



# **Basketball Ireland Coach Development Plan 2012 - 2017**



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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

The committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches (BIC) commenced a consultation process with coaches at school, club and national level throughout 2011 and 2012. The focus of these discussions/consultations was: The clear need to review coaching development and coach education with the view to develop strategic goals for coaching development from 2012 - 2017. This consultation had led to the development of The BIC Coach Development plan in 2012. What follows is a summary of our findings and our strategic priorities.

### **Background**

What is the Vision of Basketball Ireland Coaches?

- "Following the evaluation of all aspects of our sport, there was the capacity and potential for Basketball Ireland to play a far greater role in developing the standards of coaching".
- This document has been developed as a tool to promote coaching development.
- In order to deliver an integrated approach to coaching, Basketball Ireland Coaches spoke to and involved as many people as possible to help form a clear view of how proceed with coaching development.

### **Present Strengths and Weaknesses**

#### **Strengths**

- A positive and enthusiastic voluntary coaching body working many hours with teams around the country.
- Large willingness among many coaches to further their knowledge through courses, coaching clinics and through their own personal endeavours.
- The mainly voluntary role of coaches in the technical sector of Basketball is critical in the development of playing standards.
- The level of goodwill shown by many coaches to assist in the development of the game across the country should not be underestimated.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of understanding and education on LTAD & Physical Literacy
- A lack of coherent strategy for "how" basketball should be coached & played across all the levels of the Game.
- A weak link between too much competition, too early competition and age specific player development
- A lack of a clear pathway for coaches who want to coach in the area of performance (National Teams, National League, Superleague, Schools & Colleges "A" competition, etc)
- There is a need for more resources and a greater encouragement of aspiring coaches to achieve a high level of coaching.



### **A Vision for the Future:**

- The Committee of BIC has confirmed their vision as follows: *“To create the environment which facilitates the delivery and development of coach development and education to enhance the quality of coaching received by players at all levels of the participation and high performance levels”*
- While that vision statement contains the essence of what is required, it should be possible for the vision to be expressed in a sharper and more compelling way which will catch the attention of the basketball community, coaches, players and administrators. The following was suggested as one possible slogan: **“Good Coaching DOES make a difference”**

### **Communication:**

Clubs/Schools/Colleges and Individual Coaches need a focal point to communicate with if they have any queries on any matter relating to coaching. [coaching@basketballireland.ie](mailto:coaching@basketballireland.ie) is the email address of Basketball Ireland Coaches and is a direct point of contact to the committee.

Basketball Ireland Coaches produce a bi-monthly newsletter that is available via email to all registered coaches.

Basketball Ireland Coaches has also created a facebook page as a resource through social media.

The coaches page on the Basketball Ireland website is constantly been updated with news and articles.

Matthew Hall is the member of staff in BI HQ that has responsibility for Technical affairs. His contact details are [mhall@basketballireland.ie](mailto:mhall@basketballireland.ie) and he can be contacted by phone on 01 - 459 0211.

### **Strategic Priorities for Coaching:**

What follows is an identified series of goals that would be required to deliver the vision for coaching for Basketball Ireland. These include:

- Increasing the number of qualified coaches working in basketball
- Increasing the standard of coaching at the FUNDamentals and Learning to Train stage of LTAD
- Increasing the numbers and developing the standard of Level 2 and Level 3 coaches to appropriate International standard.
- Increase the number of coaches who complete the FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC)



### Basketball Ireland Coaches



<i>Strategic Priority</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Responsibility of</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Start/Completion Date</i>
Implementation of Development Plan	All Coaches	None	BIC	CSC, PPSC, IAC, SLMB, Mini Ball, BI HQ, Area Boards	Start in September 2012 until 2017
National Coaching Conference	Level 1 - 3 Coaches	Funding within BIC Budget	BIC	IAC, PPSC, SLMB	September 2012 and yearly thereafter
BIC Mentoring Programme	All Coaches	Coaching Material & Feedback Process	BIC		Phase 1: September 2012 - May 2014
Level 2 Coaching Courses	Performance Coaches	None	BIC	Coaching Ireland, BI HQ, Tutors	First Course run by May 2012 & Ongoing
Level 3 Coaching Courses	Performance Coaches	None	BIC	Coaching Ireland, BI HQ, Tutors	First Course run in 2014
FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC)	Performance Coaches	None	BIC		Next course starting in 2013. Applications been sought in early 2013.
Coaching Clinics to allow CPD	All Coaches	Funding through WIS Programme	BIC	IAC, PPSC, Mini Basketball, SLMB, CSC, Mentors, Tutors	2012 onwards
Coaching Hall of Fame	All Coaches	Support from BI HQ	BIC	IAC, PPSC, Mini Basketball, SLMB, CSC	September 2012
Development of Resources	All Coaches	Expertise of Coaches required to create resource packs	BIC	IAC, PPSC, Mini - Basketball, Mentors, Tutors	Ongoing
Tutors	Tutor Group and Experienced Coaches	Up - skilling	BIC, BI HQ	Coaching Ireland	September 2012
Identification of prospective Coaches at Performance Level	Coaches at all Levels		BIC	IAC, PPSC,	September 2012
Coach Licensing	All Coaches	All Committee Agreement	BIC	All Committee Agreement	September 2013



**Conclusion:**

Basketball Ireland Coaches understand that this document will take at least one five year phase of implementation before it starts to reap rewards. Patience is something that we have not always had in abundance. Attitudes will have to change; a greater sense of collegiality will have to be fostered. Coaches will have to look at information, new and existing programmes and initiatives, requirements with an open mind. Basketball Ireland Coaches must have a clear vision of what and how they want to see coaching structures develop on the island. Inclusivity is important but also is a single minded focus to achieve our goals and not to be dragged down by issues that are not within our control.

Based on the conversations and work done with a number of committees and individuals around the country over the last twelve months, we feel that there is recognition that the development of better equipped coaches is a major priority. It is time to begin that process. The following document allows us to begin that process and develop the sport through Coach Education and Continuous Professional Development.



**Introduction:**

**"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results" (Albert Einstein)**

Basketball has grown to be a truly international sport. FIBA Europe, the governing body for basketball internationally, has 213 national basketball federations as members. Within Ireland, in most cases, children have the opportunity to begin playing basketball by 8 years of age and can continue to play into adulthood. Basketball is the leading indoor sport in the country, especially for children at post primary level. In some clubs children may begin playing by 6 - 7 years of age and these players can play from Local League to National League to Superleague and eventually International. Raising the standard of play of these players across all competition levels by raising the numbers and standard of coaches from Intro to Level 3 is our primary goal. Increasing the number of FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC) qualified coaches to bring back knowledge and best practice from FIBA Europe is also very important.

Basketball Ireland Coaches were charged with the task of creating a Development Plan for coaches. The coaching community in Ireland is disparate group of people who have been working hard across the country to develop players and teams. A lot of coaches have been able to access information through a number of avenues to increase their knowledge. Providing information, resources and a plan for Coaches in Irish Basketball was seen as one of the main priorities of Basketball Ireland Coaches. Also, we want to increase the opportunities for coaches to share information, to work together, develop their programmes and importantly to be part of a united group. It was important that we put down on paper a structure and a pathway that allows individual coaches the opportunity to access the programmes and initiatives that Basketball Ireland can provide. It allows coaches the opportunity to communicate with the coaching committee that has the task of facilitating their development within the sport.

This development plan was written to make the general basketball population aware of:

- Where our sport is now and how coaching fits into the sport.
- What we want from our coaches and what we want our coaching system to look like.
- The issues regarding access and under representation leading to development of a cohesive, ethical, inclusive and valued coaching system.
- What other sports and other National Basketball Federations are doing

And

- Importantly allows us to communicate what is planned to the most important element, the coaches themselves.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



In November 2012, we had 3,080 qualified coaches across the Ireland. The majority of these coaches are qualified at Intro Level and Level 1. Level 2 and Level 3 coaches are in the minority. Below is a breakdown of the registered Basketball coaches who have completed a course(s) through Basketball Ireland which are recognised by Coaching Ireland.

<b>Intro:</b>	2183
<b>Level 1:</b>	801
<b>Level 2:</b>	44
<b>Level 3:</b>	52
<b>Total:</b>	2,080

**Tutors:** 43

The above numbers are always increasing. It is important that we develop our database so that we know who is coaching, where they are coaching, what their needs are and courses we need to run in the future.

Increasing the number of coaches qualified at Level 2 and Level 3 is a pressing concern but also raising the quality and skill set of the Intro Coach cannot be overlooked. Transferring coaches from Intro to Level 1 is a major priority. Obtaining a Level 1 qualification must be seen as the minimum level attained by every club and school coach involved in competition.



### **Do good coaches make a difference?**

*"The importance of coaching cannot be overstated. One only has to think of the negative effects of bad coaching, especially on young people, to realise how crucial it is. We have all heard of young people turned off of sport for life because of bad coaching. However, everybody will be able to remember the positive side of coaching as well: the coach that praised and encouraged you when you were starting out or indeed, the coaching colleague who builds confidence while challenging the players to do their very best".*

(Dr. James McDaid T.D. Minister for Tourism, "Good Coaching Makes a Difference", 2000)

It is generally agreed that people's participation in sport in their adult lives is directly linked to their introduction to sport. Good coaching can make a difference as to how young people are introduced to sport and consequently whether those same people continue to participate in later years.

It has been proven that good coaching really does make a difference. Good players/ athletes or good parents don't become good coaches automatically. Quality coaches have to be trained and gain appropriate experience with various age groups and levels to find where they are best suited or if they are suited at all.

We are all aware, coaching in Ireland is done both on a professional and voluntary basis and it is essential that the volunteer should never be undervalued. Without the commitment of volunteers, Basketball would not be so successful. Volunteerism translates into well-ordered clubs and sporting organisations that provide the environment for the nurturing of sporting talent, particularly amongst our young people. Basketball Ireland Coaches recognises that there are many individuals who gives this huge commitment, especially when the pace of modern life means that everyone has so many competing demands on their time.

Basketball Ireland, like many other National Governing Bodies of Irish sport, has worked closely with Coaching Ireland to develop a pathway of coach education. Basketball Ireland organize and deliver coaching courses with a view to the newly trained coaches going back to their clubs to generate enthusiasm and raise the standard of play with the participants from their sport in a fun and structured environment.

Unfortunately, not all clubs take advantage of this service and in some cases it's whoever puts their hand up or gets their arm twisted, that gets landed with the job of taking a team. In many cases it can be a parent who has had no formal training or who may not have even played the sport in question. Facilitating these coaches so they can access a coaching course as quickly as possible is important. No adult should have to go through a full season without having at least one opportunity to attend a coaching course.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



On the other hand, in some situations it's a coach who has been working with teams for years and who may have got their qualification years ago and is set in his or her ways and is not willing to accept modern trends. We need to develop a cultural change where coaches feel that they can easily access relevant coaching material and attend short and local coaching clinics that allow them to upskill.

There have been many changes in modern teaching methodologies versus old styles or approaches to coaching. Many of us who are 30 years plus became accustomed to the Command Style adopted by many of our school teachers and sports trainers. Children and youth of today are educated in school with a much more **Cooperative Style** of teaching where they are involved in their own learning and encouraged to give their view on the world. They don't, however, in many cases, experience this approach in the sport of their choice. Walk into any sports hall and this can be witnessed firsthand where in many instances you will hear abuse been roared at children from their coaches/managers and in some cases, their parents.

As coaches, we are in a position to be able to promote the right ethos in our clubs. It is from the coaches that future players will learn good practice that will see them right through their involvement of sport. Therefore, it is important that they are instilled with a belief in fair play and equal treatment and this must start when they are children. Basketball Ireland coaches would ask all coaches to give some consideration to the promotion of a child-centred ethos in their clubs. In this way, we can ensure that our children's experience of sport is both safe and enjoyable. We do not condone behaviour that turns children away from participation in sport. The role of coaches in ensuring that this does not happen is crucial.

Governing Bodies, clubs and coaches at all levels of sport have a responsibility to ensure that all their players, particularly children and young players, are treated with respect in an atmosphere of fair-play and in an ethos where all that is good and honest in sport prevails.

Basketball Ireland has tried to address this issue through our Coach Education Program's and our Child Protection Policies. It is, however, a serious issue and it's critical that sports clubs make it compulsory that their Sports Leaders, Coaches and Managers have formal training. As well as this, the clubs need to insist that established coaches go through Continuous Professional Development by attending refresher courses organized by Basketball Ireland and other National Governing Bodies.

Governing Bodies have to ensure that there are opportunities and systems in place that will allow for the individual player, of whatever age, to participate to the level of his or her desire, ability or ambition. Progress in sport and levels of participation in sport are not fixed. Different people at different ages have different aims in life, different ranges of ability. So there is a challenge for all of us involved in basketball to try to help provide the means whereby the needs of all ages, of



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*

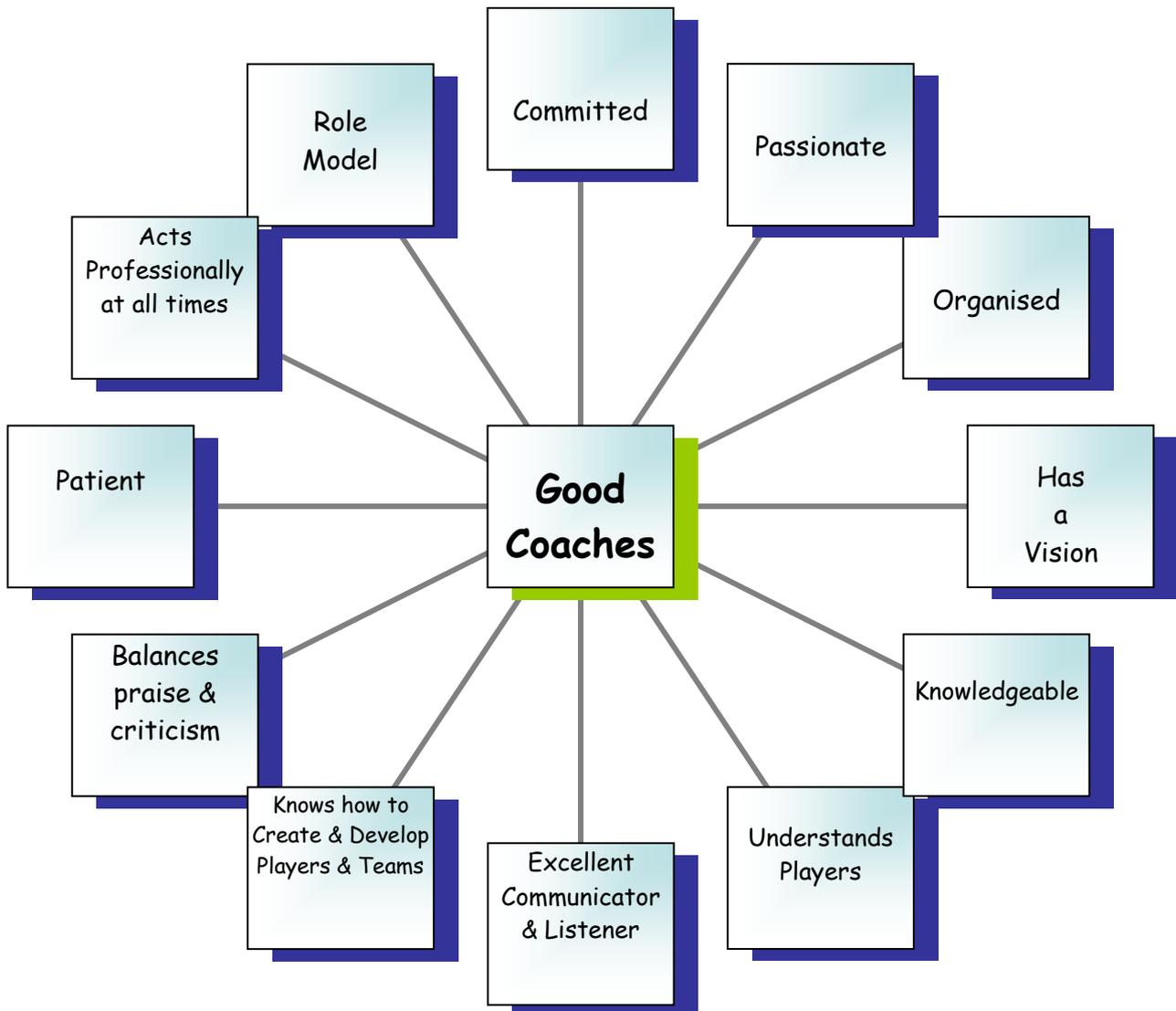


all levels of ability and ambition can be facilitated and that these people are respected, assisted and provided with the opportunities to take part.

We also have to look after matters at the top end of the game. The pursuit of excellence, the achievement of success and the joy of victory are synonymous with sport and are the fundamental elements which attract so many people to sport both as players and spectators. The quality of the coaching is vital in the successful performance of teams and individuals in every sport and at every level of competitive sport right up to international level.

## The Characteristics & Qualities of a Good Coach

This document is written with the hope that we help develop better coaches. What qualities do these coaches need to have? While any list written is not exhaustive, we feel it is important to put on paper, the qualities that we think are necessary to develop coaches and players across all levels.



When a coach takes on the responsibility of coaching a team, they have established themselves as the leader of a group of athletes. A coach encourages his athletes to reach for the greatness within their selves. Inspiring the seemingly impossible, a great coach insists on going beyond one's expectations to reach goals of tremendous magnitude. A coach of a basketball team is someone who has the dedication to lead their team to a goal. That goal usually is the winning of a championship. A great coach is often thought of as the coach who is the epitome of success also often called the "winningest" coach, the coach who has trophies and championships. A winning coach has the traits of integrity and honesty which make them stand out in society. It takes mental strength for a coach to withstand the stress and criticism that comes with the day to day leading of their team.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



There are many great coaches who have brilliantly led their teams to the top of their divisions with the determination that made them winners. Not all great coaches receive awards and honorable mentions nor do all win championships. But all great coaches touch the lives of their players and develop those players into the best people that they can become. Winning for a great coach is all about the creation of healthy people who can use their bodies and minds.

- The good basketball coach emphasises that winning is not everything and winning is only possible through team spirit and through the execution of the fundamentals and strategy.
- A good basketball coach will try to give equal opportunity and play time to every player of the team. In case some player gets less playing time, the coach must be able to explain properly about the cause of it. This is obviously more important at underage level but every player regardless of age wants to play more and coaches need to be able to explain why they play the amount that they do.
- The coach must have teaching skills which can help the players to learn better. The coach must also be able to motivate the players by encouraging them. He should also know the weaknesses and strength of each player and should capitalise on it.
- The coach must integrate the life lessons into the sports lesson. He should also make the coaching fun and without stress. There should be no physical or psychological abuse of the players by the coach.
- Good coaches are leaders who have integrity and honor. They are excellent Role Models for their athletes. They are ethical and credible in all their dealings with players, parents, referees, coaches, etc.
- A good coach knows that character counts and teaches this by example.
- Coaches lead by building relationships with people.
- Coaches recognise the potential in others and inspire development.
- Coaches have drive, believe in excellence, and organise their lives accordingly.
- Coaches affirm, encourage, and have a positive attitude with those Coaches coach.
- Coaches rise to the occasion, adapt when necessary, and strive to overcome obstacles.
- Coaches are organised, disciplined, and focused. Coaches assist others to be the same.
- Coaches are not afraid to allow others to excel beyond their own abilities.
- Coaches are not threatened by the success of others nor any setbacks.
- Coaches are hard workers; Coaches pull up their sleeves and work alongside their athletes.
- Good Coaches think outside of the box.
- Good Coaches foster an environment of change and adaptation for accelerated growth.
- Good Coaches believe in education and learning as a continuous process throughout their life.
- A good coach loves coaching and lets the world know about their passion.
- Coaches involve their family and community to support their athletes.
- A successful coach knows their own methodology, belief system, principles, and system and do not back down from it. A good coach never apologizes for doing what he knows is right, good, and correct.
- A good coach never apologises for doing what he knows is right, good, and correct. Never.



## **Challenges that exist within Coaching and Playing in Ireland**

Below are a number of issues that we feel that to be addressed. Some of these may not be able to be dealt with under this development plan.

