone of this principle is the basic assumption that each person has value and is worthy of respect. Acting with respect for participants means the following:

- ✓ Coaches do not make some participants feel more or less worthy as persons than others on the basis of gender, race, place of origin, athletic potential, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, marital status, age, or any other conditions.
- ✓ Coaches have a responsibility to respect and promote the rights of all participants. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for: confidentiality (right to privacy); informed participation and shared decision-making (right to self-determination – participants' rights); and fair and reasonable treatment (right to procedural fairness). Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in vulnerable or dependent positions, and therefore less able to protect their own rights.
- ✓ Coaches interact with others in a manner that enables all participants in sport to maintain their dignity.
- ✓ Coaches build mutual support among fellow coaches, officials, participants and their family members.

2) Coaching Responsibly. The principle of coaching responsibly carries the expectation that the activities of coaches will benefit society in general and participants in particular, and will do no harm. Fundamental to the implementation of this principle is the notion of competence (i.e. coaches who are well prepared and current in their discipline will be able to maximize benefits and minimize risks to participants). In addition, coaching responsibly implies the following:

- ✓ Coaches act in the best interest of the participant's development as a whole person.
- ✓ Coaches recognize the power inherent in the position of coach.





- ✓ Coaches are aware of their personal values and how these affect their behaviour.
- ✓ Coaches acknowledge the limitations of their knowledge and competence in their sport.
- ✓ Coaches accept the responsibility to work with other coaches and professionals in sport in the best interests of the participants.

3) Maintaining Integrity in Relationships. The principle of maintaining integrity in relationships means that coaches are expected to be honest, sincere and honourable in their relationships. Acting on these values is most possible when coaches have a high degree of self-awareness and the ability to reflect critically on how their views and opinions influence their interactions. Critical reflection questions existing assumptions about the values and practices that govern coaches' actions. The essential component of critical reflection is an attitude based on open-mindedness, active inquiry and sincerity.

4) Honouring Sport. The principle of honouring sport challenges coaches to recognize, act on, and promote the value of sport for individuals and teams, and for society in general. Honouring sport implies the following:

- ✓ Coaches act on and promote clearly articulated values related to coaching and sport.
- ✓ Coaches encourage and model honourable intentions and actions.





1.7.4 CCC Coaches Code of Conduct Form (to sign)

Preamble

1. The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channeled. Thus, how athletes regard their sport is often dependent on the behaviour of the coach. The following Code of Conduct has been developed to aid coaches in achieving a level of behaviour that will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident and productive human beings.

Coaches' Responsibilities

2. Coaches have a responsibility to:
 - a. treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status;
 - b. direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete;
 - c. consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of their sport and of coaching. For example, coaches should:
 - 1) refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes,
 - 2) abstain from the use of tobacco products while in the presence of their athletes and discourage their use by athletes,
 - 3) abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages when working with athletes,
 - 4) refrain from encouraging the use of alcohol in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at the playing site, and
 - 5) refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties;
 - d. ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
 - e. communicate and cooperate with registered medical practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their athletes' medical and psychological problems. Consider the athletes' future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue playing or training;
 - f. recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over their own;





- g. regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness;
- h. treat opponents and officials with due respect, both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. Actively encourage athletes to uphold the rules of their sport and the spirit of such rules;
- i. in the case of minors, communicate and cooperate with the athletes' parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their children's development; and
- j. in an educational institution, be aware of the academic pressures placed on student-athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner so as to allow academic success.

Coaching Imperatives

3. Coaches must:

- a. ensure the safety of the athletes with whom they work;
- b. at no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with their athletes. This includes requests for sexual favours or threat of reprisal for the rejection of such requests;
- c. respect their athletes' dignity. Verbal or physical behaviours that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable (the CCC definition of harassment, and the associated policy for harassment prevention and for investigation of alleged incidents, can be found on the CCC website at www.cccski.com);
- d. never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances; and
- e. never provide under-age athletes with alcohol.

Coaches' Attestation

4. This CCC Coaches Code of Conduct has been developed to be consistent with the Coaches Code of Ethics (Principles and Ethical Standards) promulgated by the Coaching Association of Canada. Divisions and Clubs of CCC are encouraged to require their coaches and ski leaders to sign the attestation below, as confirmation that they understand and will comply with the undertakings herein.

I have read and understand the above statements and agree to conduct myself in a manner that demonstrates the standards established in this CCC Coaches Code of Conduct and the Coaching Code of Ethics (Principles and Ethical Standards) available from the Coaching Association of Canada.

Signature: _____ **Witness:** _____

Print Name: _____ **Date:** _____





1.7.5 CCC Coaches Code of Conduct Form (to keep)

Preamble

1. The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channeled. Thus, how athletes regard their sport is often dependent on the behaviour of the coach. The following Code of Conduct has been developed to aid coaches in achieving a level of behaviour that will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident and productive human beings.

Coaches' Responsibilities

2. Coaches have a responsibility to:
 - a. treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status;
 - b. direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete;
 - c. consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of their sport and of coaching. For example, coaches should:
 - 1) refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes,
 - 2) abstain from the use of tobacco products while in the presence of their athletes and discourage their use by athletes,
 - 3) abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages when working with athletes,
 - 4) refrain from encouraging the use of alcohol in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at the playing site, and
 - 5) refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties;
 - d. ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
 - e. communicate and cooperate with registered medical practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their athletes' medical and psychological problems. Consider the athletes' future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue playing or training;
 - f. recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over their own;





- g. regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness;
- h. treat opponents and officials with due respect, both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. Actively encourage athletes to uphold the rules of their sport and the spirit of such rules;
- i. in the case of minors, communicate and cooperate with the athletes' parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their children's development; and
- j. in an educational institution, be aware of the academic pressures placed on student-athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner so as to allow academic success.

Coaching Imperatives

3. Coaches must:

- a. ensure the safety of the athletes with whom they work;
- b. at no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with their athletes. This includes requests for sexual favours or threat of reprisal for the rejection of such requests;
- c. respect their athletes' dignity. Verbal or physical behaviours that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable (the CCC definition of harassment, and the associated policy for harassment prevention and for investigation of alleged incidents, can be found on the CCC website at www.cccski.com);
- d. never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances; and
- e. never provide under-age athletes with alcohol.

Coaches' Attestation

4. This CCC Coaches Code of Conduct has been developed to be consistent with the Coaches Code of Ethics (Principles and Ethical Standards) promulgated by the Coaching Association of Canada. Divisions and Clubs of CCC are encouraged to require their coaches and ski leaders to sign the attestation below, as confirmation that they understand and will comply with the undertakings herein.

I have read and understand the above statements and agree to conduct myself in a manner that demonstrates the standards established in this CCC Coaches Code of Conduct and the Coaching Code of Ethics (Principles and Ethical Standards) available from the Coaching Association of Canada.

Signature: _____ **Witness:** _____

Print Name: _____ **Date:** _____





REFERENCES

CPCA Coaching Code of Ethics, Canadian Professional Coaches Association.

Ewing, M.E. & Seefeldt, V., *Reasons Children Participate in Their Favourite Sport*. Participation and attrition patterns in American agency-sponsored and interscholastic sports: An executive summary. *Preliminary Report to the Athletic Footwear Council*. North Palm Beach, FLA: Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 1988.

What Parents Expect of Coaches. *Sport Parent Survey*. Ministry of Government Services, Sports and Commonwealth Games Division, Government of B.C., 1994.

What Parents Expect of Sport. *Sport Parent Survey*. Ministry of Government Services, Sports and Commonwealth Games Division, Government of B.C., 1994.

Some images and pictures contained in this document are the property of CARDISPORT or HEMERA TECHNOLOGIES INC. and are copyrighted.

Coaching Association of Canada, *Introductory Module*, Version 1.1, 2007.





SECTION 2 - CHILDREN AND THEIR SPORT NEEDS



Coaching Tip: Terrain can teach better than most people can.

Source: Teaching Children to Ski



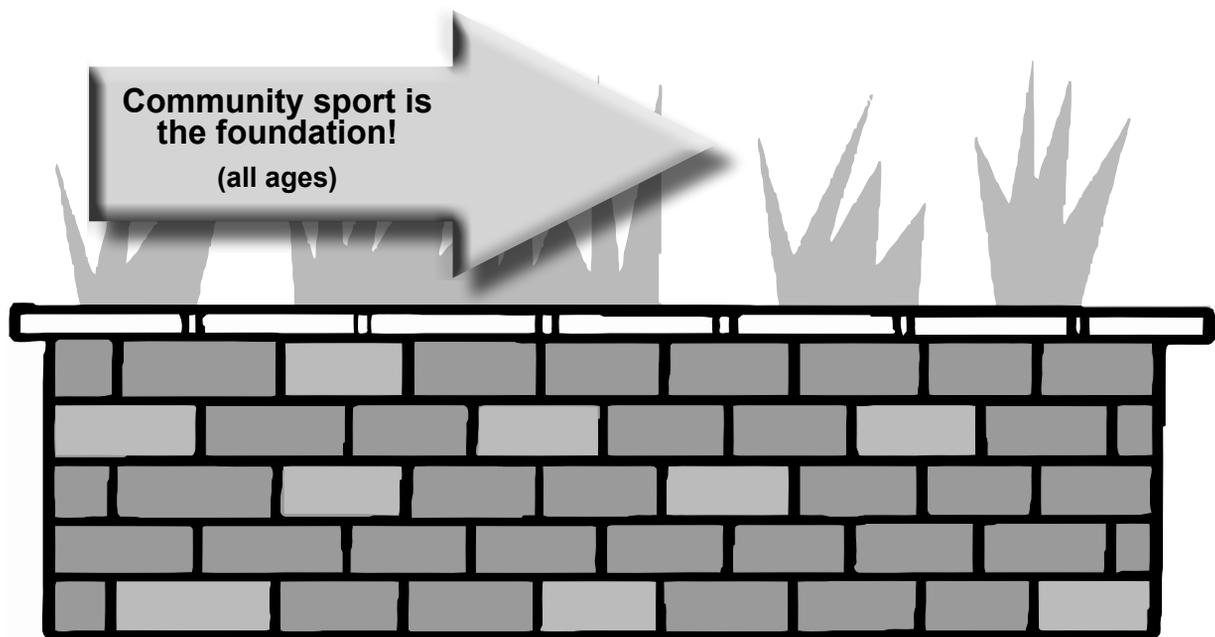
2.1 Where Community Sport Fits in Athlete Development

Community sport represents most participants' entry point into sport. It is often in community sport that participants first develop basic sport skills and abilities and where the foundation for athlete development takes place. There are participants of all ages involved in community sport because, over time, they will choose to either:

- increase their training commitment to a sport and progress to the Training to Train stage in one or two sports;
- move back and forth between an increased commitment stage and community sport as their abilities, interests, peer groups, personal priorities and opportunities change; or
- stay in community sport into adulthood and participate for the fun and fitness.

It is part of a healthy child's development to explore different sports. Experience has shown that:

- a focus on FUNdamentals and participation in many sports at early ages is key to elite performance as adults in sports where champions are generally 20+ years old (called "late specialization sports" – all team sports and most individual sports fall into this category);
- emphasis on a single sport at an early age does not result in better performance in that sport as an adult than a person who played multiple sports at a young age; and
- emphasis on a single sport at an early age often results in burnout and dropout.





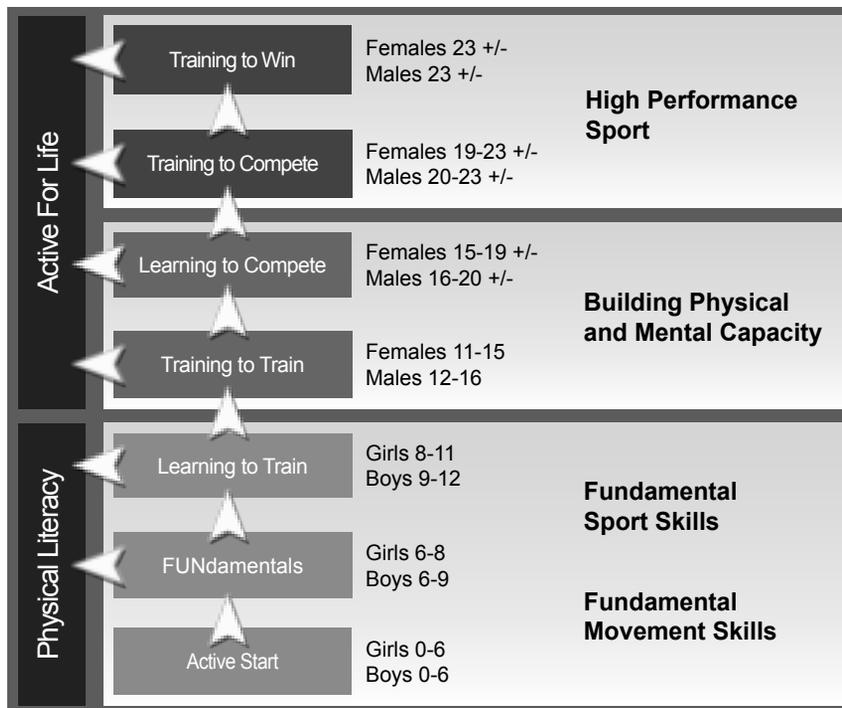
2.2 Stages of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

Cross-country skiing is a late specialization sport. During the first three stages of Canada’s LTAD model, children grow and improve within the sport through programs permitting a broad exposure to activities that develop overall motor and sport skills. Following the first three stages, there is a transition to either further development and excellence in cross-country skiing or life-long participation in skiing and/or other sports at the recreational or less competitive level. For athletes who wish to pursue excellence, increasing specialization in cross-country skiing and an expanding focus on competition permit them to mature athletically and aspire to national and international podiums. Regardless of the level of excellence or sport-mastery achieved however, participation in cross-country skiing – a “sport for life” - can enhance the health, fitness and mental well-being of Canadians of all ages.

2.2.1 The LTAD Framework for Cross-Country Skiing

The first three stages encourage physical literacy and “Sport for All”:	The next four stages focus on development and competitive excellence:	The final stage encourages life-long physical activity:
1. Active Start 2. FUNdamentals 3. Learning to Train	4. Training to Train 5. Learning to Compete 6. Training to Compete 7. Training to Win	8. Active for Life

Figure 2.1





2.2.2 The LTAD Stages for Cross-Country Skiing

To promote a healthy and logical development for each athlete, the LTAD model identifies sequential stages for training and competition that respect the athlete's physical, mental and emotional development. This approach encourages lifelong physical activity for athletes of all levels of ability and disability. It also provides an effective route for athletes to pursue excellence up to and including the national and international levels of competition.

Following is an overview of the eight LTAD stages:

Active Start (Boys and Girls 0-6)

- ❑ This is an important period for acquiring the fundamental movement skills that lay the foundation for more complex movements, thereby preparing children for a physically active lifestyle.
- ❑ Young children should be physically active through active play, and encouraged to begin cross-country skiing at an early age.

FUNDamentals (Boys 6-9 and Girls 6-8)

- ❑ Fundamental movement skills are mastered, motor development emphasized and basic cross-country ski skills learned. For optimal sport specific acquisition, all basic ski skills, both classic and skating, should be learned before the end of this period.

Learning to Train (Boys 9-12 and Girls 8-11)

- ❑ This is an important period for motor development and **window of optimal trainability for motor-coordination**. Children are developmentally ready to acquire the general sport skills that will be the cornerstone of their athletic development.
- ❑ Fitness becomes increasingly important.

Training to Train (Males 12-16 and Females 11-15)

- ❑ This is an important period for developing aerobic capacity, which is especially critical for cross-country skiing (a lot of skiing at low intensity!).
- ❑ Social and emotional considerations are very important. Team building, group interaction and social events should be emphasized.

Learning to Compete (Males 16-20 (+/-) and Females 15-20 (+/-))

- ❑ Fitness preparation, sport and individual specific skills are developed. The development of self-awareness and independence should be emphasized.
- ❑ Training and racing should be integrated gradually and seamlessly into the overall timetable and lifestyle of the aspiring competitive athlete.





Training to Compete (Males 20-23 (+/-) and Females 19-23 (+/-))

- This is an important period for individualized fitness preparation. Fitness and medical monitoring is increasingly sophisticated, and sport and individual specific skills are mastered.
- Self-awareness and independence become increasingly important.
- Athletes learn to compete internationally.

Training to Win (Males 23 (+/-) and Females 23 (+/-))

- During this stage athletes focus on high performance and undertake multi-year preparations for major events (i.e. Olympics, World Championships).
- High performance sport specialist support is optimized, as is fitness and medical monitoring.
- All aspects of training and performance are highly individualized.
- Podium performances are the goal.

Active for Life (This stage can be entered at any age)

- There is a better opportunity to be “Active for Life” if physical literacy is achieved before the “Training to Train” stage.

2.2.3 Active Start Stage of Development

This is an important period for acquiring the fundamental movement skills that lay the foundation for more complex movements, thereby preparing children for a physically active lifestyle.

Physical activity is essential for healthy development of children. Among its other benefits, physical activity:

- enhances development of brain function, coordination, social skills, gross motor skills, emotions, leadership and imagination;
- helps to build confidence and positive self-esteem;
- helps to build strong bones and muscles, improve flexibility, develop good posture and balance, improve fitness, reduce stress and improve sleep;
- promotes healthy weight; and
- helps children learn to move skillfully and learn to enjoy being active.

Young children should be physically active through active play. Physical activity should be fun and a part of the child’s daily life, not something required.

Organized physical activity and active play are particularly important for the healthy development of children with a disability if they are to acquire habits of lifelong activity.



**Objective:**

- To develop fundamental movements and link them together into play.

The Goals:

The goals for this stage include:

- Providing organized physical activity (including outdoor activities) for at least 30 minutes a day for toddlers and 60 minutes a day for preschoolers.
- Providing outdoor physical activity every day regardless of the weather.
- Providing unstructured physical activity - active play - for at least 60 minutes a day, and up to several hours per day for toddlers and preschoolers. Toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except while sleeping.
- Introducing children to cross-country skiing early (e.g. three years of age).
- Teaching children to cross-country ski through an organized mix of play and discovery in situations in which they learn to ski naturally, with limited formal instruction.
- Frequent use of ski facilities with ski playgrounds/terrain parks during the snow season.
- Developing fitness and movement skills as a FUN part of daily life.
- Ensuring positive experiences through the use of appropriate equipment.
- Allowing children to explore risk and limits in safe environments.
- Improving basic movement skills such as gliding, running, jumping, twisting, balance while moving, kicking, throwing and catching. This means introducing children to activities that incorporate a variety of movement skills - such as gymnastics, dance, swimming, cross-country skiing, etc. These basic movement skills are the building blocks for more complex movements.
- Designing activities that help children to feel competent and comfortable.
- Ensuring that games are non-competitive and focus on participation.
- Ensuring that activities are gender-neutral and inclusive so that active living is equally valued and promoted for all children (because girls tend to be less active than boys, and children with a disability less active than their peers).





2.3 Teaching Children in the Active Start Stage of Development

In early childhood, the emphasis should be on play and discovery, with limited formal instruction. Programs for children in the Active Start stage of development should therefore be designed as "activity" plans, rather than "practice plans", to meet the skill and ability levels of these youngest skiers.

2.3.1 How Children Learn

Children must attain a certain level of maturity to be teachable. That is why formal schooling begins in most countries when children are six or seven years old. For instance, the set ages for first graders is based on the average child's ability to understand the information presented in school. They are old enough to be guided, or taught; they can understand what a teacher says and learn from it.

However children are developed enough to learn skiing and other physical literacy skills long before they have reached the stage of mental development necessary to handle school work. This may seem to be stating the obvious as everyone knows that children learn to walk, run, jump, swim, ride bikes and so on, long before they learn to count or read. But it's only recently that it has been fully recognized how important the early stimulation of fundamental movement skills is.

Children have an enormous, spontaneous need to be active. They are naturally energetic, and play involving physical skills can use that energy meaningfully. Fundamental movement skills are a natural part of a child's total development, and frequently the most obvious part. A child's world is a physical world, one of constant, unbroken activity, eight hours or more a day. It is forced inactivity, not activity, that exhausts small children. They are literally "built" for the former, and incapable of handling the latter.

The challenge therefore is to fully exploit this high receptiveness to physical learning in children during a period when they are simply not teachable in the conventional sense of the word. In this situation the traditional roles of teacher and instructor are out of place. Instead, the most effective role for teaching is that of arranger or organizer. In other words, if you pick the place and set the scene, children can learn - sometimes without further intervention on your part.

2.3.2 Coaching Tips

Young children acquire ski skills quickly while playing on skis, and respond well to a positive, motivating environment in which to learn. They have their own special requirements, however, and there are some guidelines that coaches should follow to ensure that activities are appropriate!

Keep in mind that the objective is to teach cross-country skiing by creating situations in which children can learn basic skills naturally.

- Create situations in which children learn skiing naturally. Remember that children can learn to ski before they can comprehend they are learning.
- Use a ski playground. Choose a specific location where the group skis regularly, and develop





it to suit the needs of your group. Keep in mind that terrain will teach better than most people can.

- Ensure that the skiing environment is safe and well-suited to the ability of the skiers (i.e. safe; sheltered from the wind; varied terrain; set up for adventure, discovery and play; etc.)
- Encourage fun and playful activities. A fun and positive environment is conducive to excellent learning patterns.
- At this age children find comfort in following a routine. The group should have the same coaches for the duration of the program.
- Coaches are advised to keep records of games and activities that they find useful, both for their own use and for sharing with new leaders in the program.
- Balance is vital, and rhythm is more important than technical finesse. Make sure that the location and design of your sessions provides for optimal opportunities for the development of good balance and rhythm.
- Sessions should be short. 30 to 60 minutes for the actual session (depending on the age of the child) is ideal, with additional supervised play time. Take into consideration snow and weather conditions. It is better to be short and enjoyable than long and discouraging.
- Use “role models” frequently. Role models can be the club head coach, junior racing team or senior racing team athletes from your club, or a “hot shot” skier that is 10 or 12 years old.
- Six to eight formal “activity sessions” a winter are appropriate. Keep the structured ski season short. However, children should be encouraged to spend time on skis in addition to their activity sessions - as many ski playground experiences as possible - and to go on age-appropriate ski excursions with their family in late winter and early spring. Special ski experiences with the family are very important.
- Comparisons with other children should be avoided. Coaches should not “measure” achievement, but rather should reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.
- Always take into consideration the weather conditions. Establish cancellation policies that consider the facilities available at the ski area (or lack of), and are appropriate for this age group. Be flexible.
- Ensure parents are educated as to the clothing standards for the program and that children are not dropped off for their activity session unprepared.
- Create a nurturing and comfortable environment during the first five minutes of every session. It is much easier to work with children who are comfortable being with the group.
- It is important for the coaches to have good contact with children when they are on skis on the snow.
- Instruction with this age group is best accomplished one on one. However, play can be encouraged as a group process.





- ❑ Continually encourage the skiers.
- ❑ Ensure that structured instruction time is minimal; keep all instructions brief and simple.
- ❑ Use musical beat to help develop rhythm. For example, chant children's rhymes that have a suitable beat. The underlying rhythms of skiing maneuvers are more important than technical perfection.
- ❑ Use positive statements (e.g. "look in front all the time..." instead of "don't look behind...").
- ❑ Encourage cooperation with others and proper skiing etiquette.
- ❑ Children can understand the difference between black and white, red and green, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse before they learn the difference between left and right. You may choose to put stickers on skis or ribbons on legs to help them with directional instructions.
- ❑ At this age children appreciate consistency. Relate instructions to things they have done before. They relate well to the same coaches and the same games.

2.3.3 Balance

The main goal of learning to ski at an early age is to promote balance – the ability to stand steadily on something in motion. For ordinary everyday situations children develop and their bodies automate the positional reflexes that counteract the pull of gravity on the various parts of the body. Skiing involves forces and movements that lie outside the sphere of this automated balance process.

Balance is largely controlled by sensory nerves in the soles of the feet. These sensors react to changes in pressure, and evoke reflexive muscular movements. In beginners, these reflexive movements may be extreme, as "fine tuning" the smaller, deft movements in response to a stimulus are the result of experience.

Maintaining balance while gliding at constant speed on an even underlying snow layer is only marginally more difficult than retaining balance while standing still. Apprehension and fear of speed, however, can disturb the process and upset balance, causing falls.

Skiing involves speed, which is one of the attributes contributing to the thrill of the sport. Terrain slopes and snow surfaces vary. Speed increases and decreases continuously, and sometimes skiers become airborne and then land. The fine reflexes involved in balance must be trained to handle these situations. Balance is the vary core of the ability to ski.

Balance isn't a maneuver which can be learned by being instructed or by copying others, as can, say, the various turns used in downhill skiing.

Balance is the product of extensive and varied experience on skis, an underlying fact which should be emphasized in all instructive situations. This also means that using one specific style in skiing maneuvers isn't at all necessary, or even desirable. What is important is the unconscious automating of the sensory detection-automatic reflex cycle.





2.3.4 Rhythm

Basic rhythm skills are developed during the early years of life and, if developed well, open up later possibilities for lifelong involvement in dance, music and other artistic activities. Rhythm activities also help develop fluid movement patterns that can help children perform many fundamental movement and fundamental sport skills with greater ease and efficiency.

Rhythm is as vital in skiing as it is in music. Without it, much is lost. Skiers, like musicians, can get off beat and ruin their performances. This doesn't mean that children must have musical talent to ski well, but it does mean that the underlying rhythms of skiing maneuvers are more important than the technical perfection of their components. This is where many coaches err. "The knee should be here, not there; weight on this ski, not that one," and so on. Details like these are not critical in the early stages of athlete development. A child with good rhythm will pick up any needed fine points, but a child lacking rhythm in a maneuver still has much to learn, no matter how perfectly individual movements may be performed.

Just as in music, the essence of rhythm in skiing is to depart from regularity to avoid the monotony of repetition. Rhythm in skiing means that the right things happen at the right times. Exploiting the connection between the rhythm of a movement and the tonal image of a musical equivalent is a superb teaching aid. The syllables or words used may direct or command, as in many children's ditties. But their rhythmic content is more important. Single syllables, such as short words or even the tones of the diatonic scale can be chanted or sung. They don't even have to have any meaning. Words ending in vowels are particularly useful, as the vowel can be cut off or stretched out to suit the duration of the movement involved. Chanting "DO-DO!", "I SKIIII!" or similar combinations of words creates clear audible images that do more to imbue rhythmic movement than any explanation of details.





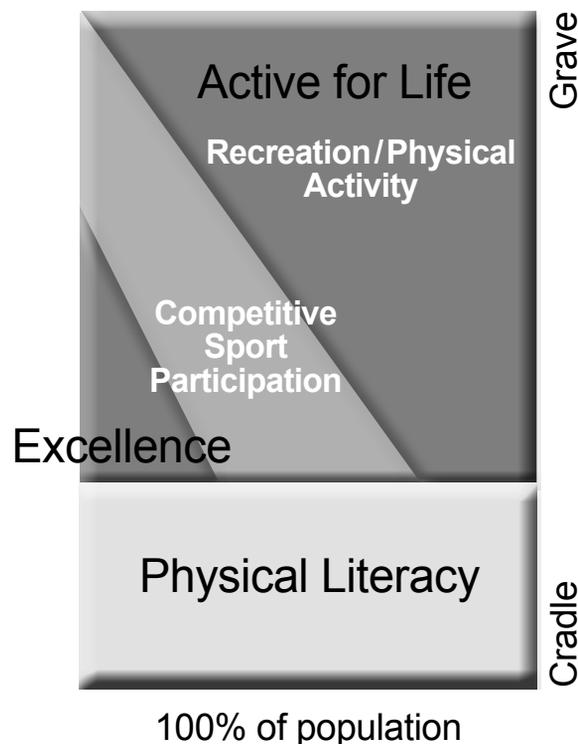
2.4 Physical Literacy

- ❑ Fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills = physical literacy.
- ❑ Physical literacy refers to competency in movement and sport skills.
- ❑ Physical literacy gives children the tools they need to take part in physical activity and sport, both for healthy life-long enjoyment and for sporting success.
- ❑ Physical literacy should be developed before the onset of the adolescent growth spurt.

Fundamental movements and skills that provide the base requirements for future advances in movement capacity and athletic skill should be introduced through fun and games at an early age. Without the basic movement skills, a child will have difficulty excelling in most sports. For example, to enjoy baseball, basketball, cricket, football, netball, handball, rugby and softball, the simple skill of catching must be mastered.

Fundamental movements and specific skills should follow and include basic universal elements such as (but not limited to) running, jumping and throwing. Furthermore, the aspect of an underlying “physical literacy” should be considered as a foundation concept that embraces the ability to execute a broad base of physical competencies.

Figure 2.2





2.4.1 Developing Physical Literacy

Physical Literacy: What Exactly Is It?

Physical literacy is the development of fundamental movement skills (section 2.4.2) and fundamental sport skills (section 2.4.3) that permit a child to move confidently and with control in a wide range of physical activity, rhythmic (dance) and sport situations. This includes the ability to “read” what is going on around them in an activity setting and react appropriately to those events.

For full physical literacy children should learn fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills in each of the four basic environments:

- On the ground – as the basis for most games, sports, dance and physical activities.
- In the water – as the basis for all aquatic activities.
- On snow and ice – as the basis for all winter sliding activities.
- In the air – as the basis for gymnastics, diving and other aerial activities.

Physical literacy is developed during the first three stages of the LTAD progression, meaning the period of time from birth to the start of adolescence (see figure 2.1).

The emphasis on “FUN” within “FUNdamentals” clearly recognizes fun as an extremely powerful, motivating force for children.

The Myth That It “Just Happens”

While it’s true that many children DO develop good physical skills on their own by trial-and-error, there are many who do not; and for those the consequences can be serious.

Children who are physically skilled often enjoy vigorous healthy play while the less skilled are left out. This creates a vicious cycle - those with the skills play, and through that play further develop fitness and skills. In contrast, those who are less skilled play less, have fewer opportunities to refine and develop their skills, and fall further and further behind their skilled peers. Eventually many of the less skilled children stop trying and withdraw from the activities that would help them become fitter and more skilled.

The Consequences of Missing Out

A child who misses out on developing physical literacy is at a great disadvantage. On the playground and in the park, children like to play with other children who have the same level of skill they do, and who can “keep the game going”. If a child can’t keep the game going, they generally won’t be asked to join in.





Children tell us that not having the skills to play is one major reason they drop out of physical activity and organized sport.

Missing out on fundamental movement skills also means that a child is unlikely to choose to take part in a formal sport activity that requires proficiency in that skill. This will restrict his/her choice of life-long health-promoting activities. It will also restrict opportunities for sporting excellence.

It is worth noting that the inability to perform even one fundamental movement skill can seriously restrict later opportunities for recreational or competitive activity.

2.4.2 Fundamental Movement Skills

To become physically literate, children need to master fundamental movement skills. However this mastery does not come all at once and coaches need to continually keep in mind that children are not miniature adults. To learn most skills successfully, developing children need to go through a series of developmental stages. The objective of a coach should therefore be to help children move through an appropriate skill progression, rather than pushing them to perform the skill the way an adult would do it.

Although children mature and learn at different rates, almost all children learn their fundamental movement skills in the same sequence, and go through the same phases:

- ❑ **When can a child learn a skill?** As a child grows and develops (matures), the nerve cells make more connections. At the same time, the muscles of the body become stronger. When the brain is mature enough and the muscles are strong enough, a child can learn a skill. Before that point in time, trying to teach skills to a child does little good. What a child needs most during this period is many opportunities to explore all possible movements in a rich environment – which means that the child’s environment needs to be both safe AND challenging.
- ❑ **When is the child ready to learn a skill?** At a certain point in maturation, all the hardware – the muscles and nerves – will have developed sufficiently to allow the child to perform a particular skill (the readiness factor). When the skill begins to emerge naturally, learning can be dramatically improved through practice by using a variety of different equipment and materials. Providing children with simple instructions and plenty of opportunity to practise can help them develop confidence that will stay with them throughout their lives (although it may not actually “speed up” the learning process).
- ❑ **The optimal time to learn a skill.** For every emerging skill there is a “best” time for a child to learn. Again, providing the child with simple instructions and plenty of opportunity to practise can improve learning and pay great dividends. While the “best” time to teach a particular skill differs according to the child, there is a consistent pattern in the sequence in which skills are learned.
- ❑ **The time for remedial work.** If the child goes too long without learning a skill, then it may become more difficult to learn. However, the sooner the child starts to overcome the learning





deficit the easier it will be to catch up – and develop the skill and confidence needed to be fully active with friends and peers.

2.4.3 Fundamental Sport Skills

Running, jumping, catching, kicking, throwing and hitting something with a stick, bat, or racquet of some kind, are the basic building blocks of the many sports played by the vast majority of people. A person who can perform these fundamental sport skills well can easily learn to play many sports.

Making good decisions in sport situations is another skill that is fundamental to each sport.

The difference between fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills can be illustrated by the following examples:

- ❑ When children learn to throw a variety of balls of different sizes with one hand or both hands, and to throw the ball at different speeds - sometimes for accuracy using a variety of different targets, and sometimes for distance - they are learning a fundamental movement skill.
- ❑ When children learn to throw a softball using a softball pitching motion, and attempt to pass the ball over home plate, they have moved from learning a “fundamental movement skill” to learning a “fundamental sport skill”.

For children to have success in sport - either as a health-related recreational activity or a competitive activity - it is important that they master fundamental movement skills before learning fundamental sport skills, and it is important that they learn fundamental sport skills before being introduced to specific techniques. Some further examples of this are:

❑ Kicking Skills

- ✓ In the “fundamental movement skill” stage, children should learn the basic kicking action with each foot. They should kick a wide variety of balls and try different things – e.g. kicking as far as they can, kicking to hit a target, kicking to keep the ball on the ground, kicking the ball as high in the air as they can.
- ✓ In the “fundamental sport skill” stage (e.g. soccer), children learn to kick a soccer ball without touching the ball with their hands, how hard they have to kick the ball in order to get it to another team member and how to kick the ball with the inside of the foot to increase passing accuracy.

❑ Catching Skills

- ✓ In the “fundamental movement skill” stage, children learn to catch - first with both hands together in a two-handed catch, and then with one hand. They will learn to catch a wide variety of balls of different sizes and weights, to catch the ball while they are standing still and when to move towards the ball. These are skills that can later be transferred to any sport they take up.
- ✓ In the “fundamental sport skill” stage (e.g. baseball), children learn to catch a baseball using a baseball glove. As their skill level improves they learn to catch the baseball when it is thrown at them, and then when it is hit with the bat.





For more information on movement skills and sport skills refer to section 4.4 of this Reference Material.

2.4.4 Other Skills

Prediction and Interception

While it is easy to understand why physical literacy needs to include the skills of running, jumping, throwing kicking, catching, etc., along with agility, balance, coordination and speed, there are other skills that are less obvious. The two most important of these are prediction and interception.

Take a moment to think about what it takes to catch a softball that has been hit high into the air. As the catcher, children need to be able to:

- see the ball leave the bat, and predict where it will land;
- move to where they think the ball will land, and do so before the ball arrives (this is the ability to intercept the ball, and is a physical literacy skill that needs to be learned); and
- catch the ball!

This ability to predict and intercept is critical to many stick, bat and racquet sports where children need to predict where the ball or puck is going, and then move their bat, racquet or stick so that the moving “stick” makes solid contact with the moving “ball”.

