



Active Start @ Home Guide

Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada



Special Olympics was founded upon one simple notion: sport has an incredible capacity to transform lives, change attitudes and make communities stronger. By bringing people together, Special Olympics teaches us to recognize our similarities rather than focusing on our differences.

Active Start @ Home Guide



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Olympiques spéciaux
Canada





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When Active Start and FUNdamentals by Special Olympics Canada were first implemented they were probably the most significant programmatic initiatives for the physical activity and sport participation of young children with intellectual and developmental disabilities ever in Canada. Building upon this success, the Active Start and FUNdamentals @ Home Guides will provide parents and caregivers opportunities to engage in physical activity and skill development with their children at home and in their communities. By reinforcing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes learned in their weekly sessions with Special Olympics, the families will be able to play, learn and participate together. This will increase the likelihood that these important early skills will be practised in multiple contexts, be valued by the whole family, and increase the probability that the children will participate in physical activity and sport for life; which will, in turn, have a positive impact on their health and overall quality of life. By empowering families to engage in physical activity together, everyone will benefit.

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Active Start @ Home Guide

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The Special Olympics Movement

Special Olympics was founded upon one simple notion: sport has an incredible capacity to transform lives, change attitudes and make communities stronger. By bringing people together, Special Olympics teaches us to recognize our similarities rather than focusing on our differences.

From St. John's to Victoria to Whitehorse, the reach of our grassroots movement is profound and the benefits to those children, youth and adults with an intellectual disability who are registered in its programs, as well as those that matter most to them, is undeniable.

As a chapter within the larger global movement - there are now more than 229 accredited programs in 170 countries servicing more than 3.7 million individuals - Special Olympics Canada has come a long way since it began in 1969. Then, one single competition attracted 1,400 individuals with an intellectual disability from across the country. Today, more than 38,000 children, youth and adults with an intellectual disability are registered in our programs which run literally every day of the week out of local sport clubs. They, in turn, are supported by an extraordinary network of more than 18,000 volunteers; Canadians from all walks of life who are committed to help accomplish something remarkable, something extraordinary.

And so, Special Olympics is no longer just an event. Rather it has become one of the world's most powerful and effective social movements. One that is fortunate to receive tremendous support from a loyal group of community, corporate and government partners as well as individual supporters who all share in our belief in the extraordinary power of sport and the success that can be had through Special Olympics.

For individuals with an intellectual disability, Special Olympics is often the only place where they have an opportunity to participate in their communities, and to develop a strong belief in themselves. For many, it is a gateway to empowerment, competence, and acceptance.

Special Olympics Canada is here to serve the needs of this disability population - from its very youngest to its more mature, from the individual who will stay active for life, regularly participating in sport at his or her local club, through to the athlete who will advance and compete at national and international competitions.



a lifetime of memories
and skill building, made
possible through active
participation in sport

SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA CEO SHARON BOLLENBACH
WITH ACTIVE START PARTICIPANT LEVI AND HIS DAD.

A message from our CEO

On behalf of Special Olympics Canada, I would like to welcome you to the Special Olympics Movement. Your child's participation in **Active Start** is the first step towards a lifetime of memories and skill building, made possible through active participation in sport.

For decades, Special Olympics Canada has encouraged the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle through participation in Special Olympics programs that improve the wellbeing of individuals with an intellectual disability. All ages and abilities are welcome to participate in Special Olympics programs, as we aim to enrich the lives of individuals with an intellectual disability across the country, strengthening communities and changing attitudes to create a more inclusive society.

In 2009, Special Olympic Canada launched the **Active Start** program nationwide. **Active Start** is an innovative sports play program for children with intellectual disabilities between the ages of two to six, that introduces them to the world of sports while enhancing their fundamental movement skills and physical literacy. This program engages young athletes through a variety of developmentally appropriate play activities that are designed to foster physical, cognitive and social development.

We are excited to see the **Active Start** program continuing to expand across Canada. We currently have programs running in each of our 12 provincial/territorial chapters and the number of athletes participating in this great program continues to grow every year.

Have Fun.