- Lack of Unity and clear pathway for coaches has seen some coaches feel that they should have been rewarded more quickly with Inter Regional and/or National Team positions. The coaching community needs to be more unified, focused and open to achieve its goals.
- The majority of our underage players train for an hour a week. A sizeable minority may practice twice a week and a small minority practice may practice for more than three hours a week. This may be a combination of school and club practice.
- We introduce our players at a very early age to competitive structures. The majority of players may not be ready for competition at such a young age. The current competition system has facilitated a culture of Over-competition and under-training so that teams are "Peaking by Friday" for their games. This is not to be confused with playing not enough games. Players need games but at U10 - U14 levels, we need to look at the competition to games ratio. Also, adult training programmes and competition structures are often superimposed on children. This is detrimental because it means that coaching is conducted without sufficient regard to the principles of childhood development.
- For late specialisation sports, such as basketball, specialisation prior to age ten is not recommended since this contributes to early athlete burn-out, drop-out and retirement from training and competition
- We must also recognise that not all children grow and mature at the same rate. Chronological age versus developmental age is used in most sports in this country. Training and competition is based on chronological age (U12, U14, etc). Athletes can be 4 - 5 years apart by maturation levels. This is most noticeable at Under 14 level. Also, girls also mature faster than boys on average. There is an awful tendency to apply adult models of sport on children and to apply male models on females. Too often it is the early maturing athlete who gets to make the elite teams during the development stages. Research has shown that very often the late maturing child becomes the superior athlete since they have more time to develop the fundamental movement skills.
- The ABC'S of physical literacy are not being prioritized enough by youth coaches. The level of "Physical Literacy" experienced by our players is quite low. This works in tandem with introducing players to competition to young. Work needs to be carried out to develop programmes that educate more coaches on Physical Literacy.
- Not enough of our experienced and high level coaches are working with young players. Coaches tend to move the coaching framework far too quickly. We need to develop a culture of having our better coaches' work with younger players. Allied to this though is the recognition that we need to spend time and resources developing our High Performance coaches.
- We need to develop coaches who can be on a par with the High Performance coaches of other countries.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



- With some rare exceptions, the vast majority of coaches in Ireland are volunteers, there is also a shortage of coaches, and with these conditions it has been difficult for Basketball Ireland to insist that their coaches receive coaching training.
- Schools in Ireland very rarely hire teachers to be coaches; the teachers who coach are volunteers and there is no expectation that they receive any coach training. Some schools have been able to bring in coaches to work with teams but this is the exception rather than the rule.
- Even in our club system, coaches, in most cases, are not required to receive any formal coach training. However, this has begun to change in the last few years. Area Boards have none an excellent job in this area to expect minimum levels of qualification from the coaches in their leagues.
- Coach retention: particularly at the youth level coaches are often parents of participants. Often when the child advances on in the sport or leaves the sport the parent drops out; leaving a void that is filled by another parent. The challenge is to retain these parents who have several years of coaching experience.
- The nature and importance of practice in achieving excellence in sport is not widely understood. There tends to be an over emphasis on competition to the detriment of practice at key phases of the development of children in sport. Too much time is spent on competing, not enough time on learning and mastering basic sport specific skills. Added to this, an inappropriate focus on winning, rather than development, characterises the preparation of the developmental player.
- In some cases, the most effective, experienced and/or professional coaches work at the elite level in basketball. Intro/Level 1 coaches coach the early phases dealing with physical literacy and skill development. However, this is ironic because it is these early phases that are the most critical to Long-Term Player/Athlete Development. Coaching at these levels requires knowledgeable and experienced coaches who can correctly organise and demonstrate age-appropriate skills and activities for the children. Individuals coaching at these levels should also be well acquainted with the physiological, mental, cognitive and emotional development patterns of children and adolescents. The cognitive, emotional and physical development of children is not fully taken on board when training and competition programmes are being planned. The damage which might be done due to incompetent coaching during these early phases cannot be fully repaired later on.
- Coaches and Parents need to be educated about Physical Literacy & LTAD.
- Needs of athletes with a disability is not well enough understood and needs to be addressed with the Coaching Pathway.
- Do we have an adequate Talent Identification System? Research suggests that competition is not an adequate method of selecting squads.
- Do we need greater integration between school and club programmes?
- Do we need to further develop a participation model and competitive (performance) model at underage level?
  - How can we do this?
- The cost of gym hire is often prohibitive. This is a major barrier to player and team development. Our players are not getting enough time in the gym to practice.



**Development Plan Recommendations:**

- It is vital that there is **system alignment within Basketball Ireland** for this plan to work. We need to work closely with all committees and the Council and the Board. This will take time and may be the hardest task to complete. Coaches may lead athlete training and physical activity programming at the ground level but they need to be supported by administrators, sport scientists, health, and the governing body across multiple sectors and committees.
- Where possible, all area boards should have as many league competitions as possible per year group as opposed to the two year grouping used in most area boards. (Some area boards do have competitions at all age levels). At the moment, most Area Boards would provide competition at U12, U14, U16 & U18. We feel that all Area Boards should have U11 & U13 (and eventually U15) added to this list. It is particularly important at these age groups due to the large physical and emotional differences that might exist at this level. These (new) competitions could be run on a blitz basis.
- From U10 to U13 and possibly including U14, league competition should be run on a blitz structure. This would allow coaches to plan their season better and allow coaches and players to have a better balance between practice and competition.
- In the 2011 - 2012 season, leagues from Under 11 and younger were classified as "Development Leagues". Score was not displayed, there were no limits on the number of players who could play, no press defences were allowed, etc. This status should apply to Under 12 Leagues as well. For many children, U12 would be their first experience of organised basketball. While many coaches might not like this change, the introduction of U13 leagues would allow the "early maturers" to play more competitive games.
- The system of competition of Underage basketball needs to be addressed. Coaches are trying to win and are teaching their teams "how to win" at too early an age. Development of the player and the team in fundamental skills and basic strategy need to be addressed and coached for longer to younger age groups. This would allow coaches to focus on playing more players and developing a style of basketball for their teams as opposed to pushing a culture of "winning at all costs".
- Area Boards should be facilitated with being able to provide a "Technical Week" at the start of each season. Cork County Board have successfully run one for the last number of years.
- Increase the number of Level 2 & Level 3 Coaches.
  - Run at least two Level 2 Courses each year (15 Coaches x 2 courses)
  - Run at least one Level 3 Course each year from 2013 onwards (15 coaches x 1 course)
- It is important that a current or recently retired primary school teacher would be facilitated in attending a Tutor Development Course. We currently have no Tutors who are or who were formerly primary School Teachers and with the roll out of Primary Teacher Coaching Courses, this would be seen as a necessary and positive development.
- It is important that we identify tutors which can allow for greater inclusion within our sport. This inclusion might be based on the Area the tutor is based, gender, special needs background, etc



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



- Coach Licensing needs to be addressed within the lifetime of this plan. Basketball Ireland, through its Area Boards needs to know who is coaching what teams. Should a minimum level of qualification be imposed to coach children? Is it possible to implement such a programme on volunteers? How do we legislate for coaches who come from another country to coach in the Superleague/National League? Is coach licensing a barrier to coaching? A lot of work will have to be done to get all the partners (Area Boards, SLMB, Women's Superleague, CSC, Schools) on board. It needs to be addressed in such a way that it does not force coaches to have to pay more money to retain their qualifications. Coach licensing is important on the basis that it can set minimum standards to coach in different areas of our game. It would also allow us to be more focused in our provision of resources to specific groups.
- Coach Certification is mandatory in Cork for coaches of team's upto and including Under 14. It is also mandatory for coaches to be certified in Northern Ireland. We would hope that this would become standard across the country.
- Code of Ethics training needs to be part of every coach's professional development. At this moment in time, it is a requirement for the receipt of the Level 1 Cert.
- Revision of the Underage Rules needs to be addressed in two main areas: Player rotation and Man to Man Defence Principle. Discussion and training with the referees is crucial for them to apply the Man to Man defence rules better.
- The roll out of the Mentoring programme in the 2012 - 2013 is vital. Kerry Area Basketball Board has been running a mentoring programme over the last number of years. Rolling this programme out across the country is a major step in Coach Development.
- A National Coaching Conference with a set date needs to be set in stone on the calendar.
- A "Technical Group" (Coaches, Referees, Table Officials and Commissioners) should meet once/twice a year with competition providers (CSC, SLMB, IAC, PPSC, Colleges and Area Boards) to discuss priorities, issues and area of mutual interests. Each group has different needs and meeting with the Technical Group would allow for interaction on a formal basis that appears to be needed.
- New Clubs need to be supported to recruit and develop the technical members within their club. A lack of coaches, referees and Table officials is often seen as a barrier to club development. Giving clubs a pathway to developing its technical members is important to the growth of the sport. To get and keep players in the sport, we need high quality Coaches, Referees and Table Officials.
- Obviously, it is very important, if not crucial that we develop the "Physical Literacy" levels of our players. We must move to a situation where players are thought how to move, stop, change direction, catch and throw as early as possible. Lack of these fundamentals movements has long been cited as the main reason why children quit sport. Provision of workshops and training for parents and coaches on how to develop children's basic motor skills is urgently needed. This information needs to be made widely available to all coaches.
- The Area Boards could look at creating an Under 18 AICC competition. Timing of the competition would be an issue due to exam pressure but could be feasibly held at the end of March.



**Objectives of the Coach Development Plan:**

The recruitment, long term development and retention of coaches is critical to the development of athletes and growth of basketball within the country. Presently, within both the school and club system there are very little qualification requirements for coaches and the sport frequently suffers from coaches dropping out of the sport when their child's involvement ceases. Also, we need to encourage players to stay in the sport and become coaches.

A number of gaps have been identified in our sport in the areas of Physical Literacy, competition and participation, coaching pathways, quality of coaching, long term athlete development, inclusion, sports science and medical support.

This document sets out and defines the direction and goals of Basketball Ireland and Basketball Ireland Coaches from a Development & Technical perspective for the five year period 2011 - 2016. The plan builds on the successful first strategic plan of Basketball Ireland and commits the Committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches (BIC) to an emphasis of increasing participation while providing the necessary building blocks to enable an increase in the performance of coaches and athletes within the sport.

Basketball Ireland must continue to aim higher if we are to provide a level of satisfaction and enjoyment to our coaches, officials and players. The Long Term Athlete Development Model must be seen to be in operation within clubs, primary and post primary schools and colleges. The pathway for players and coaches must be one that supports learning and experience and includes a clear vision of an athlete centred programme with a long term commitment to development from all the stakeholders within the sport.

**The key objectives of this plan are:**

**Increasing Participation of:**

- Coaches and
- Increase the quality of basic skill of all coaches within the participation & competition sectors.

**Increasing Performance of:**

- Individual Athletes
- Individual Coaches

**Create & Implement Programmes to achieve the above:**

**Putting in place a structure to implement the Development Plan:**

- Being aware that staff levels at BI HQ have been greatly reduced, there has to be Reorganisation of the Technical Department to deliver the objectives of the Technical Plan in an effective manner in conjunction with Basketball Ireland Coaches who will now become the main body responsible with the delivery of this coaching plan.



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- Establish a procedure to evaluate and monitor the progress of the plans.
- Resource the necessary budget to implement the programmes outlined in conjunction with Basketball Ireland Council and the Board of Basketball Ireland.
- Ensure that the Development Plan is at the centre of our development policies for the future. Working in collaboration with the Area Boards, member clubs, schools and colleges to establish the grassroots support for the programmes outlined and ensuring collective engagement with the priorities as outlined in this plan.

### **Improving Communication:**

One of the areas of criticism that has often been directed at Basketball Ireland is a lack of communication with coaches on the ground. The creation of a regular newsletter circulated among the general basketball population would be a step in the right direction. Information needs to be circulated earlier and more freely so that all coaches can have access to all the developments in the coaching sector with Basketball Ireland.

This Development Plan will see the introduction of a viable and efficient database system which will deal with the following key issues:

- Creation of a online web based system that holds a list of registered coaches and their qualifications

And

- Other key volunteers within and outside the sport that can assist in the development of coaches and players in areas such as Sports Psychology, Medical, Fitness, Nutrition, etc.

One of the key goals of this plan will be to strengthen the existing communications network and establish a strong culture of verbal and electronic communication. This strategy will involve the development of strong communication within the organisation and its members; Teams, Clubs, Schools, Colleges, Area Boards, Committees, Basketball Ireland Council and the Board of Basketball Ireland, etc. The strategy will set out to reach a position where collaboration and cooperation are an integral part of the Coach Development Plan.

Developing links with coaches within the Area Boards is essential for any plan to work. More detail on this is described later in the plan under the heading Area Board Coaching Committees. The Area Boards are also essential for the development of a programme of coaching clinics and the continued development of Underage & Adult leagues as well as the further development of the Underage Rules

Continuing to developing links and contact with outside agencies such as Coaching Ireland, Irish Sports Council, FIBA EUROPE and other National Governing Bodies of Sports in Ireland and Basketball Federations in other countries.



**Increasing the Quality of coaches:**

One of the main aspects Basketball Ireland has undertaken is a review of the coaching syllabi. This was needed to be done to bring a clear picture to the coaching pathway. It also allowed for more effective Tutor training and development by having all tutors work in unison to deliver the same constant message. This Development plan will outline clearly the relevant stages of development and where each particular coach education programme will link with the development of coaches, increasing the quality of the coaching sector.

We are committed to working with Coaching Ireland and raising the standards through implementation of BI approved coaching programmes for recruitment and training of new coaches while meeting the requirements of the C.D.P.I. We are also committed to working with FIBA Europe and supporting our coaches to achieve FECC qualifications.

High quality, challenging and enthusiastic coaches at every level are required to raise the level of players that we are producing. Commitment to developing High Performance coaches over a long period is required so that our National Teams can compete at their current level and reach the next level.

Opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should be encouraged, provided and utilised at every opportunity so that coaches can improve their knowledge and performance and their ability to prepare and coach players at all levels. Such an investment in coaching can never be underestimated or undervalued in developing quality High Performance team programmes but also catering for the majority of players by allowing children to participate in Basketball as adults in later life.



### **High Performance Coaching:**

Performance coaching should be considered not only to be International Teams and Coaches but also Men's & Women's Superleague, National League Division 1, U18 & U20 National Cup, AICC, "A Grade" (possible also B level after regional and play offs) Schools Competitions, Inter Regional Competition.

Continuing to develop the capacities (technical, tactical, mental, physical, personal and lifestyle) of underage players to maximise the possibility of lengthening their time as a high level basketball player. Thus, the capacities of the coach in the areas listed needs to be developed so that this can be passed onto the player. How do we measure our coaches to see if they are adept in these areas? Are we providing them with enough feedback to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses in these areas?

Winning a league, an All Ireland Club championship or a School All Ireland is a very crude way of measuring your success as a coach. Unfortunately, we have allowed a culture to develop where coaches with minimal years of coaching experience or coaches who have shown little aptitude to develop their experience by working with other coaches feel that they are entitled to an International Team. This is unfair on the players and the coaches involved. Coaches don't like to hear that they have to wait and gain more experience but we must develop our systems so that the right coaches get the right opportunities at the right time.

We have some very good coaches in this country. Getting them enthused and inspired to work at International level must be seen as an immediate concern of Basketball Ireland Coaches and the International Affairs Committee (IAC).

Both the IAC and BIC need to work closely together to identify the right coaches in the near future and also look out for young coaches who can be mentored and pointed in the right direction to become assistants at International level. It is important that BIC work with the committee in charge of the National Competitions such as Area Boards (AICC) and PPSC (School Inter Regional's) so that there is a clear and transparent pathway for coaches to develop according to their ability and aspirations.

The IAC work under a number of constraints (financial, expectations, level of competition, logistics, etc) and yet their work is crucial as International Basketball is the pinnacle and often the show case of the sport. Closely working with IAC is crucial to the development of the game on the island. Every assistance should be given where possible and feasible, open lines of communication need to be maintained and a willingness to cooperate is necessary.

### **Appendix 4: High Performance Identification & Development**



### **Coaching Development:**

A great deal of voluntary coaching has led to developing of basketball as a sport in Ireland. This commitment has produced individual athletes who have achieved a high level for themselves within the sport, nationally and internationally. As a nation we have not managed to identify and develop talent in such numbers that we have had a reasonable chance to secure consistent results for our national teams. At present there is no definable pathway that is clear for all to see. This is true not only players but also for coaches.

In some cases, the most effective, experienced coaches work at the High Performance level in Basketball. Uncertified, Intro & Level 1 coaches tend to coach the early phases dealing with physical literacy and skill development. This is an issue because it is the early phases (Fundamental, Learning to Train, Train to Train) that are the most critical to the development of Players. Coaching at these phases requires knowledgeable and experienced coaches who can correctly demonstrate and teach age specific skills and activities.

Individuals coaching at the early phases should be knowledgeable with the psychological, mental, cognitive and emotional development patterns of young children and adolescents. Poor coaching at these ages cannot be repaired later on in the athlete's life. There is a need for a much stronger focus and investment on the early phases of development, including physical literacy, within coaching and coach education.

### **Coach Development Model:**

*Research indicates that coaches can influence whether the junior player has a positive or negative sports experience (Gilbert, Gilbert and Trudel, 2001; Hedstrom and Gould, 2004). Smith, Smoll and colleagues (Smith, Smoll and Curtis, 1979; Smith et al., 1993; Smith and Smoll, 2002) have been the leading researchers in investigating how coaching behaviours influence athletes' satisfaction. Their research suggests that players with a trained coach display increased motivation, self esteem, and satisfaction with their coach, teammates and the season.*

### **Intro, Level 1, Level 2 & Level 3**

Coaching development is the overriding and main priority of this Development Plan. The Committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches in conjunction with Coaching Ireland is conducting a review of the coaching syllabi. The pathway for coaching will change as a result of this and we welcome the development of an age appropriate syllabus and one that supports continuing education of coaches. We are well on our way to achieving this. We have introduced new Intro, Level 1 and Level 2 syllabi. The Level 3 course is currently been written and will be offered to coaches in early 2013.

One person has completed the FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate course and we are now in a position to facilitate someone attending each programme with the introduction of a selection policy for the FECC. This is a crucial step in allowing our coaches experience high level coaching, witness



what other countries are doing and bring back a wealth of knowledge that will help develop the level of coaching on the island.

"Coaching Courses are not a destination they are just a point on your coaching journey and research confirms that coaching experience and learning from other Coaches are the primary sources of knowledge for Coaches" (Michael McGeehin, *Good Coaching Makes a difference*, 2006). We need to continue to work closely with BI HQ, Area Boards and other committees to be aware of the course requirements among the coaching public and put courses in places and times where coaches can access them easily.

## **Syllabi**

### **Introductory Level**

**Target:** Coaching Primary School aged students (6 - 12)  
**LTAD Phase:** The Fundamental Stage (Males 6 - 9 & Females 6 - 8)  
The Learning to Train Stage (Males 9 - 12 & Females 8 - 11)

### **Level 1**

**Target:** Coaching Underage club teams & Secondary school students upto U16  
**LTAD Phase:** The Training to Train Stage (Males 12 - 16 & Females 11 - 15)

### **Level 2**

**Target:** Coaching teenagers/young adults to participate & perform  
**LTAD Phase:** The Training to Compete Stage (Males 16 - 18 & Females 15 - 17)

### **Level 3 (Draft will be submitted to Coaching Ireland in April 2012)**

**Target:** Coaching participation with all sectors & Coaching Teenagers/ Adult Performance  
**LTAD Phase:** The Training to Win Stage (Males 18 and Older & Females 17 and Older)

### **FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC) (Selection Policy written)**

**Target:** Coaching for performance; European Coaching Credentials.

### **Primary School Coaching:**

The development of Primary School Teacher Coaching course should be seen as a major development in increasing the number of participants. Giving Primary School Teachers the tools to develop the sport within their school and making it specific and relevant to the age profile of the participants would be a positive development in increasing the quality and number of players. Courses for primary school teachers are being run in July 2012. The Primary School Basketball Committee should be commended for their work in this area. Basketball Ireland Coaches should look to support them in whatever way we can.