In order to learn a complicated skill of this kind two things are required:

- sufficient maturation of the brain and vision (which usually happens between the ages of four and seven); coupled with
- many opportunities to try to catch, intercept and hit a variety of different sized and shaped objects moving in many different directions at many different speeds (i.e. a lot of practice!).

Learning these kinds of skills can also be helped significantly by good coaching, particularly with respect to body position and what children should be seeking.

2.4.5 Key to an Active, Healthy Life and Sporting Excellence

Being physically active is more important to health than just about any other part of life over which we have control. Recent research suggests that it is better for one’s health to be overweight and active than to be of normal weight and inactive. For this reason alone it is critical that children develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that give them the very best chance of staying active throughout their lives.

When children have confidence in their ability to take part in recreational and sporting activities without fear of showing themselves up, the probability that they will join in is high; and if they enjoy the activity they will likely continue with it. Children’s movement confidence develops gradually as they grow and learn, and children are constantly comparing their own level of ability





with the ability of the children with whom they play. Physically literate children who move with skillful purpose KNOW that they move well, and this confidence encourages them to try new and different activities without fear.

Physical literacy also provides a foundation from which sporting excellence can grow.

Physical literacy is therefore the key both to developing habits of life-long physical activity for enjoyment and health, and to the development of athletes who have the strong foundation that will permit them to reach the highest levels of international sporting excellence – to become world-class athletes.





2.5 Growth and Development Considerations

3-5 Years, Growth and Development of Participants

General Remarks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot see the difference between what is real and what is not • Lives in an imaginary world • Constantly imitates • Highly dependent on parents • Needs to have a well-established routine in daily activities 	
Psychosocial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly individualistic, even egocentric • May be afraid of strangers • Boys and girls may be involved in the same activities without any problem
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period of life where significant progress is seen in areas such as ability to learn, intelligence and language; is capable of understanding concepts such as age, time, space and morality (good-bad) • Limited ability to concentrate (very short attention span); difficulty understanding abstract concepts • Limited ability to reason and solve problems • Cannot take into account most of the information or stimuli from the environment
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth rate is slightly reduced compared to the first two years of life; body proportions become more balanced; head is fragile • Resting heart rate and heart rate during exercise higher compared to adults • Development of the nervous system takes place at a very high rate during this period; growth of the brain is approximately 75% completed at three years of age, and 90% at the age of six • Hand-eye coordination is improved, as well as speed/rhythm of execution of fundamental movements; increased control of movements, which nonetheless remain somewhat jerky





- Motor performance is highly linked to kinesthetic and touch senses
- At age five, activities such as walking or running are usually well mastered and can be incorporated into games; 35 metres can be run in approximately 10 seconds

Preferences

- Likes activities that stimulate several different senses and the imagination
- Likes simple games with easy-to-understand tasks and rules
- Prefers individual activities, yet will share his or her environment of play with others

To Avoid

- Any activity that is structured or requires attention
- Activities that feature repeated impacts or where there is a risk of collision
- Repetitive activities (to prevent boredom and also overuse injuries)
- Exposure to a cold or a hot environment
- Comparisons with other children
- Emphasizing the result or performance

Suggestions

- Activities that feature a variety of motor experiences, and where the emphasis is put on the kinesthetic sense (i.e. knowledge of the body and location of body parts in space)
- Simple explanations and provision of manual assistance to the child during the execution of the movement
- All activities should take the form of games
- The instructions and the teaching must be specific, simple, and aimed at a very clear objective
- Creation of small groups where activities take the form of games, with focus on psychomotor development (balance, coordination, movements in all directions, various forms of movement). Where possible, parents should be involved, thus creating an opportunity to consolidate a close relationship with the child through play
- Children need to be praised and complimented generously and regularly for their efforts





6-7 Years, Growth and Development of Participants

<p>General Remarks</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this age the child remains fairly individualistic and self-centred; needs a lot of attention and must be in the company of an adult and/or in a small group • High dependence on parents • Acknowledges the coach as the leader • Needs to have a well-established routine in daily activities • Has no athletic or competitive background • Interest in sport activities may begin to grow 	
<p>Psychosocial</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather individualistic; often tries to expand social circle and the number of friends, especially with individuals of the same sex • Sometimes shy • Is conscious of own feelings and emotions, and of those of others toward him/her; can play on these feelings to obtain privileges • Boys and girls can be involved in the same activities without difficulty 	
<p>Learning</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns best by observing, quickly followed by doing • Short attention span (a few minutes) • Ability to reason is limited to what is readily observable • May be afraid of the unknown • Is likely to imitate and be highly imaginative; is often curious and wants to know everything 	
<p>Physical</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the nervous system is almost complete • Rate of physical growth is constant, yet relatively slow; on average, little difference is observed between boys and girls with regard to height and weight • Head is still very fragile; bones, tendons, muscles and ligaments cannot sustain heavy loads • Always seems to be moving; coordination is not very well developed; endurance is low 	





- Resting heart rate and heart rate during exercise are higher than for adults; resting heart rate is approximately 100 bpm. Aerobic metabolism predominates during effort; low anaerobic capacity
- Sweating mechanism of children is not well developed, which reduces their capacity to dissipate heat during exercise; children are at an increased risk of heat injuries
- Children cool off rapidly, and do not tolerate cold well, which is why it is important for them to dress appropriately for winter activities (refer to sections 3 and 6 for more information)

Preferences

- Enjoys individual activities, with some interaction with the group (e.g. tag); likes to throw, catch, hit, kick, run, jump, climb and other activities where the whole body is involved
- Enjoys all types of activities that require imagination or involve imitating an adult
- Games should encourage creativity and have few rules

To Avoid

- Activities that require repeated impact or wherein there is a risk of collision
- Repetitive activities and activities that feature too much structure (to prevent boredom and also overuse injuries)
- Exercising in a very cold or hot environment
- Using equipment that is not designed for children (i.e. too big, too heavy)
- Specialization in a sport or in a position
- Repetition of all-out efforts lasting between 20 and 60 seconds; work against a high resistance; prolonged aerobic endurance efforts
- Emphasizing the result or performance
- Negative competitive experiences
- Comparisons with other children
- Lengthy explanations
- Negative criticism





Suggestions

- All activities should take the form of games; conditions in which activities or games take place should be varied to promote the development of a variety of motor patterns and skills
- Rules should be adapted to encourage a high degree of interaction between and involvement of participants, and to increase the probability of success during the activity; modified, scaled-down equipment should be used
- Demonstrations should be highly specific, simple and aimed at the achievement of a well-defined objective; duration of activities should be relatively short, and exercises should change frequently
- Children need to be praised and complimented generously and regularly for their efforts; feedback should focus on one point only; choose the most important one; children should be encouraged to be proud of their own performance, and to congratulate others for theirs
- Basic motor abilities should be developed through games; techniques should be introduced in ways that stimulate the child's imagination (e.g. refer to a funny situation of the child's life, a cartoon)
- Encourage children to drink water, and in hot conditions ensure that there are plenty of beverages available

Examples

- Relay or obstacle races
- Somersaults, pirouettes, jumps, runs, lateral movements, rope climbing, rope skipping, use of play structures, sliding, throwing, catching, passing a ball with hands or feet, hitting a ball
- Basic strength exercises using the child's own body weight (push-ups, pull-ups, squats with own body weight)





2.6 CCC Athlete Development Grid

LTAD STAGE	COACH LEVEL	FACILITIES	TECHNIQUE	PHYSIOLOGY	STRENGTH & FLEXIBILITY	MENTAL SKILLS	COMPETITION	OTHER
<p>“Active Start” stage of athlete development.</p> <p>Boys and Girls 0 - 5 (6)</p>	<p>NCCP NCCP Community Coach “in training” (completed NCCP Introduction to Community Coaching (ICC) workshop)</p> <p>Minimum 10 hrs. training</p>	<p>Frequent use of ski facilities with ski playgrounds/terrain parks during snow season.</p> <p>Daylodge in close proximity to ski playground.</p>	<p>Important period for developing fundamental movement skills.</p> <p>Introduce children to cross-country skiing early (e.g. three years of age).</p> <p>The focus on snow is balance, gliding, diagonal stride without poles.</p> <p>Spend time on skis in addition to activity sessions (as many ski playground experiences as possible).</p>	<p>Develop fitness and movement skills as a FUN part of daily life.</p> <p>Provide unstructured physical activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active play - for at least 1hr. and up to several hrs. per day depending on age. 	N/A	<p>Provide activities that help children to feel competent and comfortable.</p>	<p>Games/low key competitions for older children in this stage should be non-competitive and focus on participation.</p>	<p>Learning should be accomplished through an organized mix of play and discovery in situations in which children learn to ski naturally with limited formal instruction.</p> <p>Activity sessions: 6-8 wks, one per/wk, 30-60 min. of organized activity on snow depending on age.</p> <p>Ensure positive experiences through use of appropriate ski equipment.</p> <p>Explore risk and limits in safe environments.</p>

Age as of December 31st of the current ski season.





LTAD STAGE	COACH LEVEL	FACILITIES	TECHNIQUE	PHYSIOLOGY	STRENGTH & FLEXIBILITY	MENTAL SKILLS	COMPETITION	OTHER
<p>“Fundamentals” stage of athlete development. Boys and Girls 6 - 7 (first part of the FUNDamentals stage)</p>	<p>NCCP Community Coach (i.e. completed NCCP Coaching (CC) workshop) Minimum 26 hrs. training.</p>	<p>Varied terrain, groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. Daylodge in stadium area. Continue to make use of ski playgrounds/terrain parks. Lit ski playground.</p>	<p>Master fundamental movement skills, develop overall motor skills. Acquire basic cross-country ski skills (both classic and skating techniques); equal use of techniques; develop downhill abilities. Focus on balance, agility and rhythm. Use “Snow Goals” to encourage time on snow. Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice.</p>	<p>Window of optimal trainability for speed 1 and flexibility development. Develop general fitness through participation in a variety of sports/activities on a regular basis, year round. Utilize games to develop technique, speed, skills and fitness.</p>	<p>Introduce basic flexibility exercises. Introduce strength exercises using the child’s own body weight, medicine balls, Swiss balls.</p>	<p>Create awareness of the importance of mental skills. Exposure to positive thinking skills to build confidence and the ability to cope with stress. Integrated mental, cognitive and emotional development.</p>	<p>Ski tournaments, club relays, treasure hunts, year-end activities. 5 - 10 min. (0.5 to 1 km) 4 races/season. Use varied terrain, include some unconventional settings (e.g. obstacle courses, terrain parks). Introduce competition in a team environment whenever possible.</p>	<p>Ensure appropriate ski equipment including waxable skis. Practice sessions: two per/wk, minimum 16 on-snow sessions 60 min. organized activity plus supervised active ski play. Practice sessions should be well-structured and monitored. Time on skis in addition to practice sessions - as many ski playground experiences as possible (several times a week). Basic ski care.</p>

* seven years of age or under as of the December 31st that is part of the current ski season.





REFERENCES

How Children Learn. *Teaching Children to Ski*. Flemmen A. and Grosvold O, (M. Brady, trans). Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1983.

How Balance is Learned. *Teaching Children to Ski*. Flemmen A. and Grosvold O, (M. Brady, trans). Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1983.

Rhythm First. *Teaching Children to Ski*. Flemmen A. and Grosvold O, (M. Brady, trans). Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1983.

Coaching Tips – Bunnyrabbit Age Group. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*. 2000

Some images and pictures contained in this document are the property of CARDISPORT or HEMERA TECHNOLOGIES INC. and are copyrighted.

Where Community Sport Fits in Athlete Development. Balyi. *Sport System Building and Long-Term Athlete Development in Canada – The Situation and the Solutions*. Coaches Report, Summer 2001, Vol. 8 No.1, p. 25-28.

Ewing, M.E. & Seefeldt, V., *Participation and Attrition Patterns in American Agency-sponsored and Interscholastic Sports: An Executive Summary*. Preliminary report to the Athletic Footwear Council. North Palm Beach, FLA.: Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 1988.

Canadian Sport Centres, *Developing Physical Literacy*, 2007.

Cross Country Canada, *Cross-Country Skiing, A Sport For Life*, 2007.

Detailed Growth and Development Considerations:

Bar-Or, O. (Editor) *The Encyclopedia of Sports Medicine: The Child and the Adolescent Athlete* (IOC Medical Commission Publication), Blackwell Scientific Publishers, Oxford, 1996.

Coaching Association of Canada, *NCCP Level 1 Coaching Theory manual*, Ottawa, 1989.

Coaching Association of Canada, Task 16: *Athlete Long-Term Development*, NCCP Level 4/5, Ottawa, 1994.

Coaching Association of Canada, *Straight Talk about Children and Sport*, Ottawa, 1996.

Malina, R., Bouchard, C. *Growth and Development of Children*, Human Kinetics, Champaign, 1991.





SECTION 3 - CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT



Coaching Tip: Provide parents with information on the equipment their child will need for their age and skill level - how to get it, how much it will cost and how to maintain it. Take the time to ensure this aspect of your program is managed well. It is the first step toward the development of good technique in young skiers.

Source: CCBC Ski League Manual



3.1 Clothing for Cross-Country Skiing Activities

To be comfortable while skiing, it is important to wear appropriate clothing. If skiers are active during their activity/practice sessions it is easy for them to stay warm without wearing a great deal of clothing.

“Layering” - wearing several pieces of lighter clothing in combination - is usually better than wearing one or two bulkier pieces of clothing that can restrict movement. With “layering”, air is trapped between the layers, which helps insulate the body. As the skier’s body heats up and starts to perspire with exercise, the skier can remove one or more layers to maintain a comfortable body temperature. When the skier is less active or gets tired, layers can be added so that body temperature can be properly maintained. As a corollary to the principle of layering, it is better to bring too many clothes than too few, as layered clothing provides options that are not available if a skier wears insufficient clothing for the prevailing weather conditions.

First Layer

It is a good idea to wear synthetic “sport underwear” types of clothing, such as polypro, next to the skin. Natural fibres such as Merino wools or silks are also effective options. Sport underwear allows perspiration to evaporate away from the body into the outer layers of clothing, keeping the layer next to the skin drier and thus providing better insulation. This type of clothing can be readily found in sports stores.

Second Layer

On top of the underwear, the second layer for the upper body should include a mixed blend of polypro and polyester or technical fleece depending on the temperature, type and duration of the planned activity. There is good synthetic (e.g. fleece) ski and sport clothing available that is well-suited for these layers.

For freedom of movement, skiers should wear stretchy or looser clothing. This is particularly the case for the second layer covering the lower body. Jeans should not be worn; they are generally tight, which restricts movement. Moreover, clothing made of cotton – such as jeans – is not suitable for skiing as it absorbs and retains moisture very easily.

Third Layer

The final layer should generally be some sort of windproof clothing to which snow will not stick. This could be a commercially available ski suit that is suitable for the conditions. Generally, waterproof clothing should be avoided, since while it keeps water out, it also traps perspiration in. A windproof jacket and pants of breathable nylon or similar type of material make a good final layer. The pants are especially important for younger children, who may spend much of their time in contact with the snow. This final layer is particularly essential in windy or snowy weather and can be removed and stored easily if not needed. Be sure to take a shell along when you go on a ski tour.



In cold conditions, a snowsuit may be the most appropriate for the youngest children (Active Start stage of development). However coaches need to ensure that they don't overheat and then stand around, as they will become cold quickly.

If a skier is wearing light clothing in cold conditions - for example when racing - windproof underwear can help prevent frostbite in sensitive areas.

The head is important for body heat regulation. Wearing a toque will help retain heat and keep the hands and feet warm. Taking the toque off will help the skier cool down quickly. Skiers should use a thicker toque for cold conditions and a lighter toque for when it is warmer. Earmuffs worn in conjunction with a toque or a toque with ear flaps will help keep the ears warm and are particularly important for preventing frostbite in colder conditions. For very cold conditions, use a balaclava, scarf or neck warmer pulled up to help keep the face warm. If a scarf is worn, tuck the ends into clothing so they don't get caught on a branch.

For colder conditions mitts keep the hands warmer than gloves. Over-boots can also be purchased to add an extra layer of insulation over ski boots. An old pair of socks with a hole cut at the binding and pulled on over ski boots can serve the same purpose of providing extra warmth.

Many sports stores carry sport socks that can help keep your feet warm by keeping perspiration away from the skin. Often feet get cold because boots are too tight, or socks too thick so there is no "wobble room" for the toes. Try to ensure sizing so that the skier's boots and socks leave room for movement at the toe, while also being snug enough to prevent shifting and rubbing at the heel. Sometimes feet will perspire when winter boots are worn in a warm car on the way to a skiing activity. In this scenario, changing to a dry pair of socks before putting on ski boots can help keep the feet warmer.

After skiing, skiers will be much warmer if they put dry clothes on next to the skin, particularly for the upper body, before heading home. Be sure to also bring clothes, such as a parka, mitts, toque and winter boots to wear after the practice.

For additional information refer to section 6.3.





3.2 Dressing Appropriately for Skiing (Lesson Plan)

This section outlines a lesson plan for a classroom session on how to dress for cross-country skiing. This makes a perfect fill-in for regular activity/practice sessions when early snow conditions are undependable or when the weather is too cold for skiing. Adapt to the age group with which you are working.

- Objective.** To teach basic information on how to dress for skiing.
- Location.** Classroom or a similar room.
- Equipment.** Sample clothing.
- Time/Activity Breakdown**
 - ✓ 20 minutes - teach the principle of dressing in layers.
 - ✓ 10 minutes - teach the characteristics of clothing materials.

Teaching Methodology

Display all the clothing on a table. Dress either a volunteer or yourself to illustrate the principle of layering with the following selection of items:

- underwear (top and bottom);
- on top of the underwear, a second layer of a mixed blend of polypro and polyester or technical fleece, and a shell for protection against wind and rain;
- an outer layer such as tights or loose-fitting, fleece lined polyester pants;
- suitable socks;
- ski boot covers or old socks that serve the same purpose;
- two pairs of mitts, one thin and one thick, and ski gloves;
- a neck tube or neck warmer (that can be pulled up over the lower face);
- three toques, one thick one, one thin one and one with ear flaps;
- a winter coat for before and after skiing;
- a balaclava; and
- windproof and semi-water proof shell to cover pants (for younger children), not insulated.

As you dress, explain the main reason for dressing in layers and the qualities of each layer of clothing.



Teaching Points

- ❑ **The Principle of Dressing in Layers.** Describe dressing in layers:
 - ✓ Skiers preserve body heat by dressing in layers to insulate the body. Each layer acts as a protective barrier to the cold. Air is warmed between each layer.
 - ✓ If overheating occurs, the skier removes a layer of clothing, which releases the trapped, warmed air. Point out that a skier should wear a thicker toque on cold days and a thin toque on warm days. If a skier wears a toque that is too warm for the day, he/she will want to remove it, leaving the head uncovered.
 - ✓ If the skier becomes cool, or cannot keep the extremities (especially the hands and feet) warm, he/she adds a layer.

- ❑ **Discuss Why Skiers Dress in Layers**
 - ✓ To keep their torso warm; if the torso is warm, so are the arms and legs.
 - ✓ To avoid excessive perspiration. Skiers should dress in layers to maintain but not exceed body temperature.
 - ✓ Also teach the following points about layering:
 - Skiers can protect their body from the cooling effect of wind and rain by wearing a windproof breathable shell that allows perspiration to evaporate.
 - Skiers should cover their head with a toque - 80 % of body heat is lost through the head. Although skiers may remove layers after warming up, they should not remove their toque.
 - For freedom of movement, skiers should wear stretchy or baggy clothes, not tight jeans.
 - Mitts are generally warmer than gloves.

- ❑ **The Characteristics of Clothing Materials.** The main teaching points about clothing materials are as follows:
 - ✓ Sport underwear absorbs sweat from the body in the same way a wick on a candle draws wax up the string. This absorption keeps the skin dry. If the body stays dry, skiers will be warmer than if their body is wet. To illustrate that water is a good conductor and cools the body, blow air on a wet finger.
 - ✓ Natural fibers such as wool have traditionally been worn on the outer layer to provide additional warmth; however, synthetic fibers that provide comparable warmth are now available.
 - ✓ Shells or windbreakers are designed to keep the body heat within the shell. The shell protects the body from such external conditions as rain, snow and wind. Just as a finger feels cool when air is blown on it, so does the body - but over a greater surface area. Getting very cool on a long ski tour may be not only uncomfortable but also foolhardy. Skiers should therefore carry a shell to protect their body from windy, wet or snowy weather.





3.3 Tips for Keeping Warm

Below are some “tips” to assist you in teaching the participants in your group how to prepare appropriately for their skiing activities.

What I Wear When I Go Skiing

- I cover my face when the weather is windy and/or cold.
- I keep my toque on!
- I dress in thermal underwear.
- I dress with mitts, not gloves.
- I wear clothing that is not too bulky and allows me to move freely; if possible, I layer my clothing.
- If I wear wool, I wear it as a second layer away from my skin.
- My clothing and boots are not too tight.
- I keep metal zippers away from my skin.

How I Keep My Feet Warm

- I wear a toque. It helps me retain body heat, which in turn will keep my hands and feet warm.
- I change into a pair of dry socks just before I begin skiing. Socks that I have been wearing in my winter boots will be damp, which will cause my feet to become cold.
- My toes must be able to move in order for my feet to stay warm. I don't wear boots that are too tight, or wear thick socks in boots that don't have enough space for my feet to move.
- On cold days I wear boot covers, which are available in sport stores, or pull an old pair of socks over my boots. If I use a pair of socks, I will need to cut a hole in them so that my boot will fit into the binding.

How I Keep Warm

- I hop up and down like a bunnyrabbit.
- I spin my arms in big circles like a windmill.
- I wiggle my toes and my nose.
- I laugh out loud.
- And ski all around.
- If I do these things, I will keep warm all day long!



3.4 Ski Equipment

Both coaches and parents play an important role in determining whether or not a child is adequately prepared for a ski session.

Often parents will have insufficient knowledge of the sport to know what equipment their child needs for a good ski experience. Also, parents may not understand how to prepare their child's skis for an activity/practice session. It is therefore important that meetings or clinics for parents are held each year before the ski season begins in order to prepare them for their role in supporting their child.

Suggestions for the coach:

- Take the time to ensure that this aspect of your program is managed well. It is the first step towards the development of good technique in the young skiers with whom you are working.
- Provide parents with information on the equipment their child needs for their age and skill level, how to get it, how much it will cost, and how to maintain it.
- Encourage a balance between the cost and what a skier really needs for a good ski experience.
- State of the art equipment is not necessary for beginning skiers, but poor quality equipment that doesn't fit the skier will not allow for a good ski experience.
- Establish a minimum standard of equipment for the participants in your program. For example, poles that are 30cm too long for a young skier would clearly be unacceptable equipment.
- Consider a year-end award or some other method of recognizing your skiers for taking good care of their equipment.
- If you are in charge of a school program, you may be using equipment that the school provides. There are benefits and drawbacks to this approach. To get the best out of the arrangement, take the time and prepare the equipment to the best condition possible. Ensure that it is stored and maintained properly throughout the year.
- Ski swaps are a good method of keeping equipment costs down. Your club or community may already hold one each autumn. If not, this is a project that your group may wish to coordinate themselves.
- However it is important that there are knowledgeable people on site to help the parents make good choices.

3.4.1 Know the Terms

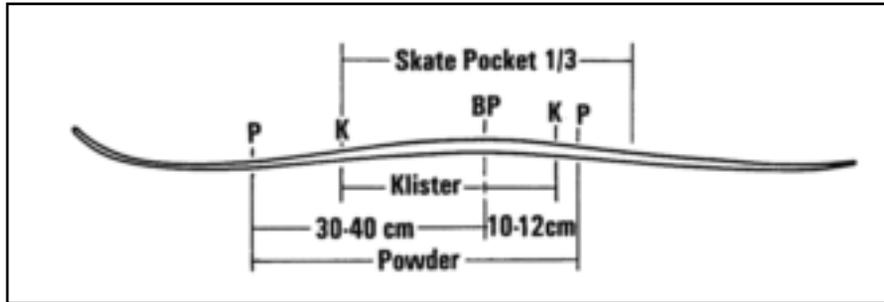
- Base Binder.** Base binder is used to help the kick wax (either hard wax or klister) stay on the ski when the track is abrasive. Base binder is not designed to provide kick.
- Boot/Binding.** Salomon and NNN are two commonly used, suitable boot/binding systems. Both are good and equally functional.





- ❑ **Camber.** Camber is the longitudinal arc that is built into the ski. The arc can be of varying degrees of stiffness.

Figure 3.1: Camber Pockets



- ❑ **Classic Ski.** This is a double or single camber ski that is designed to support the skier's weight until he/she kicks. When the skier "kicks" the ski will flatten, allowing the grip wax to hold the snow.
- ❑ **Skate Ski.** This ski can also have a single or double camber. However, the ski should be stiff enough that when the skier skates (kicks) the ski is not flattened.
- ❑ **Glide Wax.** Glide wax is applied to the glide zones of classic and full ski length of skate skis to enhance the free glide abilities of the ski. These waxes are designed for the whole spectrum of snow conditions.
- ❑ **Grip Wax (Kick Wax).** Grip wax is used for classic skiing only and is designed to permit the ski to "grip" the snow when fully weighted. It is applied in layers to the middle portion of the classic ski. Grip wax comes in different levels of hardness so that the wax can be matched to the snow conditions. Since the snow crystal must penetrate the kick wax for the wax to hold, the kick wax must match the hardness of the snow crystal.
- ❑ **Klister.** Klister is a resin that is used as a grip wax. It is applied in a single layer in the middle section of the classic ski and it is used in classic skiing to provide grip when the snow is melting or has melted and refrozen. Klister must always be allowed to cool before it is skied on.
- ❑ **Plastic Scraping.** Scraping describes the process of removing the excess glide wax from a ski. A plastic scraper is unlikely to remove any of the actual base material of the ski, as might be the case in "metal scraping".
- ❑ **Poles.** Ski poles are usually made of fiberglass, carbon fibre or aluminum. A rule of thumb for determining pole height would be chin height for skating poles and a tight fit under the arm for classic poles.

3.4.2 Ski Equipment for Children

Following are some general guidelines to assist you in determining the equipment children need. Poor equipment, equipment that doesn't fit, or skis that are poorly prepared for the snow conditions may lead to a negative ski experience that can have a lasting impression on a child.



Take the time to ensure that this aspect of a child's participation is managed properly, as it is the first step towards the development of good technique.

Active Start Stage of Athlete Development

- A child's first set of ski equipment should include a pair of no-wax skis with "classic" length poles (with the pole tip in the snow, the pole height should reach the underarm).
- Initial on-snow play does not require long skis. Skis should be approximately the same height as the skier.
- It is better for children to outgrow their ski poles than to grow into them.
- Select a binding that is not difficult to operate, but is not prone to releasing either. If you select strap-type bindings used in conjunction with snow boots, ensure that all the straps are integrated into the binding construction. Loose straps have a way of getting lost.
- Snow boots can be nice and warm, but unless they are laced up firmly, there is a risk of little feet coming right out of the boot. The boot will be securely fastened to the ski – and the young skier will be left standing in the snow wearing only socks.
- If children are on their second pair of skis, they may be ready to graduate to waxable skis.

FUNDamentals Stage of Athlete Development

- Levels 1 & 2.** For learning the skills required at these levels, it is preferable to have waxable skis, even if it is the child's first pair. Skis can be dual purpose (classic skis that can also be used for skating), but the poles must remain "classic" length.
- Levels 3 & 4.** Skating technique is officially introduced to practice sessions at this point in the skill progressions. Children can be introduced to skating technique skills while using classic, dual-purpose skis, but they now require both skating length poles and classic length poles. For skating technique sessions, skiers using the classic, dual purpose skis must have the grip wax removed from the kick zone and the entire length of the ski prepared with glide wax. For classic technique sessions, the kick zone must be in place again, and grip wax must be applied. It is also important that the skiers are using bindings that do not rub the track when the ski is on edge or when the skating technique is used.

Near the end of this age range, you might want to suggest to parents that their children need two sets of equipment (both skating and classic) if their ski skills and future involvement in the sport appear to warrant the investment.

Skis

- Classic skis should reach just below the wrist of the skier's outstretched arm, and the camber should be suitable for classic skiing. A basic camber test should be performed to check for





suitable camber. When the skier is standing on one ski, the ski base should fully contact the flat floor under the foot; when the skier is standing on both skis at the same time, a piece of paper should be able to slide between the ski and a flat floor for about 15-20 cm. This movement indicates that the ski's camber is appropriate.

- Skating skis should be 3-4 cm above the head of the skier, and the camber should be suitable for that technique. When the skier is standing on one ski on a flat floor, a piece of paper should be able to be pulled out from under the foot with a gentle tug.
- Dual-purpose skis should be a length mid-way between the length of a classic ski and a skating ski, but the camber must be determined by what is suitable for classic skiing.
- If the skis are not of the correct length and camber, the skier will have difficulty mastering the technical skills necessary to become competent in the sport.

Poles

- Poles must have adjustable straps.
- Classic poles should fit snugly under the arm when the skier is standing on the floor.
- Skating poles should be the same height as the chin.
- If poles are too long or too short, the skier will have difficulty mastering the technical skills necessary to become competent in the sport.

Boots/Bindings

- Select bindings that will not rub in the track when the ski is on edge or when skating technique is used.
- Salomon and NNN are the two commonly used, suitable boot/binding systems. Both are good and equally functional.
- Boots must be comfortable. If boots are too large, they will be awkward to ski in and if they are too constrictive, feet will not stay warm.

3.4.3 Ski Shops and Ski Swaps

Encourage parents to buy suitable equipment for their children. It is an investment in a positive, fun learning experience and good equipment retains its value for re-sale.

Acquiring equipment from ski swaps or other families involved in cross-country skiing is a good method of keeping equipment costs under control. Keep in mind, however, that the ski equipment for children that is being recycled is often of a poor quality, and may lead to disappointment. Second hand equipment is only a bargain if it is suitable for the needs of the skier, and if it fits properly.

Ski shops can be approached with the prospect of trade-ins. Some already have trade-in programs in place. This method of shopping can help to keep the cost down, keep children



in proper equipment as they grow and progress, and encourage shops to carry only good equipment (it is harder to recycle poor quality!)

If parents in your ski club have been proactive in acquiring good ski equipment for their children, you may wish to create an equipment pool. Before the end of each ski season, ask parents to look at what other children are using. When the following ski season approaches (and the children have done some growing), have them use the network to locate the equipment that is most suitable for their youngster.

3.4.4 Ski Care

A *most important* lesson for all ages of skier in your program is “take care of your equipment.” At an early age children should be taught to appreciate their own equipment and develop an interest in how their skis are prepared and cared for. If your program is part of a school program, practice should not end until the skis are prepared for storing (socks for both tips & tails, and proper ties).

Encourage the education of the skier. *Do not* do everything for them. Progressively develop their ability to look after themselves.

The following are useful ski care tips:

- Don't walk in the parking lot with skis on; small stones and dirt will harm the base.
- Don't leave poles on the ground as they will break easily if someone steps on them.
- Wipe the snow off your skis when you are finished using them. Store your skis after each ski session.
- Put socks over the tips and tails so that the skis won't rub together.
- Use ski fasteners to hold the skis firmly together.
- Dry your boots slowly by putting newspapers in them if they are wet. Remove the insole to dry underneath them.





3.5 Ski Preparation

Basic Wax/Tool Kit for Coaching Children in the Active Start Stage of Athlete Development

- ✓ cork
- ✓ putty knife
- ✓ paper towel
- ✓ wax remover
- ✓ metal, plastic and groove scrapers
- ✓ grip wax:
 - minus one to minus four degree range (extra blue)
 - zero degree range (purple)
 - plus one to zero degree range (special red)
 - base binder
- ✓ klister: universal
- ✓ one warm range and one cold range non-fluoro paraffin glide waxes
- ✓ good wax iron (controllable heat)

Base Preparation

- ✓ Place the ski firmly in the ski form.
- ✓ Clean the ski top, sides and bottom with wax remover.
- ✓ Dry thoroughly.
- ✓ Using a plastic scraper, make a couple of passes from tip to tail in a continuous pass.
- ✓ Take some paper towel or fiberlene and wipe the ski.
- ✓ The ski is now ready to wax.

Glide Wax Application

- ✓ Place the ski in the ski form.
- ✓ Make certain that the ski is fastened down.
- ✓ Clean the ski by using wax remover and a sharp plastic scraper.
- ✓ Heat the iron. It should be hot enough to melt the wax, but not hot enough that it begins to smoke.
- ✓ Lay a thin bead of glide wax on both sides of the groove. Do not put wax in the kick zone unless the ski is being used for skating.



- ✓ Melt the beads of wax by passing the iron over the whole glide zone. Do not allow the iron to stop in one place or use a “scrubbing” motion.
 - ✓ Let the ski cool to room temperature.
 - ✓ Scrape with the plastic scraper.
 - ✓ Brush.
- ❑ Application of Grip Wax
- ✓ The first step is to make sure the grip wax pocket of the ski base is clean. Clean it with wax remover.
 - ✓ Take some sandpaper (80 grit) and rough the kick zone of the ski. Note, however that you should be cautious about applying this step to the equipment of young skiers who use their classic skis for both classic and skating techniques.
 - ✓ Make sure the grip wax is cold. This is especially important with the softer waxes or base binder. “Freeze” the wax by leaving it outside while you get ready to begin. This allows it to be rubbed on in thin layers and avoids big lumps that are difficult to spread with the cork.
 - ✓ Rub a thin layer of the grip wax onto the kick zone of the ski and smooth out each layer with a cork.
 - ✓ Start with 3-4 thin layers of grip wax. If the ski is not too stiff and the wax is right, that will be enough.
 - ✓ If skiers do not have adequate grip they can add one or two more layers, or a slightly softer wax,
 - ✓ The next step is to lengthen the layers.
 - ✓ Finally, if the grip is still inadequate, you should scrape it all off with a plastic scraper and repeat the process with a softer wax.
- ❑ Application of Klister
- ✓ The first step is to clean the grip wax pocket of the ski with wax remover.
 - ✓ Next, warm the klister tube (use warm water in a can, your hand or a heat gun).
 - ✓ Poke a small hole in the top of the tube.
 - ✓ Squeeze small thin strips on both sides of the groove, in a uniform manner, in the kick zone of the ski. The strips should be horizontal, from the groove out. You should be able to duplicate the amount of klister on the second ski.
 - ✓ Spread the klister with your thumb or the spreader that comes in the box. If the klister has become cold, you may need to warm it in order to spread it smoothly.
 - ✓ Let the klister cool for at least 10 minutes before skiing on it.





REFERENCES

Equipment for Cross-Country Skiing. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*. 2000, pp. 283.

Know the Terms. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*. 2000, pp. 281.

Lesson Plan – Dressing Appropriately for Skiing. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*, 2000, pp 236.

Ski Equipment For Children. 'A Parents Guide to Cross-Country Ski Equipment for Children'. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*, 2000, pp. 279.

Ski Preparation. *CCBC Ski League Manual*. 2000, pp. 207-208.

Ski Shops and Ski Swaps. 'A Parents Guide to Cross-Country Ski Equipment for Children'. *CCBC Ski League Leader Manual*, 2000, pp. 280.



SECTION 4 - TEACHING CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING



Coaching Tip: Coaching is not just about memorizing techniques or devising the perfect game plan. It is about paying attention to people, really believing in them, really caring about them and really involving them.

Source: Unknown



4.1 Ski Playgrounds and Terrain Parks

4.1.1 Ski Playgrounds

A ski playground is a designated location which has been developed or set up to assist children to learn to ski naturally, and which provides a variety of skiing discoveries.