Sharon Bollenbach,
Chief Executive Officer Special Olympics Canada

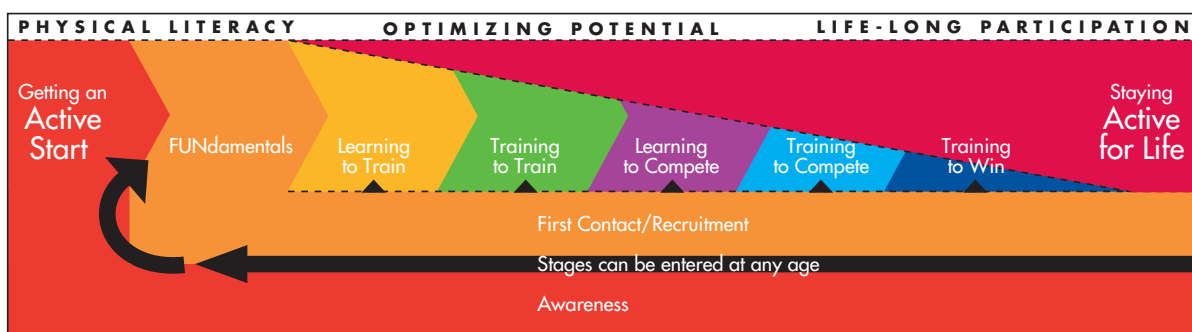
Active Start @ Home Guide

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) and Special Olympics

Not just for adults, Special Olympics Canada has developed a model for our athletes that ensures their physical wellbeing is nurtured from a very young age onward. With our initiatives for young athletes, as well as our programs and services for adults, we have become a well-respected organization in the athletic field.

Acting as a framework for those who choose to stay active for life in community or recreational programs, or those who seek to reach the podium in competitive training programs, the Long Term Development Model (LTAD) serves as a guide through their participation in sport for individuals with an intellectual disability, including those as young as two years of age.

The following diagram illustrates a long-term approach to developing Special Olympic Athletes:



Active Start is for children aged 2 - 6

Fundamentals is for children aged 7 - 12

The middle stages - **Learning to Train, Training to Train, Learning to Compete, Training to Compete, and Training to Win** - reflect a competitive pathway where athletes will have an opportunity to participate in local and regional competitions with the possibility of advancing to provincial, national and even world games. Alternatively, the **Active for Life** stage reflects a recreational pathway. Whichever pathway an athlete chooses, and regardless of age and competitive drive, our programs are designed to promote physical activity while helping individuals reach their sport goals in a fun and safe environment.

For more information on our LTAD Model please visit:

www.specialolympics.ca/resources/long-term-athlete-development-model/



Positive Interaction

Active Start @ Home Guide

Active Start – Rationale

The Special Olympics Canada **Active Start** program is the first of its kind in Canada. The program provides specific training and educational opportunities for children with an intellectual disability and their families, many of whom do not have any other avenues for structured physical fitness.

Active Start is built on the rationale that, when children with an intellectual disability receive early instruction in basic motor skills and developmentally appropriate play, there is an excellent opportunity for improvement in their physical, social, and cognitive abilities.

Active Start – Traditional Program

A traditional **Active Start** program runs over a span of 12 weeks. Individuals gather once a week, in a group setting, at a central location. A program leader leads athletes through a variety of activities designed to improve fundamental movement skills and enhance physical literacy. Program leaders are guided by the Special Olympics Canada **Active Start** Program Leaders Guide which was developed so that volunteers responsible for an **Active Start** program have the tools to ensure that the experiences of young athletes are positive and safe. This guide educates program leaders in the areas of positive movement skills and the importance of caregiver involvement in the lives of children with an intellectual disability. The Guide also introduces the values of positive movement experiences during childhood development, and describes sport-specific activities aimed at improving basic motor skills. Finally, this guide also introduces the importance of family involvement, which facilitates growth in self-esteem and confidence and the ability to interact with peers and in group settings.

Active Start – At Home

In traditional **Active Start** programs, parents/caregivers of participants are expected to participate in weekly group sessions and have always been encouraged by program leaders to continue with their child's physical literacy development in the home setting. Special Olympics Canada understands that facilitating home activities can be challenging for some; this was the impetus behind the **Active Start @ Home Guide**. This guide is designed to reinforce and further develop the skills that your child is learning at his/her weekly group sessions. The goal of the **Active Start @ Home Guide** is to provide activities and games that complement the lessons from the weekly group sessions, and allow your young athlete to continue to develop fundamental movement skills while staying physically active.

How To Use This Guide.