**Transition Year (TY) Course:**

The Introduction of the TY Coaching Course is a major and positive development. It would give non basketball participants an opportunity to experience the sport and also give a basic experience of coaching prior to completing the Intro Course which can be a lot to take in. It would also allow us to recognise young coaches for the future and start the process of allowing them to be educated and gain experience in a setting where they should be always supervised by an adult.

**Pre Intro Course:**

It is also important that we develop some form of Pre - Intro course for teenagers/adults who have very little experience, if any, of the sport of Basketball. A 3 - 4 hour course could be run as an Introduction to Coaching Basketball. The Ty course could be modified to be run as the Pre Intro.

**FIBA Europe Coaching Certification (FECC):**

A policy for the selection of participants for the FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC) has been written. It is the aim of BI and BIC to submit someone for this course each year from 2013 onwards. The policy should be reviewed once we have our Level 3 course up and running and the FECC policy should be changed accordingly.

**Appendix 9: FECC Selection Policy**



**Tutor Development:**

The tutor's role in coach education is vital. The tutor, who can be classed as service provider, can impact best practice and develop the independence of coaches. The appointment of a key advisor as the lead tutor trainer as part of the Development plan would provide us with an opportunity to develop tutor skills and provide an organised programme of tutor training and resource materials to a high level. Approaching this area with a supported work programme will help us to achieve results and re-enforce the methods by which we deliver our course material. Coaching Ireland will also play a role in this important area over the next number of years. It is important that we look to appoint someone into this (voluntary) position by the start of the 2012 - 2013 season.

Coaches interested in becoming Tutors need to be made aware of the requirements and responsibilities that they will have to perform when they qualify. A policy has been written for the selection of Tutors. Closely working with Coaching Ireland is a very important part of this process. Coaching Ireland can give us the leadership, direction and knowledge that is required to develop excellent Tutors which will in turn lead to the development of better coaches.

**Appendix 10: Tutor Selection Policy**



### **Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's):**

The **Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's)** guidelines are the "what is important now" for the development of the game of basketball in Ireland. They are the necessary and immediate requirements to focus on for coaching, teaching and development of Irish Coaches and Players of the future. We hope to raise the standards of all involved in all clubs and schools with these PDFC's. Thus, we believe that this will in turn raise the standard of player, the level of competition on the island, the level of coaching and ultimately the performance that is expected to be competitive in competition in Europe.

All coaches must review what and how they coach, learn from experienced coaches within the country and from individuals outside. We must create and encourage an environment where coaches are looking to improve their own teaching and coaching. Hopefully, these PDFC's will allow coaches to focus their coaching on improving their development and standards of their players.

These PDFC's are designed to be the minimum standard of teaching and coaching of basketball delivered on the island. It is not just about playing the game, it's about what and how we teach. Everyone will have a view, "we should have added this", "why did we add that". However, at this moment in time, it is important to start this process, develop short term, medium term and long term goals for our coaches. We will need to engage in a review process towards the end of this programme and look to re focus on the same areas or to look at new area to emphasis.

Our best players have weaknesses that need to be addressed urgently. If these weaknesses could be addressed at club, AICC, school and Inter-regional level, it could allow us to compete with the best teams in Division B of the European Championships and ultimately allow us to gain promotion to Division A at all age groups. This is about improving standards across the country from local league to National league and International. It gives coaches a template to work on, takes the focus away from "coaching to win" which should be a by-product of developing good players and teams.

### **Appendix 7: Player Development for Coaches**



## **Increase Player Participation & Retention:**

### **Increasing Participation:**

The objective of increasing participation is particularly relevant and urgent in the category of 7 - 12 year old boys and girls. The implementation of development plans at National and Area Board level, working alongside clubs and schools to introduce a higher number of children to basketball in this age group is a key objective for the success of this plan.

Improving the quality of skill development in this area is also crucial. This area is where we need better coaches, people who understand developing fundamentals, Physical Literacy, the concepts of Early Developers and Late Maturers, coaches with pedagogical & psychological knowledge of players, someone who is a good motivator. We need to develop a culture that coaches can be seen as excellent coaches by coaching within this age group. We need to recognise the coaches that work in this area. Recognition should not only come to coaches who win school or club titles, coach national teams or who coach at National League Level. Everyone has a role to play in the development of a higher standard of player. Most coaches only work with a player for a short space of time. Also, they are unlikely to be the only coach working with that player especially as they get older and maybe playing on more than one team.

It is also important that we look to create a pathway for athletes/players from other sports to enter ours. Players who have fallen out of their sport may have certain attributes that make them successful in our sport. Do we have the capacity to allow latecomers adapt to our sport. Do we know how to include players who may have the athletic ability but are lacking in basketball skills.

### **Retention within the Game:**

It is important that we look at retaining players within the sport. There is huge dropout among all categories but particularly among female players. These players tend to leave between secondary school and college. One of the reasons for this is a lack of suitable levels of basketball competition for players coming from weaker basketball areas who may not have played basketball at a high level in their secondary school going years. The colleges have done an excellent job in trying to cater for many different levels by introducing a three division structure to their league competition.

Some area boards are in a position to provide competition with a number of divisions within certain age groups. This is not possible in all areas however. Providing social basketball in smaller urban and rural areas is an idea that should be explored. Keeping people in the game must be the underwriting concern at all times. We may need to offer a product/programme to Local Sport Partnerships, GAA clubs, Gyms that provide a social basketball outlet during the basketball season to a cohort of the population who may not be able to commit to a full basketball season. A programme has been run in Cork with GAA clubs to provide basketball throughout the winter months.

We need to find a way to keep these players in the game. Evidence would suggest they fall out of the game and may return a number of years later. Providing coaching courses to these students



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may have them coaching earlier than they expected. Having a cohort of young, enthusiastic, educated coaches would be seen as a positive step in terms of increasing the numbers, quality of coaching and the length of time they have to gain experience for later years. It is important that we focus on Senior Cycle students in Post Primary Schools and students in Third Level Institutions to recruit and train coaches.

The areas where the plan and agreed programmes will target are:

- Primary Schools (Existing primary school leagues and mini ball events)
- Post Primary Schools
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Colleges/Universities
- Primary School Teacher training centres
- Area Boards
- Existing clubs
- New Clubs
- Communities/Organisations that provide sport for children in after school clubs.
- Rapid growth areas, disadvantaged communities.
- Parents
- Specific Programmes to Retain Female Basketball players

**The above order does not reflect the importance of one area above the other.**



### Pathway for the development of Irish players (LTAD).

*"Research has concluded that it takes eight to twelve years of training a talented athlete to reach High Performance levels. This is called the ten year or 10,000 hour rule, which works out at more than three hours of practice daily for ten years" (Ericsson, et al, 2003)*

This may not be feasible in an Irish context but the premise remains the same. We need to increase the contact time our players have with their coaches and the quality of the coaching needs to be of the highest level.

*Unfortunately, parents and coaches in many sports still approach training with an attitude best characterised as "Peaking by Friday", where a short term approach is taken to training and performance with an over emphasis on immediate results. We now know that a long term commitment to practice and training is required to produce High Performance players/athletes in all sports" (Bayli, 2003).*

Studies have found that players who specialize too early:

- Many have reached their peak at junior level
- Many have retired before reaching senior level
- Very few have improved their top performance at senior level.

Early specialisation is common practice and may develop youngsters quickly into successful age performers (Early Maturers); it is far less effective for long term development. We have all seen players who dominate U12 & U14 competition. Usually, this happens due to physical attributes. From U16 onwards, these advantages have tended to balance out. Early maturers tend to lack the sufficient skills to compete at High Performance level at senior level.

Basketball Ireland needs to produce a comprehensive player manual for clubs and coaches to define the player development pathway.

It needs to clearly:

- Provide and implement clear guidelines on the balance between training and competition at the different stages of development.
- Develop a strategy in conjunction with Coaching Ireland to support the Long Term Player Development Pathway for the next 5 years.

This cannot be done just by one committee, it requires cross committee contributions and cooperation. Developing resources for coaches so that they can access up to date information on developing players from the Fundamental to Retainment phases is seen as a priority of Basketball Ireland Coaches. ***Knowing what to teach, when to teach it and how to teach should be a major issue for all coaches across all levels around the country.*** Providing the right information for coaches to allow them to develop players in all areas is an essential task for Basketball Ireland and Basketball Ireland Coaches. Research has shown that negative self



perceptions of motor skill ability are often cited by children as a major barrier to participation in physical activity and sport as they feel they cannot perform the basic skills necessary to achieve any degree of success. This can lead to the rejection of future participation opportunities, lower self esteem, reduced fitness and a decrease in social competence. Alternately, children competent in Fundamental Movement Skills are more likely to enjoy and have a positive attitude towards sport and physical activity.

Coaches worldwide currently design long and short-term athlete training models as well as competition and recovery programs based on their athletes' chronological age. Yet, research has shown that chronological age is not a good indicator on which to base athlete development models for athletes between the ages of ten to sixteen. There is a wide variation in the physical, cognitive and emotional development of athletes within this age group.

Players, coaches, officials, parents and the governing body must be aware of the LTAD pathways. There needs to be a smooth transition from one stage to the next. This can only occur when all basketball providers within the Irish basketball community are aligned with the LTAD model. We feel that it is important to its success that Basketball Ireland implements an LTAD Programme. There is no short cut to success in athletic preparation. Overemphasizing competition in the early phases of training will always cause shortcomings in athletic abilities in an athlete's career.

The coach is the single most important person in the implementation of the key principles of the LTAD model. Coach education and ensuring coaching competency and creating "**Credible Coaches**" are major keys to success. Coaches need to balance the individual development of the athletes with getting the players to work together as a team. This cannot always be achieved in a competitive league setting. Our history and introduction to other sports in the past have put us in a position to copy what they have done. However, these sports have adapted and changed how they introduce their sport to young children. We need to adapt too.

### **Appendix 3: Long Term Athlete Development**



### **National Underage Rules:**

*"Coaches must also be aware that children (8 - 12 years) perceive their competence in sport in relation to peer comparison so feedback must be task oriented rather than performance focused" (Horn and Harris, 2002).*

The National Underage Rules were created to bring uniformity across the age groups and the Area Boards as our Under 14's and Under 16's meet at an end of season tournament (AICC) each year. It was imperative that the players coming to these tournaments were playing with the same rules. Unfortunately, despite all Area Boards enforcing these rules, some coaches, clubs and Area Boards may not be doing so

There has been a lot of debate about these rules. We have tried to minimise the rules that we have included. However, rules needed to be included as we had issues with some people who were not what would be described as "Credible Coaches". Winning at all costs was their only motivation, not the players. As we do not have a participation stream and a competition stream to our underage competition, we also felt that some rules were needed to allow both streams to exist within the one competition system.

Some coaches have still found ways to find "grey areas" within the rules. It "says this", it "doesn't say this" are common statements. These rules are not in place to frustrate or thwart any coach's aspirations but are there so that we can give more players the opportunity to perform for a longer period of time.

Also, we feel it is important that we encourage coaches to understand the principles of participation and developing fundamentals for longer than they have been in the past. Obviously, a lot of clubs and coaches are against the development and participation elements of the Underage Rules but based on our increasing knowledge of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD), we feel that we need to continue along this route. We have been making decisions about the abilities of young players far too early. We need to allow players to develop and mature at their own pace. Some coaches have been doing this throughout their coaching career but we feel that we need to educate more of our coaches explicitly in the area of LTAD.

Basketball is in prime position as a late specialisation sport to pick up better athletes who may have quit or fallen out of other sports. The rules at U12 & U14 would allow for these athletes to be incorporated into basketball programmes. It would make coaches have to teach basketball to these players, can't stick them in the middle of the zone, allows them to develop good offensive skills knowing that the defence in front of them will always be Man to Man.

We have amended the rules each year and will continue to engage with coaches across the country to continue develop these rules. Coaches need to understand that from Under 15 onwards, there



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are no rules regarding the number of players that must participate, no rules on pressing, etc. Coaches may need to make decisions to coach in these age groups rather than Under 14 downwards. Work needs to be done with the Post Primary Schools Committee to merge the rules so that there is less confusion in terms of player rotation, etc.

*"Unfortunately there is also the negative aspects of underage sport participation particularly when a 'win at all costs' mentality is prevalent. This can lead to unhealthy levels of aggression and stress and contribute to player burnout and withdrawal. If players encounter competition or advanced skill work too soon they will experience increased anxiety and decreased self esteem" (O'Connor and Cotton, 2009)*

**Appendix 1: National Under Age Rules 2011 - 2012**

**Appendix 2: National Under Age Rules 2012 - 2013**

**Practice & Competition:**

For too long the practice in sport has been to identify and cultivate the talented players and elite teams at younger and younger ages. There is the tendency to nurture the perceived best and neglect the rest. This has contributed to adult training regimes and playing conditions being imposed onto young players. Training and competition is geared to outcome and winning, and not for the process of development which it should be.

For coaches of children, there must be a balance between the need to win games and trophies versus the need to develop players and recognise the importance of fair play - provide full participation within an environment where players are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Coaching adult players places unique demands on the coach. The motivation to play differs slightly from that of children. Players remain involved in Basketball because of:

- **Enjoyment:** Basketball is a fast and fun game, often high scoring
- **Skill:** Basketball is considered a very skilful game
- **Possibility of success:** Many players continue to participate as they have aspirations to play at higher levels.
- **Coach:** The coach can be the most important factor in whether a player continues to play at this stage. Situations where the coaches' goals and players' needs are different can lead to players becoming disillusioned and dropping out.
- **Participation:** Low involvement through poorly designed training sessions or through a lack of games is one of the most serious causes of drop out.
- **Training and games:** Games can be fun, but if training is boring or set at too high a level players can lose interest quickly.
- **Social:** Adult players tend to stay together on the same team season after season as they have become friendly with their team mates.

**Adult players**

- **Have conflicting commitments:** Work, financial and family commitments might impact on the ability of adult players to commit to all requirements
- **Display independence:** Players often want to display a higher level of independence and want to be part of the decision making process.

Some points that need to be taken into consideration when coaching

- The nature and importance of practice in achieving excellence in sport is not widely understood.
- There tends to be an over-emphasis on competition to the detriment of practice at key phases of the development of children in sport.
- Competition, among the major team sports in particular, has led to the reduction of competition ages and an increased pressure on children to specialise sooner than necessary, resulting in early drop-out.



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- The system of competition, or the non-existence of a rational system of competition, often inhibits optimal training and performance. Competitive calendar planning is not often based on technical knowledge, but on traditions and improvisations.
- Adult competition schedules tend to be superimposed on young players/athletes. As a result, too much time is spent competing and not enough time is spent learning and mastering basic and sport specific skills (i.e. very low "contact" time in practicing and learning the basic skills of the sport).
- An inappropriate focus on winning, rather than development, characterises the preparation of the developmental player/athlete.

(NCTC, Building Pathways in Irish Sport, towards a plan for the sporting health and well-being of the nation)

### **Appendix 8: Recommended Training Session to Game Ratio**



**Area Boards:**

The Area Boards are the feet on the ground. They are also the smallest area and often the most effective area of governance. They can easily access the needs of the coaches in their area and allow us to focus the level of clinic and courses required within the area. They can implement a lot of this development plan as part of their own strategic/development plans.

The Area Boards provide a crucial role in the development of the sport. An energetic and inclusive area board working with Basketball Ireland Coaches would allow us to identify coaches who want to improve and develop their coaching skills. Also, the area boards are in best position to roll out the programmes outlined in this document.

It is recommended that each Area Board would have a Coaching Officer on their committee. This person would be responsible for helping deliver BIC coaching programmes and clinics within their Area Board. It is important that coaches of all levels and abilities have a local person that they can communicate with. It is also envisaged that the coaching officers of the Area Boards would feed into the Committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches. We would hope that all Area Boards would have coaching officers and coaching committees by the end of the 2013 - 2014 season.

It is important that BIC have a close working relationship with the National Area Board Committee. There are many areas of mutual interest, National Underage Rule, Coaching Clinics, Coaching Courses and Basketball Camps are a few that are been dealt with at the moment.

Regular meetings between BIC and the Area Boards are an important part of our development and the development of coaches across the country.



**Coaching Clinics & Conferences:**

Development of basketball coaches is more than just getting "certified". Basketball Ireland and Basketball Ireland Coaches are committed to providing a number of Regional Clinics and a National Conference each year. Irish and Foreign Coaches will be utilised for both. A headline speaker should be recruited to build the National Coaching Conference around. Irish coaches should be utilised to speak at the National Coaching Conference. It is important that we encourage Irish Coaches to speak in front of Irish Coaches to develop a culture of sharing information. Developing a National Coaching Conference that caters for all levels of coaches is a challenge. We need to develop a system where there are different strands so that coaches of different abilities can access such a clinic. Working in conjunction with the National Referees Committee or the Post Primary Schools Committee and pooling our resources would be an effective way of developing a product for our coaches.

In terms of Regional Clinics, it is important that we look to develop participation and performance strands for coaches. We have a number of regional clinics; most of these clinics were directed at developing fundamentals. We do need to have a performance strand at each of these clinics so that we can raise the standard of game coaching and development of a higher standard of player. It is also important that we continue to develop the standard of coaches of the majority of coaches who are coaching at participation level. These coaches need support to develop the different levels of players that they coach.

Sports Psychology, Nutrition, Fitness and Game analysis modules should also be conducted at Regional and National Level. Liaising with Area Boards and Area Board Coaching Officers (when in situ) will be used to ascertain the needs of coaches in the Area Boards.



**Resource Material:**

This development plan will see the delivery of modern resource materials and course specific participant manuals alongside a tutor resource pack.

Development of resources and the ability to access these resources is crucial. Coaches of all levels need to be able to access different materials that will challenge and enhance their level of knowledge.

We need to create a bank of PDF resources that can be easily accessed through the Basketball Ireland website or that can be delivered through email/post to all coaches. Developing a panel of experienced coaches who can provide material to share is necessary. It would be important to create resources on Drills, Game Coaching, Offences and Defence, etc.

Links with other Coaches Associations, FIBA EUROPE and leading Coaches need to be further developed and encouraged to make this facility credible and worthwhile.

Book and DVD's need to be sourced and put on the BI website for general sale. Numbers of items does not need to be large. Work should be done to find a supplier who can provide quality resources at a competitive price to BI, who can pass them on coaches similarly at a competitive price. Other resources such as coaching boards, game analysis software also need to be sourced.

Using multimedia outlets such as the BI Website, Community TV, Facebook and YouTube would enable us to disseminate material and resources among coaches.



**Coach Mentoring Programme:**

*"Coach Education programmes should include mentoring in a variety of context, to enable coaches to consider differences, make mistakes, learn from them and try again. This should provide coaches with multiple opportunities to test and refine knowledge and skills". (Cushions et al 2003)*

Basketball Ireland Coaches feel that it is important that we introduce a mentoring programme for our coaches. Coaches who would feel that would benefit from the advice and assistance of an experienced coach should be facilitated.

Fostering an atmosphere of sharing information and knowledge would be a massive development in Irish Coach Development.

This should be a two year programme where coaches would get to work with two different mentors over the two years with a different mentor in Year 1 and Year 2. There would be a set programme for the mentor to cover. Any extra material/area that needs to be covered over the period can also be done, however it is important that we have guidelines and resources for the mentoring coaches.

Mentoring coaches would be paid expenses by the club/coach that uses the mentor. These rates should be in line with BI guidelines.

Area Boards & Basketball Ireland Coaches would look for coaches of suitable experience and qualities who would act as mentors within the Area Board.

**Appendix 6: Mentoring Programme**



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



### **Coaching Hall of Fame:**

It is important that Basketball Ireland recognises the work done within the coaching community over the years. It must also be recognised that a lot of this work was and is also done in a voluntary capacity.

Basketball Ireland Coaches feel that it is important that we recognise a number of people each year who would be inducted into the Basketball Ireland Coaching Hall of Fame. These people would be presented at the National Cup Finals/League Finals/AICC/Internationals each year. 3 - 5 coaches each year should be recognised and inducted.