Figure 4.1 - Terrain Park



The requirements of a ski playground include:

- varied terrain (both slope and flat terrain);
- close proximity to a day lodge; and
- shelter from the wind.





Features or components (not exclusive) that may be incorporated into a ski playground include:

- a terrain park;
- an adventure trail;
- an obstacle course; and
- animated cartoon characters.

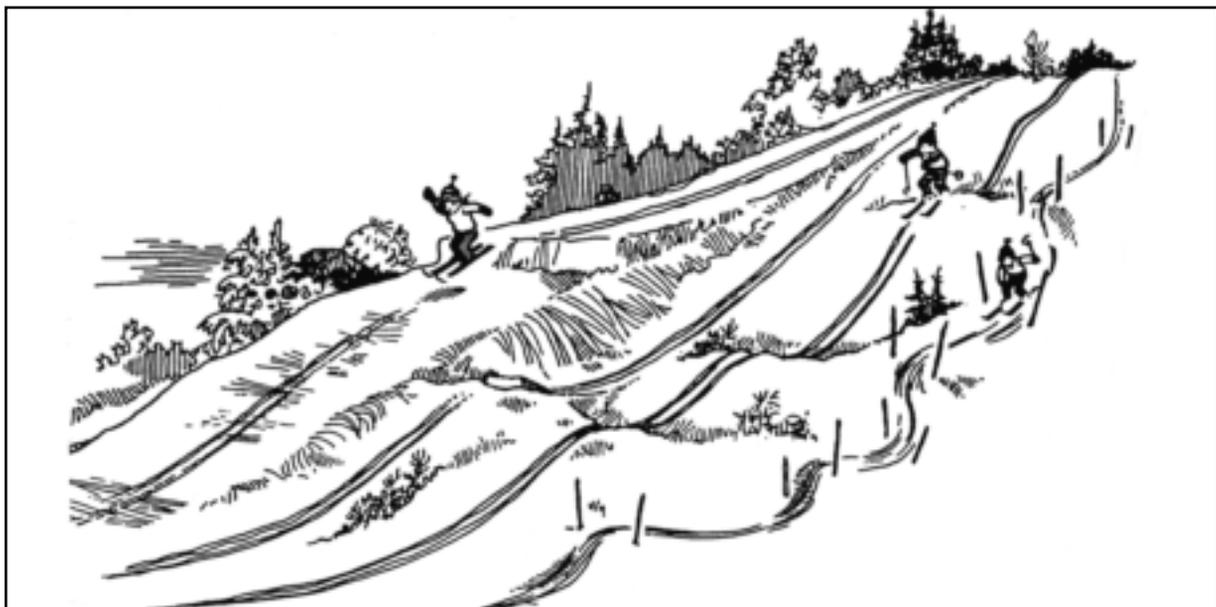
Choosing a Site

A ski playground could be developed almost any place there is snow. Although an established ski area is preferable, a snow-covered school playground, golf course, community park or pasture will also work. The playground requires a relatively large, flat surface with a gentle slope nearby. Shelter and washrooms should also be close by. Once a suitable site has been selected, it should be used for the duration of the program. Young children are comfortable with a familiar site and routine.

Preparing the Site

Ensure appropriate preparation of the snow surface. Young skiers are not ready to face the challenges of hard, icy conditions or deep, wet snow! Plan for one or more coaches to spend one-half to one hour repairing the ski area before each session. Pack and track-set with a snowmobile, and prepare the bicycle dips, etc. with snow scoops and shovels. Each week the site can be altered to provide variety and new challenges. By changing the snow surface in a few places to create corridors, bumps, ditches and so forth, a new dimension can be added to the play area. Use a pair of skis to move around on while manually preparing the terrain features. Being on skis will allow you to test the features and you will be better able to match the size and spacing of bumps to the skill level and size of your skiers. This will have the additional benefit of preventing you from sinking in the newly prepared snow and leaving big footprints.

Figure 4.2 – Terrain Park





Features of a Ski Playground

A ski playground should provide a variety of terrain that will help develop a child's balance and coordination skills. It can include the following features:

- ❑ **Cartoon Characters.** Try a different theme every session (e.g. Sesame Street, animals, a trip to the zoo, choo choo trains, Jungle Book, dinosaurs, Ninja Turtles, Disney characters...).
- ❑ **Obstacle Course.** Easily obtained materials such as stakes, poles, plastic pipe, course flags and signage can be used to create obstacles. Rolls of two inch diameter ABS plumbing pipe or natural gas pipeline are suitable for making archways. Cartoon characters can be cut out from painted corraplast signboard.
- ❑ **Adventure Trails.** This component of a ski playground is a favorite with children. Each trail should have its own theme – e.g. jungle, Peter Pan or Star Trek. Use your imagination and develop adventure trails that are unique to your own ski area.

Forest trails which have narrow access and plenty of bumps, uphill, downhill, dips and turns throughout make an exciting route. Trees are essential in order to create a closed in "tunnel" effect. Tunnels appeal to a child's sense of adventure. Moreover it is important to choose trails that have a variety of terrain variations because this encourages the natural development of ski skills.

It is best if the trail is a circuit route, both departing and returning to the main ski playground in the stadium area. Because the route should be narrow, it will require packing and setting with a snowmobile. Use weight shifting creatively and bank up the turns to add to the challenge.

- ❑ **Roller-Coaster Dips.** Roller-coaster dips are gradual bumps and dips that are added to a slight downhill trail. The downhill should permit the skier to carry enough speed to get over the dips. Use a snow scoop to create a dip in the track and pile the snow beyond the dip to create the hump. Repeat this process along the track and ski it in to compact the snow and smooth out the humps. This teaches balance, coordination and control of parallel skis. Refer to section 4.1.4 for detailed information.
- ❑ **Bicycle Dips.** This is the next step up in challenge from roller-coaster dips. These can be made on a slight downhill or on flat terrain. More advanced skiers can use steeper slopes. Select a downhill track that has been skied in. Scoop out snow from a track to make a dip, and pile some of it on the parallel track to make a hump. Alternate this procedure as you move down the hill. Round off the hills and dips and ski them in yourself. Space the crest of the humps about 3-4 meters apart. Prepare this course so that the height differences between the bottoms of the dips and the crests of the humps are half the leg length of the smallest child to use it. This teaches balance, coordination and independent arm and leg action on skis, plus it provides a lot of fun. Refer to section 4.1.4 for detailed information.

The articles on the following pages (sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3) give us a look at how two clubs have applied this concept.





4.1.2 Building an Adventure Trail

In 1997 the 100 Mile Nordics developed a “kid size” lit adventure trail for their youngest skiers (3 to 7 years of age). The purpose of this adventure trail was to teach technique through a combination of play, discovery and appropriate terrain. It was the first step in the club’s plan to develop a full ski playground.

This new trail featured both “kid size” trail lighting and motion detectors to highlight animal characters posted in the trees. The trail is fun to ski night or day, but it is the most fun at night. Based on the 100 Mile initiative, the following are some tips for setting up your own adventure trail:

❑ Lighting

- ✓ When determining the location of the adventure trail, take into consideration access to your existing power supply and lit trails system.
- ✓ Use underground wiring.
- ✓ In this case, 20 mini-lights were used for a 254 meter trail. The height of the lights was determined by the average snow fall for the area and what would be appropriate in order to keep the trail kid size. For this trail, the lights were approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ meter (75 cm) high.
- ✓ The adventure trail lights turn on as soon as a skier moves from the club’s main lighted trail system onto the adventure trail. A motion detector is at the start of the adventure trail and when the skier passes the sensor, it triggers the first spot light and starts up the 20 mini-lights. The lights were initially set on a 20 minute timer, and after 20 minutes, the lights shut off automatically. This amount of time turned out to be a bit short for this trail for some of the smallest skiers, but the timer is easily adjustable, as are the motion detectors, and the club can adjust the system to meet the needs of the children once those needs are determined.
- ✓ Four motion detectors are set up along the trail. As each child passes the detector, a spot light comes on highlighting one of the animal characters posted in the trees.
- ✓ The lights used for this project use an ordinary light bulb under a plastic shade. This allows the use of different colored light bulbs for different effects on different occasions, e.g. red or green for Christmas.

❑ Terrain

- ✓ The adventure trail needs to be easily accessible for the smallest skiers. It should be in close proximity to the stadium area.
- ✓ When determining the width of the trail, keep in mind that this is an adventure trail. It should have a narrow entrance, and give the impression of “skiing into the forest”. This is all a part of the atmosphere that you are trying to create. Another factor to consider is that the width of the trail should be kept in proportion to the age of the skier, i.e. “kid size”. This is because a regular ski trail may look like a super-highway to a four year old. The 100 Mile Nordics adventure trail is no wider than two metres, and this allows sufficient room for little skiers to both snow plow downhill and side-step up hill.
- ✓ The trail is packed with a snowmobile. No track is set.





- ✓ The intention of this project is to encourage the development of technique by creating situations in which children learn to ski naturally. The terrain used is quite challenging for the age of the skier. The trail system is geared towards fun, adventure and exploration so that children do not really comprehend that they are acquiring skills (balance, rhythm and coordination) and learning to master fairly difficult terrain.
- ✓ The trail drops somewhat in elevation between the beginning and the end, making the downhill quite challenging. The intention was to make the terrain difficult, but to keep it fun. It is important to find just the right balance.

❑ **Animal Characters**

- ✓ You can find suitable illustrated animal characters in books, coloring books, etc.
- ✓ Photocopy the illustrations that you want to use. You may want to enlarge the photocopy if the illustration is too small.
- ✓ Next photocopy your illustrated animal characters onto transparency paper (i.e. make overheads).
- ✓ Using an overhead projector, trace the illustrations onto sheets of corraplast. Corraplast is available at most hardware stores and comes in a variety of colors.
- ✓ Cut out the corraplast figures. In this case the corraplast was cut with a sharp exacto knife. Later it was decided that the figures should be strengthened with plywood, so the corraplast sheets with the figures on them were attached to pieces of plywood and both were cut out with a jig-saw.
- ✓ To paint the characters, the club used varathane paint and tremclad. The club also tried spray painting the clear corraplast, but this meant painting both sides and waiting for drying.

❑ **Protecting the Adventure Trail from Vandalism**

- ✓ During the summer the corraplast animal characters are removed and stored in a safe place.
- ✓ During the summer, the club placed five gallon plastic oil buckets upside down over each light to protect them. First the buckets were cleaned and the handles removed. Two holes were drilled, one on each side of the bucket close to where the handles had been. A (two foot) soft, pliable wire was attached to one side of the bucket. This wire ran down below the bucket, was wrapped around the post and then ran back up to the hole in the other side of the bucket where it was fastened.

4.1.3 Kid Magnet - A Ski Playground Primer

Why Build a Ski Playground?

The concept of ski playgrounds and terrain gardens has been around for quite some time. Experts agree that in the early development of ski skills amongst children the value of this type of learning environment cannot be overstressed. But too often these facilities are overlooked, as the tendency at most cross-country ski facilities is towards the development and maintenance of smooth, linear trails only.





For young children, a ski playground is just what it says it is. In the process of having fun in a playful surrounding, children develop the basics skills for cross-country skiing. This is referred to as the “natural learning” approach. Spontaneous fun and imagination are the motivators; the snow, terrain and obstacles are the teachers; and balance, coordination and confidence are the results. Skills are developed through repetition. There are no errors; there is no right or wrong way, only an ongoing learning process.

The primary role of coaches in the context of playgrounds should be to create learning situations that motivate children to become active in this environment. The notion that ski instruction is all about explanations and demonstrations of various techniques using technical jargon is out of place in a learning situation for children. Kids want action, not talk.

The following is an account of how this approach was put to the test when the Sovereign Lake Nordic Club in Vernon, BC introduced a “Ski Bunny” program for the first time. The main objective for the “Ski Bunny” group (age six and under) was to ensure a positive, outdoor winter experience on cross-country skis. It was felt that this could be achieved by creating a dedicated environment with fun as the focus.

Setting Up a Ski Playground

The first step in establishing a playground (or terrain garden) is to assess the potential in your ski area. A specifically designated area that will not interfere with or be interfered with by other activities is ideal. In this way, children will become comfortable with the location and the terrain features can be developed over the winter without disruption. The area should have a gentle slope nearby for up and downhill manoeuvres. Access to forest adventure trails is a bonus, and close proximity to a day lodge is always important for young skiers.

The Sovereign Lake trails conveniently had a location with all of these attributes. The first component to be developed had an obstacle-type course (flat slalom, duck under/reach up, gentle up and downhills, loose powder, small bumps and ditches). This course was important for the development of initial skills. Children would keep moving around the circuit without encouragement, because they were motivated by their own enthusiasm.

The “obstacles” were created using easily obtained materials such as stakes, poles, plastic pipe and course flags, together with appropriate signage. Archways were popular with the children as they were a very visible object in the course and their function was obvious. Two inch diameter ABS plumbing pipe that comes in big rolls or natural gas pipe-line are excellent for this purpose. Basic flattening and sloping of the playground area was done with the groomer and an Alpine snowmobile was used for track-setting a new course configuration each week.

Anyone who has ever shoveled a driveway, made a snowman, set ski tracks or built an igloo is familiar with snow’s tremendous potential for shaping. With this understanding, additional features that created new challenges were developed in the playground area throughout the season. Snow corridors, bumps and ditches and the “roller coaster” were all built by the use of a standard snow scoop. With this tool, mountains of snow can be move without being picked up. The scoop glides easily across snow surfaces and is the perfect size for building such attractions as the roller coaster.





Line ups are not something you would normally associate with cross-country skiing, but once the roller coaster trail was set up it was the site of constant activity. Inspired by pictures and descriptions in books and the well known Erik Roste video clip of the Norwegian National Team (where the men's team attempts to ski down a roller coaster trail, single file, holding onto the waist of the person in front), the roller coaster was one of the most popular activity centres with all ages. Any observer would have been impressed by the enthusiasm, confidence-building and skill development that was gained from that wavy slope.

The second component of the playground was a forest path which made use of an abandoned skidder trail. The path's disguised access, narrow width, and obvious bumps and turns made it an ideal kid's trail on two counts: it appealed to their sense of adventure; and it was loaded with the kind of terrain variations that naturally develop good skiing skills. To add to the wonderment, the path was dubbed the "Jungle Trail", and jungle animal cutouts made from painted corrugated signboard were mounted in the trees. Not only did the skiers have to negotiate the downhill slope with its dips and turns, but they also had to keep an eye out for a monkey, parrots, a lion and a tiger. The trail became a kid magnet. Sooner or later, every age group in the Ski League program discovered it and took numerous runs down the Jungle Trail. The older kids skied at much faster speeds than the Ski Bunnies, but they derived the same challenges and skill development. The trail rejoined the main network at a location not far from the day lodge and close enough to the playground to make for a rewarding circuit trek.

The Jungle Trail was track packed with an Alpine snowmobile prior to each session, whenever there was new snow. By weight shifting on the Alpine it is possible to bank up turns which gave the kids added thrills and confidence.

Due to the success of the terrain-oriented areas and paths, a second adventure trail was created. Unlike the Jungle Trail, which was a cleared trail, it was purely a bushwhack trail that meandered through the trees. It was just wide enough to pack with an Alpine so that the younger skiers didn't have to slog through the deep snow and become discouraged. Although there were no animal cut-outs in the trees, the branches were close enough to brush up against the skiers' jackets and visibility was limited enough to provide some mystery. Speed was not a factor as much of the trail was uphill – perfect for refining the herringbone. This trail linked the playground to the Jungle Trail, permitting skiers to move from one discovery area to the next, spurred on by their curiosity.

Variety was one of the keys to maintaining the motivation level of the young skiers. New learning situations present a stimulating environment, in both the imaginative sense and the physical challenge/skill development sense. Time ran out and the sessions ended before all options could be tried. Bicycle bumps were built after the fact as an experiment and these were subsequently added to the terrain garden during the following season. In addition, cartoon cut-out characters joined the playground as colorful, animated obstacles (more fun!).

The effort put into the playground and terrain features was rewarded with the reaffirmation that kids can do and learn by having fun. It was a relatively simple undertaking. All children's skill development programs are encouraged to set up their own unique playground sites.





Figure 4.6 – Bicycle Dips



4.1.4 Roller-Coaster Dips and Bicycle Dips

Roller-Coaster Dips

Find a gently sloping, well-packed hill, and build a series of small rolls on the hill. Start with three rolls and add more as the children gain skills. Create rolls as follows: shovel snow from nearby onto the track/slope the skiers will be using in order to build some higher spots. Then pack the snow firmly with your snow shovel and skis. The rolls should be 15-30 cm high and about four metres apart. Remember to “ski in” the roller-coaster dips yourself before you allow the children in your group to use them.

Children may fall frequently when they first try the roller coaster dips, but this is the initial stage of learning and falls are natural. *“Children will improve their skiing skills if they continue to ski on these kinds of features!”*

Always match the slope of the hill with the ability of your skiers. If some children have more difficulty in negotiating the rolls than is usually the case, take them to a flat area and encourage them to practise on that terrain first. On the other hand you should use higher rolls and steeper slopes for the more advanced skiers in your group.





Figure 4.4 – Roller-Coaster Dips - Skier Action

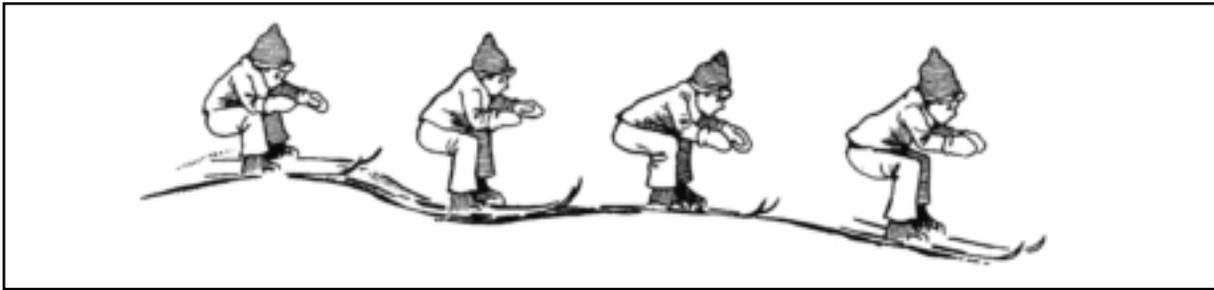
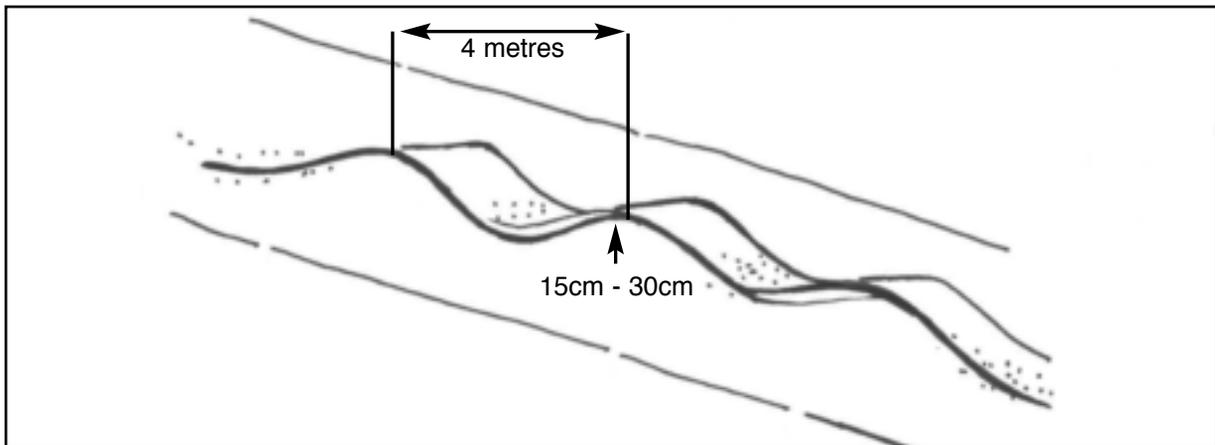


Figure 4.5 – Roller-Coaster Dips - Profile



Bicycle Dips

Bicycle dips are similar to roller-coaster dips in that the track skied is uneven. The main difference between the two features is that bicycle dips consist of a dip in one track accompanied by a parallel bump in the other track. Bicycle dips are a more advanced exercise than roller-coaster dips and can be created on either sloping or flat terrain.

To prepare the terrain for bicycle dips, lower one ski track by scooping snow out of it, and raise the other track by moving the scooped snow on to it to build it up. Always round off the dips and bumps you have made. Create four or five “pairs” of dips and bumps by alternating dips and bumps in each track (the distance between consecutive bumps on the same track should be about four metres). The final step is to ensure that the difference in height between each dip and bump is no greater than the distance between the knee and foot of the smallest child in your group. Again, “ski in” the bicycle dips yourself before you allow the children in your group to use them.

If your group has difficulty mastering this exercise, space the pairs of dips and bumps farther apart, and/or round off the bumps to reduce the difference in height between the dips and bumps.

Once your group can negotiate the dips and bumps competently, challenge them by increasing the difference in height between the two. You can also make the activity more difficult by having the children increase their skiing speed.



Figure 4.6 – Bicycle Dips - Skier Action

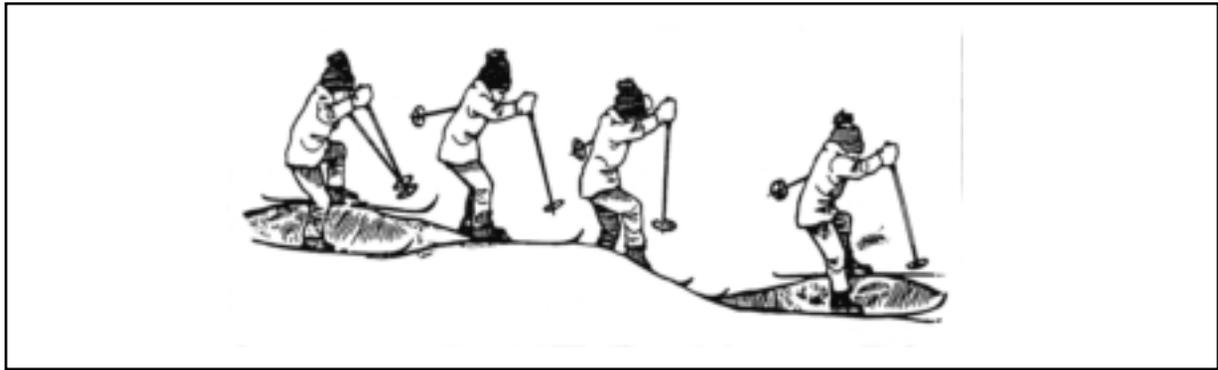
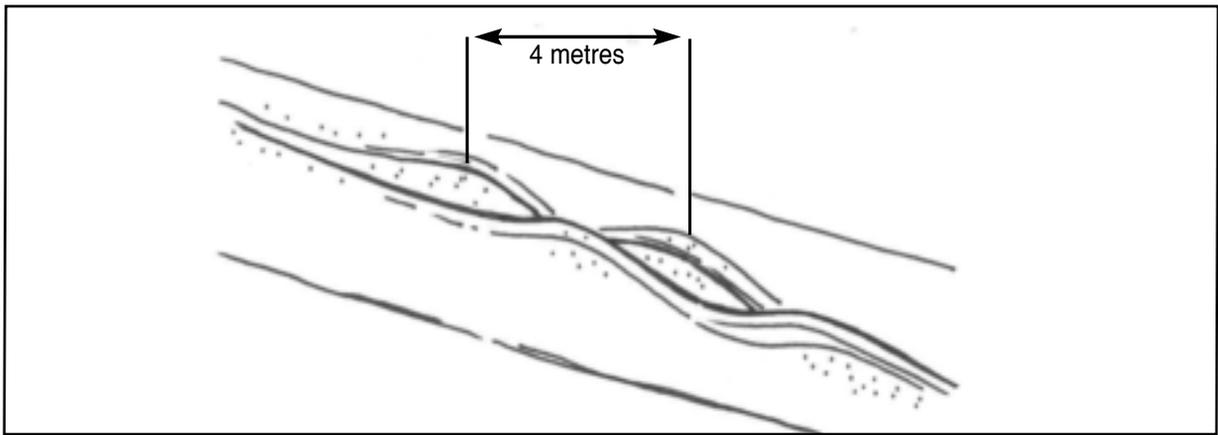


Figure 4.7 – Bicycle Dips - Profile





4.2 The First Steps – Technique for Beginners

The Skill Criteria outlined below are appropriate for novice skiers of all ages. If you are coaching children in the Active Start stage of development this information will go hand in hand with the sample activity plans provided in section 5.3 and the Skill Evaluation Benchmarks provided in section 4.2.2.

Most skills should be practised on flat, packed terrain without poles. The reason poles are not used when these skills are introduced is that skiers may rely too much on their poles and not enough on their body position for balance.

4.2.1 Skill Criteria

<p>Falling and Rising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall to the side and back in a sitting motion • Bring skis together, side by side and under the body • Move onto hands and knees • Stand up (young children often require assistance) 	
<p>Side Stepping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arms and hands forward and out to side for balance • Place weight on one ski, lift other ski placing it down 20-30 cm away from the original position • Shift weight to second ski, and bring the first leg to it to keep the skis parallel • Repeat in opposite direction 	
<p>Star Turn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skis parallel, and arms away from body for balance • Place weight on the left ski, lift the right knee and move tips of skis apart 20-30 cm • Keep tails together, place right ski back down (forms a “pizza slice”) • Place weight on right ski, bring left ski parallel to it • Continue until full circle is completed • Repeat in opposite direction 	





<p>Movement on Skis – Diagonal Stride</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk in place on the snow, alternately lifting skis off the ground • Move forward in small steps keeping skis parallel • Try this skill both in and out of the tracks • This “walking step” is the first progression of the Diagonal Stride 	
<p>Movement on Skis – Herringbone</p> <p>This technique should be practised on a gradual uphill slope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a packed area without tracks, move forward lifting first one ski and then the other • Keep tails of skis close together and the tips apart • This “duck walk” is the first progression of the Herringbone technique 	
<p>How to Hold a Ski Pole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For cross-country skiing, two poles are used, a left pole and a right pole. Each ski pole has a strap as shown in the illustration on the right. The thumb rests on the lower side of the strap, which should be adjusted until it is somewhat snug, while still allowing freedom of movement. The crook between the thumb and forefinger should be approximately a centimetre away from the pole. If the poles are adjusted correctly, the poles can easily be held with the thumb and forefinger. • Holding a ski pole the right way can be a challenge for young children. To explain the process you may wish to use an analogy. For example: the bunnyrabbit (the hand) comes up out of the rabbit hole (the straps) and hugs the tree (the pole). As children grow and develop their ski skills they will be encouraged to hold their poles in a technically correct position as it will allow them to use their arm action effectively and improve their balance. 	





4.2.2 Skill Evaluation Benchmarks

The following benchmarks should be used when evaluating the basic skill competency of children in the Active Start stage of development.

- Falling and Rising.** This technique should be assessed on packed, but not hard/icy snow. Children should be able to fall to the side and back in a sitting motion, with their skis and legs together. They should then move their skis parallel to each other under their body. Next they should move forward on their hands and knees, and stand up without assistance.
- Side Stepping.** This technique should be assessed on packed, but not hard/icy snow. Children should hold their arms and hands out to the side for balance. They should place their weight on one ski and then lift their other ski, placing it down 20-30 cm away from the original position. They should then shift their weight to the second ski, and bring the first leg to it while keeping the skis parallel. Skiers should be able to step their skis to the side in both left and right directions.
- Star Turn.** Skiers should stand relaxed on packed snow with skis parallel and arms away from the body for balance. They should then place their weight on their left ski, lift their right knee, and move the tips of the ski apart 20-30 cm. Keeping the tails together, they should place the right ski back down. The skis will form an obvious pizza slice. Then putting their weight on the right ski, children should bring the left ski parallel to it. Children should be able to turn a full circle in both the left and right directions.
- Movement on Skis**
 - ✓ Children should walk in place on the snow, alternately lifting their skis off the ground. They should be able to move forward in small steps, keeping their skis parallel. They should be able to do this both in and out of the tracks.
 - ✓ On a packed area without tracks, children should move forward, lifting first one ski and then the other, keeping the tails of their skis close together and the tips apart.

When coaches are evaluating the skills of children under six years of age, they should:

- avoid making comparisons to other children and emphasizing performance; and
- praise and compliment skiers regularly for effort, enthusiasm and respect for others.





4.2.3 Skill Criteria and Evaluation Benchmarks - Level 1

The skill criteria and evaluation benchmarks outlined below are appropriate for novice skiers of all ages. If you are coaching children six years of age they go hand in hand with the sample practice plans provided in section 5.4, and the Skills Checklist - Level 1 in section 4.2.4.

In general poles should not be used when these skills are introduced. The skier may rely too much on the poles and not enough on body position for balance.

<p>Ready Position</p> <p>This technique should be practised and assessed on flat terrain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The skier stands with arms and hands slightly forward and to the side for balance • Skis are kept parallel • Body is upright, but relaxed • Knees and ankles are relaxed and slightly bent • The skier remains in this position for several seconds 	
<p>Falling and Rising</p> <p>This technique should be practised and assessed on a gentle slope that is packed but not too hard or icy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The skier glides down the hill without poles, and falls to the side and back in a sitting motion • Skis and legs are kept together • Skis are brought together, side by side and under the body, on the downhill side of the body and perpendicular to the fall line (the path a ball would take if it rolled down the hill) • The skier moves on to hands and knees • The skier edges skis and stands up with minimal or no assistance • Once the skier can accomplish the skill effectively without poles, poles should be used. Poles need to be moved parallel to the skis as the skier prepares to rise 	





Side Stepping

This technique should be practised and assessed on a gentle slope that is packed but not too hard or icy. Poles could be used, but may make this exercise more difficult to accomplish.

- The skier stands on the flat at the start of a gentle slope, with skis perpendicular to the fall line
- Arms and hands are forward and to the side for balance
- The skier places his/her weight on the downhill ski and then lifts the uphill ski, placing it 10 to 20 cm uphill from the original position
- The downhill ski is then placed beside the uphill ski
- Skis are kept parallel
- Repeat for five repetitions
- The skier should also practise going down the slope using five side steps



Star Turn

This technique should be practised and assessed on flat terrain.

- The skier stands in the Ready Position, in loose snow, with skis parallel and arms away from the body for balance
- The skier places his/her weight on the left ski
- The skier then lifts up the right knee and places the right ski back down with the tips about 20-30 cm apart, keeping the tails together. The skis form a “pizza slice”
- The left ski is then moved parallel to the right ski
- This is repeated until a full circle is completed
- Repeat in opposite direction

On flat terrain and packed snow, the skier can repeat the above points, but keeping the tips together and positioning the tails 20-30 cm apart





Tracking

This technique should be practised and assessed on flat terrain with several metres of clear-cut, set tracks. No poles are used.

- The skier moves forward down the track and steps sideways out of the tracks, without breaking them
- The skier is able to get out of both sides of the track and come back into it easily while moving forward



Diagonal Stride

In the progression of the Diagonal Stride this is the “running step”. This technique is practised and assessed on flat terrain with set tracks.

- The skier slides his/her skis down the track
- The skier “walks” down the track on the balls of the feet with some ankle and knee bend
- There is some glide onto the forward ski as the skier pushes off
- There is a “jogging-like” action on the balls of the feet, with glide onto the forward ski
- After the skier’s weight is shifted to the gliding ski, the pushing ski momentarily comes off the snow at the end of the push
- Arms swing comfortably (somewhat in opposite time to the leg’s stride)



Herringbone

This technique should be practised and assessed on a gentle slope that is packed but not too hard or icy.

- The skier steps up a gentle slope, alternating arms and legs
- He/she maintains the tips quite wide apart (in a “V” shape)
- Arms swing comfortably
- The skier completes five steps with each leg





Free Glide

This technique should be practised and assessed on a gentle slope that is packed but not too hard or icy. Ideally, the bottom of the hill should be flat (for emergency landings).

- The skier starts at the top of the hill in the Ready Position (the body is generally upright, knees and ankles are relaxed and slightly bent)
- Hands are kept forward
- Skis are kept parallel
- Skiers are able to glide three metres down the slope maintaining the Ready Position



Snowplow Braking

After the skier can demonstrate a stable Ready Position moving down a gentle slope, he/she can advance to Snowplow Braking on a similar slope.

- The skier makes a wedge, by spreading the tails of the skis apart (the tips come together)
- The skier controls his/her speed by adjusting the size of the wedge and edging his/her skis
- The pressure (braking) on each ski is fairly equal with minimal turning to one side
- The skier maintains the upper body in the Ready Position





4.2.4 Skill Checklist - Level 1

	Ready Position																				
	Falling and Rising																				
	Side Stepping																				
	Star Turn																				
	Tracking																				
	Diagonal Stride																				
	Herringbone																				
	Free Glide																				
	Snowplow Braking																				
	General Comments																				





4.3 Games for Teaching Technique

“One of the best ways to introduce children to skiing skills is through games. Almost any game that can be played on foot can be played on skis.”

Teaching Children to Ski

At this age, the main goal is to encourage children to have good balance so that they can stand comfortably on skis that are in motion. Instruction should be kept to a minimum, and the skiers should be encouraged to learn several different basic movements with the help of games such as the following:

- ❑ **Magic Hoops.** Hula hoops or other objects are placed at random on flat terrain, no more than two metres away from each other. Children walk/ski around them and when they hear the whistle, or when the music stops, they must get into a hula hoop. This is like musical chairs, but make sure that everyone keeps playing. There shouldn't be anyone sitting out.
- ❑ **Snakes.** This game is also known as “follow the leader” and can be played by having children follow one of the coaches. Make this more interesting by changing directions, going over obstacles and using different terrain. More advanced skiers in the group can practise their skills of side step, herringbone and shuffling in the tracks during the trek. The changes in terrain should be very small and progressive.
- ❑ **Simon Says.** This traditional game can be adapted to your ski program as well. The children should follow your movements when you say: “Bunnyrabbit says....” No one should move unless you say “Bunnyrabbit” (e.g. Bunnyrabbit says to hop, Bunnyrabbit says to touch the tips of your skis with your pole, OR, touch the tails of your skis with your pole, clap your hands, etc.).
- ❑ **Peanut Butter and Jam.** Use skis to spread either peanut butter or jam around on the snow. You can draw a big piece of bread on the snow and have the skiers cover the whole piece of bread with their tracks. Be creative and find different “things” to spread.
- ❑ **Rabbit in a Box.** Children begin this game in a small ball and then spring up!
- ❑ **Jungle Walk.** Children imagine they are going for a jungle walk and act out the animals they encounter.
- ❑ **Red Light, Green Light.** This game can be set up in a number of ways. For the youngest skiers, it may be best to have the children follow the coach down the trail, starting or stopping in response to the commands of “red light or green light”. Start this game on flat terrain and then move to a gentle slope as the skiers become more proficient.
- ❑ **Scooter.** Children stand in a straight line with one ski in the ski track. They then kick with the other foot, as they would if they were using a scooter. A ski pole can be used to simulate handlebars. Encourage steady, even kicks. Alternate to the other ski and repeat the game.