Your child's participation in an **Active Start** program will improve his/her fundamental motor skills running, jumping and balancing abilities, among others. Supplementing this training with practice in a home setting following each of his/her weekly group sessions will reinforce newly learned skills while improving confidence and ability.

The **Active Start @ Home Guide** is designed to supplement your child's weekly group sessions in a fun, family environment. Ideally, you will be able to work through some of the weekly activities at least once and ideally two or three times in between group sessions. Activities are designed for participation outside (in a park, the back yard, or driveway) or inside (a basement, rec room, or nearby gymnasium). Please refer to **APPENDIX A** for further detail regarding proper activity spaces.

As you progress through the guide, you may find that your child is more drawn to certain activities but shies away from others. Be sure to use the notes section at the back of the guide to record any successes and challenges that your child experiences. Also be aware that some of the activities progress in difficulty. **Remember to always work at your own pace and not to be discouraged if your child does not complete each activity. It is fine to work on only a few skills each week. You will have plenty of time when repeating the program to work on some of the more difficult achievements.**

We encourage you to speak to your program leader and / or local Special Olympics staff about your family's experience with this guide as they may be able to recommend changes and adaptations to the activities listed, that are more suitable for your child.

Lastly, when possible, we encourage your child's siblings / friends to participate.

Equipment

We have tried to minimize the amount of equipment needed for activities in this guide. Please see **APPENDIX A** for a rundown of recommended equipment. Here, you will also find our recommendation for proper clothing / attire for participants.



Let me win
But if I cannot win
Let me be brave
in the attempt

Special Olympics Athletes Oath

Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 1

Group Session

This week's group session served as an introduction to the Active Start program as caregivers and athletes familiarized themselves with the surroundings, got a chance to interact with the other athletes, experiment with the equipment and get an overall sense of the structure of the program.

Reinforcement @ Home

This time can be used as an introduction to future sessions in the home setting. Explain to the athlete that over the next several weeks, they will be spending some time at home repeating some of the activities from the weekly group sessions.

You Will Need

You should take a look through the guide and make sure you have the necessary equipment to complete the activities in this guide. This is also a good time to source out a location for the activities to take place. Please refer to **APPENDIX A** for recommendation regarding proper equipment and ideal locations for activity.

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes (SEE APPENDIX B)

I Spy with My Little Eye

- A) Spread out coloured floor markers or bean bags (household objects or paper taped down can work) along the floor.
- B) Call out the name and colour of the object then have the athlete crawl, walk or run to the object. If the athlete is at a stage where they do not yet identify colours or objects, you can simple point at an object and encourage them to travel towards it.
- C) Repeat until you have called all of the objects.
- D) As athlete improves, encourage them to travel to the object in a different manner; walking backwards, hopping, etc.

Free Play

- A) Allow athlete to explore any sporting equipment that you have and encourage them to play without structure.
- B) Focus on positive interaction and having fun with the child.

Week One



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 2

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Movement Concepts and Balance. Program Leaders focused on Static (stationary) Balance and Dynamic (moving) Balance as participants become more aware of Movement Concepts:

Body Awareness:

What the body can do

Space Awareness:

Where the body can move

Effort Awareness:

How the body can move

Relationship Awareness:

With what or with whom can the body move

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's Static and Dynamic Balance. Key characteristics of these skills are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. While participating, you want the child to improve on existing skills while learning new skills. Don't expect significant improvement overnight; instead look for gradual improvement as their core strength and confidence grows.

You Will Need

Ensure you have ample space for this, and all activities throughout the guide (**SEE APPENDIX A**) Always ensure proper clothing is worn by all participants (**SEE APPENDIX A**)
Masking Tape

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes

(**SEE APPENDIX B**)

Left Foot / Right Foot

- A) Athlete stands in ready position with caregiver close-by. Start out by holding one or both of the child's hands if necessary.
- B) Alternate calls of "left foot" or "right foot" while encouraging child to hold one-footed balance for a stated time (count out loud).
- C) As athlete improves, challenge them to hold balance position for longer period of time.
- D) As athlete improves, ask them to shift their visual focus to different objects in the room as they hold balance.

Balance Beam

- A) Have child follow a straight path, walking along a line taped on the floor. Start out by holding one or both of the child's hands if necessary.
- B) Progress from straddling the line to walking on the line.
- C) As athlete improves, encourage them to look straight ahead (as opposed to down) at the line.
- D) At a very advanced stage, encourage them to complete the activity while walking backwards.