**Appendices:**

- Appendix 1: National Under Age Rules 2011 - 2012
- Appendix 2: National Under Age Rules 2012 - 2014
- Appendix 3: Long Term Athlete Development
- Appendix 4: High Performance Identification & Development
- Appendix 5: Physical Literacy
- Appendix 6: Mentoring Programme
- Appendix 7: Player Development for Coaches
- Appendix 8: Recommended Training Session to Game Ratio
- Appendix 9: FECC Selection Policy
- Appendix 10: Tutor Selection Policy



## Basketball Ireland Coaches



### Appendix 1: Underage Rules 2011 - 2012

	U9 - U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18
<b>1. Competition &amp; Participation</b>	Development Leagues. No score to be displayed or recorded.	Competitive participation but emphasis is still on participation of all players in the game and on the technical development of the players so rotations are applicable						
<b>2. Age Limit</b>	As per FIBA age limits, all players must be under the age on or after January 1 <sup>st</sup> of the current season							
<b>3. Year</b>		2000, 2001, 2002	1999, 2000, 2001	1998, 1999, 2000	1997, 1998, 1999	1996, 1997, 1998	1995, 1996, 1997	1994, 1995, 1996
<b>4. Basketball Size</b>	Size 5	Size 5	Size 6	Size 6	Boys: Size 7 & Girls: Size 6			
<b>5. Basket Height</b>	8.5 feet or 10 feet with the free throw line marked 2ft closer to the basket		10 feet with standard FIBA Court Markings					
<b>6. Quarters</b>	6 - 8 minute quarters	All games should be played in four 7 - 10 minute quarters, which may be reduced to a minimum of 6 minutes if teams play more than one game a day, especially in the case of tournaments						
<b>7. Defence</b>	Man to Man Defence mandatory for all competitions up to and including U14				Man to Man & Zone Defence Allowed			
<b>8. Defensive Press</b>	No Full court press allowed. Players must return to the back court after a score or when the referee has stopped the game for a violation or a foul.	Full court press is allowed only in the 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter. You cannot press if your team is winning by 15 points or more	Full court press is allowed only in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> quarters. You cannot press if your team is winning by 15 points or more	Full Court Press Allowed				
<b>9. Scoring</b>	No 3 pointers recorded upto and including U13 level			FIBA Rules				
<b>10. Scoresheet</b>	BI Official Underage Scoresheet				BI Official Scoresheet			
<b>11. Time Outs</b>	FIBA Rules							
<b>12. League Points</b>	Win = 3 points, Loss = 1 point, Walkover Received = 3 points, Walkover Given = 0 points, Forfeit = 0 points							
<b>13. Fouls</b>	FIBA Rules							
<b>14. Team</b>	Maximum of 20 players can play			12 players can play in any game				



### Basketball Ireland Coaches



	U9 - U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18
<b>15. Minimum No. of Players</b>	10 players.				FIBA Rules			
<b>16. Rotation</b>	All players must play a minimum of one full quarter and play <b>IN</b> a maximum of two quarters.	All players must play a minimum of one full quarter and <b>IN</b> a maximum of 2 quarters. Five players play in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter, a different five play the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter. Any five play the 3 <sup>rd</sup> and a different five play the 4 <sup>th</sup> . Any additional players must play one full quarter in the second half.	All players must play a minimum of one full quarter and <b>IN</b> a maximum of three quarters. Five players play in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter, a different five play in the second. Any additional players must play one full quarter in the second half.		FIBA Rules			
<b>17. Injury Rule</b>	If a substitute comes on to replace an injured player, they are not deemed to have played a <u>full</u> quarter and must <u>still</u> play one full quarter (See point 16 in further clarification for more details)							
<b>18. Other</b>	Backcourt Rule applies, 24 second rules applies: 3, 5 & 8 second rules apply							
	U9 - U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18



**Further Clarification on Underage Regulations:**

1. Competition: From the 2011 - 12 season onward, U11 leagues downwards will be Development Leagues (non competitive). For competition up to U11 no score will be displayed or recorded. Score sheet will be kept for rotation of players and foul recording.
2. Age Limit: To establish the date of birth corresponding to the age limit for an age group, the following procedure is used; the age of the player must be subtracted from the year in which a competition takes place with the understanding that this year begins on 1<sup>st</sup> January. E.g. the age limit for U18 in a competition in 2012 shall be: 2012 - 18 = 1994, so any player born on the 1st January 1994 or after this date will be entitled to participate in a competition for U18 in 2011/2012 season.
3. Year: A player may only play a maximum of 2 grades within her/his age band in any one season. E.g. a player aged 11 can play U11 and U12 or U11 and U13. She/he cannot play U11, U12 and U13. No player U15 can take part in the BI U18 National Cup. No player U16 can take part in Senior National Competition.
4. Basket Height: It is recommended that 8.5ft baskets are used up to U12 participation. However it is understood that this is not feasible in all venues and it is acceptable that 10ft baskets are used. In the use of 10ft baskets up to and including U12, the free throw line should be marked 2ft closer to the basket.
5. Defence: To assist the proper technical development of young players, ZONE defence is forbidden up to and including U14 Competition. Following the basic man to man principles, each defensive player is responsible for an offensive player. An imaginary line is created down the centre of the floor from rim to rim. A player must be on the same side of the line as the player they are marking. A player may cross the line to help on a dribble penetration but that player must recover to find his/her player when the ball is passed. The penalty for noncompliance is a technical foul awarded to the offending coach. The technical foul should be recorded as a "B" bench technical foul rather than a "C" coach technical foul.
6. Minimum Number of Players: The minimum number of players up to and including U14 competition is 10 players. In the event of a team having less than 10 players by the start of the second quarter, the team will lose the game by default (20 - 0) and be awarded 1 point at the start of the game. Where two teams have less than 10 players the game is played and each team is awarded 1 point by default game.
7. Defensive Press: No full court defence is allowed in the frontcourt following a score or dead ball/inbounds pass from either the end line or sideline, even after the inbounds pass. U13's can press in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter and U14's can press in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. The defence must wait for the ball to cross the half way line, i.e. they will pick up their players man to man from the halfway line.
8. Rotation: If a player is fouled out or sustains an injury, they must NOT be substituted by a player who has already appeared in his/her full quota of quarters and the team must continue with one less player on the court for that quarter or quarters affected i.e. for U12 - U14 teams that only have 10 names on the score sheet, they must not substitute an injured player or player that has fouled out in the first two quarters. Instead they must continue the affected quarter(s) with a player short.



Underage Rules 2012 – 2014

Age Group	Years of Birth	Rotation of Players
U10	2003, 2004, 2005	All players must play a minimum of one full continuous quarter and can only play in a maximum of two quarters.
U11	2002, 2003, 2004	All players must play a minimum of one full continuous quarter and can only play in a maximum of two quarters.
U12	2001, 2002, 2003	All players must play a minimum of one full continuous quarter and can only play in a maximum of two quarters.
U13	2000, 2001, 2002	All players must play a minimum of one full continuous quarter and can only play in a maximum of two quarters.
U14	1999, 2000, 2001	All players must play a minimum of one full continuous quarter and <b>IN</b> a maximum of three quarters. Five players play in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter, a different five play in the second. Any additional players must play one full continuous quarter in the second half.
U15	1998, 1999, 2000	FIBA Rules
U16	1997, 1998, 1999	FIBA Rules
U17	1996, 1997, 1998	FIBA Rules
U18	1995, 1996, 1997	FIBA Rules



### **Further Clarification on Underage Regulations:**

- **Competition:**

U11 leagues downwards will be Development Leagues (non-competitive). For competition up to U11 no score will be displayed or recorded. Score sheet will be kept for rotation of players and foul recording.

### **U12 to U14**

Competitive participation but emphasis is still on participation of a minimum of 10 players in the game and on the technical development of the players so rotations are applicable

- **Age Limit & Eligibility:**

As per FIBA age limits, all players must be under the age on or after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season

To establish the date of birth corresponding to the age limit for an age group, the following procedure is used; the age of the player must be subtracted from the year in which a competition takes place with the understanding that this year begins on 1<sup>st</sup> January. E.g. the age limit for U18 in a competition in 2012/2013 shall be: 2013 - 18 = 1995, so any player born on the 1st January 1995 or after this date will be entitled to participate in a competition for U18 in 2012/2013 season.

A player may only play a maximum of 2 grades within her/his age band in any one season. E.g. a player can play U11 and U12 or U11 and U13. She/He cannot play U11, U12 and U13. No U15 player can take part in the BI U-18 National Cup. No U16 player can take part in Senior National Competition.

- **Basket Height:**

It is recommended that 8.5ft baskets are used up to U12. However it is understood that this is not feasible in all venues and it is acceptable that 10ft baskets are used. In the use of 10ft baskets up to and including U12, the free throw line should be marked 2ft closer to the basket.

- **Defence:**

To assist the proper technical development of young players, ZONE defence is not allowed up to and including U14 Competition. Following the basic man-to-man principles, each defensive player is responsible for an offensive player. An imaginary line is created down the centre of the floor from rim to rim. A player must be on the same side of the line as the player they are marking. A player may cross the line to help on a dribble penetration but that player must recover to find his/her player when the ball is passed. The penalty for non-compliance is a technical foul awarded to the offending coach. The technical foul should be recorded as a "B" bench technical foul rather than a "C" coach technical foul.



- **Minimum Number of Players:**

The minimum number of players up to and including U14 competition is 10 players. In the event of a team having less than 10 players by the start of the second quarter, the team will lose the game by default (20 - 0) and be awarded 1 point at the start of the game. The other team shall be awarded three points regardless of the final score in the game.

Where two teams have less than 10 players the game is played and each team is awarded 1 point by default game. No team shall be rewarded three points after the game has been played.

**OVERTIME:** Any five players may play in overtime.

- **Team Numbers:** U9 - U13: No maximum to the number of players who can play  
U14 Onwards: 12 players can play in any game

- **Defensive Press:**

Upto U11 no full court defence is allowed in the front court following a score or dead ball/inbounds pass from either the end line or sideline, even after the inbounds pass. The defence must wait for the ball to cross the half way line.

U12's & U13's can only press in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter.

U14's can press in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

**Teams cannot press if they are winning by 15 points or more.**

- **Time Outs:** FIBA Rules Apply
- **Other:** Backcourt Rule applies,  
24 second rules applies  
3, 5 & 8 second rules apply
- **Scoring:** No 3 pointers recorded upto and including U13 level.  
From U14 upwards FIBA Rules apply
- **Fouls:** FIBA Rules Apply
- **League Points:** Win = 3 points  
Loss = 1 point  
Walkover Received = 3 points  
Walkover Given = 0 points  
Forfeit = 0 points.  
Team receiving forfeit = 3 points
- **Basketball Size:**  
U9 - U12: Size 5  
U13 - U14: Size 6  
U15 Onwards: Girls: Size 6  
Boys: Size 7

## Appendix 2: Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

### Why do children participate in youth sports?

It is important that we as coaches are aware why children take up, stay and/or leave the game of Basketball. We need to address these issues as a matter of urgency. It is also important that we understand the physical and emotional development of our athletes.

"Our main responsibility to these kids is to keep them passionate, keep them interested, and keep them going." Youth sports should serve the needs of the kids, not the needs of parents, or coaches, or those seeking the fleeting possibility of stardom. "Youth sports have nothing to do with sports. Youth sports are developing better children through the medium called sports,"

A significant amount of research has been performed over the past 20 years to provide a wealth of data on why children and adolescents participate and drop out of sport. Some of the main reasons they take up sport are:

- competence (learning and improving skills);
- affiliation (being with and making new friends);
- team identification (being part of a group);
- health and fitness (getting and staying fit);
- competition (excitement, demonstrating skills);
- Just having fun.

While the reasons cited are basically intrinsic rather than extrinsic in their orientation, there is little doubt that as the children become older and participate in a more competitive environment, the extrinsic values such as trophies, winning and premierships become a primary motivational factor.

The reasons given for discontinuing participation are many and varied. The following reasons for withdrawing were cited by Whitehead (1997), boredom, having other things to do, lack of success, too much pressure, poor coaching, embarrassment, ridicule, rejection, friends leaving, expense, injury, work and other commitments.

**Highly structured competitive sport can place a tremendous importance on winning. This emphasis can carry over into the children's sporting domain via the parents, coach, teachers and peer group.**

The basic problem stems from the fact that children's sport is usually organised by adults and this takes away the spontaneity that exists when children organise their own games. With most children relying on feedback from adults, it is important that this is positive and encouraging otherwise motivation, self-esteem and perceived ability may suffer.



The supporters of competitive sport would argue that the playing of organised sport prepares the child for the competition they will experience in later life. It plays an important part in the socialisation process, and brings children in contact with social values. Sport is viewed by many as an anticipatory model of society which prepares children to take their place in society.

There are however, critics of sport competition who believe that too much emphasis is placed on winning, resulting in the development of anti-social behaviour such as, aggression and cheating. The problem stems from adults failing to appreciate that they are dealing with children and not miniature adults. Scanlan (1985) and Passer (1982) have documented the stress factors that children feel in competitive sport. They have found that those who are higher in competitive trait anxiety perceive greater state anxiety in competitive environments. In addition, children with low self-esteem experience greater stress compared to children with high self-esteem. Those children who have a low expectancy of success will also experience greater competitive stress, while those who lose often will experience greater immediate stress than those who regularly win.

There are, however, many sports where there is no positive relationship between an early beginning to training and success. These include such sports as football, basketball, cricket and rugby. Because of the physical demands of these activities, it may be advantageous to allow the young athletes to learn the basic skills via minor games in the early stages of their physical development rather than the formalised competitive situation. Studies carried out by Clough, McCormack and Traill (1993), Robertson (1982, 1991), and Robinson and Carron (1982), have all reported a high dropout rate of young athletes who became disillusioned with the formal rigours of organised sport.

The nature of competitive sport does not allow for the majority of children to experience success. With winning being emphasised, only the top few will be rewarded for their efforts. The belief that children will need to compete in later life and that sport provides the perfect medium for learning has often been raised in defence of organised competitive sport. Eitzen and Sage (1986) have pointed out that there is no documentation to demonstrate that children are worse off for not competing in competitive sport at a young age. It is not just the competing that is the problem but the intensity of competition; and the associated stress and anxiety that is detrimental to performance and participation (Martens, 1977; Scanlan and Lewthwaite, 1984; Scanlan and Passer, 1979).

Other factors have been suggested as reasons that actually discourage children from continuing in physical activity through to later life. These include the poorly trained coaches who may mean well but are not sensitive to the needs of youngsters, and have little experience in developing these needs. A second major reason is the lack of control that children have over their sporting environment. Adults direct the competition and this competition may not resemble the competitive experiences that they have later on in life where they are more in control of the competitive situation.



Sport can be a training ground for life-long achievement, and given the significant time that sporting coaches have with the children during both training and match days, there are numerous opportunities for the coach to ensure positive benefits arise from the sporting experiences.

Coaches need to be given guidance about both the physical and psychological development of children and how best they can adapt their teaching to gain maximum benefits. The major factors that need to be considered in developing sound coaching techniques include positive feedback, encouragement, developing realistic expectations, and creating an environment that is free from fear where new skills can be developed.

Children should be made to realise that failure to win a competition does not mean that there is little hope for them in life. The emphasis first and foremost should be placed on having fun, participation and developing skills. While most children want to play sport for enjoyment and fun, parents can inadvertently turn the activities into a pressurised situation where the competitive element is over-emphasised. Parents can also fall into the trap of comparing their children's performance with others instead of encouraging skill development.

It is important that the children are made aware that physical and skill development do occur at different times for different individuals and this will help them to appreciate why they are not performing at the same level as others. This is important in terms of the child's self-esteem and development of self-worth. The message that the coach is sending out to his players can be the difference between a good and bad experience for the players. They can put players at ease and allow them to focus on the processes involved in playing or they can increase the emotional anxiety and sense of failure by only focus on winning and losing.

Competitive experiences are an important part of a child's development, and correctly managed it can be a very positive training ground for teaching one to compete successfully in the numerous areas that will confront them throughout life.

### **The Early Developer and the Late Maturer**

It is not hard to identify the "superstars" of any U12 or U14 team and these "Physically mature children are more likely to succeed in sports at an early stage of their development".

This selection process of ten (or twelve) often eliminates late maturing children from sports. And more significantly, even after they physically catch up, many will rarely if ever re-enter sports. By then late maturing children have missed the advantage of early training and they have lost interest because of early failure. But differences in physical maturation may also hurt the early maturer.

In sports there is a connection between the fact that the star of the Under 12 and Under 14 leagues can be often the first to lose his position of stardom in later years. For those youngsters whose skill development hasn't been supervised correctly, there is the danger that they no longer



enjoy the prestige and status of not being a star athlete, the psychological adjustment may be a difficult one. Children who specialize in sport and experience a great deal of success at an early age may have difficulty coping with athletic failure later in life.

Children grow at different rates at different ages, and different children also develop at different rates, so there will be early and late developers. Not only are the rates of growth different, but also the changes in the body proportions can vary, and this will directly affect the ability to perform.

The early developer has the advantage in sports where size, speed and physical strength play a major role in success. It has often been noted that the early developer is able to excel in several major sporting codes. These individuals often enjoy a decided advantage over their team mates and opponents throughout primary school and into the first two/three years of secondary school.

Problems quickly arise when the peer group starts their growth spurt and begins to catch up in terms of strength and speed, and the advantage that the early maturer had is lost. To prevent this problem from arising, it is important to provide the early developer the opportunity to compete with those of a similar maturity, not of the same chronological age. Our Underage rules do allow us to play players up. This is one solution but we also tend to keep these early maturers in their own group and this can have a stunting effect on the development of the other players on the team

Conversely, the late maturer has the problem of experiencing little or no success during those years leading up to adolescence. The late maturer will be small in stature and have less strength, endurance and speed than their average peers. If sport is important to these individuals, it is imperative that they be directed to those activities that are not primarily dependent on size and strength for success.

How many kids have been turned off sports by coaches who cut them from the team or bench them? How many have been humiliated by their awkwardness because their biological clock ran slower? How many youngsters have had their self-esteem shattered in sports, their attitudes toward sports soured by a coach or parent who failed to understand that kids mature at different rates and the single most important factor determining their success is their physical maturity?

**Research shows that at age 12, there can be a four-year difference in the physical maturity of children.** An early maturer can be 30cms taller and weigh 10 to 20 kilograms more than a late developer. In basketball, which require strength, power and speed (and size), the more mature child will usually perform better and fitness levels will be greater than in less developed peers. The uneven spread of early and late developers creates a difficult challenge. Many coaches with no understanding of this phenomenon choose certain kids to play on their teams for the wrong reasons. The early developers may have a lot of success in sport at first. They are picked first for team sports and receive much of the coach's attention. This may cause late maturers to develop



low self-esteem and many drop out of sport. Towards the end of adolescence, late maturers often surpass and become better athletes than early developers.

All early superstardom usually means is that your child has matured faster than his friends. Performance success is due to a variety of characteristics including abilities, attitudes, body type, cultural background, emotional makeup, fitness level, learning style, maturational level, motivational level, previous social experience, prior movement experience and personality. Each of these factors are extremely important, with ability being one of the most important, but because there is such a wide variety of factors influencing performance, it is virtually impossible to make an early prediction about a child's future success in sports. That's not to say that the early superstars don't ever go on to be successful athletes at a later stage, such as U16 & U19 in secondary school competition. It just doesn't happen that often, only about 25% of the time.

It is impossible to predict whether or not a person will have those expert level abilities a few years down the road. This is why cutting players from teams at the youth level does not make sense. It is also why it is important for every player to try out every position. You never exactly know what a person's strengths will be until he or she has at least gone through puberty.

In the initial stages of the selection of young athletes, a 6 to 12 month developmental advantage can be decisive. Slightly older participants tend to possess physical and psychological advantages that make their selection more likely. On a typical basketball team in Ireland, there could be children 23 months apart in age eligible to participate, but many teams only want the best players. To solve this problem most likely means modifying the way teams are formed. Some suggestions include: form teams based on biological age, not chronological age; narrow the age range; rotate the cut-off date; employ age quotas; and create a variety of teams based on different standards.

Parents and coaches should be aware of the implications of delayed development and establish their expectations accordingly. Given encouragement and the correct management, there is no reason why the late maturer cannot develop and enjoy a successful sporting experience in the senior years of secondary school.