- ❑ **Giant Rabbit Hunt.** Put on a pair of snowshoes and create an interesting trail of giant rabbit prints for the “rabbits” to follow back to the day lodge (for hot chocolate). The trail can head off into the woods and even over areas inaccessible to skis, requiring the children to circle around the obstacle to find the trail.
- ❑ **Fire Engine.** Divide your group into subgroups/teams, place them behind a line, and give each team a cup. Place a “fire” (a bright red piece of construction paper) in front of each team, and a few metres away from the line. The first skier in each team fills his/her cup with snow and skis to the fire and dumps snow on it. Each member of the team takes a turn. The first team to put his/her fire out wins. The fire is out when no color shows.
- ❑ **Tunnel Tucks.** Form a tunnel by using ski poles. This can be done by sticking two poles into the snow with a third suspended through the straps. To play this game you will need three or more tunnels. The children can remain in a tuck throughout if you want to concentrate on the tuck, or they can alternatively stand, tuck, stand, tuck if you wish to work on balance.
- ❑ **Pickup.** Small balls, cones, poles, etc. are placed beside the track for skiers to pick up and put back down as they move along a trail. Alternatively these can be scattered over a larger area with the skiers walking/gliding on skis to pick them up.
- ❑ **Ball Juggling.** Once children have mastered basic walking and shuffling on snow, they can be given a ball/balloon to throw up in the air and catch while moving forward. This will shift their attention away from the mechanics of skiing and help them to become more comfortable on their skis. The older members of the group, once they become more skilled, can work with a partner and walk beside each other passing a ball back and forth with their hands. Or they can gather in one location and try and keep a ball or balloon up in the air as in volleyball. These activities cause the skiers to experiment with their range of balance and develop their agility on skis.
- ❑ **Sliding Trees.** Divide the group in half. One sub-group will be “trees” and the other will be “lumberjacks”. Each tree has a lumberjack partner. The lumberjacks take off their skis and push them around the ski area by pushing on the hips. In this way they try to move the trees into rows and other formations. When the coach calls “timber”, all of the trees and lumberjacks fall over.
- ❑ **Obstacle Course.** Set up on a gentle slope as your imagination dictates.

These are only a few suggestions. You can adapt other childhood games to your sessions as well.

4.3.1 Equipment

Young children respond well to teaching aids. Use a variety of colorful objects to create interest and provide a challenge. Here are some suggestions to start with:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - balloons | - mini coloured flags | - plastic animals |
| - bamboo sticks | - mini pylons | - stop and go signs |
| - bean bags | - noise makers | - spray paint (bio-degradable) |
| - bubbles | - nursery rhyme pictures | - whistle |
| - coloured foam balls, squares | - old poles | - variety of toys |
| - coloured hula hoops | - puppets | |





4.4 Coach Education/Training

4.4.1 Ways to Improve Your Coaching Skills

- Proceed to the next step in the NCCP progression - the Community Coaching Workshop.
- Complete the Community Coaching certification process (see section 9.1).
- Participate in the next steps in the NCCP progression, beginning with the CCI - Learning to Train (Dryland) Workshop.
- Arrange for mentoring from more experienced coaches.
- Attend club-organized sessions for upgrading the skills of developing coaches (weekly technique sessions, etc.).
- Attend club, regional or divisionally-organized technique clinics, waxing clinics, etc.
- Apply for practical coaching experience (at camps and/or competitions) with regional, provincial/territorial or national-level programs

NCCP Community Coaching Workshop

This workshop is the second step in the NCCP training progression. It provides essential training for coaches delivering skill development programs in the Active Start and FUNdamentals stages of development as well as to other novice and intermediate skiers. This program trains coaches to develop and lead on-snow sessions, to select and prepare ski equipment, to teach technical skills, to teach games that reinforce the technical skill being taught, and to make learning FUN. It also provides coaches with a framework for dealing with ethical issues in sport.

Mentoring by Experienced Coaches

Mentoring is the counseling, advising and encouraging (formally or informally) of developing coaches by an experienced coach.

Experienced coaches in your club are an important coach education resource that should be effectively utilized. Your club head coach may fill the role of a mentor in your club, and/or the head coach will coordinate this function for you with other experienced coaches in your club.

Club Training Sessions for Coaches

Most clubs will organize training sessions for their coaches in addition to NCCP workshops. These sessions can serve a number of purposes. For example:

- Program Orientation.** An orientation session might be held for new coaches teaching skill development programs to children (i.e. Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit, Track Attack). This type





of session would explain the general procedures the club follows and the administrative aspects of these programs.

- ❑ **Technique Lessons.** Weekly technique sessions might be held to help coaches improve their personal ski technique and/or teaching abilities. These sessions would reinforce the concepts presented in the NCCP workshops and provide coaches with further opportunities to develop their skills and competence. Depending on the coaching experience within the club, outside experts may sometimes be brought in to provide the necessary expertise. Clubs might recruit this assistance locally (from ski shop personnel, a competent master skier, or a former high level athlete) or from another community.
- ❑ **Ski Preparation.** Ski performance has an important role to play in determining the quality of a ski experience, and the information provided in NCCP courses is not always enough for eager coaches. Again, depending on the experience within the club, it may be necessary to recruit outside expertise.

If there are limited technical resources in a community, a club will often develop its own expertise by supporting its coaches to attend courses or workshops in neighboring communities. This type of initiative will soon lead to experienced coaches who can provide technical leadership at home.

4.4.2 Teaching Technique Through Example

Children are visual learners. It is therefore important to provide them with good visual examples of technique.

It is important for coaches to take some time to upgrade their personal skiing skills, so that the children they are working with can see good examples of technique on a regular basis. NCCP Facilitators will be able to provide some feedback on areas of ski technique that could use some improvement. They will also be able to provide tips on how coaches can further develop their skills following the workshop. This might involve formal lessons in a group or one-on-one sessions with an experienced coach or instructor.

Another method of providing skiers with appropriate visual images is to bring in skilled skiers or coaches to demonstrate. If these “models” are older children, this can provide an opportunity to improve the vertical integration between the different club athlete development programs. Older skiers will gain confidence and self esteem from being asked to demonstrate to a younger age group, and younger children will generally be more attentive when they are watching someone who is only marginally older than they are. Children can readily identify with a slightly older individual, and will be impressed with skills someone close to their own age has been able to achieve. These older skiers may serve as a good skiing role model in several ways, and may even wish to serve as an assistant with the program for the duration of the season.

There are a number of videos/DVDs available that provide good video footage of technique. In addition, top quality race footage is frequently available on downloadable video files on the internet. These resources can be used at the club day lodge to introduce a practice session (prior to skiers moving outside on to the snow), or to “fill-in” for a session when bad weather or poor snow conditions would otherwise result in cancellation of the practice.





4.4.3 Recommended Training Standards for Coaches

One of the underlying principles of the NCCP is that “every child deserves a competent coach.”

All individuals coaching children should have a minimum of 25 hours of training to prepare them for their responsibilities. This would include both the Introduction to Community Coaching (ICC) workshop and the Community Coaching (CC) workshop.

Help keep kids in cross-country skiing by being prepared!

- Active Start.** The minimum (required) training for coaching children in the “Active Start” stage of development is the ICC level (completion of the ICC workshop).
- FUNDamentals.** The minimum (required) training for coaching children in the “FUNDamentals” stage of development is the CC level (completion of the CC workshop).
- Learning to Train.** The minimum (recommended) training for coaching children in the “Learning to Train” stage of development is the CCI Learning to Train level, which involves completing CC certification and the CCI Learning to Train (Dryland and On-Snow) workshops.
- Training to Train.** The minimum (recommended) training for coaching children in the “Training to Train” stage of development is the CCI Training to Train level, which involves completing CCI Learning to Train program requirements and the CCI Training to Train (Dryland and On-Snow) workshops.





REFERENCES

Ski Playgrounds and Terrain Gardens. CCBC Ski League Manual, 2000, pp.269.

Capnerhurst, M. *Building An Adventure Trail*. CCBC Ski League Manual, 2000, pp. 276.

Monteith, B. *Kid Magnet: A Ski Playground Primer*. CCBC Ski League Manual, 2000, pp. 272.

Figures 2, 3, 4 & 7. Sturla Kassa, *Teaching Children to Ski*, Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1983.

Figures 5, 6 & 8. Lamb, J. *Ski Play*. Ottawa, Ski Jumping Canada, 1984.

Gullion, L. *Roller-coaster Dips and Bicycle Dips*. Lamb, J. *Ski Play*. Ottawa, Ski Jumping Canada, 1984.

Games for the Youngest Skiers. *CCBC Ski League Manual (2000)*, pp. 241.

Flemmen A. and Grosvold O, *Teaching Children to Ski* (M. Brady, trans) Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1983.

Lamb, J. *Ski Play*. Ottawa: Ski Jumping Canada, 1984.

Skvaridlo, P, and Langstone, J. *Technique Progressions*. Personal Communication.

United States Ski Team. *Level I Cross Country Technique Progressions*, USSA Technique Coaching Video.

Nadeau, G. *Technique Illustrations*, 2001.

Saar, P. *Skill Criteria*. CCBC Ski League Manual, 2000, pp 294.



SECTION 5 - DESIGNING A SEASONAL PLAN AND AN ACTIVITY PLAN



Coaching Tip: A major benefit of play is that participants unknowingly develop efficient technique. Play activities demand that skiers perform specific tasks, and the skiers concentrate on the task rather than on themselves. In games, skiers often move with partners or in a small group, and they are less self-conscious than an individual performing before an audience. As a result, participants are loose, relaxed and willing to gamble with new ideas that promise great rewards.

Source: Ski Games



5.1 Designing a Seasonal Plan for a Skill Development Program

A well-established Skill Development Program (SDP) would offer a progression of age appropriate learning opportunities. Participant numbers might range from 40 to 250. In order for the program to be successful, good planning practices are essential. The purpose of this section is to help you understand the planning requirements behind a successful program, and to assist you in developing a seasonal plan for a group of young skiers so that you will be prepared to plan for and lead a group yourself.

The initial meeting to develop an overall program plan for the coming season is usually held at the end of the previous season or during the spring. One of the many benefits of planning early is that a basic schedule for the year and the anticipated cost to the parents can then be provided to them when they register their children.

When planning, keep in mind that: (1) this plan needs to fit into the overall club plan for the season; and (2) each SDP is unique and leaders need to adapt their plan according to the size and objectives of their own program.

5.1.1 Seasonal Plan Checklist

Considerations for an Overall SDP Program

Your plan should address the following:

- a program “enrollment/registration day”, preferably in September and possibly held in conjunction with the club registration day – determine the date;
- the progressively changing needs of the participants as they grow and develop;
- the appropriate total number of sessions per season for each age level (refer to section 2.3);
- how and when to introduce pre-snow season sessions for applicable groups (i.e. dryland activities);
- which months the program will run for each age level;
- the appropriate number of sessions per month according to the age of the participants;
- which days of the week sessions will be held (dryland and on-snow), and which sessions are daytime and which are evening;
- the appropriate length of an activity or practice session for each age group;
- coordinating the time and location of the sessions so that all levels of skier in the SDP, as well as other groups in the overall club athlete development program (such as the junior racing program), start off at the same time at least once a week;
- building an appropriate number of special activities into the program, and deciding when to do them - for each stage of development;





- selecting a year-end activity for ALL age levels in the program, and possibly the entire club – determine the date;
- scheduling ski preparation sessions;
- organizing winter safety sessions; and
- planning for meeting(s) with parents.

Considerations for Children in the Active Start Stage of Development

The key considerations when developing a plan for the Active Start stage of development are as follows:

- Plan a meeting with the parents prior to the first activity session to ensure they have a good understanding of the overall program, the schedule for the season, what is expected of them, what equipment their children require, etc.
- Develop an email contact list for parents of the skiers in your group, and use it regularly to keep the parents informed about the program.
- The length of the season should be six to eight weeks, one session per week.
- The best time of the season to begin the activity sessions may be in early January, once satisfactory snow conditions are reasonably reliable.
- Activity sessions should be held during the daytime (warmer, children can see their surroundings better).
- The length of an activity session should be 35 to 40 minutes, with a period of supervised ski play time and a social time in the day lodge following the actual session.
- Establish a familiar routine for the duration of the program (i.e. same ski area, same coaches).
- The sessions should begin at the same time and location as sessions for the other age groups in the program, as well as other programs within the club (e.g. junior racing team), as often as possible.
- Incorporate ways to encourage a smooth progression for children moving to the next level of the program.
- Schedule at least one “special activity” - such as the year-end activities - held in conjunction with the other groups in the program.





Considerations for Children Entering the FUNdamentals Stage of Development - Level 1

Skill development progressions for children in the FUNdamentals stage of development are broken down into four levels (Levels 1 to 4). Level 1 is generally used for children six years of age, Level 2 for children seven years of age, etc. The key considerations when developing a plan for children this age are as follows:

- Plan a meeting with the parents prior to the first activity session to ensure they have a good understanding of the overall program, the schedule for the season, what is expected of them, what equipment their children require, etc.
- Develop an email contact list for parents of the skiers in your group, and use it regularly to keep the parents informed about the program.
- The length of the season should be a minimum of eight weeks, with two sessions per week (a minimum of 16 sessions).
- A ski preparation workshop should be held before the on-snow sessions begin.
- The best time of the season to begin on-snow practice sessions may be in December or the beginning of January, depending on when the snow conditions in the area become reasonably reliable.
- Schedule at least one of the two weekly practice sessions during the day.
- The length of the practice session should be approximately one hour, with a period of supervised ski play time and social time in the day lodge following the actual session.
- Begin to introduce variety in the use of the ski area, the terrain and the routine.
- The sessions should start off at the same time and location as sessions for the other age groups in the program and other athlete development programs within the club (e.g. junior racing team) as often as possible (usually Saturday morning).
- Incorporate ways to encourage a smooth progression for children moving to the next level of the program.
- Schedule at least two “special activities” - such as a treasure hunt, ski tournament, year-end activities, etc. – into the plan.





5.1.2 Seasonal Plan Chart

SEASONAL PLAN								
	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	
Active Start (5 years & younger)					4	4		
FUNDamentals (6-7 years)					8	8		
FUNDamentals (8-9 years)		4	8	8	10	10		
Learning to Train (9-11 years)	3	8	8	8	10	10	3	
Learning to Train (11-12 years)	4	10	10	10	11	11	4	

YEAR END ACTIVITIES

REGISTRATION – ALL AGES

Note: The number of sessions includes special activities, waxing workshops, etc. The time allocated to a session does not include supervised ski play time or the social time scheduled at the end of each activity/practice.





5.1.3 Seasonal Plan Worksheet

<p>FIVE YEARS OF AGE AND YOUNGER</p>	<p><i>(Refer to pages 39, 67, 81, 82, 84, 89 and 135)</i></p>	
<p>SIX TO SEVEN YEARS OF AGE</p>	<p><i>(Refer to pages 40, 67, 81, 83, 84, 103 and 135)</i></p>	

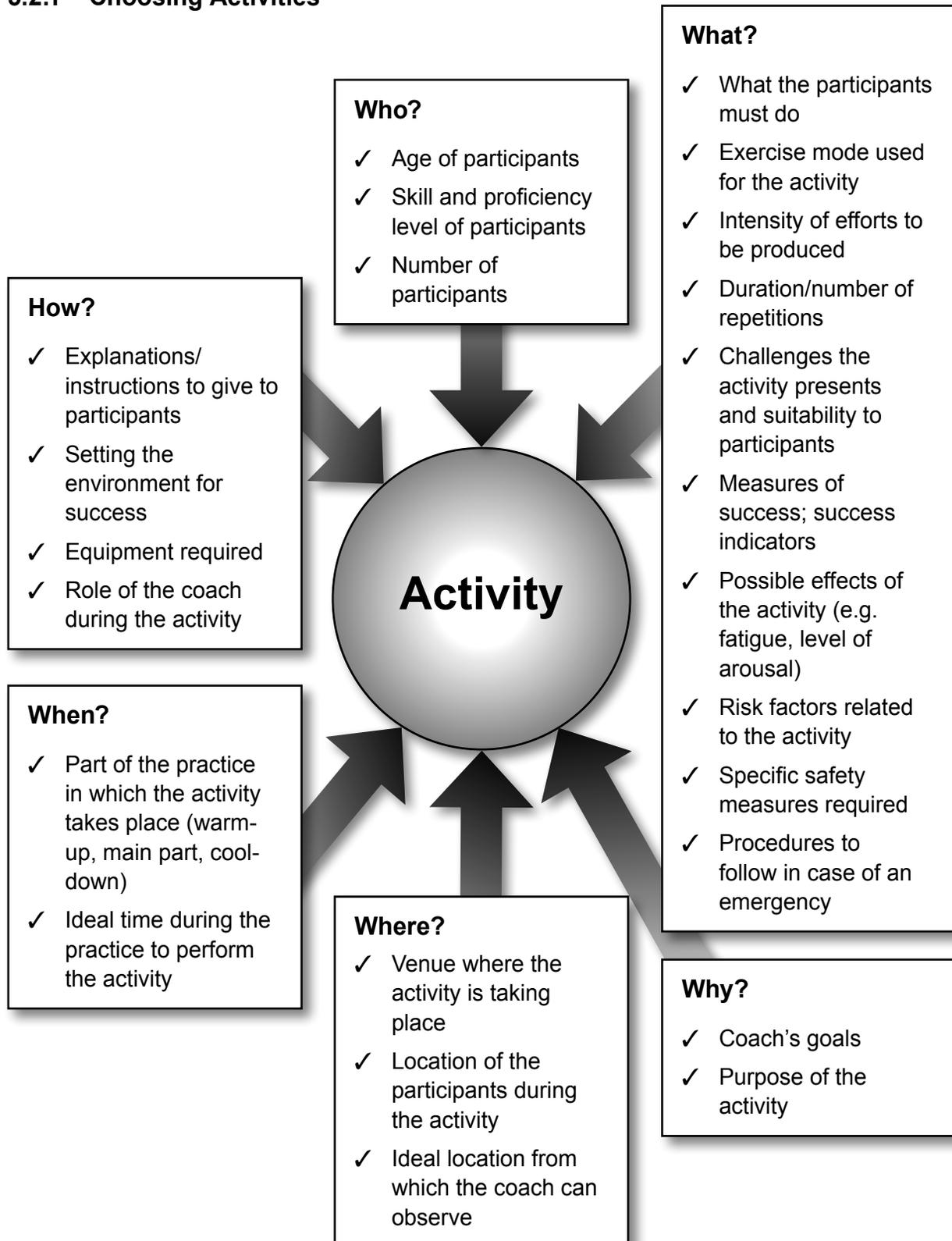






5.2 Designing an Activity Plan

5.2.1 Choosing Activities





5.2.2 Activity/Practice Planning Checklist

Structure and Organization

- The activity/practice is organized and well structured - introduction, warm-up (depending on age and other factors), main part, cool-down (depending on age and other factors) and conclusion.
- The length of the practice is appropriate for the age and ability level of the participants.
- Full use is made of available facilities and equipment to achieve the practice goals.
- The practice includes a variety of activities.
- Activities are planned so there is minimal waiting time for participants.
- The transition from one activity to the next is planned in such a way as to minimize the time wasted.
- Activities are presented in the appropriate order in the main part of the practice.

Choice of the Activities

- The activities are appropriate to the developmental stage of the participants.
- The activities are adapted to the skill and fitness level of the participants.
- The activities have well-defined goals, and the purpose of the tasks involved is clear.
- The activities are relevant to the sport.

Success and Challenge

- The activities present reasonable challenges to the participants.
- The activities are chosen or designed so that the success rate by the participants when performing the task is no less than 70%.

Safety

- Potential environmental, equipment and facilities, and human risk factors have been considered, and the activities are designed accordingly.
- An Emergency Action Plan is available.





5.3 Activity Plans: Active Start Stage of Development

The next two components of this section will help you develop a comprehensive activity/practice plan for each session, and to coordinate those plans in the context of an overall plan for the season.

These plans are coordinated with the Skill Criteria and Skill Evaluation Checklist outlined in section 4.2.

Use these activity plans as a guideline only. They are sample plans to be used as a starting point for the development of your own plans. If this is your first year coaching you may wish to follow the plans closely, but as you become more experienced you will learn to adapt them to suit your situation. For example, some groups of skiers will progress through the program at a faster or slower pace than others, or your ski area will work better for some games than others. Keep in mind that the plan for your group needs to fit in with the overall program plan of your SDP Programmer and your club.

Select an appropriate location for the activity session - safe, out of the wind, set up to promote learning through the use of terrain and suitable for adventure, plan and discovery.

Coaching Tip: Since young children have a very short attention span, five to ten different games and activities should be included in a session. Keep them moving!





ACTIVITY PLAN 1 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Introduce ways to keep warm.
- 2) Introduce the washrooms.
- 3) Introduce Falling on flats.
- 4) Introduce Rising on flats.
- 5) Introduce the ski playground.
- 6) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

Note: This activity should be conducted on flat, packed terrain and without using poles.

- Warm Up Chant – “How I Keep Warm”**
 - ✓ I hop up and down like a bunnyrabbit.
 - ✓ I spin my arms in big circles like a windmill.
 - ✓ I wiggle my toes and my nose.
 - ✓ I laugh out loud.
 - ✓ And ski all around.
 - ✓ If I do these things, I will keep warm all day long.

- Falling on Flats**
 - ✓ Falls to side and back using a sitting motion.
 - ✓ Common error:
 - falls forward.

- Rising on Flats**
 - ✓ Brings skis together, side by side under body.
 - ✓ Gets skis flat on snow by moving onto hands and knees.
 - ✓ Slides one ski forward so foot is flat on ski.
 - ✓ Common errors:
 - skier tries to stand up before skis are parallel.
 - skier tries to stand up without hips over skis.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Labels or masking tape to help the coaches learn names.

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.

- Ingenuity to help turn each skill being taught into a game that children can relate to, even the most basic skills such as Falling or Rising. Refer to section 4.3 for ideas.





Skill	Description	Time
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gather at the rendezvous point and move to the location prepared for this activity.2. Introduce washroom locations.3. Introduce action chant: "How I Keep Warm".	10 min.
Falling on Flats (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates key points.2. Have skiers fall to the left using sitting motion.3. Repeat on the right side.	10 min.
Rising (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates key points.2. Have skiers get onto knees with hands on skis and stand up.3. Repeat on the other side.	10 min.
Game Time	Snakes: Skiers follow the coach, who leads them in a chain twisting and turning across negotiable terrain in the ski playground. Refer to section 4.3 for more information about this game.	10 min.
Ski Play	The skiers explore the ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one support.	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 2 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Review and expand on ways to keep warm.
- 2) Review Falling and Rising on flats.
- 3) Introduce Star Turn - tails together.
- 4) Introduce a new aspect of the ski playground.
- 5) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

Note: This activity should be conducted on flat, packed terrain and without using poles.

Dressing for Skiing – “What I Wear When I Go Skiing”

- ✓ I cover my face when the weather is windy and/or cold.
- ✓ I keep my toque on!
- ✓ I wear thermal underwear.
- ✓ I wear mitts, not gloves.
- ✓ I wear clothing that allows me to move freely.
- ✓ If I wear wool, I wear it as a second layer away from my skin.
- ✓ My clothing and boots are not too tight.
- ✓ I keep metal zippers away from my skin.

Star Turn

- ✓ Arms and hands slightly forward and out to the side.
- ✓ Forms slight wedge with ski tips apart and tails together.
- ✓ With weight on first ski, lifts tip of second ski and widens wedge.
- ✓ Puts weight on second ski and brings first ski parallel.
- ✓ Repeats until full circle is made.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier keeps centre of gravity between the skis.
 - skier steps on tail of other ski.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children
- Special feature – a simple tunnel made of hoops or ski poles or other materials.





Skill	Description	Time
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gather at the rendezvous point and move to the location prepared for this activity.2. Review “How I Keep Warm” chant.3. Introduce principles of dressing for skiing using drama/action to demonstrate the points. Refer to “What I Wear When I Go Skiing” in section 3.3.	10 min.
Falling and Rising on Flats (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates key points.2. Skiers fall to the left using sitting motion.3. Skiers get onto knees with hands on skis.4. Repeat on other side.	10 min.
Star Turn (tails together) (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points.2. Skiers walk on spot lifting tips of skis only.3. Skiers lift tip of one ski and form a wedge. Then they stand on the “wedge” ski and bring other ski parallel. Have skiers go back to the original position. Have them do this slowly to emphasize balance and weight shift.4. Make a complete turn.	10 min.
Game Time	Tunnels: The skiers follow the coach who leads them along a similar route to the week before, but this time they have simple open-air “tunnels” made of ski poles to ski through (be creative!).	10 min.
Ski Play	The children explore the ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide one-on-one support.	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 3 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Review and expand on ways to keep warm.
- 2) Introduce the principles of trail etiquette.
- 3) Introduce Movement on Skis – the walking step (Diagonal Stride).
- 4) Introduce Movement on Skis – duck walk (Herringbone).
- 5) Introduce a new aspect of the ski playground.
- 6) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

Note: This activity should be conducted on flat, packed terrain and without using poles.

- Trail Etiquette – “My Trail Etiquette Promise”**
 - ✓ Refer to section 6.4 for more information.
 - ✓ Select a few points to use in your lesson.

- Movement on Skis – The Walking Step (Diagonal Stride)**
 - ✓ Moves forward in small steps, with a bit of glide, keeping skis parallel.
 - ✓ Common errors:
 - poor balance.
 - can't lift ski off snow.

- Movement on Skis – Duck Walk (Herringbone)**
 - ✓ Creates and maintains a small “v” with skis.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children.

- Special feature – if a permanent tunnel is not available, make your own temporary feature from hoops, ski poles or similar materials. Cover with appropriate material to create a tunnel effect.





Skill	Description	Time
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather at rendezvous point and move to the location set up for the session. 2. Review the “How I Stay Warm” chant. 3. Introduce a few key principles from “My Trail Etiquette Promise”, using active demonstration to make the points. 	10 min.
Movement on Skis - Walking Step (Diagonal Stride) (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates key points. 2. Have the skiers cross the area walking on their skis. 3. Have skiers cross the area walking on their skis and sliding forward a little each time. 4. Have skiers move forward onto the balls of their feet and walk and slide forward. 5. Have skiers cross the area sliding their skis and feeling the balls of their feet push. 6. For additional details refer to section 4.2.1. 	12 min.
Movement on Skis – Duck Walk (Herringbone) (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates key points. 2. Have skiers move forward on packed area without tracks, lifting first one ski and then the other. 3. Have skiers move forward keeping tails close together and tips apart. 	8 min.
Game Time	Tunnels: The skiers follow the coach, who leads them along a similar route to the week before. Set up two or three different kinds of “tunnels” to ski through (be creative!).	10 min.
Ski Play	The skiers explore the ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. Provide some one-on-one support.	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 4 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Review and expand on the principles of trail etiquette.
- 2) Review Movement on Skis – the walking step (Diagonal Stride).
- 3) Review Movement on Skis – duck walk (Herringbone).
- 4) Introduce Side Stepping.
- 5) Introduce a new aspect of the ski playground.
- 6) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

Note: This activity should be conducted on flat, packed terrain and without using poles.

Side Stepping

- ✓ Balances on one ski, steps sideways with the other leg, balances on this leg, brings the first leg parallel. Repeat.
- ✓ Steps in both right and left directions.
- ✓ Common error:
 - skier doesn't keep skis parallel – steps on the other ski.

Introduce Poles.

- ✓ Refer to section 4.2.1. for information on how to introduce ski poles

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children.
- Blue coloured water or a similar marker for a pond of water.
- Special feature – coloured stakes with ribbons/flags set up like a slalom course on the flats.





Skill	Description	Time
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather at rendezvous point and move to the location set up for the session. 2. Repeat teaching points on trail etiquette from previous session, using new demonstrations to get the message across. 3. Add a few additional principles. 	10 min.
Movement on Skis (Review)	<p>Snake Trail: The skiers follow the coach, who leads them in a chain formation, twisting across the ski area using the “walking step”. The children should try to slide forward a little with each step.</p> <p>Duck Trail: The skiers follow the coach, who leads them from the starting point to the “duck pond”, in a chain formation, using the “duck walk”.</p>	10 min.
Side Stepping (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates key points. 2. Have skiers put arms and hands slightly forward and out to the side for balance. 3. Skiers put weight on one ski and step sideways with the other leg. Skiers shift weight onto second ski and bring the first ski parallel to the second. Repeat. 4. Keep skis parallel. 5. For additional details refer to 4.2.1. 	10 min.
Game Time	Slalom: The skiers follow the coach, who leads them through the slalom course.	10 min.
Ski Play	The children explore the ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide one-on-one support.	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 5 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Introduce principles of basic ski care.
- 2) Review Side Stepping.
- 3) Introduce Tracking.
- 4) Introduce the use of poles.
- 5) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

Note: This activity should be conducted on flat, packed terrain and without using poles.

Tracking

- ✓ Balances on right ski and lifts left ski out of track.
- ✓ Shifts weight to left ski and lifts right ski out of track, placing it parallel to left ski without breaking tracks.
- ✓ Balancing on left ski, moves right ski back into track.
- ✓ Shifts weight to right ski and lifts left ski back into track, parallel to right ski, and without breaking tracks.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier loses balance and falls over.
 - skier breaks side of track.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children in the group.
- A minimum of several metres of clear cut, set tracks.
- Three two-metre long coloured ropes.
- Special feature – archways made of tubing or plastic pipe. Set up so that the top of the archway is just out of reach of children when they are skiing beneath. Hang a small bell on a ribbon or string from the centre of the hoop. The bell should be just in reach of children when they stretch up their arm to ring it.





Skill	Description	Time
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather at the rendezvous point and move to the location prepared for this session. 2. Introduce principles of ski care, using drama/action to demonstrate the points. For more information refer to “Ski Care” at the end of section 3.5. 3. Introduce the use of poles. The poles are then set aside for the remainder of the session. Refer to section 4.2.1 for more information. 	10 min.
Side Stepping (Review)	<p>Hurdles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach places three ropes 0.5 metres apart. 2. Have two skiers stand parallel to the rope that is on the right, one child at the bottom end of the rope and one at the top end, facing each other. 3. Using the “Side Step”, both skiers work their way across all three ropes to the other side. 4. When each skier has completed the exercise, repeat in the other direction. 	10 min.
Tracking (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates key points. 2. Have skiers balance on right ski and lift left ski out of track. 3. Have skiers shift weight to left ski and lift right ski out of track, placing it parallel to left ski without breaking tracks. 4. Have skiers balance on left ski, and move right ski back into track. 5. Have skiers shift weight to right ski and lift left ski back into track, parallel to right ski, and without breaking tracks. 	10 min.
Game Time	<p>Ring the Bell: The skiers follow a competent young skier from one of the older age groups in the program, who leads them through the archways and demonstrates how to reach up and ring the bell.</p>	10 min.
Ski Play	<p>The skiers explore the ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide one-on-one support.</p>	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 6 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Participation in a club activity/event exposes young skiers and their families to the wide range of programs that clubs offer, as well as the family orientation of the sport. If you live in a community that doesn't offer programs of this kind, refer to section 5.5 for some ideas and create a "special activity" of your own.

Specific Objectives:

- 1) To introduce young skiers to the club at large.
- 2) To play on skis.
- 3) To have fun.

Key Teaching Points:

- This activity may require the use of poles.
- Provide coaching suitable for the activity that has been selected.
- Use opportunities for one-on-one skill instruction.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.



**ACTIVITY PLAN 7 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)****Specific Objectives:**

- 1) Introduce an aspect of nature as appropriate to the session.
- 2) Reward enthusiasm, fun, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

- This activity will require the use of poles.
- If you don't already have a permanent "adventure trail" at your ski area, you can create a temporary one for the occasion. Refer to section 4.1 for ideas, select a theme and use your imagination.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- A narrow trail with trees to create a closed-in "tunnel" effect, with plenty of bumps, uphill, downhill, dips and turns throughout. Pack with a snowmobile.
- Cartoon characters and various pieces of equipment and signs to make the route kid-friendly.
- Extra help from parents or other coaches.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Various	The Adventure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The coach takes the group on a 0.5 to 1km ski on an "adventure trail". 2. The coach gives a "nature and environment" lesson. Refer to section 5.5.1 for suggestions. 	55 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





ACTIVITY PLAN 8 (ACTIVE START – ON SNOW)

YEAR-END ACTIVITY

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Have fun.
- 2) Participate in activities with the other groups in the program.
- 3) Wind up the season's ski activities.
- 4) Recognize enthusiasm, effort and respect for others.

Key Teaching Points:

This activity may require the use of poles.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- This depends entirely on the activities that are chosen.
- Refer to sections 4.3 and 5.5 for ideas for suitable activities and suggestions on how to organize them.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





5.4 Practice Plans: FUNdamentals Stage of Development - Level 1

Points to keep in mind when developing a seasonal plan for children entering the FUNdamentals stage of athlete development (six years of age):

- The program should offer a minimum of 16 sessions, two per week, over a period of eight weeks. However, if snow is available, it would be preferable to offer the program for 12 weeks (24 sessions), beginning in early December. This would include two practice sessions a week plus special activities in addition to those already scheduled in the plan for the season.
- The indoor sessions can be held before the snow season begins, or they can be used to substitute for regular sessions during the winter in the event of cancellation due to lack of snow or weather that is too cold or too wet.
- The ski playground area should be set up before the session begins and prepared for the age and skill level of the skiers using it.
- Ideally, the ski preparation workshop should be held prior to the snow season.
- Each practice session is a total of 60 minutes, followed by 20 minutes of supervised “play time” at the ski playground. An additional ten minutes should be scheduled for hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge.
- Skiers should come to the practice session prepared. In the following section the time needed to wax skis, put on ski equipment or change clothes is intended to be in addition to the time allocated for the practice session.
- In general, poles should not be used when these skills are introduced.
- All the sessions will focus on classic technique.
- If you are coordinating a school program and the ski equipment does not belong to the skier, the practice session should not end until the skis are prepared for storing (socks for both tips & tails; proper ties), and have been put away.
- Encourage the education of the skiers. DO NOT do everything for them. Progressively develop their ability to look after themselves.
- Definition: The “fall line” is the direction water would flow, or a ball would roll, down a hill.





PRACTICE PLAN 1 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve the skier's balance and agility – necessary if the skier is to progress to more advanced techniques.
- 2) Introduce Falling and Rising on flats.
- 3) Introduce Ready Position on flats – a fundamental position used in many ski techniques.

Key Teaching Points:

Falling on Flats

- ✓ Falls to side and back using sitting motion.
- ✓ Common error:
 - falls forward.

Rising on Flats

- ✓ Brings skis together, side by side and under the body.
- ✓ Gets skis flat on snow by moving onto hands and knees.
- ✓ Slides one ski forward so foot is flat on ski.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - tries to stand up before skis are parallel.
 - tries to stand up without hips over skis.

Ready Position

- ✓ Arms and hands stay forward of body.
- ✓ Skis parallel to each other.
- ✓ Knees and ankles slightly bent.
- ✓ Upper body is relaxed and slightly forward.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - hands are at side of body at hips.
 - upper body leaning too far forward, or too upright and stiff.
 - ankles and knees are straight and/or locked.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground area set up appropriately for age and skill level of the skiers.
- Labels or masking tape and marker to identify skiers.