Copycat

- A) Ask child to copy your movements as you assume different positions. Encourage child to perform actions that require balance, such as standing on tiptoes or heels, or standing with one foot directly in front of the other. Try balancing one, two, three or four body parts. For example, three body parts could be two hands and one foot touching the ground.
- B) This activity provides a great opportunity to involve other families members.

Week

2

Alberta
young athletes

Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 3

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Running. Program Leaders continued to work on movement concepts and balance while introducing running, stopping and starting.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's agility and running technique. Key characteristics of this skill are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. During activities, remind child to have swinging L's (arm position) while running. Also encourage them to keep head up and eyes forward while in motion.

You Will Need

4 Pylons or Plastic Bowls
Tennis Ball

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes (SEE APPENDIX B)

Race Around The Square

- A) Spread out four pylons to create a square with a few metres of space in between pylons. "Ready, set, go"; athlete runs from one pylon to the next to complete the square.
- B) As the athlete's stamina improves, have them complete the square 2, 3, 4, etc. times per try.
- C) Time how long it takes child to complete course; then challenge athlete to beat their time.
- D) Switch things up by crating different shapes / courses with the pylons.

Ball Chase

- A) Stand at one end of open space, with child standing nearby. Slowly roll ball across the floor away from the child, then encourage them to run and "cut off" the moving ball and sprint back to you with it. Repeat.
- B) As athlete improves, increase speed of roll and distance they have to travel in order to retrieve it.

Red Light / Green Light

- A) Athlete stands in ready position with parent nearby. Explain to the child that they are going to slowly jog "on the spot" during "red light" and run "on the spot" as fast as they can during green light.
- B) Alternate calls of "red light" and "green light"
- C) As child's stamina increases, extend the duration of "green light" calls.



Week 3

Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 4

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Jumping. Program Leaders introduced jumping while continuing to work on skills learned in previous sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's jumping ability. Key characteristics of this skill are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. During activities, focus on bending of the knees which is a key component of jumping.

You Will Need

Masking Tape
Scarf or Sock

Week

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes (SEE APPENDIX B)

Jumping Long

- A) Create straight line on floor using tape; encourage athlete to jump over line. Try different styles of jumping (one-footed running jump, two-footed standing jump, etc).
- B) Pretend the line is a sleeping snake (or animal tail) and we don't want to wake it up by touching it.
- C) As child improves, have them jump up to retrieve an object (scarf or sock) that is being held above.

Grab the Coconut

- A) Using a two-footed jump, have child jump up to retrieve an object (scarf or sock) that is being held above. Pretend that object is a coconut hanging on a coconut tree.
- B) As athlete improves, increase the height of the object.

Directional Two-Foot Jump

- A) Have child stand facing you with feet together. Point and verbalize direction as they jump in that direction on cue ("left", "right", "forward" or "back"). Try to ensure child keeps feet together throughout jumping motion. Complete series of 10 jumps with 3 second intervals in between each jump. Repeat series as necessary.

4



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 5

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Ball Rolling and Underhand Throwing. Program Leaders introduced ball rolling and underhand throwing while continuing to work on skills learned in previous sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve their child's ball rolling and underhand throwing ability. Key characteristics of these skills are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. Begin with a larger ball, then decrease size of ball as child improves.

You Will Need

Large Ball (Beach Ball) Medium Sized Ball (See Picture On Opposite Page) Tennis Ball

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes (SEE APPENDIX B)

Rolling and Trapping

- A) Sit, facing child, with legs outstretched in a straddle position. Soles of shoes should be touching allowing legs to form a diamond shape.
- B) Roll the ball back and forth to each other, making sure to catch or stop it with your hands.
- C) Continue to roll ball back and forth while progressing to kneeling, then to standing; increase distance between each other.
- D) Discourage bouncing of the ball; instead, work to roll the ball along the ground.
- E) Switch to smaller ball (tennis ball) as child improves

Target Practice

- A) Set up a hoop against the wall. Encourage child to roll the ball from the straddle position through the hoop.
- B) Continue activity while progressing to kneeling; then to standing.
- C) Encourage athlete to roll ball along the ground (no bouncing).
- D) Switch to smaller ball (tennis ball) as child improves.