Contrary to many beliefs, participation in organised sport is not always beneficial and in fact can have a negative impact when it comes to sportsmanship and human relationships. Martens (1978) points out that character development, sportsmanship and achievement orientations do not necessarily occur through just participation.

"Winning isn't the most important (actually it is way down the list) thing to kids and how kids don't grasp concepts like adults". Playing, learning, improving, and making friends are all more important to young children than winning.



Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) had become the standard in most countries. The practice of picking stars at a very young age and cutting kids from sports teams as young as eight or ten years old was and is madness and is not supported by any empirical research. We need to take a long term view of player development. We are too small a sport to cut players and make decisions about players as we do.

Children under the age of twelve are *developmentally incapable of understanding the strategy, tactics, and concepts of positional play and individual roles in team sports*. The practice of coaching kids in these areas was useless if not detrimental to their development as athletes and as people.

It has been pointed out the standard behavior of coaches, yelling from the sidelines, micro-managing the players in games were not only ineffective, but probably detrimental to the development of the athletes. The distinction has to be made between giving information, bits of advice shouted in a haphazard manner, and knowledge, advice given with the aim of understanding the reasons behind the desired behaviors in a manner that allows the player to absorb it.

Michael Jordan, once said about his own children's' athletic endeavors, "My advice would be to tell them to learn to love the game, once they develop that, the mental part will be easier. I didn't get any instruction in basketball until I was a junior in high school. First I just love the game, and develop the skills after. *I believe in playing early, and learning late.*"

### **Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)**

**LTAD is a vehicle for change in coaching and player development in the sport.** The concept of Long Term Athlete (or Player) Development (LTAD) embraces the need to create clear pathways for young people to progress in their chosen sport. It should not be perceived as an elite sport framework but a means to allow EVERY player to achieve THEIR own potential. LTAD is a sports development framework that is based on human growth and development. It is about adopting a player centred approach to basketball development. The two ways in which young players can improve their performance are training and growth development. LTAD is about achieving optimal training, competition and recovery throughout an athlete's career, particularly in relation to the important growth stages in young people. This can only be achieved if the most appropriate and effective environments can be created in our clubs.

LTAD is nothing new or a 'panacea' ...however it is:

- Built upon consensus of scientific research
- Reflects applied knowledge & experience of coaches from around the world
- Packages complex phases of child / adult development into a simple & flexible model

Balyi has used a quote throughout all his research on LTAD that should never be far away from the work we do as coaches. **"If you want to teach Latin to Dean, you have to know Latin and you**



have to know Dean. If you want to teach hockey to Dean, you have to know Basketball and you have to know Dean. We know Basketball well BUT we do not know dean from age 8 - 9 to 16 - 17"

### **What does LTAD do?**

- It identifies the current gaps in the sport system and provides guidelines for problem solving
- It's a guide for planning for optimal performance for all stages of player development
- It is a framework for full sport system alignment and integration
- It is designed on empirical / practical coaching experiences and on scientific principles
- It allows for optimal training, competition and recovery with relation to biological development and maturation of players
- It offers equal opportunity for recreation and competition
- It is player centred, coach and administration driven, and sport science and sponsor supported

**There are 10 Key Factors Influencing Long Term Athlete Development** (Balyi, Cardinal, Higgs, Norris & Way, 2005). These factors are based on current research in sport and exercise science.

1. 10 year rule (1,000 years)
2. Fundamentals
3. Specialisation
4. Developmental age
5. Windows of Trainability
6. Physical/Mental/Cognitive/Emotional Development
7. Periodisation of Performance
8. System Alignment and Integration
9. The System of Competition & Calendar Planning
10. Continuous improvement

### **1. 10 year rule (1,000 years)**

It takes 10,000 hours of training over 10 years for an able bodied athlete to reach peak performance.

Not all athletes choose to pursue elite performance. An athlete may focus instead on physical health and social involvement. Either way, the length of time required to achieve elite performances may vary according to the sport or activity and the goals of the individual.

In Ireland, we may find it difficult to facilitate the amount of hours required to reach this rule at the same pace as players from other countries. We must aspire to developing our systems so that our athletes have a better chance of achieving their goals through the structured pathway that is the LTAD model.



## 2. Fundamentals

To build the foundation for physical literacy, children need to be introduced to the FUNdamentals. These are fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills that children learn through FUN activities that maintain their interest and encourage their love of sport and activity.

Children won't develop into high performance athletes or stay active with recreational activity if they don't have good physical literacy skills, and they won't have physical literacy if they don't get the FUNdamentals. The FUNdamentals include a wide variety of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills that should be learned at young ages in four different environments: earth, water, air, and snow and ice. With these basic skills, children gain the ability and confidence to practice any sport or physical activity they choose.

Research strongly suggests that the FUNdamentals should be learned before the adolescent growth spurt begins. After the start of the growth spurt, it becomes much more difficult for the body to develop fundamental skills and the ABCs of agility, balance, coordination and speed. Athletics, gymnastics and swimming are good sports for developing FUNdamentals. The key to learning the fundamentals is FUN. Young children learn best when the activities are fun, and having fun helps them to develop a love of physical activity and sport.

## 3. Specialisation

There are right times and wrong times to specialize in any one sport or physical activity. Specialize too early, and the athlete may limit their development and success at older ages. Specialize too late, and the athlete may miss a key stage of development.

Should your 7 year old be completely focused only on one sport, such as soccer or basketball? Or is it better for them to participate in a number of sports and choose one to focus on in a few years? It depends if the sport is a late specialisation or early specialisation sport. **Athletes have better success in late specialisation sports such as basketball, soccer and hockey if they have participated in a range of different sports and activities prior to their teen years.** Athletes have greater success in early specialisation sports such as gymnastics and figure skating if they begin to specialize in those sports during their elementary school years.

In most sports, athletes should not specialise until they are between the ages of 12 to 15. Prior to that age, they should participate in a wide range of sports to ensure they become good, well rounded athletes who have acquired physical literacy.

## 4. Developmental age

Children grow and develop at different rates. Sport and physical activity programmes need to take each child's stage of growth and development into account when designing training, competition and recovery regimens.



We all know that children grow and develop at different rates, but most sport and physical activity programmes still group them together according to their birth year (chronological age). To optimize the development of our athletes, we can't paint everyone with the same brush. We need to take into account the developmental ages of our athletes as well as their chronological ages.

### **Growth and Maturation**

The terms "growth" and "maturation" are often used together, but they mean different things. Growth refers to measurable changes in body size such as height and weight. Maturation refers to qualitative changes in the body's progress toward maturity, such as the change of cartilage to bone in the skeleton.

### **Developmental Age**

The term "development" brings together growth and maturation. Development refers to how growth and maturation occur together over time. It includes physical, social, emotional and intellectual realms of the child.

## **5. Windows of Trainability**

As children grow and develop, there are times when practice and training will have the greatest effect. These "sensitive periods" provide a special opportunity to train and develop important skills and physical abilities that will impact athletic performance through the lifespan.

All sport skills and physical abilities are trainable at any age. However, as children and athletes grow and develop, there are times when practice and training will have the greatest positive effect. These times are called "sensitive periods of accelerated adaptation to training."

Science shows that we can maximize each child's skills and physical abilities if our coaching and instruction takes advantage of the sensitive periods of trainability. The sensitive periods affect five different areas of physical development that we call "the Five Ss":

- Stamina (endurance)
- Strength
- Speed
- Skill
- Suppleness (flexibility)

If our sport programmes and coaching don't take advantage of the sensitive periods, our children may never develop the strength, speed, skills, flexibility or stamina they could have had. If we take advantage of the sensitive periods, our children are much more likely to reach their peak performance abilities. They have a better chance of staying active for life and even becoming professional athletes.



## **6. Physical/Mental/Cognitive/Emotional Development**

LTAD works to develop the whole athlete - combining quality physical training with training and support for mental, emotional and cognitive development. Physical changes are not the only consideration.

LTAD addresses the complete physical, mental, cognitive and emotional development of athletes - not just physical characteristics and performance qualities. Training, competition and recovery programmes need to consider the mental, cognitive, and emotional development of each athlete.

A major objective of LTAD is a holistic approach to athlete development. This includes emphasis on ethics, fair play, and character building throughout the various stages. Programming should be designed to consider athletes' cognitive ability to address these concepts.

## **7. Periodisation of Performance**

Periodisation involves creating comprehensive training, competition and recovery plans to deliver peak athlete performance at the right time. Scientific research in periodisation helps coaches to create logical training plans for athletes at all ages and stages of LTAD.

**Simply put, periodisation is time management.** It outlines all annual and seasonal training within a logical schedule to bring about optimal improvements in athlete performance at the right times, while minimizing injury and burnout. Periodisation plans connect the LTAD stage of the athlete with the training and development requirements of that stage.

Periodisation breaks training into months, weeks, days and individual sessions. It helps coaches to organise all aspects of volume, intensity, frequency and type of training, competition and recovery programmes through long term and short term timelines. Periodisation is a highly flexible tool. When it is used in combination with proper training techniques, athlete monitoring and athlete evaluation, it becomes an essential component to deliver optimal sport performance and athlete development at all stages of LTAD.

## **8. System Alignment and Integration**

LTAD calls for system alignment and integration by bringing together athletes, coaches, clubs, schools, sports clubs, colleges, committees, area boards and the governing body to build a better sport system in Ireland.

Athlete development is the core business of national, provincial/territorial and local sport organizations. Without quality athletes in sport programmes, these organizations would not be viable. Consequently, it is in the best interests of these groups to collaborate, align and integrate in delivering optimal athlete development programmes.



LTAD initiatives and support programmes must be designed and implemented with a focus on the needs of athletes, and a commitment to cross sectoral collaboration and cooperation. Coaches, teachers, and recreational professionals may lead athlete training and physical activity programming at the ground level, but they need to be supported by administrators, sport scientists, health, and governing body across multiple sectors

## **9. The System of Competition & Calendar Planning**

Athletes need to train and compete according to training to competition ratios that develop skills and fitness while preventing injury and burnout. As well, the quality of competition and the timing of competitive events need to serve the needs of the athlete - not the needs of coaches, parents and administrators.

Science shows us that talent and ability are developed through thousands of hours of practice and training - whether it's sport, music, art or mathematics. Many sports reduce their training hours in favour of more games and competitive events, especially in youth sport where practice and skills learning is most important. They have inverted the "training to competition ratio."

At most stages of development, athletes should spend more hours training than competing. Precisely how much they should train and compete varies at each stage of development and differs according to different sports. Training to competition ratios always aim to achieve optimal performance while avoiding athlete injury and burnout. At the same time, proper competition scheduling allows for tapering and peaking in the athlete's cycle of training and competition.

## **10. Continuous improvement**

The coaches, athletes, sport scientists, administrators, and policy makers closest to LTAD constantly seek ways to improve and refine it.

We never assume that LTAD in its current form is ever complete or final. We operate from the position that it represents the best practices in coaching and athlete development as they are understood today. By focusing on continuous improvement, we will also ensure that LTAD reflects all emerging facets of physical activity, sport, recreation and education to ensure that it is inclusive of all types of activity.

LTAD promotes ongoing education and sensitization of federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments, the mass media, sport and recreation administrators, coaches, sport scientists, parents, and educators about the interlocking relationship between physical education, school sport, community recreation, lifelong physical activity, and high performance sport.

## **Long Term Athlete Development**

A number of sports scientists have reported that there are critical periods in the life of a young person in which the effects of training can be maximised. This has led to the notion that young



people should be exposed to specific types of training during periods of rapid growth and that the types of training should change with the patterns of growth. These have been used by Dr Istvan Balyi to devise a staged framework for player development. There are six stages to LTAD: **FUNdamental Phase, Learn to Train, Train to Train, Train to Compete, Learn to Win and Retainment**. A seventh phase, Active start covers children from 0 - 6 years of age. Whilst much of it may be new to some people, most practitioners are now agreed that these concepts should underpin the development of sport in Ireland and increasingly become the common language of sports development.

Sports scientists have reported that there are critical periods in the life of a young person in which the effects of training can be maximised. They have also concluded that it can take anything from eight to twelve years of training for a talented athlete to achieve elite status. This has led to the development of athletic models, which identify appropriate training aims at each stage of the athlete's physical development.

The LTAD presents guidelines for coaches, parents and administrators. For instance, the emphasis until 11 years old for girls or 12 years old for boys (onset of puberty) is physical literacy. In the FUNdamentals stage (boys 6 - 9 and girls 6 - 8), the LTAD emphasizes that **"skill development should be well structured and FUN and should concentrate on developing the ABCs; of Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed, plus rhythmic activities."**

### **Athletic model indicators**

Research has shown that that chronological age is not a good indicator on which to base athletic development models for athletes between the ages of 10 to 16 as within this age group there is a wide variation in the physical, cognitive and emotional development.

### **Models of LTAD**

Sports can be classified as Early Specialisation (Golf, Swimming, and Gymnastics) or Late Specialisation (Basketball). Late specialisation sports require a six phase model of development. A seventh phase, Active start is included as a separate phase. It covers children of the age 0 - 6 years.

### **Late Specialisation Model**

#### Active Start

1. FUNdamental
2. Learning to train
3. Training to train
4. Training to compete
5. Training to win
6. Retirement & Retainment



Unfortunately, in Ireland, people have believed that the quicker a player specialises, the better his or her opportunity for success in his or her sport. Experience and research does not support these beliefs. Specializing in one sport at an early age impedes one's overall athletic development, which leads to an early stagnation when developing sport specific skills.

Players in Spain may get 1,000 hours of Basketball (and other sports in the early years) per year and thus they reach their 10,000 hours by 16/17 years of age. It may not be possible for a 16 year old in Ireland to have achieved this amount of exposure in training and competition. To create better sports programmes for our youth athletes, we need to look at the LTAD model and educate parents, administrators and coaches about the importance of overall athletic development prior to sport specialisation.

### **Active Start**

**Ages:** 0 - 6 year old females and males

The objective is to learn fundamental movements and link them into play. Physical activity is essential for healthy child development. Among its other benefits, physical activity also:

- Enhances development of brain function, coordination, social skills, gross motor skills, emotions, leadership and imagination;
- Helps children to build confidence and positive self-esteem;
- Helps to build strong bones and muscles, improves flexibility develops good posture and balance;
- Improves fitness, reduces stress and improves sleep;
- Promotes healthy weight;
- Helps children learn to move skilfully and enjoy being active.

Physical activity should be fun and part of the child's daily life, not something required. Active play is the way young children are physically active. For this reason it is recommended to steer clear of adult organized basketball at this time. Children with disabilities are encouraged to take part in organized physical activity and active play. It is important for the healthy development of children with disabilities that they acquire the habits of lifelong activity.

Children during this time rapidly outgrow their mobility aids (such as bicycle, skipping rope, etc). Communities need to find effective ways - equipment swaps or rentals, for example - to ensure that all children have access to the equipment they need to be active.

## Active Start To-Do List

- Provide organized physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day for toddlers and at least 60 minutes a day for preschoolers.
- Provide 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 when sleeping.
- Provide physical activity every day regardless of the weather.
- Starting in infancy, provide infants, toddlers and preschoolers with opportunities to participate in daily physical activity that promotes fitness and movement skills. Provide parents and care givers with age-appropriate information.
- Ensure that children acquire movement skills that build towards more complex movements. These skills help lay the foundation for lifelong physical activity.
- Encourage basic movement skills - they do not just happen as a child grows older, but develop depending on each child's heredity, activity experiences and environment. For children with a disability, access to age and disability appropriate adapted equipment is an important contributor to success.
- Focus on improving basic movement skills such as running, jumping, twisting, wheeling, kicking, throwing and catching. These motor skills are the building blocks for more complex movements.
- Design activities that help children to feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun and challenging sports and activities.
- Ensure that games for young children are non-competitive and focus on participation.
- Because females tend to be less active than males and children with disabilities less active than their peers, ensure that activities are gender-neutral and inclusive so that active living is equally valued and promoted for.

### Phase 1: FUNdamentals

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 6 to 9 and girls aged 5 to 8. The main objective should be the overall development of the athlete's physical capacities and fundamental movement skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Participation in as many sports as possible
- Speed, power and endurance are developed using FUN games
- Appropriate and correct running, jumping and throwing techniques are taught using the ABC's of athletics
- Introduction to the simple rules and ethics of sports
- Strength training with exercises which use the child's own body weight; medicine ball and Swiss ball exercises
- Training programmes, based on the school year, are structured and monitored but not Periodized



- Develop the athlete's:
  - ABC's (Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed)
  - RJT (Running, Jumping, Throwing)
  - KGBs (Kinaesthetic, Gliding, Buoyancy, Striking with a body part)
  - CKs (Catching, Kicking, Striking with an implement)

The first critical period of speed development will occur during this phase, age 6 - 8 for girls and 7 - 9 for boys respectively. Linear, lateral and multidirectional speed should be developed and the duration of the repetitions should be less than 5 seconds. Fun and games should be used for speed training and the volume of training should be lower.

### **What are the "Fundamentals"?**

Fundamental movement Skills (FMS)

Fundamental Sports Skills (FSS)

FMS + FSS = Physical literacy

**Key time for physical literacy is before age 11 for females and 12 for males**

### **Phase 2: Learning to train**

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 9 to 12 and girls aged 8 to 11. The main objective should be to learn all fundamental sports skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Further develop fundamental movement skills
- Learn general overall sports skills
- Continue to develop strength with medicine ball, Swiss ball and own bodyweight exercises as well as hopping & bounding exercises
- Continue to develop endurance with games and relays
- Introduce basic flexibility exercises
- Continue to develop speed with specific activities during the warm up, such as agility, quickness and change of direction
- Develop knowledge of warm up, cool down, stretching, hydration, nutrition, recovery, relaxation and focusing.
- Training programmes are structured and based on a single periodization
- Competition is structured and a 70:30 training/practice to competition ratio is recommended

### **Phase 3: Training to train**

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 12 to 16 and girls aged 11 to 15. The main objective should be the overall development of the athlete's physical capacities (focus on aerobic conditioning) and fundamental movement skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Further develop speed and sport specific skills
- Develop the aerobic base after the onset of PHV
- Learn correct weight lifting techniques

- Develop knowledge of how and when to stretch, how to optimize nutrition and hydration, mental preparation, how and when to taper and peak.
- Establish pre competition, competition and post competition routines.
- The strength training window for boys begins 12 to 18 months after PHV.
- There are two windows of opportunity to strength training for girls
  - Window one is immediately after PHV
  - Window two begins with the onset of menarche (the first menstrual period)
- Special emphasis is also required for flexibility training due to the sudden growth of bones, tendons, ligaments and muscles
- A 60% training to 40% competition ratio (includes competition and competition specific training) is recommended

#### **Phase 4: Training to compete**

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 16 to 18 and girls aged 15 to 17. The main objective should be to optimize fitness preparation, sport/event specific skills and performance. The key points of this phase are:

- 50% of available time is devoted to the development of technical and tactical skills and fitness improvements
- 50% of available time is devoted to competition and competition specific training
- Learn to perform these sport specific skills under a variety of competitive conditions during training
- Special emphasis is placed on optimum preparation by modelling training and competition
- Fitness programmes, recovery programmes, psychological preparation and technical development are now individually tailored to the athlete's needs.
- Double and multiple periodization is the optimal framework of preparation

#### **Phase 5: Training to win**

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 18+ and girls aged 17+. The main objective should be to maximize fitness preparation and sport/event specific skills as well as performance. The key points of this phase are:

- All of the athlete's physical, technical, tactical, mental, personal and lifestyle capacities are now fully established and the focus of training has shifted to the maximization of performance
- Athletes train to peak for major competitions
- Training is characterized by high intensity and relatively high volume with appropriate breaks to prevent over training
- Training to competition ratio in this phase is 25:75, with the competition percentage including competition specific training activities

#### **Phase 6: Retirement & Retainment**

This phase refers to the activities performed after an athlete has retired from competition permanently. During this final phase, some ex-athletes move into sport-related careers that may



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include coaching, officiating, sport administration, small business enterprises, master's competition, media, etc.