Skill	Description	Time
<p>Ski Play (to warm up)</p>	<p>Varied speeds.</p>	<p>5 min.</p>
<p>Balance (Introduce)</p>	<p>Have skiers stand in a circle. Stork Stance: Have skiers stand on left ski only. Have skiers stand on right ski only. Tippy Toes: Have skiers rock forward onto their toes and backwards onto their heels, then try to find the best balance point. Skiers do the “teeter-totter” back and forth. Reach for the Sky: Have skiers reach for the sky, going up on their toes and then settling back equally on both feet.</p>	<p>2 min. 2 min. 2 min.</p>
<p>Ready Position (without poles) (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Have skiers go into Ready Position. 3. Have skiers bend ankles and knees. Move around the circle and give skiers a gentle nudge to check their balance. 4. Have skiers straighten ankles and knees and give skiers a gentle nudge again. Let them feel which position is best for balance. 5. Repeat each several times and help skiers refine their positioning. 6. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3. <p>Soldiers: Have skiers stand tall, with locked knees and straight back – “ATTENTION”. Have skiers relax, bending their knees and leaning slightly forward – “AT EASE”. Repeat several times.</p>	<p>5 min.</p>
<p>Rising on Flats (without poles) (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Have skiers get onto knees with hands on skis and get up into Ready Position. 3. Have skiers lie on their right side. Get into kneeling position and then up into Ready Position. 4. Repeat on left side. 5. Repeat several times. 6. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3. 	<p>10 min.</p>





<p>Falling on Flats (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Have skiers fall to the right using sitting motion. 3. Repeat on left. 4. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3. 	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Falling Tag: Coach is “it”. Coach chases skiers around field. Once tagged, skiers must fall down. Skiers are back in game when they stand up.</p>	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Balance and Agility (Introduce)</p>	<p>Flea Leaps: Have skiers leap off snow, keeping their knees flexed when landing. Snakes: This game is also known as “Follow the Leader”. The skiers follow one of the coaches, who moves slowly through the ski playground, changing directions frequently.</p>	<p>15 min.</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Skiers explore ski playground area under supervision of the coaches. Coaches can provide some one-on-one instruction.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 2 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Review Ready Position, Falling and Rising on flats.
- 2) Introduce Star Turn - tails together.
- 3) Introduce Diagonal Stride on flats without poles.
- 4) Review how to hold a ski pole.

Key Teaching Points:

Star Turn

- ✓ Stands in Ready Position.
- ✓ Forms slight wedge with tips apart and tails together.
- ✓ With weight on first ski, lifts tip of second ski and widens wedge 20-30 cm.
- ✓ Puts weight on second ski and brings first ski parallel.
- ✓ Repeat until full circle is made.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier keeps centre of gravity between the skis.
 - skier steps on tail of other ski.

Diagonal Stride on Flats (without poles)

- ✓ Skier walks on skis, pushing off with the back ski and sliding a bit on the front ski.
- ✓ Common error:
 - skier keeps both skis flat on snow throughout the movement.
 - skier can't slide the ski.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground area set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.
- Coloured plates or numbers for the clock.
- Special feature – a tunnel made of hoops or ski poles or similar suitable material.





Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Rising and Falling on Flats (without poles) (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review key points on Rising and Falling. 2. Have skiers lie on their backs; on signal, rise up to the Ready Position as quickly as possible. 3. Repeat several times. 4. Review how to put on a ski pole. For more information refer to section 4.2.1. The ski poles are then set aside for the remainder of the session. 	5 min.
Balance (Introduce and Review)	<p>Marching Soldiers: Have skiers walk on one spot lifting the knee high in front of chest.</p> <p>Tail Lifts: Have skiers walk on one spot extending the leg backwards. See if they can lift the skis off the ground.</p> <p>Flea Leaps: Have skiers jump off snow with both feet. Keep knees bent when landing.</p> <p>One-Leg Pops: Have skiers jump off snow from one ski to the other.</p> <p>Repeat each exercise several times.</p>	10 min.
Diagonal Stride on Flats (without poles) (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Have the skiers cross the area sliding their skis. 3. Have the skiers get on the balls of their feet and walk forward. 4. Have the skiers cross the area sliding their skis and pushing off the balls of the feet using a “jogging-like” action. 5. Ask them to use a certain number of steps to get from one point to another. Bring the number down as they improve. 6. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3. 	10 min.
Game Time	<p>British Bulldog: The group stands on one side of the ski area. One skier stands in the middle. At the signal of the coach, the group crosses to the other side. The skier in the middle must tag them. Skiers who are tagged remain in the centre to help.</p>	10 min.





<p>Star Turn (tails together) (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points.2. Skiers walk on spot, lifting tips of skis only.3. Skiers lift tip on one ski and form a wedge. Skiers stand on “wedge” ski and bring other ski parallel. Go back to original position. Do this slowly to emphasize balance and weight transfer.4. Make a complete turn.5. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3.	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Clock: Split into groups of three or four. Each team has two “clocks” in front of them, each about 10 metres apart. Each clock is the size of the perimeter of a Star Turn. Each clock has a number (1-4) at each quarter. A skier advances into a circle and is told to point his/her tips at different numbers (i.e. using the Star Turn). The skier moves to the next clock as fast as possible and the following skier moves into the first clock. The number commands are repeated. Then the first skier returns to the start without interfering with the others, etc. Can use colors instead of numbers.</p>	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Skiers use the ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Some one-on-one instruction can take place.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 3 (LEVEL 1 – INDOORS)

SKI PREPARATION SESSION

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Introduce young skiers to good ski equipment management.
- 2) Introduce a basic wax kit.
- 3) Teach skiers that good ski-care habits and appropriate ski preparation will result in positive ski experiences.

Key Teaching Points:

- Ski Care.** The coach reviews the principles of good ski care:
 - ✓ Put your name on your equipment (if applicable).
 - ✓ How to carry your ski equipment.
 - ✓ Don't ski where there is gravel or dirt.
 - ✓ Don't leave your ski poles lying around where someone can step on them.
 - ✓ Place your equipment in the appropriate place when you go into the day lodge.
 - ✓ Store your equipment properly after each session; put socks over the tips and tails; use ski fasteners to hold the skis firmly together, etc.
 - ✓ Learn to prepare your own skis; don't wait for an adult to do it.

- Wax Kit.** The coach introduces the contents of a basic wax kit.

- Ski Preparation**
 - ✓ The first step is inspection. Have the skier hold the ski up to the light and look down the base. Have them look for bumps, tears, etc.
 - ✓ Have the skier place the ski firmly in the ski form.
 - ✓ Have the skier clean the ski top, sides and bottom with wax remover.
 - ✓ Dry thoroughly.
 - ✓ Using a plastic scraper, make a couple of passes from tip to tail in a continuous motion.
 - ✓ Take some fiberlene or paper towel and wipe the ski.
 - ✓ The ski is now ready to wax.
 - ✓ The coach should check the ski to see if the ski needs work, and either repair the ski or inform the parent if it needs special attention.



**Teaching Aids Needed:**

- A suitable room to hold a ski preparation session.
- An appropriate number of coaches/parents to provide close supervision.
- Ski forms and supplies of tools, etc.
- A sample FUNdamentals wax kit.
- Refer to sections 3.4 and 3.5 for additional information.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.

Ensure adequate supervision for all ski preparation sessions!





PRACTICE PLAN 4 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Review Falling, Rising and Star Turn.
- 2) Introduce and review Diagonal Stride on flats.
- 3) Diagonal Stride on flats.
- 4) Introduce Falling while moving.

Key Teaching Points:

Herringbone on Flats

- ✓ Creates and maintains small “V” with skis.
- ✓ Edges ski when moving from ski to ski.

Falling on Flats

- ✓ Skier falls to the side and back in a sitting position.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier does not move into the sitting position before falling.
 - skier falls forward.

Diagonal Stride on Flats

- ✓ Skier slides a ski forward.
- ✓ While skier pushes ski back, he/she is transferring weight to gliding ski.
- ✓ After weight is transferred to gliding ski, the pushing ski momentarily comes off the snow at the end of the push.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - poor balance.
 - skier can't lift ski off snow.
 - back ski doesn't lift off snow.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground area set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.
- Balls in an old sock. Knot the sock so the ball doesn't come out. Ideally one for each skier.
- A target or basket.
- One soccer ball.
- Coloured water or another suitable marker.





Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have skiers run in place on their skis, changing the tempo from slow to fast.2. Have skiers walk on one spot extending their leg backwards.3. Have skiers balance on one leg with the other extended backwards. Hold that position for three seconds and then switch. <p>Sizzling Snow: While remaining in one place, the skiers step from ski to ski, keeping only one ski on the burning snow at a time. Have the skiers “hiss” as the snow “burns their skis”.</p>	5 min.
Diagonal Stride on Flats (without poles) (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points.2. Skiers cross the area sliding their skis in a “jogging-like” action, pushing off the balls of their feet, and lifting the ski off the snow at the back. Skiers should continue the glide on the front ski.3. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3.	10 min.
Star Turn (tails together) (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points.2. Skiers form wedge and make circles in both directions.3. Skiers repeat the above, but keep the tips together and tails apart.4. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3.	5 min.
Herringbone on Flats (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points.2. Skiers create a small “V” with their skis.3. Skiers edge one ski while stepping onto the other ski.4. Skiers move forward using first one ski and then the other, keeping the tails of skis close together and the tips apart.5. For additional details refer to section 4.2.3.	5 min.





Game Time	<p>Fetch: Coach throws several socks (with balls in them) in all directions. Skiers fetch them and return them. Try to provide a ball for each skier.</p> <p>Throw: Skiers ski up to a target and throw the sock/ball at it. If they miss, they have to do a Star Turn.</p>	10 min.
Falling on Flats (while moving) (Review and Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Skiers fall to the side and back in a sitting position. 3. Colour a couple of bright spots on both sides of the track. Skiers fall on the spot while skiing by. 	5 min.
Balance	<p>Freeze and Glide: Skiers take four or five strides, freeze on one leg and glide to a stop.</p>	5 min.
Game Time	<p>Soccer: Use more than one ball. No goalies.</p>	10 min.
Ski Play	<p>Skiers use the ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction.</p>	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.



**PRACTICE PLAN 5 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)**Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier's balance and agility.
- 2) Review Herringbone on Flats.
- 3) Introduce Side Stepping on flats.

Key Teaching Points: **Side Stepping on Flats**

- ✓ Body in Ready Position.
- ✓ Skier balances on one ski, steps sideways with the other leg, balances on this leg, brings first leg parallel. Repeat.
- ✓ Steps in both right and left directions.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier doesn't keep the skis parallel - steps on the other ski.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground area set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.
- Five ropes two metres in length, preferably coloured.
- Coloured water, pylon, target.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have skiers balance on one leg with the other extended backwards. Hold the position for three seconds, then switch. 2. Have the skiers try this exercise moving their leg to the side and also the front. 3. Repeat with both legs several times. <p>Sizzling Snow: While remaining in one place, the skiers step from ski to ski, keeping only one ski on the burning snow at a time.</p>	5 min.





<p>Diagonal Stride on Flats</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points. 2. Skiers cross the area sliding their skis. 3. Skiers cross the area “jogging” and gliding their skis, lifting the ski off the snow after they push off the balls of their feet with the back ski. 4. For additional details refer to 4.2.3. 	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Side Stepping on Flats (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points. 2. Arms and hands slightly forward and out to side for balance. 3. Skiers put weight on one ski and step with the other leg sideways. Skiers shift weight onto second ski and bring the first ski parallel to the second. Repeat. 4. Keep skis parallel. 5. For additional details refer to 4.2.3. 	<p>5 min.</p>
<p>Balance and Agility</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach places five ropes one metre apart. 2. One skier side steps over each rope, then skis around a pylon and returns to the start. 3. The next skier begins when first skier is on the 4th rope. 4. When all skiers have completed the exercise, repeat in the other direction. 5. Now lay the ropes two metres apart. 6. In turn, skiers Side Step left over the first rope, do a half a Star Turn to the left, then Side Step right over the second rope, and complete half a Star Turn to the right. Etc. 	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Mines: Spray coloured water dots on various places in the track, but don't spray left and right tracks at the same place. The skier skis down the track and lifts the ski over the “mine” while gliding on the other ski.</p>	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Balance</p>	<p>Freeze and Glide: Skier takes four or five strides, freeze on one leg and glide to a stop. Repeat.</p>	<p>5 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Freeze Tag: One coach acts as “chaser”. Skiers freeze on one leg when they are tagged. Frozen skiers may be unfrozen if tagged by a free skier.</p>	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Skiers use the ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 6 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

Participation in a club activity/event exposes young skiers and their families to the wide range of programs that clubs offer, as well as the family orientation of the sport. If you live in a community that doesn't offer programs of this kind, refer to section 5.5 in the Introduction to Community Coaching Reference Material for some ideas and create a "special activity" of your own.

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Introduce young skiers to the club at large.
- 2) Practice techniques learned during regular practice sessions.
- 3) Have fun.

Key Teaching Points:

- Provide coaching suitable for the activity that has been selected.
- No formal technique instruction.
- Use opportunities for one-on-one technique instruction.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





PRACTICE PLAN 7 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier's balance and agility.
- 2) Review Falling on Flats and introduce Rising on a Slope.
- 3) Introduce Star Turn on a hill.
- 4) Introduce Free Glide.

Key Teaching Points:

Rising on a Slope

- ✓ Skis brought together, side by side and under the body, perpendicular to the fall line.
- ✓ Skier moves onto hands and knees.
- ✓ Skier edges skis and stands up.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier does not move skis downhill of body before attempting to get up.
 - skier does not edge skis to prevent slipping down hill.

Star Turn on a Hill

- ✓ This technique helps the skier get set up before going down a hill.
- ✓ Skier plants poles downhill of skis, and weights poles.
- ✓ Using Star Turn, skier moves skis parallel to direction of hill (the fall line), keeping weight on poles.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier does not weight poles.

Free Glide

- ✓ Skier stands with hands forward, skis parallel.
- ✓ Skier has pole handles down and in front of body, pole tips pointed behind.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier stands too stiff and upright.
 - skier holds poles in awkward or dangerous position.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for age and skill level of skiers.
- Beach ball for each skier in the group.





Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Introduce)	Partner Pushes: Have half the skiers in the group remove their skis and slowly push another skier down the track. They need to push the skier's hips, first slowly and then at a faster speed. This gets the skier moving at speed without the intimidation of going down a hill. This game should be played on a packed area without ski tracks. Change around and repeat.	5 min.
Falling and Rising on Slope (Review/ Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews/introduces key points. This skill requires poles. 2. Have skiers bring skis together, side by side under the body on the downhill side of the body and perpendicular to the fall line (the path a ball would take to roll down a hill). 3. Have skiers move onto their hands and knees. 4. Have skiers edge their skis into the hill and stand. 5. Poles are moved parallel to the skis as the skier prepares to rise. 6. Have skiers get up the same as they would on a flat area. 7. "Rising on a Slope" flows into "Star Turn on a Slope". 	10 min.
Game Time	Ball Juggling: Have the skiers move along the snow while throwing a beach ball in the air and catching it. Ask the skiers to work with a partner passing the ball back and forth as they move forward on their skis.	5 min.
Star Turn on a Hill (Introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points. 2. Have skiers stand perpendicular to the fall line on a slope. 3. Skiers plant poles downhill of skis, and weight poles. 4. Skiers turn to face downhill using the Star Turn, and moving skis parallel to the fall line (facing down the hill). Weight remains on poles. 5. Skiers remove weight from poles and glide down the slope. 	15 min.





<p>Free Glide on Slope (Introduce)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points while standing on a flat area, then moves to top of slope. 2. Skiers stand in Ready Position (body generally upright, knees and ankles relaxed and slightly bent). 3. Skiers keep hands forward and skis parallel. 4. Pole handles are down and in front of body, with pole tips pointed behind. The pole shaft is angled down and backward so that it doesn't drag on the snow. 	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Slide Tall and Slide Small: Skiers descend a slight incline, exerting pressure on the tongues of their boots and bending their legs slightly. Alternate between putting a lot of pressure on the boot tongues (slide small) and a little pressure on the boot tongues (slide tall).</p>	<p>10 min. (if time allows)</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 8 (LEVEL 1 – INDOORS)

DRESSING APPROPRIATELY FOR SKIING

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Teach young skiers how to dress for skiing.
- 2) Have skiers practise dressing in layers.
- 3) Teach skiers the characteristics of clothing materials.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- A classroom or similar room.
- A complete lesson plan is available in section 3.2 Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.
- Clothing as outlined in the lesson plan.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





PRACTICE PLAN 9 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier's balance and agility.
- 2) Review Rising on a Slope.
- 3) Review Free Glide.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.
- Special feature – gentle roller-coaster dips.
- Bean bags, cones.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	<p>Pendulum Swings: Skiers stand on one leg while swinging the other leg back and forth. Begin slowly, and then increase the tempo.</p> <p>Combo Swing: Skiers stand on one leg while swinging the other leg back and forth. When the skiers stand on their left leg, the left arm swings in the same direction as the right leg and the right arm swings in the opposite direction.</p>	5 min.
Rising on a Slope (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points. 2. Have skiers bring skis together side by side under the body on the downhill side of the body, and perpendicular to the fall line. 3. Skiers edge skis into the hill to prevent slipping. 4. Skiers get up the same way they would on flats. 	10 min.





Game Time	Downhill Catch: Skiers try to touch the ground, and then lift their arms into the air while skiing down a slope. If they can achieve this, have them throw their mitt or a bean bag into the air and catch it while skiing down the slope. If they can achieve this also, the coach can throw a glove to them while they are coming down the hill to see if they can catch it and throw it back while they are moving.	10 min.
Free Glide (Review)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points.2. Skiers stand in Ready Position at top of slope.3. Skiers keep their hands forward and skis parallel.4. Pole shaft is pointed down and backwards without dragging on the snow.	10 min.
Game Time	Downhill Pairs: Skiers practise Free Glide on a slight downhill slope. The coach then sets up “start” and “finish” cones at the top and bottom of the slope, and breaks the group into teams of two for two-skier downhill races.	20 min.
Ski Play	Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 10 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier's balance and agility.
- 2) Introduce Snowplow Braking.

Key Teaching Points:

Snowplow Braking

- ✓ Use games to introduce edging needed for Snowplow Braking.
- ✓ Form wedge with ski tips together and tails apart.
- ✓ Control speed by braking - adjusting size of wedge and edging skis.
- ✓ Upper body maintains Ready Position.
- ✓ Common error:
 - skier cannot keep equal pressure on both skis.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up for age and skill level of skiers.
- Bean bags, cones.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	Downhill Catch: Skiers try to touch the ground, and then lift their arms into the air while skiing down a slope. If they can achieve this, have them throw their mitt or a bean bag into the air and catch it while skiing down the slope. If they can achieve this also, the coach can throw a glove to them while they are coming down the hill to see if they can catch it and throw it back while they are moving.	10 min.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points of Snowplow Braking on flat terrain. 2. Have skiers form wedge with ski tips together and tails apart. 	





<p>Snowplow Braking (Review)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Have skiers practise braking - adjusting size of wedge and edging skis. 4. Move group to slope and repeat exercise. 5. Have skiers control speed by adjusting the size of the wedge and edging their skis. The pressure on each ski should be equal, so that the skier does not turn to the left or right 6. Skiers maintain upper body in Ready Position while practising the skill. 7. The coach introduces the following games that reinforce the teaching points: <p>Nibbles and Bites: Have skiers stand on flat area with skis parallel, in Ready Position. Have skiers try different degrees of edging, using both the left and right edges of their skis. Little “Nibbles” refers to a little edging. “Bites” refers to a lot of edging. Move the group to a slope when they have accomplished the skill on flat terrain.</p> <p>Ridges and Valleys: Have skiers stand in Ready Position on flat terrain, pushing one ski to the side and leaving a ridge at the farthest point away. Repeat with the other ski. The objective of the game is to create equal ridges with both the left and right skis.</p> <p>Stomp Fest: Have skiers stand in Ready Position and skid one ski sideways furiously and repeatedly to create a big ridge of snow. When the coach yells “change” (every few seconds), skiers switch to the other ski. The skier who creates the biggest snow pile wins the game.</p>	<p>15 min.</p> <p>5 min.</p> <p>5 min.</p> <p>5 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>The coach places cones/poles as markers on the slope. Have skiers move down the hill slowly to the first set of markers, speed up between the first and second set of markers, and slow down between the second set of markers and the “finish line”.</p>	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Some one-on-one instruction.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 11 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier's balance and agility.
- 2) Review Snowplow Braking.
- 3) Introduce Diagonal Stride without poles.

Key Teaching Points:

Diagonal Stride (without poles)

- ✓ Weight is on free foot. Pushing down and back, transfer weight to gliding ski.
- ✓ Do it slowly.
- ✓ Put free foot beside or ahead of other foot.
- ✓ Common errors:
 - skier cannot balance on ski (weight isn't transferred).
 - skier puts free foot down on snow behind the other foot.

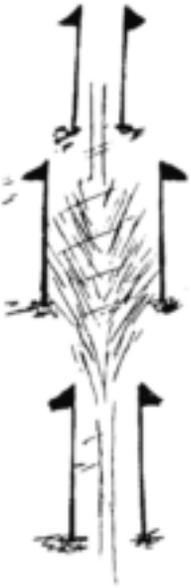
Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children.
- Several set tracks close together on a gentle slope.
- Slalom poles if available (or stakes with flagging/regular ski poles).
- Ropes with fixed loops for every second child in the group.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	Toe Lifts: Skiers glide down a slight incline, lifting the tip of one ski by raising their toes. Repeat with each ski. Next move to the slope that has set tracks close together. Skiers go down the incline stepping sideways from track to track as they move from the left to the right side of the slope.	5 min.





<p>Snowplow Braking (Review)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Coach demonstrates and reviews key points.2. Have skiers form wedge with ski tips together and tails apart.3. Have skiers control speed by adjusting the size of the wedge and edging their skis. The pressure on each ski should be equal, so that the skier does not turn to the left or right.4. Skiers maintain upper body in Ready Position while practising the skill.	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Fast-Slow Poles: This exercise will help skiers learn the snowplow technique. In Practice Plan 9, cones were used to mark the snowplow sections. This time you will use “gates” marked with ski poles. Note: This exercise should only be used if the skier has the skill level to use the Snowplow technique. The diagram below shows the set up of the markers. Narrow gates: one metre apart. Wide gates: two metres apart. Skiers tuck through the narrow gate, snowplow through the wide gate, and tuck again to pass through the narrow gate. The ski tails should brush the poles as the skiers go through the wide gate.</p> <p>Figure 5.2 - Fast Slow Poles</p> 	<p>10 min.</p>





<p>Diagonal Stride (without poles) (Introduce)</p>	<p>Coach demonstrates and reviews key points.</p> <p>Scooter Exercise: Practise Diagonal Stride elements using this activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skiers remove their right ski and stand on their left ski in the right hand track. 2. Skiers then push their way down the track using their right hand foot. They push themselves slowly up on the left ski to glide for a period between push-offs. This is done with an emphasis on transferring the skier's weight from the foot to the ski. 3. The kick foot stays behind until the glide ski comes to a stop. 4. Skiers bring the free foot beside or ahead of the glide foot when starting the next push. 5. Switch the ski to the other foot and repeat. 	<p>10 min.</p>
<p>Game Time</p>	<p>Horse and Carriage: The coach makes two lines in the snow about ten metres apart. Skiers are paired up, with one skier playing the role of the horse, and the other the role of the carriage. Using a rope with a fixed loop, the horse double poles forward, pulling the carriage from the first line to the second one. Horse and carriage then exchange roles.</p> <p>Scooter Cops and Robbers: Everyone has only one ski on. One coach is the "cop." The skiers are "robbers." The robbers are safe as long as they are in a marked area (hideout). However they cannot stay in the hideout for more than five seconds. One of the marked areas is a prison. When captured robbers are tagged by a free robber, they can go free. Switch skis to opposite foot after five minutes.</p>	<p>10 min.</p> <p>10 min.</p>
<p>Ski Play</p>	<p>Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction.</p>	<p>20 min.</p>

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 12 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

SPECIAL ACTIVITY – TREASURE HUNT

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Put into practice skills learned during regular practice sessions.
- 2) Have fun.

Key Teaching Points:

- Prepare the setting ahead of time.
- Following the Treasure Hunt, time permitting, provide supervised ski play time at the ski playground. Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks in the day lodge.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Refer to section 5.5 for more information. Additional information is available in subsequent NCCP workshop materials.
- A good imagination.
- Various pieces of equipment and signs to set up for the hunt.
- Extra help from parents and other coaches.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





PRACTICE PLAN 13 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Develop and improve skier balance and agility.
- 2) Review Diagonal Stride without poles.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Ski playground set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the children.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Balance (Review)	Snakes: This game is also known as “Follow the Leader”. The skiers follow a coach, who leads the group through the ski playground, changing directions frequently, going over or around obstacles and using different terrain. The coach might also include different skills such as Side Step, Herringbone and shuffling in the tracks.	15 min.
Diagonal Stride (without poles) (Review and introduce)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach demonstrates as he/she leads the group. 2. Skiers cross the area sliding their skis in a “jogging-like” action, pushing off the balls of their feet, and lifting the ski off the snow at the back. Skiers should continue the glide on the front ski. 3. For additional details refer to 4.2.3. Scooter Exercise: Practise Diagonal Stride elements using this activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skiers remove their right ski and stand on their left ski in the right hand track. 2. Skiers then push their way down the track using their right foot. They push themselves slowly up on the left ski to glide for a period between push-offs. This is done with an emphasis on transferring the skier’s weight from the foot to the ski. 	15 min.





	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The kick foot stays behind until the glide ski comes to a stop.4. Skiers bring the free foot beside or ahead of the glide foot when starting the next push.5. Switch the ski to the other foot and repeat.	
Game Time	<p>Horse and Carriage: The coach makes two lines in the snow about ten metres apart. Skiers are paired up, with one skier playing the role of the horse and the other the role of the carriage. Using a rope with a fixed loop, the horse double poles forward, pulling the carriage from the first line to the second one. Horse and carriage then exchange roles.</p> <p>Freeze Scooter Tag: One coach acts as the “chaser.” Skiers remove one ski. They freeze on one leg when tagged by the chaser. Frozen skiers may be unfrozen if tagged by a free skier. Alternate skis after five minutes.</p>	10 min. 15 min.
Ski Play	Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Coaches provide some one-on-one instruction.	20 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 14 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

SKILL EVALUATION SESSION

Specific Objectives:

- 1) On a ski trail, be able to use all skills learned.
- 2) Review and evaluate skiers for year end skill awards.

Key Teaching Points:

- Prepare a trail for the “Adventure” ahead of time. It may be best to close that trail off from the public, depending on the features you set up for the session.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- A good imagination.
- Various pieces of equipment and signs to prepare the trail.
- Extra help from parents or other coaches.
- Level 1 Skill Criteria and Evaluation Benchmarks from section 4.2.3 and Level 1 Skill Checklist from 4.2.3.
- Clipboard with plastic protection.

Skill	Description	Time
Ski Play (to warm up)	Varied speeds.	5 min.
Review All Level 1 Skills	<p>The Adventure: The coach takes the group on a ski on an easy terrain trail that is approximately one or two kms in length. Describe it as the “<i>Trip Around the World.</i>” When crossing wild rivers, skiers need to “walk like a duck” (i.e. herringbone). When they come to the “sleeping crocodiles” (i.e. coloured ropes or painted lines) they side step over them, etc.</p> <p>During the session, coaches evaluate the skiers’ skills and record their evaluation on the Skills Checklist.</p>	45 min.
Ski Play	Ski playground under supervision of the coaches. Some one-on-one instruction.	30 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.



**PRACTICE PLAN 15 (LEVEL 1 – ON-SNOW)****Specific Objectives:**

- 1) Work with individual skiers to improve skills that are below Level 1 standard.
- 2) Continue to evaluate skiers for year end skill awards.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Appropriate video to show the group what they can achieve if they continue to improve their ski skills, and to inspire them to work towards this goal.
- Ski playground area set up appropriately for the age and skill level of the skiers.

Skill	Description	Time
Review Technique Skills	Video presentation in day lodge.	30 min.
	Skiers prepare for on-snow session.	15 min
Work on Skills Ski Play	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skiers use ski playground under the supervision of the coaches. 2. Coach demonstrates and goes over key points (with individual skiers) of skills that have been identified as requiring improvement. One-on-one basis. 	35 min.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate, snacks and a short social time at the day lodge.





PRACTICE PLAN 16 (LEVEL 1 – ON SNOW)

YEAR END ACTIVITY

Specific Objectives:

- 1) Have fun.
- 2) Encourage team work and the integration of ski skills through adventurous, cooperative activities.
- 3) Wind up the season ski activities.
- 4) Recognize enthusiasm, effort, skill achievement and respect for others.

Teaching Aids Needed:

- Awards, Progress Reports.
- This depends entirely on the activities that are used.
- Refer to sections 4.3 and 5.5.

Conclude the session with hot chocolate and snacks at the day lodge. Extend the supervised activity time in the day lodge as appropriate.





5.5 Special Activities

To help you host your own “special activity”, a number of tips to consider and examples of successful activities have been provided below.

Tips to Consider

- Keep it simple.
- Enlist parents to organize the event and provide them with appropriate information as guidance.
- Learn from others who have held similar events. Call your Division office to get the contact numbers of groups that have successfully coordinated special events in other communities.
- Decide on “cut-off” temperatures and alternative dates in case of cancellation due to weather problems.
- Keep the children moving and avoid lapses in the day’s schedule of activities, but provide them with opportunities to rest and have refreshments. An example of a way to keep children moving is to limit the numbers on a relay team to three or four, and keep the distances short, so skiers don’t get cold waiting for their team-mates.

Note: The following examples of special activities need be adapted to the age group you are working with.

Example Activity: Cross-Country Christmas

Each Christmas the Larch Hills Ski Club of Salmon Arm holds a special practice session. At the final practice before the holidays, one of the club coaches dresses up as Santa Claus and skis to one of the club’s back country cabins. He/she does this early in the morning before any of the children arrive on site. Near the end of the session, after the children have gone through their usual routine, Santa skis down from the mountain top (not from the parking lot) - with bells ringing – carrying a large bag of candy to share with them. As this tradition grew, the other coaches started dressing up as Santa’s helpers to add to the atmosphere. After Santa skis back up the mountain, the children retire to the day lodge where hot drinks and snacks are waiting for them.

Example Activity: Turkey Glide

The Larch Hills Ski Club also hosts a “Turkey Glide” each year just prior to Christmas. At this event the order of finish is not important, but getting your name in on the random draw for Christmas turkeys and boxes of chocolate is! An activity of this kind can also become a fundraiser for your club skill development program. Just use your imagination and devise your own brand of fun activities.





Example Activity: Spring Crust Ski

A favorite for many clubs is skiing in the spring once the crust is hard (make sure it is really hard!). This is an easy “special activity” to prepare for, because the group just skates to a lake to play games and have a picnic. The freedom of skiing in these conditions is exciting and skiers of all ages will appreciate the opportunity.

Unfortunately, many children don’t get exposure to experiences of this kind because their programs end in February. Plan for this activity during the winter when your SDP is still running. Then, later in the winter or in early spring, when the weather is right, pick a suitable day and have your special ski activity. It will be well worth the effort.

Example Activity: Treasure Hunts

This game can be as simple as sending your group of skiers out to pick up the garbage - with the skier with the largest pile being the winner. Other variations include having clues or poems at each station to direct the skier to the next station. For older children, you might introduce a modified version of orienteering, with the next station’s location and approximate distance being used to lead the skiers through their course.

Another version consists of creating a course by putting the letters A to Z (or less) on different trees, with a simple picture on the other side of the tree. At the start line the skiers are handed a pre-printed page – the objective of which is to join the matching letters and picture. For example: A (duck), B (tree), C (elephant), D (moose), etc. When trying this variation you may wish to pair your older skiers with younger skiers.

More detailed examples of treasure hunt possibilities are provided in subsequent NCCP Reference Materials.

Example Activity: Poker Ski Run

The Yellowhead Ski Club of McBride once hosted a festive grand opening for their new day lodge at Pine Lake. The day’s activities began with a Poker Ski Run from the trail head of the club’s Bell Mountain Trails to its newly completed Pine Lake Cabin. Seventy five skiers followed a beautiful five kilometre course through two sunny meadows to reach the lake. Five one-gallon ice cream pails were nailed to trees along the way. Participants drew one card from each pail. Anticipating possible “cheaters”, race organizers skewed the cards in the pails, thereby thwarting the serious gambler types. The best poker hand won the prize. When skiers arrived at the end of the trail at Pine Lake, they were rewarded with warm soup, barbecued hot dogs and drinks. To introduce the grand opening, a local French horn builder played his 12 foot long alpine horn. The opening ceremonies, snow volleyball and fun relays that followed made for a memorable day for the skiers in the Robson Valley region.

Example Activity: Lantern Ski

The Revelstoke Nordic Ski Club hosted its first Lantern Ski in 1999. With lanterns rented from the Sovereign Lake Nordic Club, Revelstoke’s organizers were able to light five kilometres of trail on their club’s main loop. This included a stop at their day lodge for socializing over hot





drinks and goodies. 105 skiers attended the event. In 2000, the club hosted a second Lantern Ski, this time renting lanterns from the Larch Hills Ski Club. Once again the organizers had a magical night with 144 skiers in attendance. The club then initiated a “Light the Loop” campaign to purchase its own lanterns. The campaign was successful and the necessary \$1300.00 was raised. Membership enthusiasm and support for the event then prompted the club to host two lantern events. The New Year started with a Lantern Ski with 107 skiers in attendance, and a later event saw over 150 skiers take part. The Lantern Ski has now become an annual event coordinated with the City of Revelstoke’s Winter Snofest.

Example Activity: Beckie Scott Day

Following is an account of a special event that encouraged team building and the development of ski skills through competition, games and other fun activities.

“When I saw the notice inviting clubs to host a CCC Beckie Scott Day, I saw it as a great opportunity to introduce competition to our young skiers in a fun and exciting way.

We hear so often from the parents....”my child is not into racing but would like to ski”. This of course is fair enough, but do they really know how much fun a cross-country ski competition can be? These same kids compete in soccer, track and field, hockey, cross-country running, etc.

Our coaches decided to try something a little different and planned this event for a Saturday evening so that we could utilize our lit stadium. We started at 7:00 PM. As the children arrived they were greeted on the deck of the lodge by music, disco lights and a strobe light! They all thought this was pretty “cool” or, as their generation would say, “sweet”! We had one of our older junior racers standing in as our DJ and taking care of the music and the lights.

We decided to use a modified sprint relay format and held our race under the lights in our stadium area. The skiers were organized into teams of three and handed relay bibs. As they headed out to the start line our young DJ handed out glow-in-the-dark necklaces to each of them. It was quite a sight watching these youngsters sprinting while wearing their glowing necklaces! Once all the members of a relay team were finished racing, they were presented with a cookie medal. Each cookie medal included a bright blue ribbon and a number “1” in icing on the front of it.

After the sprint, the skiers came into the lodge for popcorn and a movie... appropriately, a video clip of Beckie Scott winning her Olympic medal. We had borrowed a theatre type popcorn maker from our local high school and it was perfect for this activity. While the kids were racing, some volunteers had popped the popcorn and filled bags. When the skiers came into the lodge they simply grabbed a pop or juice and found a seat. We showed the video clip on a big screen, to make it more like a theatre. When the video was over everyone had a few minutes to shake out the sillies and fill in the Beckie Scott event forms.

Next on the agenda was a very enthusiastic and interesting guest speaker, Dillon Spencer. Dillon was a member of the “Pole to Pole Expedition 2000”, a group of athletes from around the globe who journeyed from the North to the South Pole. He was a wonderful addition to our evening, speaking on setting goals and how to reach them by taking one little step at a time. He continually referred to Beckie Scott and how she would have achieved her goals step by step, and then he did an interesting demonstration of what he meant. He asked two of our adult club members come up to the front of the lodge to participate in a demo. The children really enjoyed this!