Two-Hand Underhand

- A) Ask child to stand in ready position a few metres away from parent while holding large ball with two hand, and fingers pointing down towards the ground.
- B) Instruct child to look at your hands, then toss the ball towards you.
- C) Walk the ball back to child
- D) As child improves, extend distance between to the two of you
- E) Switch to smaller ball and have child throw using one hand.

week 5



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 6

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Catching and Trapping. Program Leaders introduced catching and trapping while continuing to work on skills learned in previous sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's catching and trapping ability. Key characteristics of catching are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. It is especially important to ensure child is "tracking" object with their eyes at all times. For all catching exercises, be sure to progress at a slow pace in order to increase athlete's confidence.

You Will Need

Large Ball (Beach Ball)
Medium Ball (See Picture)
Tennis Ball



week 6

Activities

Head, shoulder, knees and toes (SEE APPENDIX B)

Catch A Falling Star

- A) Standing in front of athlete, drop a scarf down from above their head, and encourage them to catch it at chest level.
- B) As athlete improves, try dropping scarf at their side or behind them while encouraging them to adjust/rotate to the direction of the scarf in order to make the catch.
- C) Pretend that the scarf is a falling star and they need to catch it in order to make a wish.

Big Ball Practice Catch

- A) Ask child to stand in ready position while you stand a few metres away facing them.
- B) Slowly carry the ball towards athlete while encouraging them to watch the ball the entire time. Simulate a catch by placing the ball in their hands. Repeat several times, moving more quickly each time.
- C) Repeat exercise. This time, as you approach, have them grab the ball from you; progress to releasing the ball just before it reaches their hands.
- D) Pretend that the ball is a dinosaur egg and you don't want it to touch the ground or it will crack.

High Ball Catch

- A) Ask child to assume the ready position.
- B) Take a large ball and assume kneeling position while facing athlete roughly 2 metres away.
- C) Gently toss a ball (be sure the toss is delivered from chest/waist level) and encourage them to catch it with fingers pointing up or away from their body.
- D) If ball is too difficult for them to catch, start with using a scarf instead; then progress back to using a ball.
- E) As athlete improves, move further away and vary between high and low tosses. Again, if a big ball is too difficult at first, revert back to using a scarf; then progress back to using a ball.

Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 7

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Throwing and Catching. Program Leaders introduced overhand throwing as athletes progressed towards throwing with one hand, while continuing to work on catching.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's throwing and catching ability. As we reach the half-way point of the program, you may find that the activities increase in difficulty. It is important to be patient and allow your child to progress at their own pace. Continue to progress at a slow pace and focus on using a great deal of positive reinforcement. Key characteristics of catching are outlined in **APPENDIX C**.

You Will Need

Large Ball (Beach Ball or Rubber Ball) Hoop or Tape Tennis Ball or Stringy Ball

Activities

If You're Happy And You Know It (SEE APPENDIX B)

Two-Handed Overhead Throw

- A) Give child a large ball.
- B) Facing you ask them to raise the ball over their head.
- C) Encourage them to bring both arms forward to throw the ball to you.
- D) Repeat. Extend distance of throw as child improves.

One-Handed Throwing

- A) Give athlete a tennis ball and instruct them to hold it with one hand (the same hand they write with)
- B) Hold up a hoop a few metres away and encourage child to throw the ball through the hoop using one arm. Alternatively, tape a target in the wall for them to aim at.
- C) Cheer as they score a point for hitting the target
- D) Proper throwing technique will be emphasized during **Fundamentals** Stage.
During **Active Start** Stage, simply ensure that the athlete is making a general effort to throw the ball at the target wherever it is located.
- E) As athlete improves, increase distance of throw.

Bounce Pass Catch

- A) Have child assume ready position roughly 2 - 3 metres away while facing you.
- B) Lightly pass them the ball on a single bounce.
- C) Encourage them to keep their eyes on the ball, and to keep their body in the ball's path as it is coming towards them.
- D) As athlete improves, increase distance of pass.

week

7



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 8

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Kicking. Program Leaders introduced kicking while also working on skills learned in previous sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's kicking ability. Key characteristics of this skill are outlined in **SEE APPENDIX C.**

You Will Need

Soccer Ball
2 Pylons or masking tape
Plastic Cups

Activities

If You're Happy And You Know It

Free Kick

- Athlete stands in ready position.
- Place ball at athlete's feet and encourage them to kick the ball forward.
- Progress towards having them run up to the ball before kicking it



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 8

Kicking for Accuracy

- A) Follow instructions in free kick
- B) Emphasize accuracy by encouraging child to kick the ball between two pylons or at a target taped on the wall
- C) Cheer as they score a goal for hitting the target
- D) As athlete progresses, vary the distance of the target.
- E) You can also create a pyramid using plastic cups, and encourage athlete to knock it over with the ball.