## Long Term Recreational Players

**“The Long Term Recreational pathway encourages those individuals who choose to stay involved in sport and physical activity at a recreational level”**

**(Coaching Ireland)**

While adults can now choose from a vast range of physical pursuits, recent surveys have shown that there is a marked decline among adults in rates of physical activity. Research has also indicated that there is a cohort of adults who do not wish to participate in highly organised structured physical activities, particularly as they get older. They wish to pursue activities that improve physical health and increase social opportunities in a cost-effective environment without too much pressure on time. In some areas this means dropping down leagues within their Area Board Competition or dropping from National League to Local Area Board completion.

At underage level, this can mainly manifest in the form of “B” divisions. Some area boards do not have enough teams to create a second division within an age group. Some clubs have been able to set up second teams within their clubs to accommodate players who have not developed at the same degree or level as their peers within their club or area. At school (A, B, C & D) and college (1, 2 & 3) levels there is more than one division within its competition structure.

The Long Term Recreational strand is based on the needs of the individual, is less goal-orientated, less constrained by rules and more spontaneous than sport *per se*. Sports done in an informal setting by an individual or on a non-competitive basis can be recreational, e.g. swimming, fishing, running, walking, etc. Once individuals have experienced the FUNdamental and Learning to Play and Practice phases of the model, it is possible that some may not yet have decided whether to specialise in one particular sport or to participate in sport and physical activity for social reasons.

Finding time/hours and a structure for “social participation” basketball would allow a cohort of basketball players to be included in our sport especially in area where a smaller basketball playing population cannot sustain more than one Division in their respective leagues.



Long Term Athlete Development Model:

Phase	Fundamental Movement Skills	Fundamental Movement Skills Including Basic Basketball Skills	Technical Basketball Development	Becoming a Basketball Player	Optimising Performance	Retention
	Fundamental	Learning to Train	Training to Train	Training to Compete	Training to Win	Retention
Age	6 – 8 (Girls) 6 – 9 (Boys)	8 – 11 (Girls) 9 – 12 (Boys)	11 – 15 (Girls) 12 – 16 (Boys)	15 – 17 (Girls) 16 – 19 (Boys)	17+ (Girls) 19+ (Boys)	Individually determined
Aim	Learn the fundamental skills of basketball using a well-structured, positive and fun approach	Continue with basic skills development in a fun, all-inclusive environment Improvement of technical ability	Increased focus on technical development to a high level of skill proficiency. Develop physical and functional capacities.	Enhance individual, specific and intensive training including off-, pre- and in-season periodisation and bring this to bear in a team context	Optimise performance for domestic and international competition	Enjoy a healthy active lifestyle and reinvest time and energy in basketball through coaching, management or administration
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Basketball stance</li> <li>● Movement: Multi directional, changing direction, change of pace. Running form, jumping.</li> <li>● Footwork: Front and reverse pivots. Step slide</li> <li>● Ball familiarisation: Passing, shooting and dribbling technique. Bilateral development of fundamental skills</li> <li>● Perceptual abilities</li> <li>● Rules: travelling, double dribble, no contact, basic rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of passing shooting and dribbling techniques to a higher level of proficiency</li> <li>● Introduce rebounding technique and footwork</li> <li>● Defending on the ball and 1 pass away</li> <li>● Recording of skill test results</li> <li>● Learning skills in game related conditions                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Getting open</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Introduce screening</li> <li>● Stationary moves and moves off the dribble</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skill development programmes</li> <li>● Skills required for Guard, Forward, Centres</li> <li>● Application of skills at higher tempo</li> <li>● Focused work on skill development with taller players</li> <li>● Correct application of all skill principles for passing, shooting, dribbling, screening and rebounding</li> <li>● Defending penetration, screening, and post play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Apply Guard, Forward and Post moves and skills in game situation</li> <li>● Increased quickness of applied skills                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recognising skill strengths and limitations</li> <li>● Development of perceptual abilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete refinement of sport-specific skills</li> <li>● Adjusting performance skills to competition requirements</li> <li>● Integration of skills with physical capacities                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remedial skill work</li> <li>● Learning to defend different strengths and abilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retain skills</li> </ul>



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Phase	Fundamental Movement Skills	Fundamental Movement Skills Including Basic Basketball Skills	Technical Basketball Development	Becoming a Basketball Player	Optimising Performance	Retention
	Fundamental	Learning to Train	Training to Train	Training to Compete	Training to Win	Retention
Age	6 – 8 (Girls) 6 – 9 (Boys)	8 – 11 (Girls) 9 – 12 (Boys)	11 – 15 (Girls) 12 – 16 (Boys)	15 – 17 (Girls) 16 – 19 (Boys)	17+ (Girls) 19+ (Boys)	Individually determined
Tactical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Movement without the ball               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spacing</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Players play equal time in modified games               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learn the basic principles of the game</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading the defence in 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 situations</li> <li>● Spacing and movement rules               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of decision making skills in small sided games</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Introduce transition game up to 3 on 2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pick and Roll</li> <li>● Team offence and defensive systems</li> <li>● Team Transition</li> <li>● Special situations</li> <li>● Mental quickness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● More extensive knowledge of offensive and defensive systems</li> <li>● Match/notational analysis</li> <li>● Simulation training</li> <li>● Learning to make adjustments during game</li> <li>● Press offense and defensive systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greater depth of knowledge of offensive and defensive systems</li> <li>● Learning to play at the adult level</li> <li>● Adjusting to multiple styles and systems</li> <li>● Decision making relating to team roles</li> <li>● Adjusting to variations in tactics               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advanced understanding of time and score situations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retain recreational involvement</li> </ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Warm-up &amp; cool down               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agility, Balance, Coordination, (ABC's)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Jumping activities( level 1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A B C ' S continued</li> <li>● Enhance aerobic ability               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop sprinting technique</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Resistance exercises</li> <li>● Dynamic and static flexibility</li> <li>● Jumping ability (level 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Aerobic training prioritised after onset of Peak Height Velocity<sup>1</sup></li> <li>● Anaerobic training               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SAQ</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Strength training</li> <li>● Introduce special training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Periodized training</li> <li>● Develop aerobic and anaerobic systems in sports specific context</li> <li>● Individual conditioning</li> <li>● Strength and power</li> <li>● Plyometrics up to Level 3               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recovery</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tapering and peaking</li> <li>● Periodized of seasonal training</li> <li>● Hypertrophy and strength training</li> <li>● Maintenance training               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recovery and regeneration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Corrective exercise training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keep active</li> <li>● Detraining principles followed</li> </ul>



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	Fundamental	Learning to Train	Training to Train	Training to Compete	Training to Win	Retention
Age	6 – 8 (Girls) 6 – 9 (Boys)	8 – 11 (Girls) 9 – 12 (Boys)	11 – 15 (Girls) 12 – 16 (Boys)	15 – 17 (Girls) 16 – 19 (Boys)	17+ (Girls) 19+ (Boys)	Individually determined
Mental & Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fair play</li> <li>● Playing with others</li> <li>● Asking questions of coaches</li> <li>● Developing task based self confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continued focus on task based Self-confidence               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop social confidence skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Enhance concentration capacity</li> <li>● Developing questioning skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduce mental skills training</li> <li>● Self discipline</li> <li>● Team building activities</li> <li>● Goal setting</li> <li>● Emotional control awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Performance routines               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-competition preparation</li> <li>● Imagery</li> <li>● Relaxation</li> <li>● Goal setting</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Emotional control skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Performance routines               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Problem solving</li> <li>● Dealing with conflict</li> <li>● Personal management</li> <li>● Mental skills practice appropriate to needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relaxation</li> <li>● Readjustment to non-competitive environment</li> </ul>
Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage multi-sport participation</li> <li>● Practice at home</li> <li>● Healthy eating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-directed practice</li> <li>● Multi-sport involvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nutrition advice</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Development of good practice habits</li> <li>● Develop accurate attributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-directed practice</li> <li>● Communication</li> <li>● Introduction to planning and periodisation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training and performance diary/log</li> <li>● Nutrition/hydration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Plan career/sport options               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Basic leadership</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dealing with being an athlete</li> <li>● Self-directed practice               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nutrition/hydration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Life balance, coping with pressures</li> <li>● Career/sport planning sustained</li> <li>● Lifestyle management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-directed practice               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work-life balance</li> <li>● Rest and relaxation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Career/sport planning sustained</li> <li>● Dealing with transition to college/work</li> <li>● Weight management and nutrition</li> <li>● Personal and lifestyle management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pursue personal and family goals more strongly</li> <li>● Pursue further education/career development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coaching</li> <li>● Administration</li> <li>● Management</li> <li>● Role model</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Masters competition               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Officiating</li> <li>● Media and PR</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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Phase	Fundamental Movement Skills	Fundamental Movement Skills Including Basic Basketball Skills	Technical Basketball Development	Becoming a Basketball Player	Optimising Performance	Retention
	Fundamental	Learning to Train	Training to Train	Training to Compete	Training to Win	Retention
Age	6 – 8 (Girls) 6 – 9 (Boys)	8 – 11 (Girls) 9 – 12 (Boys)	11 – 15 (Girls) 12 – 16 (Boys)	15 – 17 (Girls) 16 – 19 (Boys)	17+ (Girls) 19+ (Boys)	Individually determined
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enjoyment and fun</li> <li>● Fair play and sportsmanship</li> <li>● Spectating at games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enjoyment and fun</li> <li>● Fair play &amp; sportsmanship</li> <li>● Teamwork/interaction skills</li> <li>● Communication</li> <li>● Leadership</li> <li>● Spectating at games</li> <li>● Accepts discipline and structure</li> <li>● Respect for officials and decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enjoyment and fun</li> <li>● Understanding of changes puberty will bring</li> <li>● Discipline and personal responsibility</li> <li>● Awareness of Peak Height Velocity and windows of trainability</li> <li>● Dealing with winning and losing</li> <li>● Ability to play in a robust, competitive way</li> <li>● Respect for officials and decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enjoyment and fun</li> <li>● Teamwork/interaction skills for younger children</li> <li>● Integration of sport, career and life goals</li> <li>● Economic and independence issues addressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enjoyment and fun</li> <li>● Working with others</li> <li>● Full integration of sport, career and life goals</li> <li>● Utilising support systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Re-set goals</li> </ul>
Target	Primary schools Multi-sport camps Fundamental camps Summer Schemes Clubs	Primary schools Secondary schools Multi-sport camps Fundamental camps Summer Schemes Clubs Festivals/Jamborees	Primary schools Secondary schools Multi-sport camps Fundamental camps Summer Schemes Clubs Festivals/Jamborees Schools of excellence/ regional squads U14 national League	Regional teams Superleague National Competitions International Junior teams National Camps	International Superleague	



### Basketball Ireland Coaches



Phase	Fundamental Movement Skills	Fundamental Movement Skills Including Basic Basketball Skills	Technical Basketball Development	Becoming a Basketball Player	Optimising Performance	Retention
	<b>Fundamental</b>	<b>Learning to Train</b>	<b>Training to Train</b>	<b>Training to Compete</b>	<b>Training to Win</b>	<b>Retention</b>
<b>Age</b>	6 – 8 (Girls) 6 – 9 (Boys)	8 – 11 (Girls) 9 – 12 (Boys)	11 – 15 (Girls) 12 – 16 (Boys)	15 – 17 (Girls) 16 – 19 (Boys)	17+ (Girls) 19+ (Boys)	Individually determined
<b>Emphasis</b>	Process not outcome	Process not outcome Talent Identification Mindful of early & late developers Retain tall players	Process not outcome Talent Identification Mindful of early & late developers Retain tall players	Process not outcome Talent Identification Mindful of early and late developers Retain tall players	Outcome important	
<b>Needs</b>	Teacher training and coach education in Fundamentals & all inclusive coaching practices & drills	Teacher training and coach education in Fundamentals & all inclusive coaching practices & drills	Teacher training and coach education in Fundamentals & all inclusive coaching practices & drills	Coach Education Coach Mentoring	Coach Education Coach Mentoring	
<b>Time</b>	Minimum Hours: 1 – 2 Desirable Hours: 4 – 5 (Inclusive of other sports)		Minimum Hours: 3 – 4 Desirable Hours: 6 – 8 (Inclusive of other sports)  Note: This needs to be increased if the athlete is motivated to participate at the High Performance level (National Teams, NCAA Level)		Minimum Hours: 4 – 6 Desirable Hours: 8+ If the athlete is competing at a High Performance level. (Superleague Level)	



### Basketball Ireland Coaches



For Basketball Ireland to adequately support a LTAD Model, the following issues need to be addressed by all sectors of the Basketball community. It is important that there is joined up thinking across committees, the Council and the Board of Basketball Ireland & BI HQ. System alignment is required to ensure that any Development plan can be implemented and not become another document collecting dust on a shelf.

#### Periodisation of performance, System Alignment and Integration

Performance Priorities	System Alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Athlete Performance &amp; Support</li> <li>• Coach Education &amp; Support Competition</li> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Facility Access</li> <li>• Sport Science</li> <li>• Talent ID and Scouting</li> <li>• Teams: National, Provincial and Club Training Methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Colleges/Universities</li> <li>• Community Initiatives</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Facilities Plans</li> <li>• Financial Sustainability</li> <li>• Governance (Board of BI, BI Council, BI HQ, Basketball Ireland Committees (IAC, BIC, PPSC, Colleges, CSC, SLMB))</li> <li>• Games (International, Inter Regional)</li> <li>• Event Hosting</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Organizational</li> <li>• Risk Management</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul>

**Appendix 3: High Performance Identification & Development**

Stage	Aspect of Development	Important Experiences	Key Personnel	Competition	Syllabi
1	Development of Physical Literacy (4 - 7 years old players)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE Curriculum.</li> <li>• Mini &amp; Adapted Sport.</li> <li>• Multi Sports Camps.</li> <li>• Club Academies &amp; start up teams</li> <li>• Jamborees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary School Physical Education Coordinators &amp; Teachers</li> <li>• Club Academy Coaches</li> </ul>	Primary School Leagues & Blitzes	Primary School Teacher Coaching Course
				U8 - U12 Leagues	Intro Course
2	Identification of Aptitude Basketball (Potential tall players)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE Curriculum.</li> <li>• Incremental development to full game or activity where appropriate (Club or School based programmes).</li> <li>• Locally based quality sports specific coaching.</li> <li>• Organised Club Basketball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Primary Physical Education Teachers &amp; Specialists</li> <li>• Club, Local Sport Partnerships and/or Local Authority Coaches with expertise in Children's coaching.</li> </ul>	Under 13+	Intro Course & Level 1
3	Identification of those most likely to succeed at Basketball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Coaching opportunities for large inclusive squads.</li> </ul>	Coaches with expertise in coaching children and developing talent.	Under 13+	Level 1 & Level 2
4	High Performance Squads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Coaching.</li> <li>• International Squads</li> <li>• International Teams</li> </ul>	High Performance Coaches.	Under 14+	Level 2 & Level 3 & FECC



## Appendix 4: Physical Literacy

Running, jumping, throwing, kicking and catching are very important skills to teach children at an early age. Balance, coordination, speed and agility are the most important physical capacities to focus on during pre puberty. Sports science tells us that if these capacities are not trained well before puberty then performance athletes/players will fail to meet their full potential. **Recreational players will lose out as well as they may drop out of sport through feeling incompetent as a result of not been exposed to these critical capacities at an early age.**

### Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is the concept that children must learn how to move properly when they are in preschool and primary school. Contrary to popular belief, no one is a "natural born athlete." 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 and is a key component of any Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) programme.

The definition of Physical Literacy is: **"the development of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills that permit a child to move confidently and with control, in a wide range of physical activity, rhythmic (dance) and sports situations"** (Higgs, Balyi, Way, Cardinal, Norris & Bluecharadt, 2008). The authors also identified that Physical literacy also includes the ability to 'read' what is going on around them in an activity setting and react appropriately to those events".

While it's true that many children can and 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 severe. Some people think you need "natural born" skills to participate in sport and activity. The truth is really the opposite. Even the top professionals first had to develop physical literacy as children. And they had to practice their skills for years, before they were ever recognised as special talents. It is important that qualified and knowledgeable coaches assist in the development of good physical skills.

In fact, scientific research has proven that you need 10,000 hours of practice to become an "expert." To develop physical literacy, children need to learn fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills. What's more, they need to practice these fundamental skills for hundreds of hours in the playground, at school, in recreation programs and within sport clubs before they reach puberty.

How can you get kids practicing their fundamental skills? Make it fun. You can get started with these games and activities. You can also measure your child's physical literacy with the physical literacy checklist. Children should be encouraged to engage in unstructured physical play with their friends every day, continue to play catching, throwing, hitting, running and other physically demanding games with both boys and girls. If possible, parents should enrol their children in



programs that offer a wide variety of different activities (multi-sport programs) or in a wide range of different activities. They should try as many different activities as possible. Parents shouldn't be concerned with the score. At this age many programs that include competition don't keep score. This puts the focus of the program on learning and having fun, rather than on doing whatever it takes to win matches, games and leagues. Don't believe the myth that early specialisation in basketball (and sports such as soccer) will lead to far greater performance later in life. Developing all-round athletes at this age is far better, but a few sports (such as gymnastics and golf) do require early specialization.

### **The Consequences of Missing out On Physical Literacy**

A child who misses out on developing physical literacy is at a great disadvantage. On the playground and in the park, children really like to play with other children who have the same level of skill as they do, and who can "keep the game going", and, if you can't keep the game going, you won't generally be asked to join in. Missing out on Fundamental Movement Skills also means that the child is unlikely to choose to take part in a formal sport activity that requires proficiency in that skill, and this restricts their choice of life-long health-promoting activities. It also restricts their opportunities for sporting excellence. Being unable to perform even a single fundamental movement skill can seriously restrict later opportunities for recreational or competitive activity.

Without physical literacy, research shows many children and youth withdraw from physical activity and sport. Children report that not having the skills to play is one major reason they drop out.

Late developers should have an advantage of early maturers is that they have a longer period of time between learning fundamental movement skills and the onset of adolescence. The Learn to Train stage (Girls Aged 8 - 11 and Boys Aged 9 - 12) is a time when the human body is perfectly designed for the acquisition and refinement of sport skills, and the longer a child is in this stage, the better developed their skills can become.

Research (e.g. Vallentyne 2002) suggests that the 'window of opportunity' to teach Fundamental Movement Skills occurs during the first 8 years of life. Much other literature extends this notion further by stating that one of the most important periods of motor development for young people is between the ages of 7 and 12. At these ages, children are highly intrinsically motivated and naturally enthusiastic about learning, as well as being physically and intellectually capable of benefiting from instruction in physical education.

### **Fundamental Movement Skills**

To become physically literate a child must first master the fundamental movement skills. **Fundamental Movement Skills are the movement patterns that involve different body parts.** Having these skills is an essential part of enjoyable participation and a lifelong interest in an active lifestyle. The Fundamental Movement Skills are also often grouped into types of movement Locomotor Skills, Object Skills, and Body Management/Control Skills.

**Locomotor Skills:** involve the body moving any direction from one point to another.

- Crawling
- Running
- Galloping
- Walking
- Hopping
- Skipping
- Dodging

**Body Management/Stability Skills:** involves the body balancing either in one place (static) or while in motion (dynamic).

- Rolling
- Stopping
- Bending
- Twisting
- Landing
- Stretching
- Climbing
- Static and Dynamic Balancing
- Turning

**Object Control/Manipulative Skills:** involve handling and controlling objects with the hand, foot or an implement. (stick, bat and racquet) and include throwing, catching, striking (hands, feet, implement).

- Throwing
- Catching
- Striking
- Bouncing
- Dribbling
- Kicking

“FUNDamental Movement Skills must be learned first before fundamental sports skills”. These fundamental movement skills provide the movement ability basis for future sport specific skill development. Jess (2004) states that the establishment of a fundamental movement competence cannot be overemphasised as it allows children to pass through a 'proficiency barrier' when attempting to develop the simple activities of early childhood to the more complex activities of later years. If Fundamental Movement Skills are mastered, they not only provide the optimal environment for this skill transition to occur but also lay the foundation for a lifelong commitment to physical activity.