We ended the evening with the children handing in their event forms and receiving their Beckie Scott posters.

The next day I read through what these young people had to say about their evening. What I found interesting was that the vast majority of them said their favorite part was the sprint relay!

Following this event, what we as coaches remember most clearly is the effort of a ten year old who was skiing for the first time this season. During the sprint relay she had to struggle to keep up with others. However, she refused to quit or to ski an easier route. She completed the prescribed course and came across the finish line to many cheers – and with the biggest smile on her face! If our young skiers participate in more of these types of activities at their own club, perhaps they will be inspired to progress to higher levels of competition, such as our Provincial Winter Games or Midget Championships, and from there to the Provincial Cup Series. They just might become our next Olympians.”

Example Activity: Ski Tournament/Rabbit Fun Day

Following is the story of one club that combined its annual Rabbit Fun Day with a Ski Tournament for the first time and started a new chapter with its SDP.

“The weather fully cooperated, with partially sunny skies and a temperature of -2C, in what was a most successful Ski Tournament. The turnout was high, with 129 participants 14 years of age and under, plus leaders and parents. The Ski Tournament events were an integral part of the Rabbit Fun Day, taking just over one hour to complete.

The Ski Tournament events/races were supervised by the Bulkley Valley Club Head Coach and the Racing Rabbits Coach, with race officiating undertaken by members of the Junior Racing Team.

The first race was a team event involving all 129 children. This was a classic technique race with all participants doing 75 metres twice. The 14 regular groups (groups used throughout the year at practice sessions) were teamed up to ensure an even level of skill, resulting in seven racing teams - both team numbers and skill levels were evened out.

The second event was a sprint race (two heats per individual). The sprints had four participants in each heat. Groups under the age of seven years did not compete in this event, although a team of four keen five year olds insisted on skiing one heat.

Following the races, cookie medals and Cross Country Canada Ski Tournament T-shirts were given to the participants, and the regular fun began. The T-shirts were beautiful and were coveted by older siblings.

This year the Rabbit Fun Day included the regular events of a snow tunnel, inner tube rides, adventure trail, balloon toss, slalom course and marshmallow roast, plus a snowball biathlon. The biathlon course involved a 50 metre race track and balls to hit a swiveling target that dropped candies into a bucket when hit. This last event attracted a lot of attention and continued the modified “racing” theme established early in the day.

This was the 15th annual Bulkley Valley Rabbit Fun Day and the first one to involve racing. The overall conclusion from the kids, leaders and parents was that this was a very successful





addition and will be continued in the future. Until this event the Rabbits had not been exposed to racing and the link to the racing program within the club was not as strong as it could have been. This event was non-threatening! It demonstrated to the kids that racing was fun and that they had the ability to do well.

The winning team shared their “Crispy Cup” with the other Rabbits, ending a day of success and fun for all participants. On behalf of the Bulkley Valley Rabbits and their leaders I wish to thank Cross Country Canada and Sport Canada for the impetus to include racing as part of our Fun Day. You have helped begin an important new chapter in our skill development program.”

Example Activity: Mini-Olympics

Following is an account of a special event that encouraged team building and the development of ski skills through competitions, games and other fun activities.

In February the Cariboo Olympic Cross-Country School Meet was held at 70 Mile House. This exciting event was an inter-school ski event that just happened to occur during a Winter Olympics. 70 Mile House is a rural area and the 70 Mile Trackers (the local ski club) had never held a race event before. Schools involved came from Bridge Lake, Buffalo Creek and Horse Lake as well as 70 Mile House itself. The ages of the participants ranged from 9-14 years and nearly 100 participated in the day’s activities.

The Cariboo Olympic Cross-Country School Ski Meet began and ended at the 70 Mile Community Hall. All involved seem to have had a terrific time. A lot of organizing effort and time was put into this event and those who were involved should be very proud. Bridge Lake usually holds the annual school ski event in the area, but was unable to this time so the teachers and coaches from their Bridge Lake Jackrabbit Club assisted the 70 Mile Trackers’ volunteers. The 70 Mile parents group provided the concession and hall rental so the athletes and helpers could warm up during the day, and a very professional race was put on with the help of many parents and community members.

First of all, the 70 Mile Trackers hosted the Olympic opening ceremony - marching in with banners and flags carried by the 70 Mile School’s primary class. 70 Mile, Bridge Lake, Horse Lake and Buffalo Creek Schools were introduced and welcomed. The Cariboo Olympians and bystanders sang O Canada, heard the Olympic Athletes’ and Officials’ Oaths being recited and witnessed the lighting of the Olympic torch (well, a Cariboo version!). Then the competitors were led to the start of their races.

After the competitions were over, a constable from the nearby Clinton RCMP detachment presented medals to the winners in each category. The great thing about the event was that each school had members go up on the podium receiving cheers, handshakes and medals to take back to their schools. When each group had been announced over the PA and the medals were awarded, the gold, silver and bronze winners held hands and raised them in victory. The crowd went wild!

All students who competed tried their best. What great sports we had at our school meet!!! A good time was had by all. The Olympic Spirit really shone through and - as the Olympic athletes’ oath says - the students participated “in the true spirit of sportsmanship” and “for the glory of sport”.





Year-End Activities

Most SDP Programmers plan some kind of special activity at the end of the season. The activity your group chooses depends on your energy and your imagination. Some groups establish a tradition around a particular year-end activity, while others look for a new way to end their season each year.

Year-end activities usually have the following characteristics in common. You may wish to include some or all of these in your plans:

- the main objective is that the participants have fun on skis;
- there is a place to get warm and have a hot drink and snack;
- there are awards and/or recognition for all the participants; and
- coaches and other program leaders/supporters are recognized.

Some examples of club year-end activities are:

- A Regional Year-End Activity.** Three big clubs in a region hold a combined jamboree, rotating the hosting responsibilities from one to the other each year. The host club is responsible for setting up the ski area for the approximately 150 children who attend. An example of one Year-End event is outlined below:
 - ✓ Station #1 - face painting.
 - ✓ Station #2 - slalom course.
 - ✓ Station #3 - low key race course.
 - ✓ Station #4 - obstacle course.
 - ✓ Station #5 - relay course.
 - ✓ Station #6 - bumps and jumps courses.

Coaches and other supervisors are stationed throughout the “field of play”. A warming hut is close by for children who want to warm up and rest. All participants have the opportunity to participate at each station as they rotate around the course.

- Obstacle Course.** One club creates a unique obstacle course each year. On the day of the big event, they break the participants into the groups they skied with all season. Each group is scheduled to use the obstacle course for a period of time and, when it is their turn, their coaches bring them there. When they are not using the obstacle course, the coaches take their skiers out on the ski trails. This allows for personal time between the coaches and their own group of children on their last day of skiing together, plus an opportunity to play on a special facility that has been set up for the day. At the end of the event everyone congregates at the day lodge for an awards/recognition ceremony for both the children and the coaches/program supporters. After the awards hot dogs and warm drinks are served to all.





- ❑ **Mini-Olympics.** Clubs sometimes use a mini-Olympics for their year-end activity. Use your imagination and try this one with your group. There are some very original ways in which to run both summer and winter Olympic events on skis. Don't limit yourself to traditional Olympic-style events, and don't forget the Parade of Nations.

Additional Ideas

- ❑ Arrange for a volunteer or local reporter to come out and take video or pictures of the event. Even better, take pictures all winter. This can be excellent publicity for your program and it can provide a good photographic history of what you have done at past events.
- ❑ Invite people who were not involved with the program to participate. It is a great way to recruit new skiers and helpers.

5.5.1 Nature and Environment

The following is a progression of learning experiences, with respect to nature and the environment, that can be taught to children as they move through the different stages of athlete development.

Have the skier:

- ❑ Identify characteristics of the natural environment: a variety of tree, a lake, a river, a cliff, a summit, etc.
- ❑ Compare the different types of snow (crystals and grain); observe the points on snow crystals and how they interlock; learn what exactly a snowflake is (i.e. frozen water in the air!)
- ❑ Become acquainted with the ski trails normally used for activity/practice sessions: learn the ski trail names or numbers; learn the level of difficulty; learn the length or distance; and learn how to find reference points to help them recognize routes used during practice sessions.
- ❑ Learn the properties of snow and how temperature changes affect snow.
- ❑ Locate "cardinal points" from different locations on the trail network; identify a completed route on a map; learn about the notion of "fall-line".
- ❑ Locate their position on a map; position the map according to the landmarks; follow a route using a trail map.
- ❑ Learn the components of a compass, what it does and how to use it; learn to follow a bearing over short distances.
- ❑ Take part in an orienteering course or competition: follow a course with map and compass (whether the activity is timed or not).

Additional information on nature and the environment, as well as ski orienteering and back country skiing, is provided in subsequent NCCP Reference Materials.





REFERENCES

Designing an Overall Season Plan. *CCBC Ski League Manual*, 2000, pp. 43.

Practice Plans for Children Six Years of Age. *CCBC Leader Manual*, 2000, pp. 47-197.

Davidson, S. *Beckie Scott Day*. *Ski Cross Country*, 2003, pp. 7.

Muskeyn, H. *Mini Olympics*. *Ski Cross Country*, 1999, pp. 13.

Wilford, D. *Rabbit Fun Day*. *Ski Cross Country*, 2004, pp. 15.



SECTION 6 - SPORT SAFETY



Coaching Tip: Risk management is really the exercise of good common sense, but in a planned and structured manner in accordance with a formal plan and recording system.



6.1 Sport Safety Through Risk Management

By its very nature, physical activity can present some risk of injury. One of the key responsibilities of the coach is to manage the potential risks that present themselves during practice or competition.

The main risk factors can be categorized as follows:



Environmental Risks

Factors related to the weather and/or its effects on the site or location where the sport takes place.

Examples: freezing rain; icy conditions on the trails; very cold weather/windchill; travelling across thin ice; snow storms.



Equipment and Facilities Risks

Factors related to the quality and operating conditions of the equipment and the facilities.

Examples: the snow cat is on the ski trail during the practice session; a tree falls across the ski trail; a skier uses ski poles/boots that are much too large; there is a fence at bottom of the hill used for practice.



Human Risks

Factors related to the participants and the people associated with them, such as parents, coaches, officials and event organizers. Human risks may also be related to a participant's individual characteristics (e.g. height, weight, level of physical preparation, ability) or behavior (e.g. carelessness, panic, aggression).

Human factors related to coaches include their training and experience and their supervision of the participants, as well as the decisions they make about situations in which they place the participants.

Examples: a beginner skier is asked to ski down a steep slope; a skier leaves a deep hole on a hill after a fall; one skier gets left behind while on a group ski tour; skiers group to talk at the bottom of a blind downhill corner on the ski trail; skiers ski the wrong direction on a one-way ski trail.



6.2 Strategies for Managing Risk

Information to Gather	Actions to Take
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks of the activity • Participants' medical information • Participants' contact information in case of emergency • Facility safety checklist • Past injury reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Designing an Emergency Action Plan • Inspecting equipment and facilities • Informing participants and parents • Supervising activities

Information to Gather

- Phone numbers and addresses of the participants, their parents, the ambulance service, the police force, the fire department and the public safety service (see Emergency Information Chart - section 7.7).
- Medical conditions of each participant (e.g. illnesses, allergies, disabilities, injuries), whom to contact in an emergency situation and procedures to follow if an emergency occurs (e.g. administer a specific medication).

Keep this information in a waterproof binder that you can carry with you to the training or competition site.

Find out if 911 services are accessible from your facility or if there is medical support on site.

Planning

- Ensure that the activities are appropriate for the age, fitness and ability level of the participants.
- Ensure that the practice starts with an age-appropriate warm-up, and that the activities include a reasonable progression and challenge for the participants.
- Adjust activities for participants who cannot perform them as planned for the larger group.

Designing an Emergency Action Plan

- Guidelines for designing an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) appear in this document (see section 6.7).

Inspecting Equipment and Facilities

- Ensure that you are fully aware of the specific safety standards related to the equipment used in your sport.



- Take an inventory of collective and individual equipment.
- Take an inventory of available first aid equipment. Carry a first aid kit at all times.
- Assess the safety of the facility itself (e.g. walls, playing area, lighting) by completing a facility safety checklist. Facility Safety Checklist (see section 7.4).
- Identify environmental, equipment, facility and human risk factors.
- Ensure that the participants wear appropriate equipment and that it is properly adjusted and in good condition.

Informing Participants and Parents

- Inform the parents and the participants of the risks inherent to the sport.
- Properly explain the safety procedures and instructions related to all activities, and check that the participants understand them.
- When giving explanations for an activity during a practice or during competition, highlight potential risks.
- Examples: If participants are required to cross paths, ask them to keep their heads up and to be alert to where others are as they are moving around; if it has just rained and your team is practising on wet grass, remind your participants that the field is slippery.

Supervising Activities

- Ensure that the number of participants involved is not so high as to compromise adequate supervision and safety.
- Keep in mind that participants need to be constantly supervised.
- Look for signs of fatigue and aggression in participants and, if necessary, stop the activity.
- Stop the activity/practice if you have to leave the room or site for any reason, or delegate responsibility for the group to a competent person.

Preventing Sport-Related Injuries: What To Do and When To Do It

Before the Season
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have each participant complete a medical profile • Inform parents of possible risks • Ensure facilities and equipment meet established safety requirements • Create and fill in a Facility Safety Checklist • Review last season's injuries and/or common injuries in your sport



During the Season**Before a practice or competition**

- Inspect equipment and facilities
- Meet with the officials
- Prepare an Emergency Action Plan
- Plan specific safety measures for the practice/competition

During a practice or competition

- Inform participants of specific safety measures relating to activities, facilities and equipment
- Ensure there is proper supervision
- Evaluate participants
- Ensure that fair play principles are followed

After a practice or competition

- Store equipment safely
- Fill in an Accident Report Form if necessary

After the Season

- Keep an accident/injury report log



6.3 Cold as a Risk Factor

The Challenge of Exercising in the Cold

- The colder the environment, the faster a participant's body temperature will decrease.
- During exercise in a cold environment, the skin can become wet as a result of sweating or exposure to rain or snow. A wet skin surface cools the body faster than a dry skin surface.
- The temperature may drop considerably once the sun has set, which can quickly increase the level of risk associated with exercising in a cold environment.
- The wind magnifies the perception of cold, and increases the rate at which the body loses heat. This effect can be further amplified if the skin is wet.
- In cold weather, high humidity makes the temperature feel colder than the air temperature indicates it is.
- It is generally easier to tolerate cold when the air is dry although cold, dry air makes it difficult for some asthmatics to breathe.
- Skin can freeze when exposed to very cold temperatures, and when this happens circulation slows. Tissue can be damaged if frostbite is prolonged and extensive. Extremities (e.g. toes, fingers, nose, ears) are particularly at risk in cold temperatures, because the body shunts blood flow to central organs and tissues to maintain the body's core temperature.
- In severe cold, brain function can slow down, and so risk of further injury increases with prolonged exposure.
- Children get cold much faster than adults, and their skin is more prone to freeze. People with less body fat usually have less tolerance for cold than those with more body fat.
- Muscles and other soft tissues that are cold are more susceptible to injuries such as pulls and tears, especially if movements are sudden and intense.
- In very dry cold environments, water vapour lost through breathing and the evaporation of sweat from exposed surfaces may lead to dehydration.
- It can be a challenge to wear appropriate clothing for exercising in the cold. On the one hand clothes must protect the skier against the cold; on the other hand they must not impair the body's ability to get rid of the heat produced during exercise. Heavy clothing can be cumbersome and interfere with movement, and it can also increase air resistance in some sports where speed is critical. At the same time, the thin clothing used in many sports frequently offers little protection from the cold and the wind. Refer to "Clothing for Cross-Country Skiing Activities" and "Lesson Plan - Dressing Appropriately for Skiing" (sections 3.1 and 3.2) for more information.
- The type of fabric worn can either wick water from the body surface (i.e. synthetics such as polypropylene or Gore-Tex®) which results in less risk of heat loss, or trap it there (i.e. cotton or nylon) which results in greater risk of heat loss.





Steps to Avoid Cold Injuries

When exercising in the cold:

- Ensure participants wear sufficient clothing for the conditions, and layer clothing as follows:
 - ✓ Layer closest to skin: polypropylene, close fitting (wicking effect).
 - ✓ Second layer: fleece or wool, slight room between first layer and second layer for “trapped air” effect.
 - ✓ Third layer: wind-breaking, water repellent, breathable layer.
- When it is very cold, ensure exposed surfaces are kept to a minimum.
- Once the body has warmed up, and if the temperature is not too cold, consider removal of the second layer of clothes during exercise to avoid excessive sweating. Have participants add a layer or use blankets to keep warm during breaks or pauses.
- Apply anti-perspirant to feet before exercising to lessen sweating of the feet (which is usually followed by cooling of the feet). Doing the same on the palm of the hands may reduce the feeling of cold for people who tend to sweat a lot in their gloves or mitts.
- Ensure participants hydrate when they exercise in the cold.
- Bring children inside when they say they are cold. It is not worth the risk to prolong exercise and have them suffer from frostbite. Once a person suffers serious frostbite, the risk of subsequent frostbites to the same area may be increased.
- Never send skiers out into the cold alone or without means of communicating with you and/or an emergency centre. Avoid prolonged activities in which participants are in isolated areas and run the risk of becoming exhausted.
- When the weather is very cold, and your group needs to train on snow, hold your practices between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. as these tend to be the warmest hours of the day. Be aware that temperature drops quickly when the sun sets.
- Educate the skiers and their parents to consider the combined effect of cold and wind when making decisions about how to dress for an outdoor session, rather than simply looking at the thermometer. Do the same when you make coaching decisions about the choice and the scheduling of activities.
- If possible, choose areas that are protected from the wind and avoid activities in open areas.
- Ensure protective eyewear is worn to prevent snow reflection from damaging eyes, and to protect them from the cold and the wind.
- Have the skiers or their parents bring a change of clothing, especially socks and underwear. Try to find a warm and protected spot to change. It is especially important to change after exercising, rather than to stay in damp clothing for the drive home.
- Inform skiers and parents that a hat should be worn at all times; over 30% of body heat may be lost through the head. Ensure ears are covered to avoid frostbite.
- Allow additional time to warm up for a training session or a competition. It takes longer to get the body warmed up and ready for a sport activity in cold weather than it does in warm weather.





Wind Chill Factor

Wind makes cold temperatures feel colder. The “wind chill factor” is an index that combines air temperature and wind velocity, and measures the rate at which living creatures lose body heat to the environment. It is not a temperature in the strict sense, but a temperature-like number that quantifies the sensation of cold. It was created to help reduce the risk of frostbite and other cold-related injuries. The wind chill factor should be consulted prior to exercising in the cold, as it provides more useful information regarding the best way to dress than temperature alone.

The table below shows the equivalent temperature (C) felt by the human body as a result of the combined effects of ambient temperature and wind velocity.

Wind Chill Calculation Chart

T air = Air temperature in °C and V10 = Observed wind speed at 10m elevation, in km/h.

T air	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45	-50
V ₁₀												
5	4	-2	-7	-13	-19	-24	-30	-36	-41	-47	-53	-58
10	3	-3	-9	-15	-21	-27	-33	-39	-45	-51	-57	-63
15	2	-4	-11	-17	-23	-29	-35	-41	-48	-54	-60	-66
20	1	-5	-12	-18	-24	-30	-37	-43	-49	-56	-62	-68
25	1	-6	-12	-19	-25	-32	-38	-44	-51	-57	-64	-70
30	0	-6	-13	-20	-26	-33	-39	-46	-52	-59	-65	-72
35	0	-7	-14	-20	-27	-33	-40	-47	-53	-60	-66	-73
40	-1	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-54	-61	-68	-74
45	-1	-8	-15	-21	-28	-35	-42	-48	-55	-62	-69	-75
50	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63	-69	-76
55	-2	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-63	-70	-77
60	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78
65	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79
70	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-80
75	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-59	-66	-73	-80
80	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81

FROSTBITE GUIDE

Low risk of frostbite for most people

Increasing risk of frostbite for most people in ten to 30 minutes of exposure

High risk for most people in five to ten minutes of exposure

High risk for most people in two to five minutes of exposure

High risk for most people in two minutes of exposure or less



Wind Chill - Minutes to Frostbite

The following are approximate values:

Temperature (°C)	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45	-50
Wind (km/h)								
10	•	•	22	15	10	8	7	2
20	•	30	14	10	5	4	3	2
30	•	18	11	8	5	2	2	1
40	42	14	9	5	5	2	2	1
50	27	12	8	5	2	2	2	1
60	22	10	7	5	2	2	2	1
70	18	9	5	4	2	2	2	1
80	16	8	5	4	2	2	2	1

• = Frostbite unlikely

The wind speed, in km/h, is at the standard anemometer height of ten metres (as reported in weather observations).

Frostbite possible in two minutes or less
Frostbite possible in three to five minutes
Frostbite possible in six to ten minutes



6.4 Trail Safety

Section 6.1, *Sport Safety Through Risk Management*, reviews possible safety concerns that a coach should keep in mind before and during an activity session. Where possible the trails the group will ski on should be pre-skied to ensure there are no dangerous situations present. For example icy conditions significantly change the difficulty of a trail, and “blind corners” should be approached with care. Also remember to ensure that no trail grooming machinery will be present on the trails you will be using.

- Know which trails you are allowed to ski on, and never ski outside the designated area.
- If you plan to ski in unfamiliar areas, carry a map and stay on recognized trails. Advise others of intended routes and plans.
- Leave a safe trail: fill in holes that you make; remove obstructions; mark hazards on the trail; and advise authorities of problems.
- Avoid skiing in darkness without a head lamp.

The following “**My Trail Etiquette Promise**” is a useful 12-point summary on trail etiquette to present to your skiers.

- 1) If I practice good trail etiquette it will make skiing more fun for everyone!
- 2) When I overtake slower skiers I can call out “track” or I can move to the left and go around them.
- 3) When faster skiers come up behind me I will move to the right and let them pass.
- 4) If I meet another skier head on I will pass to the right.
- 5) If a trail is too narrow for two skiers to pass, I will move to the side and wait until the other skier passes.
- 6) I will remember that skiers coming down a hill have the right of way.
- 7) If I need to stop, or if I fall, I will move off the trail to allow clear passage for other skiers.
- 8) I will move off the trail if I want to visit with my ski-friends.
- 9) I will not take my pets on a ski trail unless the trail has been designated for use by pets (i.e. K-9 Trail).
- 10) I will not litter and I will pack out what I packed in.
- 11) I will respect the custom and say a friendly “hello” when passing other skiers.
- 12) I will obey the trail signs and ski in designated areas only.



6.5 Winter Safety

The following sections in this Reference Material, “Cold as a Risk Factor”, “Hypothermia”, and “Clothing for Cross Country Skiing Activities” (sections 6.3, 6.6 and 3.1), highlight many of the important environment related risk factors that you should keep in mind during your coaching activities. The following summary of tips should be reviewed with your skiers during one of your sessions.

- Never ski alone.
- Dress appropriately for ski sessions, so as to stay dry and warm. Be prepared for bad weather or changing conditions.
- Be prepared for accidents, emergencies or damaged equipment. Bring a backpack on longer trips, with first aid kit, space blanket, drinks and equipment repair materials.
- Learn what to do if you become lost.
- Find out what hypothermia and dehydration are, the signs and symptoms to watch out for, and what you should do if a problem occurs.
- Re-evaluate your plans if you or a group member starts to fatigue.
- Do not ski out of control.
- Ski terrain and distances suited to the fitness levels and abilities of your group members. Occasionally evaluate everyone’s condition.
- Be aware of the dangers of crossing bodies of water in winter. Proceed one person at a time and check the thickness of the ice with your poles.
- Do not ski in avalanche areas without proper training and equipment.

Frostbite

The chances of frostbite and hypothermia are forever present and skiers should be aware of that fact and act accordingly.

- The body’s extremities (fingers, toes and ears) are common places for frostbite.
- As your body gets cold it shuts off the blood supply to the extremities and they freeze.
- Cold temperature combined with constrictive clothing or boots greatly contributes to frostbite.
- Parts exposed to wind and wet readily become frostbitten.
- Symptoms of frostbite are white and waxy skin, with feeling lost in the affected area.
- Frostbitten parts (white) should be warmed up quickly by cupping with the hands or bathing in warm water.



- Do not rub the frostbitten area, especially with snow.
- You may not notice frostbite on yourself, so watch out for each other on cold days.
- Watch the other skiers in your group for signs of frostbite.

Coaching Tip: The essence of safety is knowing what to do to avoid trouble and how to handle it should it occur.



6.6 Hypothermia

Cold! The thought raises markedly different images in different athlete's minds. For some it prompts an avoidance reaction that has them gravitating towards the fireplace or migrating south towards sunnier climes. For others, it represents a challenge that is an integral part of their chosen sport. Winter weather and cold temperatures do pose one very real danger for everyone involved in activities outdoors: hypothermia!

Hypothermia, however, is not restricted to one season to the exclusion of all others. Sub-zero temperatures are not the only contributing factor for the onset of the condition. Any situation that results in the body expending more heat than it creates for a prolonged period of time increases the risk of hypothermia. For athletes who are naturally low in body fat and are involved in outdoor sports with high energy and fluid expenditures, the risk factors are even greater.

Definition

The normal body temperature is around 37° C. Hypothermia occurs when body temperature falls below 35° C and the body's heat loss exceeds its heat production. At this temperature the body no longer generates enough heat to maintain body functions. The heat loss can happen in four different ways: by radiation, evaporation, conduction, and/or convection. Of these, radiation is the main source (60%) of heat loss from the body. Basically, if the environmental temperature is cooler than that of the body, heat travels outward.

Basic Physiology

An area in the brain called the hypothalamus acts as the body's thermostat. It is the central controller of heat balance in the body and triggers an increase in the rate of heat production when the body temperature falls. It is the hypothalamus that makes us shiver when we are cold. Shivering, an involuntary muscle contraction, is the main mechanism for producing heat by increasing our metabolic rate. This can increase the body's heat production by up to five times. The hypothalamus is also responsible for decreasing the blood supply to peripheral areas of the body in order to maintain core temperature and increase hormone production to "up" the metabolic rate. It is when these survival mechanisms fail, and the body is unable to maintain its core temperature, that hypothermia develops. The signs and symptoms are progressive according to the amount of heat loss from the body. An individual's condition deteriorates as the body temperature drops. (See Stages of Hypothermia Table)

A Danger for All Seasons

Although hypothermia is usually associated with harsh winter conditions, it would be wrong to assume that this is the only time of year that someone involved in outdoor activities is at risk. Walkers and hikers who are ill-prepared for the vagaries of weather that can occur in the mountains are particularly susceptible. Wet clothing and the chilling effect of strong winds promote increased body heat loss. Swimmers, divers, triathletes or anyone taking part in aquatic sports have to be aware that water has a much higher thermal conductivity than air and, accordingly, heat is lost from the body more rapidly during cold water immersion than during exposure to air of the same temperature. In winter, cross-country skiers are more at risk than



their downhill counterparts. This is because exhaustion and dehydration are both strong influencing components for the onset of the early stages of hypothermia. *It should also be noted that the whole process from mild exposure to severe hypothermia may take only a few hours or less.*

Risk Factors

A variety of other conditions can also do their part in contributing to the increased chance of succumbing to hypothermia. Drug or alcohol use, hunger, anemia, impaired circulation are all flags for danger when allied to some of the other factors already outlined. Certain medical conditions such as diabetes mellitus and thyroid disorders which adversely affect the body's ability to regulate its own temperature should also be taken into consideration. *Moreover, children and the elderly are more at risk as they are less able to retain body heat in cold conditions.*

Treating Hypothermia

The longer the body core loses heat, the more difficult it is to re-warm. It is therefore imperative to treat hypothermia at the earliest possible stage. The first step of a "cure" is to get the victim out of the cold, wind and rain (or water) and into shelter. If the person is at the shivering stage but not exhibiting other more serious symptoms, get him or her into dry clothing and give them a hot, non-alcoholic drink with some high energy food. It is important to remember that body cooling may increase when the hypothermia victim stops exercising because the extra heat generated by activity then ceases. Someone who was only shivering mildly may begin to show more serious signs upon entering a warm environment.

A person who has slipped further into hypothermia syndrome than the stage of moderate shivering needs more help. Putting the victim into a sleeping bag with another person is a very effective method of re-warming. Skin to skin contact especially in the neck and chest is most beneficial. If available, warm baths are also an effective way to re-warm the moderately hypothermic person. However, the water should be between 30-35° C and the arms and legs should be kept out of the water (it is the core temperature that needs to be raised, not the extremities). Gradually raise the water temperature to 42-44° C over a period of five to ten minutes. For severe victims whose temperature has dropped below 30° C, hot bath re-warming should not be undertaken without medical supervision.

Severe Cases

Make no mistake, hypothermia can be fatal. The adage of mountain rescue teams when dealing with hypothermia cases is that "you are not dead till you are warm and dead". This is because severe hypothermia can mimic death and before presuming someone is deceased, re-warming must be carried out until the core temperature reaches at least 35° C. In addition to this, extremely careful handling of the victim is essential to avoid causing erratic heart beats which could lead to a heart attack.

Resuscitation on-site would include the ABCs (airway, breathing and circulation) but no cardiac compression should be applied until a diagnosis of cardiac arrest is certain. As quickly as possible, the victim should be taken to a warm environment and any wet clothing removed. Warm, dry clothes should then put on. The next step would then be to transport the victim to a hospital





for comprehensive assessment and treatment. Expert medical supervision is needed for severe cases of hypothermia as the victims usually require both internal and external re-warming. In many instances, this involves putting the person in a bath where the temperature is 40° C. Core temperature can also be increased with the inhalation of heated, humidified oxygen and the administering of warm IV fluids. At this time, the administration of drugs is usually avoided, and due to slowed gastric emptying and absorption in the stomach, no medication is given by mouth. *Exercise is not used as a method of re-warming due to the increased risk of heart failure related to the release of chemicals from blood retained in the extremities of the body.*

Prevention

The best defense against hypothermia is common sense. All outdoor activities should be planned with safety and hypothermia in mind. Key points to bear in mind are:

- Taking proper clothing for the worst conditions you might encounter is one of the best precautions.
- Wool is one of the best materials for all weather warmth.
- Include a hat in your back-pack. Over 50% of a person's heat loss comes from the head and neck area.
- Staying dry and avoiding any type of exposure are the key elements in staying warm. Wet clothes lose most of their insulating value.
- Pack high carbohydrate snacks to keep energy levels up if you are forced to take shelter in poor weather conditions.
- There is safety in numbers. Don't venture out on the trails or the mountain alone.

What Not To Do

Do not massage the limbs of a hypothermic person. This will only draw heat/blood flow away from the core where it is needed.

- Never give an alcoholic drink. This will actually inhibit re-warming.
- Never give a semi-conscious or unconscious person anything to eat or drink due to the possibility of choking.
- Don't treat any hypothermia case lightly.***

Summary

Familiarity with the signs of hypothermia will allow those involved in outdoor sports or recreation to use their own good judgment in situations where hypothermia is a danger. It is important to remember that while some people have miraculously survived under extremely hostile conditions, others have died from "exposure" under mild ones.





Stages of Hypothermia		
Stage	Core Temp. (°C)	Characteristics
NORMAL:	37.5	
MILD:	38	Increased metabolic rate
	36	Temperature at which hypothermia begins by definition. Shiver to create heat.
	34	Violent shiver, mental changes, amnesia, poor judgement, ataxia, apathy
MODERATE:	32	Stupor, decreased gut mobility
	31	Shivering stops.
	30	Rigors, decreased deep tendon reflexes, dilated pupils, weak pulse, low cardiac output, increased risk of dysrhythmias
	28	Decreased coordination with muscle control, staggered gait, increased risk of ventricular fibrillation, increased blood viscosity, decreased inter vascular volume.
	27	Loss of deep tendon reflexes and voluntary motion.
SEVERE:	26	Acid base change, no pain response, decreased cerebral flow, decreased cardiac output.
	25	Increased risk of pulmonary edema. Increased blood pressure.
	22	Maximum risk of ventricular fibrillation.
	19	Flat ECG.
	18	Asystole.



6.7 Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is a plan designed by coaches to assist them in responding to emergency situations. The idea behind having such a plan prepared in advance is that it will help you respond in a responsible and clear-headed way if an emergency occurs.

An EAP should be prepared for the facility or site where you normally hold activity/practice session and for any facility or site where you regularly host competitions. For away competitions, ask the host team or host facility for a copy of their EAP.

An EAP can be simple or elaborate and should cover the following eight items:

1. Designate in advance who is in charge in the event of an emergency (this may very well be you).
2. Have a cell phone with you and make sure the battery is fully charged. If this is not possible, find out exactly where a telephone that you can use is located. Have spare change in the event you need to use a pay phone.
3. Have emergency telephone numbers with you (facility manager, fire, police, ambulance) as well as contact numbers (parents/guardians, next of kin, family doctor) for the participants.
4. Have on hand a medical profile for each participant, so that this information can be provided to emergency medical personnel. Include in this profile a signed consent from the parent/guardian to authorize medical treatment in an emergency.
5. Prepare directions to provide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to enable them to reach the site as rapidly as possible. You may want to include information such as the closest major intersection, one way streets, or major landmarks.
6. Have a first aid kit accessible and properly stocked at all times, as well as a supply of blankets (all coaches are strongly encouraged to pursue first aid training).
7. The ski area should have a snowmobile and appropriate medical transport toboggan available at the trail head to transport injured skiers to an ambulance. The ski area may also have a portable heater available in case the injured person needs to be left on the snow until the Emergency Personnel arrive.
8. Designate in advance a “call person” (the person who makes contact with medical authorities and otherwise assists the person in charge). Be sure that your call person can give emergency vehicles precise instructions to reach the ski area, and the snowmobile operator precise directions to where the injured skier is located on the trail system.

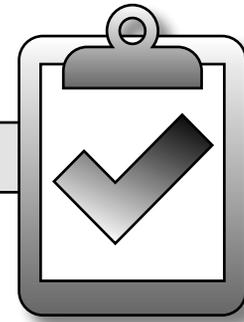
When an injury occurs, an EAP should be activated immediately if the injured person:

- is not breathing;
- does not have a pulse;
- is bleeding profusely;
- has impaired consciousness;



- has injured the back, neck or head; or
- has a visible major trauma to a limb.

