

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

WHY IS LTAD IMPORTANT?

Youngsters must be adequately prepared for a life in sport (many people enjoy working hard to improve, even without aspirations to be elite performers). LTAD provides a model to work from.

Children may play in school teams but, in adulthood, many discover new pursuits to better fit their lifestyles. The commonality is that sport lovers have the confidence and skills to move between sports.

The LTAD approach was designed to help prepare players to athletes to reach elite levels, but is equally valid for a healthy lifelong participation in sport.

The 10 year rule, which refers to the 10 years of practice, required becoming an expert or proficient performer, seems frightening, but does not just refer to 10 years of sport related activity.

Some athletes move into an elite sport at a late stage, having played other sports - the LTAD approach suggests that playing other sports is part of the 10 year development programme.

In contrast, many coaches lose talented players because they no longer enjoy themselves, so coaches and sporting bodies are beginning to re-examine how youngsters are prepared for sport.

There are 6 phases of the LTAD model, each have an objective, content and frequency - please note that some sports may only identify 5 phases, depending on what that sport has highlighted in their LTAD plans.

The 6 stages in LTAD are:

- FUNdamentals
- Learning to Train
- Training to Train
- Training to Compete
- Training to Win
- Retirement/Retainment

Stage1: FUNdamentals

Object: To learn fundamental movement skills.

The key features of the FUNdamental stage are:

- Girls: 6–8 years
- General, overall development
- ABC's- agility, balance, coordination
- Well-structured programmes
- Movement literacy

Stage 2: Learning to Train

Objective: To learn fundamental sports skills

The Key features of the Learning to train stage are:

- Throwing, catching ,jumping, running
- Introduction to mental and physical preparation
- Basic tactics
- Cognitive and emotional development
- Skills practised in challenging formats

Stage 3: Training to Train

Objective: To build fitness and specific sports skills

The key features of the training to train stage are:

- Post puberty
- Fitness training
- Detailed mental preparation
- Perceptual skills
- Sports specific skills
- Decision making
- Detailed evaluation

Stage 4: Training to Compete

Objective: Refine skills for a specific event or position

The key features for this stage are:

- Event and position specific training
- Physical conditioning
- Technical and tactical preparation
- Advanced mental preparation
- All above developed under competitive conditions

Stage 5: Training to Win

Objective: To maximise performance in Competition

The Key features for this stage are:

- Development and refinement in previous stage
- More use in competition modelling
- More attention to rest periods and injury prevention

Stage 6: Retainment/Retirement

Objective: To keep athletes involved in sport

The key features for this stage are:

- Coaching

Tri Zee Coaching

- A move into another sport
- Officiating
- Mentor/tutoring