## **Fundamental Movement Skills of Basketball**

- Agility
- Balance
- Coordination (throwing and catching)
- Proper running technique: forwards, sideways and backwards
- Change of speed and direction
- Jumping and landing
- Starting and stopping (jump stop, stride stop)
- Pivoting: front and reverse

## **Fundamental Basketball Skills**

- With and without ball
- Ready Position
- Offence: triple threat stance
- Vision: play with eyes up

## **Ball Handling**

- Ball control
- Stationary dribbling (low, high, wide)
- Movement while dribbling (running, sliding, walking, change of direction, starts, stops, low, high)

## **Passing Skills**

- Stationary Passing
- Passing on the Move
- Passing to a team mate
- Receiving the ball: absorbing
- Catching on the move
- Catching the ball with 2 hands, 2 eyes, 2 feet

## **Shooting Skills**

- Squaring feet and shoulders to sight the target
- Push with both legs
- Follow through (release): first without ball/then with ball
- Close range shots
- Lay-up progression

## **Playing Principles**

### **Basic Offensive Concepts**

- Advancing the ball towards your offensive basket
- Shooting the ball into the basket to score
- Spacing of players (ideal spacing is 3 to 4 m)

- Cutting of players (away from the ball or towards the ball)

### Basic Defensive Concepts

- Recognition of knowing when you are on defence
- Recognition of the person he/she is defending
- When defending the ball, stay between the person you are guarding and the basket
- When defending away from the ball, stay between the person you are guarding and the basket.

### Coaching Fundamental Skills:

The development of Fundamental Movement Skills does not happen by chance or maturation alone; Children need opportunity and guidance within a supportive learning atmosphere to develop.

Fundamental Movement Skill	Basic Skills (Fundamental)	Intermediary (Specialised & Functional)	Advanced (Specialised & Functional)
Body Management	Twist, Turn, Balance, Pivot, Stretch	Zig Zag run; Shuttle run;	Pass & Receive; Running and Catching
Locomotor	Run, Hop, Skip, Jump Gallop	Agility Ladder; Footwork Patterns;	Step Slides; Hop, Step & Jump;
Object Control	Throw, Kick, Control, Bounce, Catch	Running, Dribbling; Running & Dribbling; Run & Throw/Receive/control; Turn & Throw/Receive/Control; Bounce & Stop & Pivot	Rebound Catch

- Work on a maximum of 2 Fundamental Movement Skills in any one coaching session/period of time.
- Assess the needs of the athlete
- Select Appropriate Drills & Exercises
- Demonstrate Clearly & Lots of feedback
- Make it Fun & Challenging



## **Appendix 5: Mentoring Programme**

**Coach learning is about observation, experience, conversation and practice. All these elements need to be at the heart of any mentoring programme. The aim of this programme is to develop the individual (Mentee).**

This will be a two year programme where coaches (Mentees) would get to work with two different mentors over the two years with a different mentor in Year 1 and Year 2. There would be a set programme for the mentor to cover. The information would be provided from the Coaching syllabi (Intro Level & Levels 1 - 3)

- Practice Session Planning
- Game Coaching
- Individual Offence & Defence
- Team Offence, Defence & Transition
- Review Practices & Games
- Strength & Conditioning
- Communication

Any extra material/area that needs to be covered over the period can also be done, however it is important that we have guidelines and resources for the mentoring coaches. Mentoring coaches would be paid expenses by the club/coach that uses the mentor. These rates should be in line with BI guidelines.

It is important that we value our Mentoring Programme. There are many coaches out there who seek to develop their coaching. We also have a number of coaches with the knowledge, time and commitment to allow us to develop a working and constrictive Mentoring programme.

Basketball Ireland Coaches would look for coaches of suitable experience and qualities who would act as mentors within their Area Board. Area Boards would be asked to be co sponsors of the programme. They would be able to contact the clubs/coaches that they know who would be open to be involved in a mentoring programme

### **Mentoring Programmes (Guidelines of Good Practice (Jones et al 2009))**

- Formalise the relationship
- Identify needs of mentee
- Provide challenge to both
- Ensure flexibility in formality
- Training provision
- Support for the mentor
- Appreciate the fluid environment
- Take care with assignment
- Build mutual trust
- Facilitative and nurturing



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



When assigning Mentors to coaches the following factors must and should be taken into consideration.

- Gender
- Age
- Cultural background
- Mutual Interest
- Proximity
- Availability
- Personality
- Goals

**Appendix 6: Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's)**

**Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's) of Players aged 6 - 12 years:**

<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agility (A)      Balance (B)      Co-ordination (C)      Speed (S)</li> <li>• Running (R)      Jumping (J)      Throwing (T)</li> </ul>
<b>Technical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footwork (Stance, Movement, Stopping, Pivoting)</li> <li>• Shooting (Technique (BEEF), Lay Ups, Encourage Success)</li> <li>• Passing (Footwork, Follow Through, Know your passing range, Chest Pass, Bounce Pass)</li> <li>• Dribbling (Both Hands, Speed, Control, Protect (Arm Bar), Eyes Up, Change of Pace and Direction, Dribble with Purpose).</li> <li>• On ball Defence (Stance, Footwork, Step Slide, Drop Step)</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Offensive Structure (Spacing, 5 Out, Experience of all positions)</li> <li>• Basic Defensive Structure (Ball, Denial (1 Pass Away), Help (More than one Pass Away, Help Line Basket to Basket)</li> <li>• Off the Ball Movement (Getting open, Cutting &amp; Relocating)</li> <li>• Transition (2 Vs 1, 3 Vs 2)</li> </ul>
<b>Mental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment of Practice (Variety, Purpose, Planned, Challenging, Inclusion)</li> <li>• Enjoyment of Games (Focus on Process not Result, Inclusive, Set Realistic Targets, Having fun with team-mates)</li> <li>• Developing Confidence &amp; Improvement of Skills (Development of Fundamentals never stops)</li> </ul>

**Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's) of Players aged 13 - 16 years:**

<p><b>Physical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerobic (Improvement of Endurance Levels) Training</li> <li>• Periodised Training Schedules (Understanding of Out of Season, Pre Season and In Season Training)</li> <li>• Introduction of Appropriate Strength Training &amp; Plyometric Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shooting (Shooting off the dribble, Shooting off screens, Range of Shooting (Short, Middle, Long))</li> <li>• Passing (Overhead, Javelin, Push Pass. Passing off the dribble, Post Entry, Knowledge to when to use each pass)</li> <li>• Dribbling Decision making off the dribble, Combination of Moves off the dribble)</li> <li>• On the Ball Defence (Close Outs, Recovery Step, Post Defence)</li> <li>• Rebounding (Offensive &amp; Defensive, Decision making from Rebounding)</li> <li>• Post Play (Stance, Receiving, Drop Step Base, Drop Step Middle)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tactical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Offensive Structure (Different offensive alignments, start to specialise in positions, On Ball Screens)</li> <li>• Basic Defensive Structure (Defending Ball Screens, Zone Defences, Press Defences)</li> <li>• Off the Ball Movement (Screening off the Ball, (Flare, Curl, Catch &amp; Shoot, appreciation of using space)</li> <li>• Transition (Primary Break &amp; Secondary Break, Decision Making)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mental</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment of Practice (Game Preparation &amp; Game Reflection, More focus on Game structure, Focus on Offensive &amp; Defensive alignments)</li> <li>• Enjoyment of Games (Knowledge of strengths &amp; weaknesses of team mates and opponents)</li> <li>• Developing Confidence &amp; Improvement of Skills (Development of Personality, Goal Setting, Discipline, dealing with performances and results, Personal reflection )</li> </ul>

**Player Development for Coaches (PDFC's) of Players aged 17+ years:**

<p><b>Physical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced strength training, core strength work and continued Plyometric Work</li> <li>• Improved anaerobic and aerobic training</li> <li>• Continued development of ABC'S &amp; RJT while in contact</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shooting (Footwork coming off screens, flare screens, movement into space for shooting)</li> <li>• Passing (Timing of pass, decision making (knowing who and knowing when), passing out of traps))</li> <li>• Dribbling (Push pass off of the dribble, use of ball-screens, retreat dribbles and what to do next)</li> <li>• On the Ball Defence (Decision making of who the player is guarding (pressure, no pressure i.e tactical) how to defend getting screened)</li> <li>• Post Play (Passing out of the Post, Reading Double Teams, Short Corner)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tactical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Offensive Structure (Becoming an expert in your position, Ball Screen Options, Flexibility to adapt the offences)</li> <li>• Basic Defensive Structure (Trapping, transitioning from defence to offence and offence to defence)</li> <li>• Off the Ball Movement (Developing patience (not always having to move), communication and use of team-mates,)</li> <li>• Transition (Numbered break or spots, making decisions at high speed and reducing turnovers)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mental</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment of Practice (Continued to vary practice and continued teaching of older and new teaching points)</li> <li>• Enjoyment of Games (Beginning to understand what opposition are trying to achieve and using teams &amp; personal strengths to be successful)</li> <li>• Developing Confidence &amp; Improvement of Skills (Continue to improve and refine skill set, knowing when to use those skills and how to use those skills within the context of 1 v 1 and in a structured offence)</li> </ul>



**Appendix 7: Recommended Training Session to Game Ratio**

There are three main criteria to consider when thinking of training time to game ratios:

- Frequency
- Duration
- Training Sessions-to-Match Ratio

**U8:**

1 day per week  
45 to 60 minutes  
1:1

Or 0:1 - the idea here is for the U6 players to show up on a given day for their session, which includes 20 to 30 minutes of appropriate activities and then a 3 Vs 3 match. This is the academy approach in which the players are not assigned to teams, but all children in the age group meet at the same time and place to be trained and have a game.

**U10:**

1/2 days per week  
60 to 75 minutes  
2:1

**U12:**

1/2 days per week  
60 to 75 minutes  
2 or 3:1

**U14:**

2/3 days per week  
75 to 90 minutes  
3:1

**U16:**

2 - 4 days per week  
90 minutes  
3 or 4:1

**U18:**

4/5 days per week  
90 minutes  
4 or 5:1



## **Appendix 8: FECC Selection Policy**

### **Preamble:**

The FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate (FECC) programme offers coaches from around Europe the unique opportunity to learn from some of the best in the business.

The certificate focuses on the areas important in the identification and development of young talent, while offering an opportunity to network with other coaches and complete a programme that will increase their chances of finding a job.

Mentored by Svetislav Pesic, the winning coach of multiple European and World Championship titles, the FECC is built around clinics held during FIBA Europe Youth Championships.

Coaches have the opportunity to spend time in the gym watching games and practices while also analyzing game video using cutting edge computer software, all under the watchful eye of the FECC Project Group which includes Pesic as well as other experienced coaches from around Europe.

Run over a period of three years participants are also given homework and specific tasks between clinics and are lectured on off-the-court subjects such as nutrition and doping control.

### **Frequently asked questions regarding FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate**

#### **1. What is FECC?**

The FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate programme was created in order to enhance the knowledge of European basketball coaches in the area of the development of young talent. This programme, focusing mainly on the development of fundamentals, is not aimed at the basic level coaches but at those who already possess a reasonable knowledge in this area.

#### **2. Who can participate in the FECC?**

All participants who have been identified already by their national federations as the most talented coaches for the future. By completing the three years programme and receiving the FECC, each coach will receive excellent recommendations and increase their prospects of finding a coaching job in Europe and the rest of the World.

There is a limit of app. 60 participants per program. The registration deadline will be announced at the beginning of the year in which the program starts. Each federation has the right to register three (3) coaches, ranked by priority. For every Federation, the coach with the highest priority in this ranking has a guaranteed place in the FECC program. After the registration deadline has expired, open places will be given to the remaining coaches on the waiting list by FIBA Europe.

#### **3. Can I apply for a place on FECC?**

Yes, you can apply to your National Federation. FIBA Europe does not accept direct applications from individual coaches.



#### **4. Do I have to speak good English to take part?**

All participants have to be able to speak and write in English. All clinics, presentations and examinations are conducted in English language.

#### **5. What is the structure of the programme?**

The first stage of this programme concentrates on the more theoretical aspects of coaching. Participants will study player profiling, selection and **what** to teach (development principles). In the second stage they learn **how** to use the theoretical knowledge in practical terms (methods). This includes more hands on learning.

The FECC is organised in conjunction with the European Championships for U16, U18 and U20 Men Division A. The three courses, lasting six days each, will be based at the location of those events: First year - U16 men, Second year - U18 men and Third year - U20 men. At the final clinic, all participants will take an FECC exam and, if successful, will receive the FIBA Europe Coaching Certificate.

#### **6. What is the cost for participants to take part in FECC?**

There is NO PARTICIPATION FEE for FECC. FIBA Europe covers all tutors' fees, resources and other costs related to the course itself. The participants, or their national federations, are responsible only for travel and residential costs.

#### **The Course itself:**

- Coaches will need to have a reasonable good level of skill in use of a video analysis system is important. Assessments at the course require coaches to present to the whole group using video analysis software. There are no exceptions
- The average day is 8.00am to at least midnight. At least 2 nights you will be working in small groups till the small hours especially on video analysis. The week is about 80 - 90 hours in real terms
- Attendance at EVERYTHING is compulsory and monitored. They take it very seriously and insist you are there the day before and can't leave till the day after
- You are required to take part in the practical. This is tough as a majority of coaches have played at a high level. This was demanding. Most coaches are full time professional except for the Irish and British
- There are exams at the courses and papers to write in between, and these are well beyond Irish Level 2 Coaching Qualifications.

#### **Selection Policy Criteria:**

The Committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches will nominate individuals to BI and ultimately FIBA to participate in the FECC. The Coach selected should be someone of the highest professional and personal standards and is willing to work with the staff of Basketball Ireland and Coaches around the country upon their return each year.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



- The FECC course will be advertised on the Basketball Ireland website. Applicants will fill out an application form stating their qualifications and basketball experience.
- In the unlikely event that we do not receive sufficient applications or applications that fulfill the criteria below, a list of highly experienced coaches will be formed and will be written to and asked if they are interested in participating on the course.
  
- The following criteria will be used:
  - National League and/or SuperLeague Experience or equivalent in another country
  - National Teams Coaching
  - Willingness to provide courses and clinics on information learned during course when finished FECC
  - The Coach selected should, **where possible**, hold a minimum of a Level 2 Coaching Qualification for at least three years. This may be an issue for the first few years as we have only rolled out the Level 2 course. In a number of years, the minimum requirement to apply for the FECC position will be the Level 3 Qualification.
- A member of the committee of BIC cannot apply for the FECC while they are a member of the committee.
- Candidates must also be aware the while the programme is free to participate in, all flights, hotels and other costs are paid for by the participant.
- The participant will have to sign a contract with Basketball Ireland on the role they will have to play in sharing the information when they come back from the course.

Signed

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Basketball Ireland Coaches



## **Appendix 9: Tutor Development Course (TDC) Selection Policy**

### **Tutor Development**

As part of the Coaching Development Programme for Ireland Coaching Ireland in partnership with National Governing Bodies train tutors, who have been nominated by their respective NGB's.

Tutors play an enormously important role within every National Governing Body, specifically in the design, delivery and review of coach education programmes. To date seven hundred and twenty six tutors have completed Level 2 Tutor training. In the past two years Coaching Ireland has also run nine sports specific tutor courses.

Their influence is immense and their responsibility to improve the number of coaches and the standard of coaching is a challenging and deeply rewarding one. The buzz and the benefits of participation in sport are well documented and is hard to beat. They encompass a wide range of motives that attract so many to sport in the first place. Many areas of research point to the importance of the coach in providing that 'buzz' within a fun, safe, relevant, progressive context.

### **What is the structure and Duration of the programme?**

The courses comprises of 5 weekends in the University of Limerick. (72 contact hours), structured distance learning tasks and tutor practice.

### **Tutor Course (TDC 28) began in February 2012:**

- Weekend 1: February 4th & 5th
- Weekend 2: February 25th & 26th
- Weekend 3: March 24th & 25th
- Weekend 4: April 21th & 22th
- Weekend 5: May 26th & 27th

### **Who can participate in the TDC?**

All registered coaches of Basketball Ireland. Entrance to the tutor course is based on nomination by NGBs or Coaching Ireland.

### **What is the cost for participants to take part in TDC?**

The cost of the course is €1000. Basketball Ireland Coaches has budgeted to provide for 50% of this cost. The remainder of the course fee is paid by the participant to Basketball Ireland who will pay the balance to Coaching Ireland.

### **Selection Policy Criteria:**

The Committee of Basketball Ireland Coaches will nominate individuals to BI Council to participate in the TDC. The Coach selected should be someone of the highest professional and personal standards and is willing to work with the staff of Basketball Ireland and Coaches around the country upon their completion of the course.



## *Basketball Ireland Coaches*



- The TDC course will be advertised on the Basketball Ireland website and will be emailed to all registered coaches beforehand. Applicants will fill out an application form stating their qualifications and basketball experience.
- In the unlikely event that we do not receive sufficient applications or applications that fulfill the criteria below, a list of highly experienced coaches will be formed and will be written to and asked if they are interested in participating on the course.
- The following criteria will be used:
  - National League and/or SuperLeague Experience or equivalent in another country
  - National Teams Coaching
  - Willingness to provide courses and clinics on information learned during course when finished FECC
  - The Coach selected should, **where possible**, hold a minimum of a Level 2 Coaching Qualification for at least two/three years. This may be an issue for the first few years as we have only rolled out the Level 2 course. In a number of years, the minimum requirement to apply for the TDC position will be the Level 3 Qualification.
- A member of the committee of BIC cannot apply for the TDC while they are a member of the committee.

Signed

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Basketball Ireland Coaches



**Basketball Ireland 2007/2008 research completed**  
**Examining 'Motivation, future participation and drop out',**

**by**

**Ciara Losty**

**Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology**

**Waterford institute of Technology**



*Basketball Ireland Coaches*  
**Review of Literature**  
**Introduction**



*'it has been recognised for centuries that sport can contribute to education values thanks make for the development of character and right social relations... Within this contribution there are many intertwined and interwoven threads of influences, subtle and not always easy to analyse. But sportsmen who year by year have contact with the playing of amateur games do not need to be convinced by argument of the validity of sport's contribution' Kennedy p.18 (1931).*

Sport builds character. *Mens sana in corpore sano*. Physical, mental and moral health fit together. These are the foundations on which our sporting beliefs in modern society are based. Roughly fourth million boys and girls worldwide between the ages of 5 and 18 take part in organised athletic activities, most of which are not school based (Pennington, 2006). This is an immense assembly of individuals to cater and influence in their physical, mental and moral growth.

To be good athlete at any level of competition an athlete needs to persevere, discipline herself to the rigor of training, and to summon the valour to go on even when her case is hopeless. Basketball is a game of positions, tactics and roles - a team can not flourish unless the athlete subordinates herself to its demands and carries out her responsibilities. These are intrinsic values that can be learned from participation in sport, yet why do some many of our athletes drop out of sport, why do females do not participate as much as males and do these athletes intend to contribute to the Irish Basketball governing body in the future?

### **Youth's Sport**

It has been recently suggested that youth sport has the potential to accomplish three important objectives in children's development (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). First, sport programs can provide youth with opportunities to be physically active, which in turn can lead to improved physical health. Second, youth sport programs have long been considered important to youth's psychosocial development, providing opportunities to learn important life skills such as cooperation, discipline, leadership, and self-control. Third, youth sport programs are critical for the learning of motor skills; these motor skills serve as a foundation for future national sport stars and recreational adult sport participants.

Participation in organized youth sport is an accepted part of childhood development in western countries (Coakley, 1998) and has the potential to enormously influence the children's self concept (Smith & Smoll, 1990). Therefore, understanding the motives for youth sport participation and attrition are important issues concerning sport practitioners and researchers. Although it is generally accepted that children participate in sports for a multitude of reasons, major motives for participation include factors such as having fun, improving skills, making friends or getting/staying in shape (Gill, Gross & Huddleston, 1983, Salguero, Gonzalez-Boto, Tuero & Marquez, 2003 a). However, the same motives do not always emerge in all studies and it has been



demonstrated that participation motivation may change or be dependent upon factors such as age (Brodkin & Weiss, 1990; Salguero et al., 2003a), gender (Buonamano, Cei & Mussino, 1995; Gill et al., 1983), perceived ability (Ryckman & Hamel, 1993), sport type and level (White & Duda, 1994) or the influence of family, peers and coaches (Martin & Dodder, 1991).