6.7.1 Emergency Action Plan Checklist



Emergency Action Plan Checklist	
Access to telephones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Cell phone, battery well charged — Training venues — Home venues — Away venues — List of emergency phone numbers (home competitions) — List of emergency numbers (away competitions) — Change available to make phone calls from a pay phone
Directions to access the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Accurate directions to the site (practice) — Accurate directions to the site (home competitions) — Accurate directions to the site (away competitions)
Participant information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Personal profile forms — Emergency contacts — Medical profiles
Personnel information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The person in charge is identified — The call person is identified — Assistants (charge and call persons) are identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The medical profile of each participant should be up to date and located in the first aid kit.</i> • <i>A first aid kit must be accessible at all times, and must be checked regularly.</i> 	



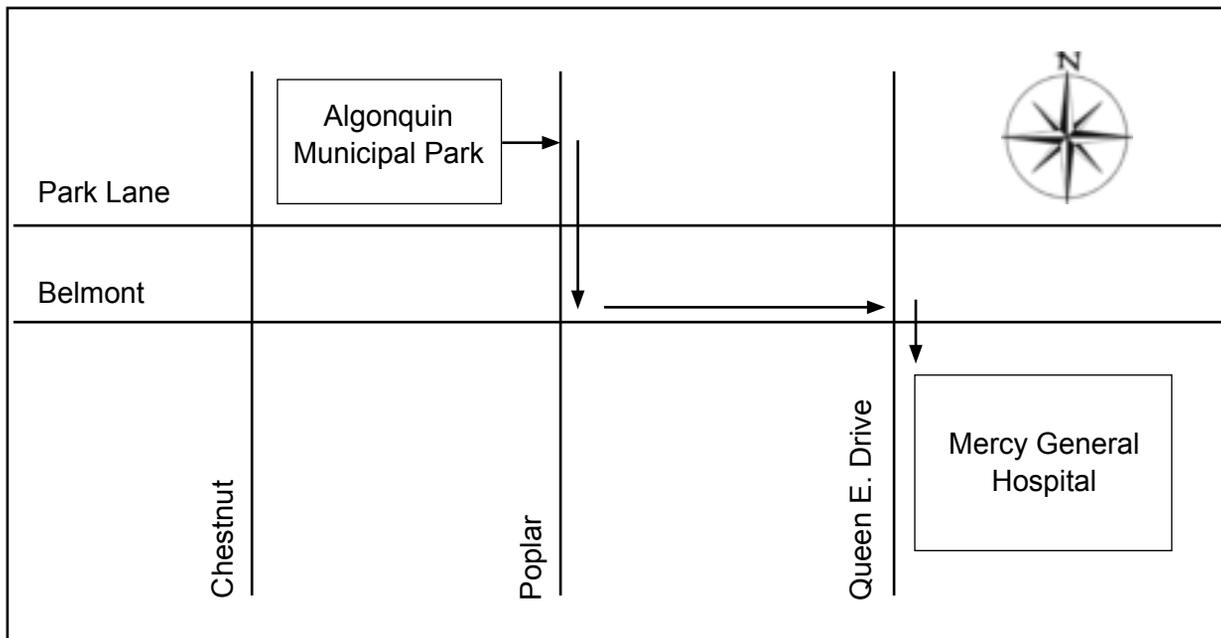
6.7.2 Sample Emergency Action Plan

Contact Information

Attach the medical profile for each participant and for all members of the coaching staff, as well as sufficient change to make several phone calls if necessary. The EAP should be printed two-sided, on a single sheet of paper.

Emergency phone numbers:	9-1-1 for all emergencies
Cell phone number of coach:	(xxx) xxx-xxxx
Cell phone number of assistant coach:	(xxx) xxx-xxxx
Phone number of home facility:	(xxx) xxx-xxxx
Address of home facility:	Algonquin Municipal Park 123 Park Lane, between Chestnut St. and Poplar St. City, Province/Territory XXX XXX
Address of nearest hospital:	Mercy General Hospital 1234 Queen Elizabeth Drive City, Province/Territory XXX XXX
In-Charge person (1st option):	Suzie Chalmers (coach)
In-Charge person (2nd option):	Joey Lemieux (assistant coach)
In-Charge person (3rd option):	Angela Stevens (parent, nurse, usually on site)
Call person (1st option):	Brad Fontaine (parent, cell xxx-xxxx)
Call person (2nd option):	Sheila Lachance (parent, cell xxx-xxxx)
Call person (3rd option):	Stefano Martinez (parent, cell xxx-xxxx)

Directions to Mercy General Hospital from Algonquin Municipal Park:





Roles and Responsibilities

❑ In-Charge Person

- ✓ Reduce the risk of further harm to the injured person by securing the area and shelter the injured person from the elements.
- ✓ Designate who is in charge of the other participants. If no one is available for this task, cease all activities and ensure that the participants are in a safe area.
- ✓ Protect yourself (wears gloves if he/she is in contact with body fluids such as blood).
- ✓ Assess ABCs (checks that airway is clear, breathing is present, a pulse is present, and there is no major bleeding).
- ✓ Wait by the injured person until EMS arrives and the injured person is transported.
- ✓ Fill in an accident report form.

❑ Call Person

- ✓ Call for emergency help.
- ✓ Arrange for transport by snowmobile for both emergency personnel and injured skier as appropriate.
- ✓ Provide all necessary information to dispatch (e.g. facility location, nature of injury, description of first aid that has been done, allergies and other medical information for that participant).
- ✓ Clear any traffic from the entrance/access road before ambulance arrives.
- ✓ Wait by the driveway entrance to the facility to direct the ambulance when it arrives.
- ✓ Call the emergency contact person listed on the injured person's medical profile.

6.7.3 Steps to Follow When an Injury Occurs

Note: It is recommended that emergency situations be simulated during practice to familiarize coaches and participants with the steps below.

❑ Step 1: Control the environment so that no further harm occurs

- ✓ Stop all participants.
- ✓ Protect yourself if you suspect bleeding (put on gloves).
- ✓ If outdoors, shelter the injured participant from the elements and from any traffic.

❑ Step 2: Do an initial assessment

If the participant:

- ✓ is not breathing;
- ✓ does not have a pulse;
- ✓ is bleeding profusely;
- ✓ has impaired consciousness;

**Activate
EAP!**



- ✓ has injured the back, neck or head;
- ✓ has a visible major trauma to a limb; or
- ✓ cannot move his/her arms or legs or has lost feeling in them.

If the participant does not show the signs above, proceed to Step 3

❑ **Step 3: Do a second assessment of the situation**

- ✓ Gather the facts by asking the injured participant as well as anyone who witnessed the incident.
- ✓ Stay with the injured participant and try to calm him/her; your tone of voice and body language are critical.
- ✓ If possible, have the participant move himself/herself off the playing surface. Do not attempt to move an injured participant.

❑ **Step 4: Assess the injury**

- ✓ Have someone with first aid training complete an assessment of the injury and decide how to proceed.
- ✓ If the person trained in first aid is not sure of the severity of the injury or there is no one present who has first aid training, activate EAP.
- ✓ If the assessor is sure the injury is minor, proceed to step 5.



❑ **Step 5: Control the return to activity**

Allow a participant to return to activity after a minor injury only if there is no:

- ✓ swelling;
- ✓ deformity;
- ✓ continued bleeding;
- ✓ reduced range of motion; and
- ✓ pain when using the injured part.

❑ **Step 6: Record the injury on an Accident Report Form (see section 7.6) and inform the parents**



6.7.4 Emergency Action Plan Worksheet (working copy)

Emergency phone numbers: _____

Cell phone number of SDP Programmer: _____

Cell phone number of head coach: _____

Phone number of Daylodge at Ski Area: _____

Address of _____ Ski Area: _____

Address of nearest hospital: _____

In-Charge person (1st option): _____

In-Charge person (2nd option): _____

_____ :

_____ :

Directions to _____ Hospital from _____ Ski Area:







Emergency Action Plan Worksheet

Emergency phone numbers: _____

Cell phone number of SDP Programmer: _____

Cell phone number of head coach: _____

Phone number of Daylodge at Ski Area: _____

Address of _____ Ski Area: _____

Address of nearest hospital: _____

In-Charge person (1st option): _____

In-Charge person (2nd option): _____

_____ :

_____ :

Directions to _____ Hospital from _____ Ski Area:



6.8 Coach Liability

Introduction

More than ever before, coaches are aware of the risks and responsibilities they assume when they coach. These risks and responsibilities include those that are legal in nature. No matter what their certification, experience, employment or volunteer status, sport discipline or location of residence, coaches at all times have a legal obligation to provide a safe environment for participants.

To understand this obligation more fully, the coach must understand some key legal principles including negligence and liability. In order to fulfil this obligation, the coach must also understand concepts and techniques related to risk management. With this knowledge, the coach can determine the applicable standard of care, can assess his or her own coaching situation for risks, and can put in place appropriate measures to manage these risks.

Negligence

Negligence is a legal term with precise legal meaning. The term relates to standards of behaviour that the law expects, and understanding the law of negligence is an essential first step in learning how to provide a safe environment for participants.

In general terms, negligence refers to behaviour or action that falls below a “reasonable standard of care.” The law in Canada demands that we behave in a particular way so that others who might be affected by our actions are not exposed to an unreasonable risk of harm. The standard of behaviour the coach is expected to meet is what is termed an “objective” standard. As adults and as coaches, we are all credited with the same general intelligence and sensibility, and thus the law expects each of us to behave in a reasonable fashion when confronted with similar circumstances.

The law does not expect a coach to be perfect in his or her behaviour, only that the coach be reasonable and act as other reasonable coaches would act in the same circumstances.

It is widely accepted that there is a certain amount of risk in many sport activities and that such risk is knowable, foreseeable, acceptable and, depending on the sport, even desirable. What is unacceptable in sport is behaviour that places participants in a situation of unreasonable risk or danger.

A coach’s conduct is negligent when all four of the following conditions occur:

- a duty of care exists (such as that which exists between a coach and a participant);
- that duty imposes a standard of care that is not met by the coach;
- a participant or some other person experiences harm; and
- the failure to meet the standard can be shown to have caused or substantially contributed to the harm.

For the coach, the “standard of care” is the most important of the above elements. The standard of care is what the coach *should* do in a given situation. Standard of care is difficult to define precisely because it is influenced by the risk inherent in the surrounding circumstances. Thus,



the duty to act responsibly remains constant, but the specific behaviour required to fulfil that duty will change with the circumstances.

Determining what the “standard of care” is in any given circumstance involves looking to four sources:

- ❑ **Written standards** – these are government regulations, equipment standards, rules for a particular sport or facility, rules from a sport governing body, coaching standards and codes of conduct, and other internal risk management policies and procedures.
- ❑ **Unwritten standards** – these are norms or conventions in a sport, an organization or a facility that might not be written down, but are nonetheless known, accepted and followed.
- ❑ **Case law** – these are court decisions about similar situations. Where the circumstances are the same or similar, judges must apply legal principles in the same or similar ways. Earlier decisions of the court are a guide, or precedent, for future decisions where the facts are similar.
- ❑ **Common sense** – this means simply doing what feels right, or avoiding doing what feels wrong. Common sense is the sum of a person’s knowledge and experience. Trusting one’s common sense is a good practice.

The responsible and prudent coach is familiar with written policies that govern him/her, is aware of unwritten norms and practices, knows something of the case law as it applies to coaches and has learned to trust his/her intuitive judgment and common sense.

Liability

Where all four conditions of the legal definition of negligence have been met, negligence of the coach may be established. What follows then is the question of liability. While negligence refers to conduct, liability refers to the responsibility for consequences of negligent conduct. Responsibility may lie with the coach who was negligent, or with another person or entity entirely.

For example, an insurance policy transfers the financial liability for negligence to an insurance company. A valid waiver of liability agreement might eliminate liability entirely. An injured participant may be partially responsible for his or her injuries and thus may share liability with the negligent coach. And a sport organization may be vicariously liable for the negligent actions of its coach, whether he or she is an employee or a volunteer.

Liability can also refer to responsibility for the consequences of conduct that fails to meet a predetermined legal standard other than the standard of care in a situation where negligence occurs. In addition to arising from negligence, liability can arise when a law is broken or a contract has been breached. The prudent coach avoids these types of liability by obeying laws and complying with contractual agreements

In summary, an understanding of the legal meaning of negligence answers the coach’s question: “How does the law expect me to behave?” The follow-up question is: “How can I be sure that my behaviour will meet this expectation?” The answer to this question lies in risk management.



6.9 Risk Management

Risk management is about taking steps to avoid risks. This involves spending time thinking about potentially risky situations, deciding which situations might pose serious risks and determining what steps to take to minimize those risks. The common ingredient in all these tasks is common sense.

There are four strategies for controlling risks, all of which are important to the coach:

- ❑ **Retain the Risk** – the risk is minor and it is inherent in the sport activity and the coach is willing to accept the consequences, so he/she does nothing about the risk. In sport, this is often a legitimate risk-management strategy.
- ❑ **Reduce the Risk** – the risk is moderately significant and the coach takes measures to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring or minimizes its consequences if the risk occurs; the coach does this by planning carefully, supervising participants appropriately and educating participants.
- ❑ **Transfer the Risk** – the risk is significant and it is transferred to others through contracts, including waivers and insurance.
- ❑ **Avoid the Risk** – the risk is severe and the coach decides to avoid whatever may cause the risk.

A word of caution for coaches: there is no template, formula or checklist for managing risk. The law expects coaches to provide a safe environment for participants, but what that means for a coach's conduct will vary with the circumstances, including the age and skill level of participants and the environment in which the coaching activity occurs.

The Coach's Personal Risk Management Plan

The informed and prudent coach protects himself/herself by implementing a personal risk management plan. This plan helps the coach in two ways. First, it will promote a safe program and help to prevent injuries from occurring. Second, it will help to protect the coach from liability claims when an injury cannot be prevented.

Coaches can, and should, practise their own personal risk management by following this ten-point plan:

- 1) Be familiar with and adhere to applicable standards, both written and unwritten, as well as internal policies and rules governing the facility, the sport and your program.
- 2) Monitor your participants' fitness and skill levels, and teach new skills in a progressive fashion suitable to their age and skills. Never leave young participants unsupervised.
- 3) If you do not have access to medical personnel or a qualified trainer, keep adequate first aid supplies on hand; ideally, you should be trained in administering first aid.
- 4) Develop an Emergency Action Plan for the facility or site where you regularly hold practices or competitions. Carry with you, at all times, emergency contact numbers and participants' medical profiles.



- 5) Inspect facilities and equipment before every practice and competition and take steps to ensure deficiencies are corrected immediately, or adjust your activities accordingly to avoid the risk.
- 6) Work with your employer or sport organization to use appropriately-worded assumption-of-risk agreements in your programs. Where appropriate (in settings involving adult participants) develop and use agreements waiving liability.
- 7) You should be covered by the liability insurance policy of your employer (if you are remunerated for your coaching services) or your organization (if you are a volunteer coach). Confirm that this is the case. If it is not, obtain your own insurance.
- 8) Do not be afraid to stop or withdraw from any activity that poses unreasonable risks, including stopping a practice or removing your team or your participants from a competition.
- 9) Trust your common sense and intuition!
- 10) Actively pursue your own training, professional development and coaching certification.



6.10 Legal Questions and Answers (FAQ)

The following are frequently asked legal questions about coaching. Answers to these questions have been provided by the Centre for Sport and Law.

1) **What are the major differences between provinces/territories regarding the law and how does this impact me as a coach?**

Laws in Canada can be divided into public laws (those laws that govern relations between the state and individuals) and private laws (those laws that govern relations between and among individuals and private entities – this area of law is also referred to as civil law). In Canada, public laws are generally in federal jurisdiction while private laws are generally in provincial jurisdiction.

The most well-known body of public law in Canada is the Criminal Code: this applies to everyone, regardless of province/territory of residence. Civil law varies from province/territory to province/territory, but not greatly. Examples of civil law relevant to coaches and varying slightly from one province/territory to another include human rights law, occupier's liability and the law of defamation.

An important distinction between criminal law and civil law is that there is a different 'standard' of proof, where the standard of proof refers to the certainty with which something must be proven. In criminal matters, guilt must be proven "beyond a reasonable doubt" (a fairly high standard), while in civil matters, fault must be proven "on a balance of probabilities" which means with a certainty that is greater than 50 percent. This is a lower standard of proof than the criminal standard. Thus, a person charged with a criminal offence could be found not guilty, while the same allegation made under civil law might be upheld.

In criminal law penalties are imposed and may include fines, restrictions on activities, restitution (paying back the person harmed), or imprisonment. In civil law, the penalties take the form of monetary compensation. The amount of compensation will depend on the cost to reimburse the harmed person for their expenses and lost income, and will also attempt to place a monetary value on any injury that the person sustains. The courts can also require a person to perform a certain service (such as following through with a contractual promise) or to refrain from doing something in the future.

2) **Are paid/contracted coaches subject to a different standard than are volunteer coaches?**

Yes and no. Paid and volunteer coaches of equivalent knowledge, skill and certification, performing equivalent duties within a sport setting, will likely be held to the same legal standard of care. They will, however, have different entitlements and privileges in other areas of the law – for example, a volunteer does not have the rights an employee has under employment standards legislation.

Depending upon the circumstances of a coaching activity, paid and volunteer coaches could be held to the same or similar standard. However, coaches who are paid and coaches who are not paid will usually have different duties, obligations and scope of authority. This will influence the standard of care to which they will be held. This standard is not dictated by



whether or not they receive payment for their services, but rather is dictated by the scope of the coach's responsibility and the nature of the relationship between the coach and the participant. The standard of care is constant in that it is always a reasonable standard; however, what is reasonable will vary according to the circumstances in which the paid coach and the volunteer coach find themselves.

3) Are coaches who are also physical educators held to a different standard?

Yes and no. Children are required by law to go to school and when in school they are under the authority and care of school officials, including teachers. Thus, a teacher has a statutory duty to stand in loco parentis, a legal term meaning that he or she stands in the place of a parent with respect to his or her students. As such, teachers have duties and responsibilities equivalent to that of a "prudent parent", and must behave as a parent would behave in caring for their child. Coaches who are not in a school setting do not stand "in loco parentis" in the same way that teachers do, and are not required to meet this statutory duty.

However, both coaches and teachers have specialized skills and knowledge and have a responsibility to provide a reasonable standard of care. The standard of care for anyone is determined by written standards, unwritten standards, case law and common sense. The coach who is also a teacher will be held to written and unwritten standards that govern coaching (such as coaching manuals, rules of the sport, coaching code of conduct) as well as written and unwritten standards that apply to teachers (such as teacher manuals, school board policies, and duties imposed by statute upon teachers). The coach in the school setting must fulfil both roles and must adhere to standards that apply to both coaching and teaching activities.

4) How would a judge describe a "reasonable and prudent person" when referring to a coach?

A coach will be held to an objective standard of behaviour that is what an average and reasonable coach would do, or not do, in the same circumstances. Black's Law Dictionary defines 'reasonable care' as that degree of care which a person of ordinary prudence would exercise in the same or similar circumstance. A coach has special skills and knowledge and is not the same as a "person of ordinary prudence", thus the reasonable standard for the coach will be that standard expected of reasonably prudent coaches having similar knowledge and skill and finding themselves in similar circumstances.

Keep in mind that the standard is objective, meaning that it is determined not by what a coach did or did not do in a situation, but by what a coach ought to have done, or ought not to have done. It might be tempting to believe that if a coach obtains less training and gains less knowledge, he or she will be held to a lesser standard. This is not the case, as the circumstances may well require a coach of greater knowledge and skill, and that will form the benchmark against which the coach's conduct will be measured.

5) Are there differences in liability if you are a head coach or an assistant coach?

Yes. The head coach and assistant coach have different degrees of responsibility and authority. The behaviour required to meet the standard of care is influenced by this.



6) What is jurisprudence?

Technically, jurisprudence is defined as the “philosophy of law” or the “science of law”. For everyday purposes, jurisprudence refers to legal principles and how they have evolved over time. The law is not static; it continually evolves to reflect changing community standards. Jurisprudence refers to the principles that are reflected in our laws, both in legislation and in common law (also referred to as “judge-made” or the accumulated body of court decisions).

7) If I am required to sign multiple codes of ethics or conduct, to which will I be held, or will I be held to all?

You will be held to all of the codes you execute, within the specific jurisdiction in which they have been signed. In other words, if you sign a code with your provincial sport body, it may hold you to it for the activities you undertake for it or within its jurisdiction. If you sign a code for a local sport club, it may hold you to it for activities you undertake with and for the club.

There may also be situations where your activity is subject to two or more codes at the same time, such as if you are coaching at the Canada Games. Unless the codes specify clearly which one might take precedence, or “trump” the others, then all may apply simultaneously. This can create difficulties if any of the terms in different codes are contradictory.

8) Is special liability insurance a requirement for coaches?

Special liability insurance is not a requirement for coaches, but is highly recommended as a risk management measure. Ideally, organizations that employ or engage coaches should include the coach as an insured party under their general liability insurance policy. Coaches should confirm this is the case and if it is not, the coach should insist that the policy be revised accordingly. As a last resort, an individual coach can purchase his or her own insurance, but this may be difficult to obtain and expensive.

9) What happens if I am uninsured? Are my personal assets at risk?

The purpose of liability insurance is to cover the costs that individuals might have to pay in the event they are sued, or are required to compensate another person for loss or damage. Insurance may also cover the costs to defend oneself or to otherwise respond to an allegation of wrongdoing, even where such an allegation may prove to be untrue.

The vast majority of coaches never find themselves in situations where they need insurance. However, if they do and they are not covered by an insurance policy, then they will be personally responsible for paying these costs. This could mean tapping into savings and other personal assets.

It is also important to note that insurance policies and coverage vary widely and a given insurance policy may not cover all of the coach’s circumstances or all financial obligations.



10) What are my responsibilities if an accident occurs? Must I accompany a participant to the hospital?

The coach's responsibilities begin long before an accident occurs. The coach should have an Emergency Action Plan that identifies who does what in the event of an accident, and should have on hand all the necessary information to contact emergency and medical authorities as well as parents/guardians, and to inform medical professionals of the medical history of the injured person.

A coach does not necessarily have an obligation to accompany a participant to the hospital; it will depend on the nature and severity of the injury, whether or not there is another responsible person available to accompany the participant, and whether the remaining participants can be properly supervised should the coach be required to leave. The coach will have to make informed decisions about these matters depending on the circumstances; the Emergency Action Plan provides guidance for this decision-making, which is why it is so important to have prepared in advance.

11) What are the most commonly occurring cases where coaches require legal assistance?

Coaches most frequently need legal assistance to deal with employment matters such as employment contracts and termination. They also seek assistance to deal with allegations of harassment and misconduct matters. On occasion, coaches require legal assistance when implicated in a lawsuit from a person who has been injured and is seeking compensation.

12) What are the key preventive measures a coach can take to protect himself/herself?

The competent, informed and prudent coach practises his or her own personal risk management as described in the NCCP materials. A ten-point plan is presented there that lays out an array of risk management techniques accessible to all coaches. A coach protects himself or herself through gaining knowledge about negligence and liability, and applying techniques to identify and control risks in the coaching environment.



REFERENCES

Coaching Association of Canada, *NCCP Level 1 Coaching Theory manual*, Ottawa, 1989.

Hypothermia. Sports Medicine Council of BC

The Centre for Sport and Law, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.

Windchill and Minutes to Frostbite Charts The Meteorological Service of Canada
http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/msc/contents_e.html, 2004

Some images and pictures contained in this document are the property of CARDISPORT or HEMERA TECHNOLOGIES INC. and are copyrighted.

Niemi, A. *Technique Illustrations*, 2004.



SECTION 7 - PRACTICE COACHING SESSION



Coaching Tip: In addition to imparting technical knowledge and understanding, the coach plays a pivotal role in the moral, social and ethical development of our young people.

Source: Foundation Themes of an Emerging Sport Plan for Canada



7.1 Self-Assessment Sheet

Practice Coaching #1: Explanation, Demonstration, Organization and Safety

Criteria	Yes	No
Selection of the activity		
The activity selected is appropriate for the age of the participant		
The activity selected is appropriate for the ability of the participant		
Comments/suggestions:		
Safety before beginning the activity		
Equipment is appropriate for the age/size of the participant		
Equipment is in good repair and is properly adjusted		
The playing area is checked for hazards		
Comments/suggestions:		
Explanation		
Coach is positioned such that all children can see and distractions are minimized		
Explanation and demonstration lasts 20 seconds or less for children in the Active Start stage of development (90 seconds or less for an adult).		
The purpose of the exercise/activity is clearly stated		
One or two key points are emphasized (not necessarily technical aspects)		
Safety points are emphasized, if appropriate		
Coach speaks clearly and loud enough for all to hear		
The choice of words is appropriate for the age of the participants		
Participants are checked for understanding		
Comments/suggestions:		
Demonstration		
All the participants can clearly see the demonstration		
The speed of the demonstration allows participants to see accurately what they are to do		
Coach demonstrates in a manner that a child would be able to perform the activity		
Coach reinforces key points while he/she demonstrates		
Participants are checked for understanding		
Comments/suggestions:		
Organization		
A sufficient area is used for the activity		
Available equipment is used optimally		
Participants are active for the majority of the time (minimum waiting in line)		
Comments/suggestions:		
Safety during the activity		
If a potentially hazardous situation presents itself, coach deals with it immediately		
Comments/suggestions:		





**Self-Assessment Sheet (working copy)****Practice Coaching #1: Explanation, Demonstration, Organization and Safety**

Criteria	Yes	No
Selection of the activity		
The activity selected is appropriate for the age of the participant		
The activity selected is appropriate for the ability of the participant		
Comments/suggestions:		
Safety before beginning the activity		
Equipment is appropriate for the age/size of the participant		
Equipment is in good repair and is properly adjusted		
The playing area is checked for hazards		
Comments/suggestions:		
Explanation		
Coach is positioned such that all children can see and distractions are minimized		
Explanation and demonstration lasts 20 seconds or less for children in the Active Start stage of development (90 seconds or less for an adult).		
The purpose of the exercise/activity is clearly stated		
One or two key points are emphasized (not necessarily technical aspects)		
Safety points are emphasized, if appropriate		
Coach speaks clearly and loud enough for all to hear		
The choice of words is appropriate for the age of the participants		
Participants are checked for understanding		
Comments/suggestions:		
Demonstration		
All the participants can clearly see the demonstration		
The speed of the demonstration allows participants to see accurately what they are to do		
Coach demonstrates in a manner that a child would be able to perform the activity		
Coach reinforces key points while he/she demonstrates		
Participants are checked for understanding		
Comments/suggestions:		
Organization		
A sufficient area is used for the activity		
Available equipment is used optimally		
Participants are active for the majority of the time (minimum waiting in line)		
Comments/suggestions:		
Safety during the activity		
If a potentially hazardous situation presents itself, coach deals with it immediately		
Comments/suggestions:		







7.2 Effective Communication

If you are to establish a good working relationship with the participants in your program and other coaches (at practice sessions, meetings, and at any other time), you need to have good communication skills. This section provides some practical suggestions to assist you in this.

Effective Communication
On a Personal Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Know yourself, both as a coach and as a person. ✓ Know your preferred communication style (analytical, dynamic, pleasant, expressive), and choose the appropriate one(s) for your target group. ✓ Be aware of the importance of the non-verbal aspects of communication. When you are a coach, people look at you! Athletes notice your slightest movements and gestures. Non-verbal language represents around 80% of all communication. Your verbal language must not contradict your non-verbal language; rather, it should be complementary. For example, if you say: “Let’s take the time we need to do this practice properly” but you are constantly looking at your watch, you are sending two contradictory messages. ✓ Know how you react to typical situations you face in sport. For example, do you get stressed during competitions? ✓ Create opportunities to listen to and communicate with other people. ✓ Pay real attention to and take genuine interest in the person you are speaking to. ✓ Accept that you will probably have to clarify and repeat whatever you say often during the season. You may have to say the same thing in several different ways and use different words before the message is truly understood and acted upon. ✓ Show that you listen actively and ensure you understand the message you are receiving. Active listening involves asking for clarification whenever necessary and occasionally repeating what you’ve heard to be sure you understood the other person. E.g. “When you said....., did you mean.....or..... ?” or “If I understand what you said, now you are going to.....”.
On an Environmental Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create a positive environment based on confidence, patience, tolerance and empathy toward others. ✓ Create a positive environment for communication (appropriate location, absence of noise, discreet, etc.). If it’s not possible to spend time with the other person, make an appointment with him or her for another time, for example, after practice.



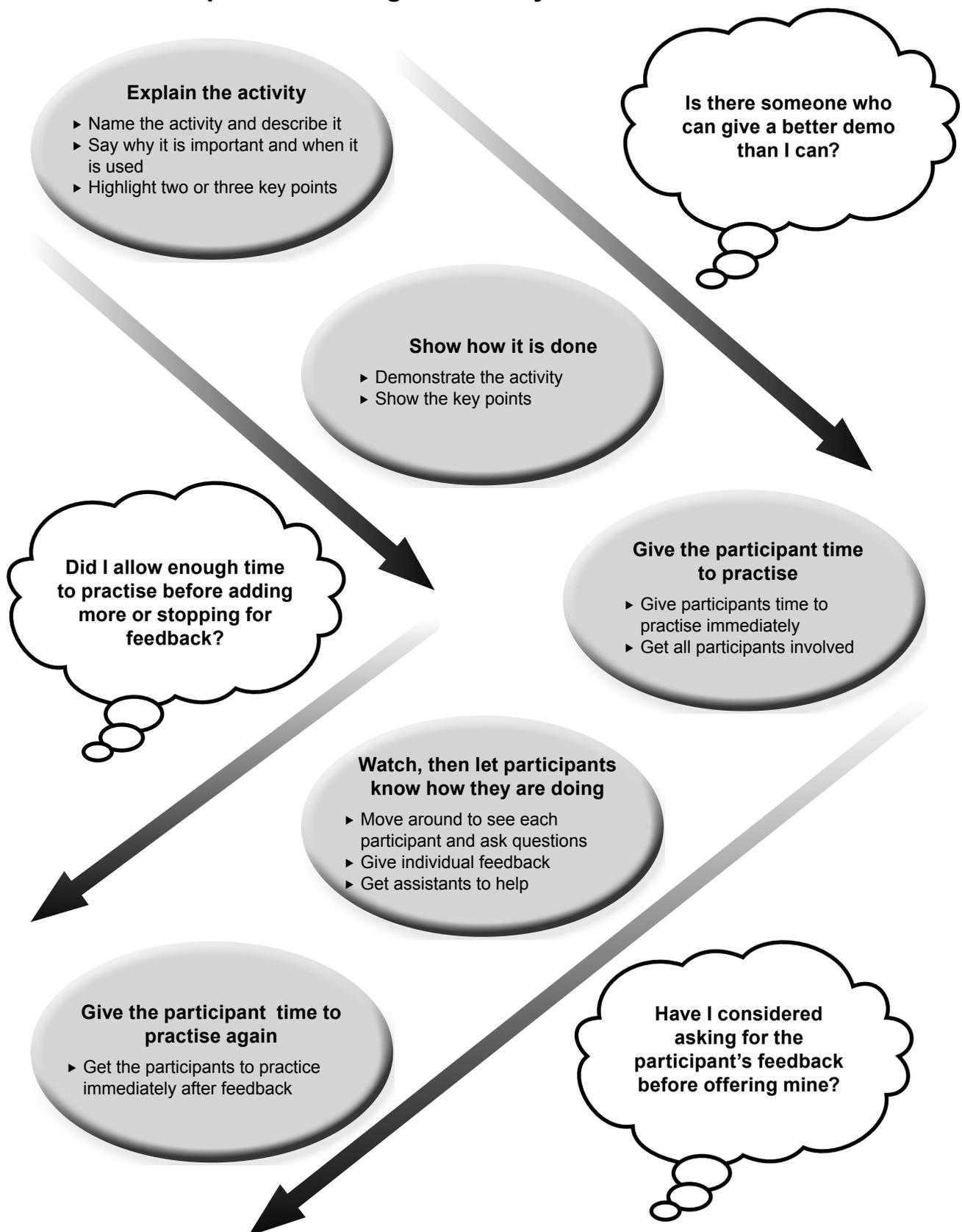
**Effective Communication****On an Interpersonal Level**

- ✓ Respect the unique characteristics of every individual.
- ✓ Be open with other people, right from the beginning of the relationship.
- ✓ Clearly identify expectations in front of athletes and athletes.
- ✓ Describe how you meet these expectations.
- ✓ Describe the attitudes and behaviours you expect to see (a code of behaviour).
- ✓ Communicate coherent and relevant messages to others in terms they understand.
- ✓ Don't talk too long to groups (before or after meetings) or in individual meetings, especially if young people are involved; be brief and specific.





7.3 The Steps to Coaching an Activity





7.3.1 Key Points for Each Step of Coaching an Activity

The material in section 7.3 identified five steps in coaching an activity:

- 1) explain;
- 2) show how it is done;
- 3) give time to practise;
- 4) watch, then let participants know how they are doing; and
- 5) give time to practise again.

This section identifies the key points in each step.

Explain the Activity

- Build an environment that is conducive to learning (i.e. respectful, supportive, enthusiastic).
- Position yourself so that you can be seen and heard by all. Proper group positioning depends entirely upon what you want the participants to see and on the environment. Here are a few ideas for positioning a group while you are explaining an activity:
 - ✓ If you are outdoors, make sure that the participants do not have the sun in their eyes.
 - ✓ Position participants so that distractions are behind them.
 - ✓ Check that you can see both eyes of each participant before beginning.
 - ✓ If there is a level of noise that prevents the group from hearing you, either reposition the group or wait until a time when the noise calms.
 - ✓ Train the participants to automatically look around them when they gather as a group to check that everyone can see.
 - ✓ If possible and when appropriate, position yourself beside the participant who most often tries to distract others.
- Give brief and clear explanations that are complete; avoid long explanations for things that can be demonstrated.
- Use words that the participants can understand.
- Speak enthusiastically, loud enough, and at a pace that can be followed by all participants.
- Give “action” instructions (e.g. “Make as many passes as you can in one minute”).
- Ask questions to verify that participants have understood what to do.

Remember, if you are losing the attention of the group, it might be because you are talking too much. Get the participants moving as quickly and as often as possible!





Show How It Is Done

- The main purpose of a demonstration is to create a mental picture of a movement. To promote proper learning, this picture must be accurate, because what you show is what you usually get!
- The characteristics of a good demonstration are that movements are executed correctly and the demonstration is given at the right moment (prior to attempting the movement and when participants have the prerequisite abilities).
- Check that the participants understand what they are to do.
- Consider using participants who can do the activity as demonstrators.

Give the Participants Time to Practise

Ensure that participants are active most of the time, and have the opportunity to attempt as many trials as possible in the time allocated (e.g. avoid line ups and waiting periods, bring extra implements).

Watch and Then Let Participants Know How They Are Doing

Ensure that you are properly positioned to watch the participants in action, and to determine if an intervention is required. To build your observation and intervention skills, aim to:

- Scan the group at all times; a coach who has good observation skills can detect signs suggesting incorrect execution, boredom, challenge, fatigue and readiness for the task and will intervene if required.
- Talk with or watch other coaches who have excellent observation skills and use their strategies.
- Know what constitutes proper and improper execution of a skill or activity and have a series of corrective measures available for common errors.
- Ask questions and try to prompt participants to come up with their own feedback. Ask questions such as “How do you think you are doing?” and “What is one thing you can work on to improve?” If participants can come up with their own feedback and you can develop this independence in them, the result will be better long-term learning and less dependence on you.

Give the Participants Time to Practise Again

The aim in this step is to provide participants the opportunity to reinforce things that they are doing correctly and to spend additional time on the corrective measures that were suggested with the feedback.

Remember that it can take a participant a lot of practice over weeks, months and years to develop a skill well. Your challenge is to find creative ways to keep the participant practising and interested, and to avoid too much waiting in line and too many repetitive movements.





7.3.2 Additional Comments on Giving Feedback

Avoid giving too much feedback, too often – let the participants perform the activities without constantly interrupting them. The more you are talking, the less they are practising! Many coaches rely on a set of commonly used comments, sometimes involving stereotypical phrases or words. Such reactions can become annoying to some of the participants and therefore lose their effectiveness. Remember that it is primarily the timeliness and quality of feedback and not the amount that determines effectiveness.

Recent research shows that “directing a performer’s attention to the effects of his/her movements (*external* focus of attention) appears to be more beneficial than directing attention to his/her own movements (*internal* focus of attention).” *Internal* focus appears to interfere with the body’s natural control processes.