Thus, there appears to be a void between the potential positive outcomes, and some of the negative realities of youth sport programs. One of the key issues for researchers and practitioners must be to close this void and work together to assure that youth have positive rather than negative experiences in sport, leading to positive rather than negative outcomes from youth sport involvement. Specifically, youth sport programs should lead to physical health, psychosocial development, and lifelong recreational or elite sport participation

### **Coach Influence**

Smith, Smoll, and Curtis (1978) were among the first to examine youth coaches' behaviors. They found that the best liked coaches were those who demonstrated more technical instructional, reinforcement, and mistake contingent reinforcement behaviors. Unfortunately much research also highlights the potential negative influences of youth sport coaches. Several authors (Gilbert, Gilbert, & Trudel, 2001a, 2001b; Hill & Hansen, 1988; Siegenthaler & Gonzalez, 1997) have suggested that youth coaches who place primary emphasis on winning often exploit their athletes rather than considering their developmental stages and advancing their psychological and social best interests. In particular, dropout and burnout athletes perceived their coaches as less encouraging and supportive, and more controlling and autocratic than other athletes (Gould, Udry, Tuffey, & Loehr, 1996; Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Briere, 2001; Robinson & Carron, 1982).

### **Parental Influence**

Parent behaviors and parenting styles can also have both positive and negative influences on children's sport experiences. Numerous studies have found that children who perceive more positive interactions, support, and encouragement, and less pressure from parents experience more sport enjoyment, show more preference for challenge, and display more intrinsic motivation than other children (e.g. Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986). In addition, positive parental influence has been associated with greater attraction to sport and physical activity, and higher levels of sport involvement (Brustad, 1993, 1996; Weitzer, 1989). Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1993) found that teenagers from families that were stable and supportive, and that promoted challenge and opportunities were happier, more cheerful, more alert, and showed more excitement towards their home and work experiences than teenagers from other families. In addition, these teenagers felt more often that they were living up to their own and others' expectations, and that they were doing something that had personal and long-term importance.

## **Women's Basketball**

It could be argued that women's sport has not yet been given a chance to excel or build its' appeal. Hargreaves argues that constant satirical remarks and the sexualisation of sporting women has to some extent filtered through to many sectors of society. The suggestion could be made that young girls would rather follow the exploits of the Spice Girls reunion rather than top female athletes. The reason for this in part could be extensive media coverage and the fact that the Spice Girls are more a part of popular culture for young girls than sporting women. The question must be asked why with 50% share of numbers on the planet are they [women] denied equality in terms of sporting media representation? It does seem odd that multi-national media corporations would not take up on what appears to be untapped profitable viewing

Interestingly, According to McPherson (1985) there is little difference in sporting activity between boys and girls up to the age of twelve years. After this a steady decline by females is seen, although the male decline does not surface until the age of sixteen or seventeen. McPherson goes on to suggest that withdrawal from the sporting arena is due to factors outside of sport. Girls move from the sphere of sport to other interests that are valued and encouraged by their peer group and parents. Taking these idea still further schools could be considered as contributing to the gender stereotyping. By segregating sport into girls and boys games, that is to say football, hurling and basketball for boys and dance and hockey for girls. The male sports can be seen to bridge the divide from boyhood to manhood, with a plethora of opportunities to be involved in sports later in life. However the female who wants to carry on her sporting interests into womanhood may find rather limited opportunities when compared to the men. It therefore follows that males have something to gain by reinforcing gender stereotypes at such an early age. In a research report surveying seven thousand female sports enthusiasts, one of the most interesting findings was that the most active sportswomen shared the childhood experience of playing mostly with boys or in mixed gender groups, rather than mostly with girls (Miller Lite Report on Women in Sports, 1985).

It could be argued that the greatest weapon for patriarchy in sport is the fragmentalising of the women's position. That is to say women who are already in the sport will be unlikely to 'rock the boat' for fear of compromising their position. Others are turned off sports by their peers, with gender stereotyping, who feel it is 'tomboyish.' Furthermore, Duncan (1997) of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee suggests that in order to avoid compromising their femininity, many girls drop out of sports and physical activity altogether.

Sport is less of a focus of social activity for women than for men. 39 per cent of female participants never socialise with other participants, compared to 23 per cent of male participants (ERSI report, [www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie)). Women are also less likely than men to volunteer for sport, or to attend sports events. When they do either volunteer or attend, they are more likely than men to do so because their own children or other young people are involved (ERSI report, [www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie)).



The future is not all bleak. The Irish Sports Council has taken the innovative to address the reality that less than one in five Irish women come close to conducting what the World Health Organisation (WHO) deems to be the minimum levels of physical activity necessary for good health. The CEO of the Irish Sports the Council allocated €2.25 million in 2006 to promote women's participation in sport.

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**Table 1: Where are you currently playing basketball?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
School	100.0%	54
College/University	0.0%	0
Other (not playing or not in school or college system)	0.0%	0

**Table 2: Are you male or female?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	38.9%	21
Female	61.1%	33
<i>answered question</i>		<b>54</b>

**Table 3: How many years have you been playing basketball?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0 - 2	5.6%	3
2 - 4	7.4%	4
4 - 6	31.5%	17
6 - 8	55.6%	30
<i>answered question</i>		<b>54</b>

**Table 4: How did you get involved in basketball? Tick the answers that are appropriate for you**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Friends	13.0%	7
School	59.3%	32
Summer camps	9.3%	5
Club	40.7%	22
Family	0.0%	0
other	0.0%	0

**Table 5: Is basketball currently the only sport you play?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	35.2%	19
No	64.8%	35

Table 6: For what reasons do you play basketball on a scale of 1-6 (1-being the highest...6 being the lowest)

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average
Social	5	6	12	14	9	8	3.740741
competition	20	11	5	12	2	4	2.574074
fun	25	12	7	6	1	3	2.166667
fitness	9	17	18	6	2	2	2.648148
role models	4	1	4	6	20	19	4.740741
family	1	3	1	3	15	31	5.240741

Table 7: For what reasons do you play basketball on a scale of 1-6 (1-being the highest...6 being the lowest)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
<b>Social</b>	9.3% (5)	11.1% (6)	22.2% (12)	<b>25.9%</b> (14)	16.7% (9)	14.8% (8)	3.74	54
<b>Competition</b>	<b>37.0%</b> (20)	20.4% (11)	9.3% (5)	22.2% (12)	3.7% (2)	7.4% (4)	2.57	54
<b>Fun</b>	<b>46.3%</b> (25)	22.2% (12)	13.0% (7)	11.1% (6)	1.9% (1)	5.6% (3)	2.17	54
<b>Fitness</b>	16.7% (9)	31.5% (17)	<b>33.3%</b> (18)	11.1% (6)	3.7% (2)	3.7% (2)	2.65	54
<b>Role Models</b>	7.4% (4)	1.9% (1)	7.4% (4)	11.1% (6)	<b>37.0%</b> (20)	35.2% (19)	4.74	54
<b>Family</b>	1.9% (1)	5.6% (3)	1.9% (1)	5.6% (3)	27.8% (15)	<b>57.4%</b> (31)	5.24	54

Table 8: At what level did/do you play? Please specify at what level

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
School	98.1%	53
Club	66.7%	36
Regional	31.5%	17
National Team	7.4%	4

Table 9: On a scale of 1-10 (1 being very low and 10 being very high) rate yourself in the following...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Rating Average	Response Count
<b>shooting ability</b>	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	0.0 % (0)	9.3 % (5)	14.8 % (8)	18.5 % (10)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	22.2 % (12)	7.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	6.50	54
<b>passing</b>	3.7 % (2)	0.0 % (0)	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	0.0% (0)	16.7 % (9)	22.2 % (12)	24.1 % (13)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	5.6% (3)	7.46	54
<b>ball handling/dribbling</b>	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	3.7 % (2)	1.9 % (1)	9.3% (5)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	24.1 % (13)	18.5 % (10)	7.4% (4)	7.4% (4)	6.80	54
<b>screening on and off the ball</b>	3.7 % (2)	1.9 % (1)	3.7 % (2)	11.1 % (6)	14.8 % (8)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	20.4 % (11)	14.8 % (8)	1.9% (1)	1.9% (1)	5.89	54
<b>pick 'n' roll</b>	7.4 % (4)	7.4 % (4)	0.0 % (0)	9.3 % (5)	14.8 % (8)	<b>22.2</b> % (12)	14.8 % (8)	11.1% (6)	3.7% (2)	9.3% (5)	5.85	54
<b>pivoting</b>	3.7 % (2)	3.7 % (2)	5.6 % (3)	3.7 % (2)	7.4% (4)	5.6% (3)	13.0 % (7)	<b>29.6</b> % (16)	13.0 % (7)	14.8 % (8)	7.06	54
<b>guard moves</b>	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	3.7 % (2)	13.0 % (7)	16.7 % (9)	<b>24.1</b> % (13)	14.8 % (8)	18.5 % (10)	3.7% (2)	6.81	54
<b>post moves</b>	1.9 % (1)	5.6 % (3)	11.1 % (6)	5.6 % (3)	9.3% (5)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	13.0 % (7)	14.8 % (8)	11.1% (6)	1.9% (1)	5.98	54
<b>on ball defence</b>	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	7.4% (4)	22.2 % (12)	18.5 % (10)	<b>25.9</b> % (14)	20.4 % (11)	1.9% (1)	7.17	54
<b>off ball defence</b>	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	11.1 % (6)	13.0 % (7)	24.1 % (13)	<b>27.8</b> % (15)	11.1% (6)	9.3% (5)	7.24	54
<b>def transition</b>	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	11.1 % (6)	14.8 % (8)	<b>27.8</b> % (15)	16.7 % (9)	16.7 % (9)	5.6% (3)	6.96	54
<b>offensive transition</b>	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	5.6 % (3)	9.3% (5)	16.7 % (9)	14.8 % (8)	18.5 % (10)	<b>24.1</b> % (13)	7.4% (4)	7.17	54
<b>team offences - zone - man</b>	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	0.0 % (0)	3.7 % (2)	3.7% (2)	20.4 % (11)	18.5 % (10)	<b>35.2</b> % (19)	11.1% (6)	5.6% (3)	7.24	54
<b>team defence - zone - man</b>	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	3.7% (2)	11.1% (6)	20.4 % (11)	<b>29.6</b> % (16)	20.4 % (11)	7.4% (4)	7.41	54

. and on the following physical ability												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Rating Average	Response Count
speed	3.7 % (2)	0.0 % (0)	0.0 % (0)	3.7 % (2)	9.3 % (5)	9.3 % (5)	13.0 % (7)	<b>24.1</b> % <b>(13)</b>	22.2 % (12)	14.8 % (8)	7.52	54
agility	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	0.0 % (0)	0.0 % (0)	16.7 % (9)	13.0 % (7)	<b>22.2</b> % <b>(12)</b>	20.4 % (11)	13.0 % (7)	11.1 % (6)	7.13	54
vertical jump	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	3.7 % (2)	9.3 % (5)	13.0 % (7)	<b>27.8</b> % <b>(15)</b>	16.7 % (9)	16.7 % (9)	7.4 % (4)	7.02	54
strength	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	1.9 % (1)	3.7 % (2)	13.0 % (7)	14.8 % (8)	16.7 % (9)	<b>22.2</b> % <b>(12)</b>	18.5 % (10)	5.6 % (3)	6.96	54

**Table 10: Do you see yourself playing basketball still in...**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
0 yr	3.7%	2
1 year	11.1%	6
2 years	11.1%	6
3 years	0.0%	0
4 years +	74.1%	40

**Table 11: What are your top two factors that would influence your decision to stop playing basketball?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Social/friends	3.7%	2
School or college studies	55.6%	30
Level of competition	14.8%	8
Time commitment	35.2%	19
cost	1.9%	1
opportunity in your area	33.3%	18

**Table 12: How many times a week to you train in basketball?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	18.5%	10
2	24.1%	13
3	33.3%	18
4	24.1%	13

**Table 13: Do you ever train outside of team practice?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Never	14.8%	8
Occasionally	53.7%	29
Regularly	22.2%	12
Everyday	9.3%	5

**Table 14: Do you have any role models, please list;**

Aine Soige	Louise callanan
Allen Iverson	Marie Hayes
Ben Wallace	Michael Jordan
Dave Donnelly	Micheal Bree
Dwayne Wade	Michele Aspell
Greg Gurr	Mindaugas Kurcenkovas
Ilgauskus	Niamh Dwyer
Jalen Rose	Noreen Coen
JJ Reddick	Pat Burke
John Teahan	Pat Glover
Kenny gamble	Pete Madison
Kieran Donaghy	Sarah Donohue
Kobe Bryant	Shane Mooney
Krstal ruddy	Shaquille O' Neal
Kwame Brown	Steve Nash
Larry Bird	Tim Duncan
Lebron James	Louise Callanan
Lisa Palmer	

**Table 15: Do you ever watch basketball live or on TV**

Never	5.6%	3
Occasionally	44.4%	24
Regularly	40.7%	22
All the time	9.3%	5

**Table 16: List the top five reasons why you would continue to play basketball;**

Subject 1 love of the sport, fitness, means of escape, competition, go further in the sport
Subject 2 Enjoyment, keep fit, competition
Subject 3 social aspect-meet new people, team sport so it's enjoyable, to stay fit, love the game, friends could play it too
Subject 4 Fitness, competition, to improve my game, to get further in league opportunities
Subject 5 Competition, fitness, to get further, opportunities, skills
Subject 6 I love it, its fun, am pretty ok at it, competition, winning a match is the best feeling ever
Subject 7 for fun, fitness, friendship, competition
Subject 8 love the game, to keep fit, competition, a way of making new friends, something to do in free time
Subject 9 to keep fit, social aspects, competition, fun/entertaining
Subject 10 Fitness, social, I like it, to achieve something for my club
Subject 11 I love the game, it's a pleasure to play, it keeps me active, builds competitive attitude, keep in touch with peers, for fun
Subject 12 I enjoy it. it's a fun way to stay fit, for the social aspect, you get to travel, I enjoy competition
Subject 13 Fitness, fun, competition, social, travel
Subject 14 to play at high level abroad, for competition, to go to college in the states
Subject 15 Competition, determination, fun, love for the game, so I don't get bored
Subject 16 the high level of competition, the team fun, friends, I enjoy it
Subject 17 Fitness, fun, social
Subject 18 Fitness, social, enjoyment
Subject 19 I enjoy it, fitness, to socialize at matches with friends, for the good of future career e.g. CV, meet new people
Subject 20 Fitness, social, competition, enjoyment, friends
Subject 21 Fitness, social life, it's fun, competition, keep in touch with friends



Subject 22 to stay fit, improve balance and ball control for football, meet new people, fun, socialize with friends
Subject 23 Enjoyment, competition, fitness
Subject 24 the competition, for fun and my passion for the game, it keeps me fit, you don't have to go out in the cold and play
Subject 25 to stay fit, keep in touch with friends, enjoyable activity, keeps hand and eye coordination good, I get to buy cool shoes
Subject 26 exciting sport, stay fit, love the game, competition, improve skills and sportsmanship
Subject 27 favourite sport, fast, exciting sport, stay fit, improve my skills, reach higher levels
Subject 28 I enjoy it, my friends play, I'm a competitive person, to keep fit
Subject 29 keep fit, meet new friends, fun, competition, my love for the sport
Subject 30 it's good to keep fit, I like it, something to do
Subject 31 Fun, craic, fitness, enjoyment, competition
Subject 32 Fun, keeps you fit, enjoyment, competition
Subject 33 Fitness, enjoyment, social, to play high standard, family
Subject 34 I like new sport challenges, fun, meet new people, stay fit
Subject 35 good fun, exercise, competition, always new things to earn, I love it
Subject 36 Fitness, friendship
Subject 37 Fitness, competition, family, pride, self motivation, feel good factor
Subject 38 Fun, keep fit, be with friends, competition
Subject 39 fast game, tactical, enjoyable, to keep fit, a change from outdoor sports i.e football
Subject 40 Fun, stay fit, develop skills, meet people, compete
Subject 41 Fitness, friends, something to do, competition, fun
Subject 42 Fun, I like it, been playing for years, exercise, relieves stress from study/work

Subject 43 for the sport, for fitness, play with friends, the competition
Subject 44 Fitness, enjoyment, competition, friends, social
Subject 45 Fitness, teamwork, social activities, fun, competition
Subject 46 Fun, competition, fitness, friends
Subject 47 Fun, competition, social, fitness
Subject 48 Fitness, social aspect, fun, played it since age 9, the competitive aspect
Subject 49 Fitness, social life, entertainment, competition, relieve stress
Subject 50 Fun, fitness, competition, social
Subject 51 Fitness, competition, social, fun
Subject 52 Fitness, competitive, enjoyment, love of the game, maximise basketball potential

Two subjects gave no reasons why they would continue to play basketball

**Top reasons for continuing to play basketball in order of frequency -**

1. Fitness/exercise
2. Competition
3. Fun, social reasons (meet new people and be with friends)
4. Enjoyment

**Table 17: If you do not play basketball anymore, would you be interested in participating as an administrator/referee/coach/not interested? Tick multiple boxes**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
not interested	29.6%	16
Administrator	7.4%	4
Referee	24.1%	13
Coach	66.7%	36

**Table 18: In your opinion what do you think would make basketball more appealing to you and your peers?**

more regular non-competitive games, e.g. scrimmage
more fair competition for relevant levels
enthusiastic coaches, good team spirit, enthusiasm on the team to play good or win, good organisation within a club or team regarding match times, training sessions
great way to keep fit, great way to meet new people, its fun
different styles of training and variety of drills
more games
Supporters
more advertising of it-showing games on the t.v. not having it so intimidating those who don't feel good enough are embarrassed to play. better system, come up against same teams in league and qualifying stages
better facilities, more training times/more serious, to be able to train on free time in school facilities
more indoor arenas like the national basketball arena
More publicity in schools basketball and club. show the NBA games on TV as well the Irish leagues. more courts available to practice on without having to pay a fortune to rent the halls for an hour
more publicity so that people will grow up with it and start playing it from a younger age therefore there would be a higher standard of players throughout the country
better facilities in Ireland
better standard of basketball courts/gyms and access to them
better facilities and courts. Most courts in Ireland are too slippery to play properly. More public basketball courts
more recognition in the community, have a club house in area
if other students were allowed watch matches they might be more interested
I think if it was shown to younger children at primary school perhaps it would make it more of a popular better known sport. For me as a leaving cert student if it was not held during school hours as you miss classes I would be more willing to play more often
increased competition, more underage groups e.g. U23, more coverage of national basketball, greater college selection, more regional coaching courses
better competition, make it more known, have better coaches in more schools so more will be interested
more local basketball teams and competitions
more games
more basketball opportunity, get a basketball show on tv so everyone can see how good it really is, more competitions
paid for playing
There is always someone better than you. fast paced sport, never boring
correct equipment/jerseys, club/school trips, friendly atmosphere, lots of competitions/tournaments



### Basketball Ireland Coaches



more teams for people especially in older age groups. accommodation for "b" teams in schools, more women's basketball shown on TV
add challenge games versus boys playing at the same level as us, it makes us work a lot harder
nice gear, more time to train, more matches
nice gear, more opportunities in area, more matches
more opportunities in your area
setting up more basketball training, showing that basketball is as good a sport as any others, teaching skills not only playing games
introduce games into training such as knockout
more half time shows and contests
more competitions
learning more about the game and watching professionals
to get tips from professionals, to set up a club in our area, get to go to matches in Tallaght, have more publicity on TV
more local club teams
if the rules weren't as complicated for outsiders
put more Irish games on TV
more competitions, club team in area
for your fitness
all star club teams, money, better courts
Money, better courts
More respect for the game from other sports player, media coverage
tournaments in other countries
more facilities
better coaching
better facilities i.e. filter glass boards in most schools

The main themes that emerge from this question is more media coverage of basketball, better facilities and more access to competition and leagues in the subjects areas.