Practice Planning Tips

- Keep children active so that they stay warm and comfortable and are eager to come back for more.
- Listen to them carefully.
- Constantly monitor how they are doing as they can tire or get hungry quickly.
- Know where the washrooms are - hopefully they are close.
- Provide as high a coach to skier ratio as possible, particularly for children in the the Active Start stage of development where they develop best when they are in a one-on-one situation.
- Give them a name tag or bring some masking tape to write their name on the first day so that you will learn their name.
- Use descriptive words and phrases that are easy to remember such as “Walk like a duck”.
- When skiing on a trail divide the groups up so the speedsters can go at their own pace, and the slower children don’t feel pressured to keep up.

Great Feedback Is...

- Specific, not general. For example, “You did ___well”, not “Nice one!”
- Positive and constructive, not destructive or negative.
- Linked to the behaviour to be changed.
- Easy to understand because it uses simple words.
- Clear and informative.
- Balanced between things done well and areas for improvement. For example, “Your ___ (movement) has improved since last practice. The next step is to try ___ (add one level of complexity to the movement, or identify a specific aspect on which to focus).”





7.4 Facility Safety Checklist (working copy)



Facility: _____ Date: _____

Inspected by: _____

Item	Adequate	Inadequate	Corrective Measures*	Observations
Practice Area				
Ski Trails				
Daylodge and Waxing Area				
Equipment				
First Aid Kit & Procedures				
Others				

*Ensure corrective measures are taken if safety standards are inadequate.





**Facility Safety Checklist**

Facility: _____ Date: _____

Inspected by: _____

Item	Adequate	Inadequate	Corrective Measures*	Observations
Practice Area				
Ski Trails				
Daylodge and Waxing Area				
Equipment				
First Aid Kit & Procedures				
Others				

*Ensure corrective measures are taken if safety standards are inadequate.





7.5 Emergency Information Chart

Emergency Telephone #s: 911 _____ Ambulance _____

Police _____ Fire Department _____

Names of Athletes (M/F)	Date of Birth (YYYY/MM/DD)	Address and Home Telephone Number	Known Medical Conditions	Specific Procedure to Implement	Person(s) to Contact in Case of Emergency	Telephone Number(s)	Gender (ie "M/F")





7.6 CCC Accident Report Form

Name of Injured Person: _____ Racing licence #: _____

Telephone #: _____ Address: _____

Division: _____ Club Name : _____ Type of Activity: _____

Date: _____ Ski Area: _____ Ski Trail: _____

Name of Activity/Event Leader: _____ Telephone #: _____

Ski Club Hosting Activity/Event: _____ Address: _____

Date of Accident: _____ Time: _____ Nature of Injury: _____

Cause of Injury: _____ Treatment: _____ Hospital: _____

Phone #: _____ Address: _____

Doctor in Attendance: _____ Phone #: _____ Address: _____

Report of Activity/Event Leader:

(use separate sheet)

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Address: _____

Report of First Aid Personnel:

(use separate sheet)

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Report of Witnesses:

(use separate sheet)

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Address: _____

In the case of hospitalization or if a liability claim may appear likely, complete this form and fax or deliver it to the CCC National Office, the CCC Insurance Agency and your Division Office within 48 hours of the accident.

Reviewed and approved by: _____

(Activity/Event Leader)

Note: at the beginning of each ski year and prior to undertaking any activities, club leaders should get in touch with their Division Office to obtain current contact information for the CCC National Office and the CCC Insurance Agency. Write this information plus your Division contact info on the Accident Report Forms that will be used during that season.





REFERENCES

Bompa, T. *Theory and Methodology of Training: the Key to Athletic Performance*, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1994.

Coaching Association of Canada, *NCCP Level 1 Coaching Theory manual*, Ottawa, 1989.

Lee, T.D., Genovese, E.D. *Distribution of Practice in Motor Skill Acquisition: Learning and Performance Effects Reconsidered*. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 59, 277-287, 1988.

Magill, R.A. *Motor Learning: Concepts and Applications* (3rd edition), Brown, Dubuque IA, 1989.

Platonov, V.N. *L'entraînement sportif : théorie et méthodologie* (2e édition), Éditions Revue EPS, Paris, 1988.

Schmidt R.A. *Motor Learning & Performance: From principles to practice*, Human Kinetics, 1991

Weineck, J. *Manuel d'entraînement* (4e édition), Vigot, Paris, 1997.



SECTION 8 - UNDERSTANDING THE COACHING ENVIRONMENT



Coaching Tip: Communicating with parents is critical to your success as a community coach. It is useful to have a parent meeting at the beginning of each season to outline the program philosophy, explain clothing and equipment standards, establish codes of behaviour, provide scheduling information and recruit help. Holding this meeting will go a long way towards establishing a positive, two-way relationship. Parents can be great allies and make great assistants when their contributions are encouraged and directed toward specific tasks.

Source: CAC Community Sport Coach Workbook Template



8.1 The Support Structure

A support structure is essential for a successful Skill Development Program (SDP). The six key components are:

- the club;
- the ski facility;
- a progression of athlete development opportunities;
- club coaches;
- the SDP Programmer; and
- parents.

8.1.1 The Club

The club is the base or foundation of the cross-country sport system. A multi-program cross-country ski club offers a wide range of programs that cover the full spectrum of cross-country ski activities for skiers of all ages.

The more established and successful your ski club is, the more resources your SDP can access. For example, a well developed full service club might offer a variety of club events, a website, a newsletter, liability insurance coverage, a progression of athlete development opportunities for skiers of all ages, coaching development opportunities, lit trails, a day lodge and a high standard of trail grooming. The stronger your club, the more you and your coaching colleagues can focus on the development of a quality ski program for children.

In any amateur sport club, regardless of the sport, the success of its athlete development programs can be attributed to a strong volunteer support structure built on the principles of planning, team work and mentoring.

8.1.2 The Ski Facility

A successful SDP requires, as a minimum, an area where a group of children can ski. Ideally, your community will have a cross-country ski facility operated by a club or a ski resort. This facility should include a lit ski playground/terrain garden for the youngest skiers and a warming hut or day lodge at the trailhead. In addition, there should be a well marked and well groomed trail system with varied terrain that will meet skiers' needs as they grow and become increasingly competent on their skis. This is the ideal, however, and although many groups have facilities of this kind to work with, others do not. Some will use a golf course, a community park or a school-yard. These locations may require more creativity and effort to set up an appropriate learning environment, but they can be very effective if prepared properly. Whatever your situation, the appropriate packing and track-setting of the ski area where your group practices is an important component of the learning environment, and a necessary one in order to teach technical skills.

If your group does not have an established cross-country ski facility close enough to your community to use on a regular basis, it is worthwhile to make arrangements for occasional





excursions to a neighboring community that does have one. It is important for young skiers to be exposed to a modern, well developed ski facility.

8.1.3 A Progression of Athlete Development Opportunities

An established club should have a progression of athlete development opportunities. This progression would normally begin with a Bunnyrabbit Program, and continue with a Jackrabbit Program, Track Attack Program, Junior Racing Team program and so on. These programs within a program must not only offer a progression but be vertically aligned in order to work to potential. It is very important that each step is thoughtfully aligned with the next to reduce the chances of skier drop-out.

Definition: A vertically integrated athlete development program is a series of individual club programs that provides a clear and continuous progression of skier development opportunities, usually up through the senior age category.

Does your club have:

- ✓ ONE athlete development program?
- ✓ ONE overall athlete development strategy?
- ✓ ONE club head coach?

Vertical integration is a critical consideration when tackling the problems of skier dropout.

8.1.4 Club Coaches

Club Head Coach

The club head coach is an essential component of a successful club athlete development program.

The key areas of responsibilities for this position would be:

- overseeing the development of all the club coaches, including beginners;
- overseeing and coordinating all the club athlete development programs from Active Start through to the Training to Compete stages of athlete development;
- coaching the junior and/or senior racing team (optional).

In carrying out these responsibilities the head coach might perform the following duties and tasks (or ensure that others perform them):

- Organizing a day-long meeting of all the club coaches (beginner through to veterans) in late August or early September to discuss and plan the program for the year. This would include reviewing the objectives of the program, the club philosophy, the budget and what





should be covered in practice/training sessions. If all the coaches are included, including beginners, then everyone will learn why things are done the way they are. This is the time when the club coaches should be updated on news from the ski world, such as changes in emphasis on technique or changes in race formats. It is the start-up of the club program for the season. Some groups within the club membership will have trained over the summer, but this will be the formal beginning to the season.

- Coordinating the different athlete development groups, from the youngest skiers to the top senior skiers in the club, so that they meet together to start their practice from one location once a week – even if all they do is start their practice with a common warm-up. This ensures that everyone sees each other at least once weekly, and encourages club identity and cohesion within the overall program. This will usually take place on Saturday and will continue through both the dryland and on-snow seasons (as appropriate for the different age groups).
- Coordinating a meeting between the coaches and parents to explain the philosophy of the club's athlete development program and the plans for the season.
- Regularly attending SDP (Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit and Track Attack) activity/practice sessions. The purpose of this is to assist inexperienced coaches, to get to know the younger skiers and to ensure the integration of the various programs.
- Providing technical leadership, which includes technique instruction and waxing clinics for developing coaches.
- Coordinating elite club skiers to assist with SDP activity/practice sessions on a regular basis.

SDP Coaches

SDP coaches lead group sessions. If the group of children are in the Active Start stage of development this role may be filled by community coaches “in training”, but if children are six years of age and older certified community coaches should be used (i.e. coaches that are technically competent and able to present the program well). General responsibilities might include:

- planning and conducting activity/practice sessions for their own group of children (dryland, on-snow and classroom sessions);
- teaching and evaluating ski technique;
- teaching ski preparation skills and respect for ski equipment; and
- providing inspiration and enthusiasm.

If your club SDP is large, and if your SDP Programmer is seeking help in this area, it may be necessary for one of the coaches to take the role of team leader in order to oversee the planning and coordination of all the group sessions. This person requires a good understanding of the program. Responsibilities might include:





- coordinating the training and development of all the coaches working with the SDP program, including new coaches recruited to replace retiring coaches;
- ensuring suitable substitutes for coaches who cannot make an activity/practice session;
- liaising with the club head coach and the next level of athlete development program above the SDP;
- ensuring the provision of current information on equipment selection, ski preparation, etc.;
- ensuring the coordination of games when the various SDP groups assemble together, as well as the coordination of appropriate equipment - hoops, soccer balls, etc.;
- coordinating the regular involvement of appropriate “role models”; and
- coordinating use of the ski area to suit the needs of the different ages/skill levels within the groups.

8.1.5 SDP Programmer

The SDP Programmer is the program administrator. This person may or may not be the team leader or the coach of a group, depending on the size of the program. This position doesn't necessarily require ski skills, but it does require good organizational skills and the ability to recruit volunteers. Responsibilities include:

- local promotion of the program;
- phoning;
- transportation;
- coordinating facility use and grooming;
- all aspects of registration;
- social events;
- coordinating special activities, ski swap, excursions, etc., possibly in cooperation with other club members (e.g. trips to a ski tournament, a back-country outing, a provincial cup competition, an inter-school ski day, etc.);
- ordering and distribution of materials and supplies;
- administration of enrolment kits, program booklets, awards stickers and badges;
- coordinating the provision of refreshments;
- information distribution: email network; phone chains; bulletin board; etc.;
- coordinating local leadership training courses – Introduction to Coaching and Community Coaching workshops, waxing clinics, etc.;





- liaising with the club head coach;
- overseeing the risk management program (safety equipment at practices, paperwork, circulating accident report forms to coaches, etc.);
- preparing year-end reports; and
- performing the responsibilities of a “team leader” if the team leader position is not filled.

8.1.6 Parents

Parents are responsible for acquiring suitable ski equipment, ensuring skis are properly prepared for activity/practice sessions, transporting their children to practice sessions (or dropping off/picking up the equipment from school), ensuring their children spend time on skis in addition to the practice sessions, ensuring their children are dressed appropriately for the weather, and so on. In addition, parents can support the program as a whole by: becoming coaches or assistant coaches themselves; helping with administration, fund-raising, ski swaps and special excursions; making materials for games or the ski playground; and so on. Parents are an extraordinary resource that can be partners in making a sport program a success.

Tips on How to Involve the Parent

Provide them with the following information when they register their children in the program:

- An overview of the program, it’s goals and objectives.
- Sample booklets and other program materials to look at – materials that help to explain the program.
- An outline of the seasonal plan for the program in which their children are enrolled. Include information such as.
 - ✓ when the program begins;
 - ✓ the number of sessions and the week days on which they will be held;
 - ✓ where the sessions will be held;
 - ✓ where at the ski area the group is going to convene;
 - ✓ how long the sessions will be for each age group;
 - ✓ if there will be dryland sessions;
 - ✓ cancellation policies;
 - ✓ the special activities in which this group is scheduled to take part; and
 - ✓ activities that will be out of town, etc.
- An estimate of the cost involved for the group their child is in, including equipment needs, special activities, etc.





- Instructions on how to find more information on ski equipment – e.g. attend the initial parent meeting, or take home a handout on the subject (see section 3.4).
- Suggestions on how parents can help. Be specific: coach; assistant coach; programmer; grooming and tracksetting; special events coordinator; registration; refreshments; fundraising; phoning; refreshments, etc.
- Contact numbers for the programmer and club coaches, and encouragement to ask questions.
- The time and location of information meetings for parents; the main topics that will be covered; and whether their participation is mandatory. Be sure to set the date for this meeting soon after registration – before parents have purchased ski equipment for their children.

Ensure that parents know that they are an important and respected part of the program.

If parents are interested in improving their own ski technique or want more information on ski preparation, help them! You may not be able to assist them yourself, but you can direct them to an individual or a program that can. Some clubs offer free parent ski lessons while the children are taking part in the activity/practice sessions. Even if parents do not want to be involved as coaches, or in any support role, they are a very important influence on their children's skill development outside of practice sessions. It is important to help parents learn as much about skiing as possible.

The Parent Meeting

A meeting with the parents soon after registration day is a must. You may choose to have more meetings than this, depending on the activities that your program is undertaking, but you **MUST** have at least one meeting with the parents at the beginning of the season. On the agenda you should include:

- the goals/objectives of the program;
- an outline of the program for the season;
- equipment requirements;
- clothing requirements for activity/practice sessions;
- the parent's responsibilities; and
- how the parent can help.





8.2 Common Tasks of Community Coaches

In your role as community coach, which of these are you expected to do?

Team and Equipment Management

- Registering individual participants.
- Registering the team in ski tournaments, competitions or other special events.
- Gathering medical and contact information.
- Ensuring the practice area will be appropriately groomed (packed and trackset) for the activity.
- Preparing the ski area for the activity/practice session.
- Booking facilities for competitions, ski tournaments.
- Ordering and purchasing equipment.
- Ordering and purchasing uniforms.
- Establishing a team code of conduct.
- Establishing a parent code of conduct.
- Recruiting assistants, the more help the better.
- Recruiting more children.
- Arranging for transportation when required.
- Compiling a first aid kit.
- Designing an EAP.
- Reviewing a facility safety checklist.



Coaching

- Setting up the ski playground.
- Completing a safety inspection.
- Coaching your group.
- Evaluating the activity.
- Leading parent meetings.
- Running the end of season special activity.



Planning

- Designing a plan for the season.
- Designing an activity/practice plan.
- Scheduling sessions.
- Planning the competitive calendar.
- Planning and preparing for a parent meeting – beginning of season.
- Planning and preparing for a parent meeting – mid-season.
- Planning and preparing for a parent meeting – end of season.
- Planning an end-of-season special activity.





8.3 Full Service Clubs

A full service cross-country ski club delivers a wide range of programs to a broad cross-section of the community, as well as a progression of athlete development opportunities for skiers of all ages and skill levels. Refer to section 8.3.1 for an example of a full service club infrastructure.

Points to note include the following:

- ❑ This is a model of a volunteer driven, amateur sport club that is, through membership in a Division of Cross Country Canada, a part of the cross-country skiing sport system.
- ❑ It is a generic model. Each club will have its own special programs, names for programs and a way of “grouping” its committee responsibilities.
- ❑ It is an ideal model. Few clubs are sufficiently developed to offer the full range of programs outlined in this example.
- ❑ It does not address the role of paid staff, although paid employees (part time and full time) have become an integral part of the operations of larger clubs, with responsibilities for trail and facility maintenance, fundraising, coaching, program delivery, etc.
- ❑ It distinguishes between club “programs” and club “partnerships”. For example, a program would be a loppet, a junior racing team, a NCCP workshop, etc. A partnership would refer to an organization with an independent mandate, such as the Ministry of Forests, a commercial ski area, the Federation of Mountain Clubs, etc. Arrangements with other organizations, whether formal or informal, do play an important role in the operations of any cross-country ski club, but they have not been included on this particular chart.
- ❑ A “coach” is an individual who helps athletes (skiers) of any age or skill level to have a better sport experience.
- ❑ An “athlete” is anyone who wishes to improve his/her fitness level and develop his/her ski skills, regardless of age.
- ❑ A “full service club” should provide a clear and continuous progression of skier development opportunities. Especially critical is the vertical integration of programs for younger children, where it is important for them to be able to see the next step. If the club coaches are working as a unit, the transition from one level to the next can be something to look forward to rather than an obstacle to continuing in the sport.
- ❑ A full service club would have ONE athlete development program, ONE overall plan, ONE head coach and good integration of the different components.





REFERENCES

The Support Structure. *CCBC Ski League Manual*, 2000, pp.5.

Your Ideal Club. *Ski Cross Country*, 1999, pp. 20.

Mundal, S. Role of the Club Head Coach. Adapted from “*How To Become A Good Senior Cross-Country Skier*”. (C. Gaarder, trans.), 1995, pp. 32.

The Parent. *CCBC Ski League Manual*, 2000, pp.9.

Some images and pictures contained in this document are the property of CARDISPORT or HEMERA TECHNOLOGIES INC. and are copyrighted.



SECTION 9 - EVALUATION



Coaching Tip: Balance is vital, and rhythm is more important than technical finesse.

Source: Teaching Children to Ski



9.1 Community Coaching Certification Process

The NCCP is a competency-based program. This program trains coaches, and then permits trained coaches to become certified. Certification is based on demonstrating abilities to “do” certain things that are deemed important for meeting the needs of those being coached, thereby creating an environment that will both optimize athletic development and encourage individuals to make a life-time commitment to sport and physical activity.

In the new NCCP system a coach is described as:

- In Training** - when the coach has completed some of the required training for a context.
- Trained** - when the coach has completed all required training for a context.
- Certified** - when the coach has completed all evaluation requirements for a context.

The Introduction to Community Coaching and Community Coaching workshops provide you with the basic training you require in order to coach children in the Active Start and FUNdamental stages of growth and development.

- When you have completed the first workshop (Introduction to Community Coaching) you will be designated a “community coach in training”.
- When you have completed the second workshop (Community Coaching) you will be designated a “trained community coach”.
- At the end of the second workshop you will have completed most of the steps required for certification.
- Community Coaching certification is a prerequisite for entry into the next step in the NCCP progression (i.e. attendance at the first CCI workshop – the L2T (Dryland) workshop).
- Once you have acquired a particular status in the NCCP progression (i.e. community coach “in training”, “trained” community coach and “certified” community coach, it will be recorded on the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) database as part of your coaching record.
- Your certification status will be valid for a period of five years, and can be extended by completing designated development activities, such as coaching seminars, practical assignments and additional coaching workshops.
- Your certification status can be revoked if you contravene the CCC Coaches Code of Conduct or NCCP Code of Ethics.

A complete explanation of the Community Coaching certification process, and the forms used in this process are available on the Cross Country Canada website. In addition, the following



chart identifies the key outcomes and evaluation components which comprise Community Coaching certification:

Outcomes	Evaluation Components
1. The coach makes ethical decisions.	a. Code of Conduct. The coach signs one copy of the CCC Coaches Code of Conduct and submits it to the Facilitator. b. Ethics Evaluation. The coach successfully completes the “Making Ethical Decisions (MED)” on-line evaluation from the Coaching Association of Canada.
2. The coach plans a safe, effective activity/ practice session.	c. Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The coach completes an appropriate EAP for an activity session and submits it to the Facilitator. d. Practice Planning. The coach prepares an appropriate written activity/practice plan and submits it to the Facilitator.
3. The coach analyzes ski technique.	e. Identifies Techniques. The coach correctly identifies the basic characteristics of common ski techniques. f. Critiques Technique. The coach correctly identifies aspects of basic techniques that require improvement, and correctly prescribes changes that will result in improvement.
4. The coach provides appropriate support to athletes.	g. Facility Safety. The coach completes a Facility Safety Checklist for a practice session and submits it to the Facilitator. h. Leading a Practice. The coach successfully leads a practice session placing an appropriate emphasis on key teaching principles and safety factors.
5. The coach supports athletes at a “special activity”.	i. Experience at an Age-Appropriate “Special Activity”. The coach supports a group of skiers at a Season Wind-up, Bunnyrabbit and/or Jackrabbit Fun Day, Ski Tournament or some other age-appropriate “special activity”.
6. The coach manages a skill development program for athletes in the FUNdamental stage of development.	j. Community Coaching Certification Test. The coach successfully completes a knowledge test demonstrating his/her understanding of the key coaching concepts covered in the community coach program.





7. The coach has personal technical competence.	k. Technique Evaluation. The coach demonstrates a basic level of technical skill in each of the techniques covered in the Community Coaching workshop. Note: Coaches with a significant reason for being unable to complete the technical skill requirements have an opportunity to apply for an exemption.
8. The coach has general coaching experience.	l. Coaching Experience. The coach: completes one season of coaching; prepares for, assists with and/or leads a minimum of six activity/practice sessions (minimum 20 hours); and receives satisfactory reviews from the parents and athletes.

Your Certification Checklist

ICC Workshop

- ✓ Sign and submit Code of Conduct to Facilitator.
- ✓ Complete and submit Emergency Action Plan to Facilitator.
- ✓ Receive NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form from Facilitator.

Between Workshops

- ✓ Develop a written Activity Plan or Practice Plan and use it with your group.
- ✓ Complete one season of coaching. Prepare for, assist with and/or lead a minimum of six sessions (minimum 20 hours).
- ✓ Support/lead a group of skiers at a Season Wind-up, Bunnyrabbit and/or Jackrabbit Fun Day, Ski Tournament or some other age-appropriate “special activity”.

CC Workshop

- ✓ Submit written Activity Plan or Practice Plan to Facilitator.
- ✓ Complete and submit Facility Safety Checklist to Facilitator.
- ✓ Personal technique competence evaluated.
- ✓ Lead a practice session and receive feedback.
- ✓ Technique analysis skills evaluated.
- ✓ Complete Community Coaching Certification Test and submit to Facilitator.
- ✓ Submit NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form (evidence of 20 hrs of coaching and support for a group of skiers at a “special activity”) to Facilitator.

Post CC Workshop

- ✓ Complete the Coaching Association of Canada’s (CAC) “Making Ethical Decisions”



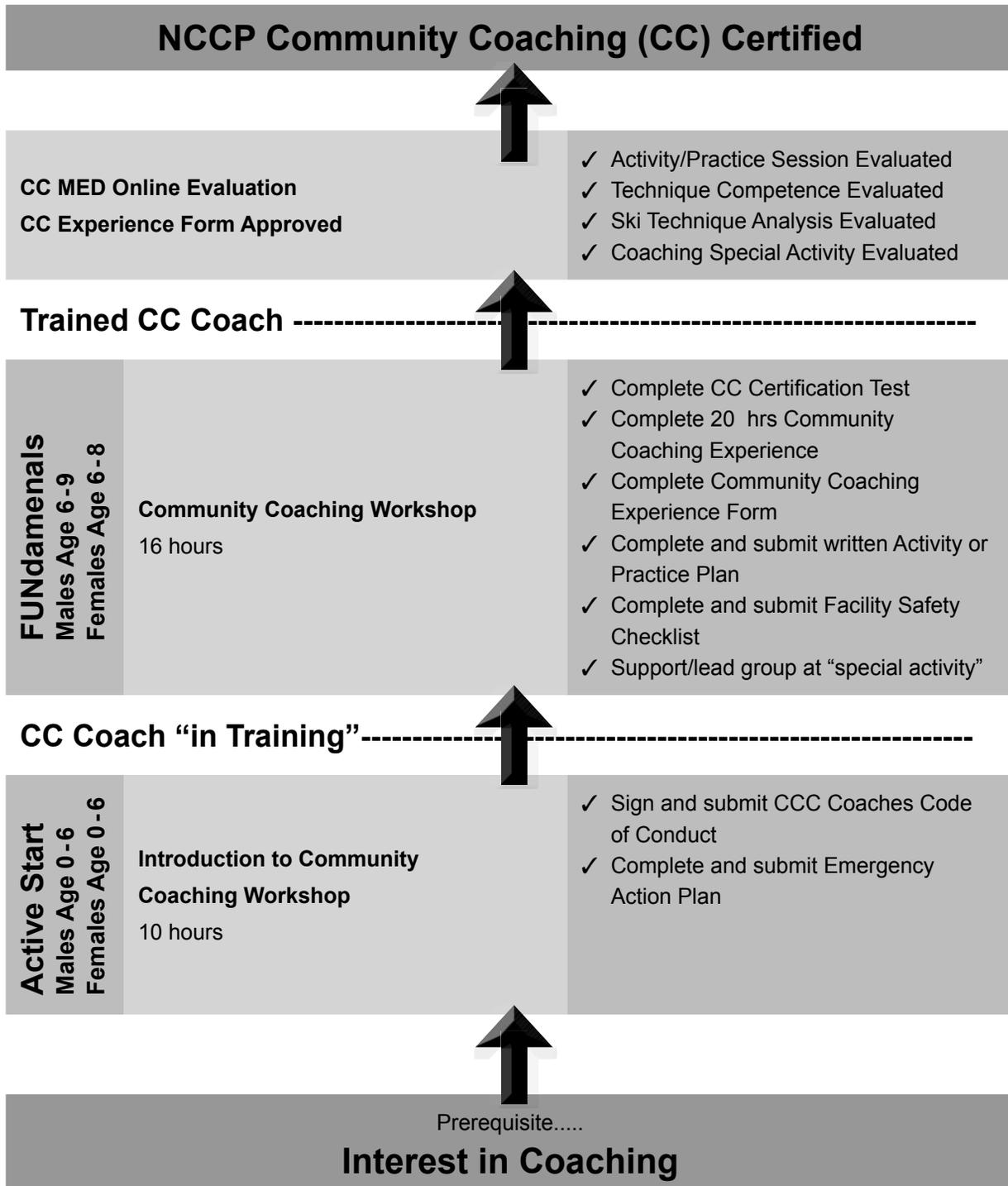
on-line evaluation. This step can be completed at any time following the Community Coaching workshop.

- ✓ Participants who have not completed their other certification steps by the end of the Community Coaching workshop will have an opportunity to complete the process afterwards provided this is done within 12 months of the date of which the CC workshop was held. Options for completing the unfinished tasks include:
 - submitting their NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form directly to their Division Office; and/or
 - submitting other outstanding forms to the Facilitator for review; and/or
 - arranging an evaluation opportunity with a qualified coach or Facilitator.
- ✓ The cost of the Facilitator reviewing and processing forms/documents following the CC workshop is included with the original honorarium.
- ✓ Possible costs relating to a subsequent on-snow evaluation are the responsibility of the club or individual.





9.2 Community Coaching Flowchart





9.3 Self Test



The following is your “Introduction to Community Coaching” Self Test.

Please answer T (true) or F (false) to each of these statements.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1) The two most important reasons children participate in sport are:
✓ to have fun; and
✓ to improve their skills. | T | F |
| 2) The NCCP Code of Ethics is based on four fundamental principles:
✓ respecting participants;
✓ coaching responsibility;
✓ maintaining integrity in relationships; and
✓ honouring sport. | T | F |
| 3) Methods for teaching children should be adapted to their age and stage of development in order to meet their changing needs. | T | F |
| 4) Very young children should be taught using repetitive drills and extensive instruction. | T | F |
| 5) It is best to keep young children standing and waiting during an activity as it gives them time to rest. | T | F |
| 6) Younger children learn best through playing on skis in a ski playground, with some one-on-one guidance from the coach. | T | F |
| 7) Poorly fitted or improper equipment can lead to a negative ski experience. | T | F |
| 8) For classic technique, it is important for the skier's grip wax to work well, especially if the skier is a beginner. | T | F |
| 9) Novice skiers need to develop a good level of balance, coordination and rhythm on skis before they can properly execute skiing techniques. | T | F |
| 10) Using games that reinforce technique points is an effective way to teach young children and encourages children to enjoy the sport. | T | F |
| 11) Helping skiers develop good skiing skills will increase their enjoyment of the sport. | T | F |





- 12) If you take your group for a ski, everyone should wait for the slowest skier. T F
- 13) Safety considerations are not an issue when working with young children because children don't ski far. T F
- 14) When coaching an activity, the following must be kept in mind: T F
- ✓ safety considerations;
 - ✓ how to give effective instructions;
 - ✓ how to give effective demonstrations;
 - ✓ organization of the activities; and
 - ✓ how to give effective feedback.
- 15) In order to help you determine ways to improve your coaching abilities, at the end of every activity you should reflect on how the session went. T F

**Answer Sheet**

- 1) The two most important reasons children participate in sport are: **True**
- ✓ to have fun; and
 - ✓ to improve their skills.
- Refer to section 1.3.*
- 2) The NCCP Code of Ethics is based on four fundamental principles: **True**
- ✓ respecting participants;
 - ✓ coaching responsibility;
 - ✓ maintaining integrity in relationships; and
 - ✓ honouring sport.
- The NCCP Code of Ethics and CCC Code of Conduct provide excellent guidance regarding appropriate coaching behaviours. Refer to section 1.7.*
- 3) Methods for teaching children should be adapted to their age and stage of development in order to meet their changing needs. **True**
- The teaching methods used for young children are significantly different from those used for older children. Refer to section 2.5.*
- 4) Very young children should be taught using repetitive drills and extensive instruction. **False**
- Studies show that in early childhood the emphasis should be on play and discovery, with limited formal instruction. Refer to section 2.2.3 and 2.4.*
- 5) It is best to keep young children standing and waiting during an activity as it gives them time to rest. **False**
- In most situations it is important to keep young children active. This will help them to stay warm and focused. They will quickly become bored if they are standing in one place for a period of time.*
- 6) Younger children learn best through playing on skis in a ski playground, with some one-on-one guidance from the coach. **True**
- Repeated ski experiences on snow will help children develop the balance skills and confidence necessary to learn more advanced technical skills. Guidance from the coach will help with this development, but research shows that playing, experimenting and having fun on snow are the best methods of teaching these skills to a child.*





- 7) Poorly fitted or improper equipment can lead to a negative ski experience. **True**
- It is self-evident that improper or poorly fitted equipment will reduce a child's enjoyment of the sport.*
- 8) For classic technique, it is important for the skier's grip wax to work well, especially if the skier is a beginner. **True**
- Slippery skis make it difficult to learn skiing techniques, and can lead to a lot of frustration. Ensure that novice skiers have appropriate grip wax for the prevailing conditions before the session begins.*
- 9) Novice skiers need to develop a good level of balance, coordination and rhythm on skis before they can properly execute skiing techniques. **True**
- FUNDamentals are important, and developing balance, coordination and rhythm is essential preparation for learning all of the ski techniques, regardless of the age of the skier.*
- 10) Using games that reinforce technique points is an effective way to teach young children and encourages children to enjoy the sport. **True**
- For the younger age groups, technique is called FUNdamentals. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that learning activities are both fun and selected because they reinforce important technical skills.*
- 11) Helping skiers develop good skiing skills will increase their enjoyment of the sport. **True**
- Improving skiers' skills will increase their motivation and enjoyment of the sport.*
- 12) If you take your group for a ski, everyone should wait for the slowest skier. **False**
- When young children are being coached, there should be sufficient coaches/assistants to allow the skiers to ski at their own pace without anyone being left behind. At a minimum there should be a coach at the front of the group and another at the end of the group.*
- 13) Safety considerations are not an issue when working with young children because children don't ski far or for long. **False**
- Safety is always an important issue due to the potential hazards of frostbite/hypothermia, icy snow conditions and intersections on the trail system. Care must be taken to ensure skiers have a safe environment to practise in, particularly young children who aren't aware of the potential hazards.*



14) When coaching an activity, the following must be kept in mind: **True**

- ✓ safety considerations;
- ✓ how to give effective instructions;
- ✓ how to give effective demonstrations;
- ✓ organization of the activities; and
- ✓ how to give effective feedback.

There are many things a coach needs to attend to if they are to create a good learning environment. This list covers the major considerations, but is not all inclusive

15) In order to help you determine ways to improve your coaching abilities, at the end of every activity you should reflect on how the session went. **True**

You can always improve the learning environment you provide for the children you are coaching by conducting a critical self-evaluation of your own performance. Feedback from others can also be of benefit.





9.4 NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form



NCCP CC #: _____ Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Street: _____

City: _____ Prov.: _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth (d/m/y): _____ Male or Female English or French
(circle one) (circle one)

1. Complete one season of coaching experience. Prepare for, assist with and /or lead a **minimum** of six activity/practice sessions including one "special activity". **Minimum** of 20 hours of coaching including preparation time.

Beginning date: _____ Ending date: _____

Age range: _____ Name of Ski Club: _____

Receive a satisfactory evaluation from a club leader (i.e. Club Head Coach, SDP Programmer) who has gathered comments from skiers and parents involved with the program).

2. Assist/lead a group of skiers at a Season Wind-up, Ski Tournament or some other age-appropriate "special activity".

Date, name and location of "Special Activity": _____

Receive a satisfactory evaluation from a club leader (i.e. Club Head Coach, SDP Programmer) who has gathered comments from the skiers and parents involved in the activity.

Please sign the following statement and have it verified by a leader from your ski club (Head Coach, SDP Programmer, Club Executive):

I, _____ have completed the NCCP Community Coaching experience requirements for cross-country skiing.

Date

Signature of Applicant

I verify that _____ has completed the NCCP Community Coaching experience requirements for cross-country skiing.

DATE

Signature of Club Official

Please forward to your Division Office





9.5 Evaluation Form



Introduction to Community Coaching Workshop Cross-Country Skiing

Date of Workshop: _____ Location: _____

Facilitator's Name: _____

Please fill in this form and hand it in to the Facilitator before you leave. Your comments are important to the ongoing development of the National Coaching Certification Program.

Please answer the following:

The workshop gave me a better understanding of my tasks and responsibilities as a community coach.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>

The workshop provided me with a good understanding of the growth and development characteristics of children and the implications for coaching different age groups.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>

The workshop provided me with a better understanding of the safety and risk management responsibilities of a coach.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>

I learned that Cross Country Canada encourages children to begin cross-country skiing at an early age through the Bunnyrabbit Program.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>

I understand how to design an overall plan for a season for the younger age groups.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly disagree</i>				<i>Strongly agree</i>



Please answer the following questions:

What sections of the workshop did you find particularly useful?

Would there be anything you would like to see added to this workshop? If so, what would it be?

Are there any additional comments or suggestions you wish to add?

Thank you for your feedback, and best wishes in your coaching.



Dear Coach,

The Coaching Association of Canada is pleased to offer you an interactive website that enables you to check your accreditation online. Go to www.coach.ca where you can:

- track your progress through the NCCP;
- update your coaching profile;
- print out copies of your coaching card or a transcript of your coaching courses;
- visit the Coaching Tips and Tools section;
- and so much more!



Coaching
Association
of Canada



National
Coaching
Certification
Program