Passing

- A) Stand roughly 4 metres apart and pass the ball back and forth.
- B) Increase distance as athlete improves.
- C) Introduce the idea of using the "inside" part of the foot to pass the ball.
- D) Explain the concept that passing is like sharing



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 9

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Striking. Program Leaders introduced striking while also working on skills learned in previous sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to improve child's striking ability. Key characteristics of this skill are outlined in **APPENDIX C**. During striking activities, encourage your child to focus on keeping their eyes on the object right through contact. Encourage the use of a forehand and backhand stroke for each activity.

You Will Need

Tennis ball
Scarf
Small racket
Bean Bag or Stringy Ball
Tall Pylon or Tee

Activities

If You're Happy And You Know It

Ice Cream Time

- A) Place a large ball (the ice cream) on a pylon / tee (ice cream cone).
- B) Have the athlete hit the ball off the cone with an open hand.

Hot Potato

- A) Have athlete sit on floor in a cross legged position.
- B) Slowly roll a ball (hot potato) to child's side and instruct them to tap it back to you with an open hand.

Side Striking

- A) Have athlete stand in a sideways, ready position with a racket in hand.
- B) Slowly drop scarf in the rackets anticipated flight path and encourage athlete to swat it with racquet.
- C) Progress towards having athlete strike a lobbed beach ball. As athlete improves try having them strike a smaller (tennis) ball.

week 9



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 10

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Advanced Skills. Program Leaders introduced advanced skills that require athletes to combine skills introduced in earlier sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to expand on some of the skills that were developed throughout the program. These skills will require a lot more practice and perseverance to master.

You Will Need

Bouncy Ball
Beach Ball

Activities

If You're Happy And You Know It

Dribbling

- A) Stand behind athlete.
- B) Assist them in bouncing a large ball with two hands without catching it.
- C) Provide less assistance as skills improve.
- D) Encourage athlete to try and only use one hand to dribble.
- E) Alternate hands

Punting

- A) Encourage athlete to balance on one leg with arms out to the sides.
- B) Have them swing her kicking leg backward and forward in a repeated kicking motion.
- C) Finally, hand athlete a beach ball; instruct her to hold it with both hands, then release it, and kick it before it touches the ground.

Fox and Bunny

- A) Demonstrate by slowly stepping forward with the preferred leg then slowly following with the trailing foot. Repeat.
- B) Encourage athlete to mimic demonstration while continue to move in a very slow manner
- C) Speed up the action
- D) Describe the activity; the lead foot is the bunny and the trail foot is the fox. The fox chases the bunny, but never quite catches it.

ten





Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 11

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Stations. Program Leaders focused on improving skills that were taught in prior sessions.

Reinforcement @ Home

Follow a series of exercises designed to reinforce some of the skills that were developed throughout the program. This is also a good time to revisit some of the earlier activities that your child may have struggled with.

You Will Need

Beach Ball
Bouncy Ball
Soccer Ball
Tennis Ball
Softball
Tape
Pylons (or plastic bowls)

Activities

If You're Happy And You Know It

Catching

- A) Play catch with athlete while using a variety of different objects (different sized balls, scarfts, etc)
- B) Vary distance and height of throws to athlete.

Eleven

Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 11

Throwing

- A) Practice throwing a variety of objects at a target
- B) Vary the size and distance of targets.
- C) Practice making one-handed and two-handed throws.

Kicking

- A) Practice kicking different sized balls
- B) Vary the size and distance of targets
- C) Alternate right and left footed kicks.
- D) Practice making contact with ball using "inside" and "outside" of foot.



Active Start @ Home Guide - Week 12

Group Session

This week's group session was titled Fun Day. Program Leaders focused on reviewing material from prior weeks, then having athletes practice skills learned throughout the entire **Active Start** Program.

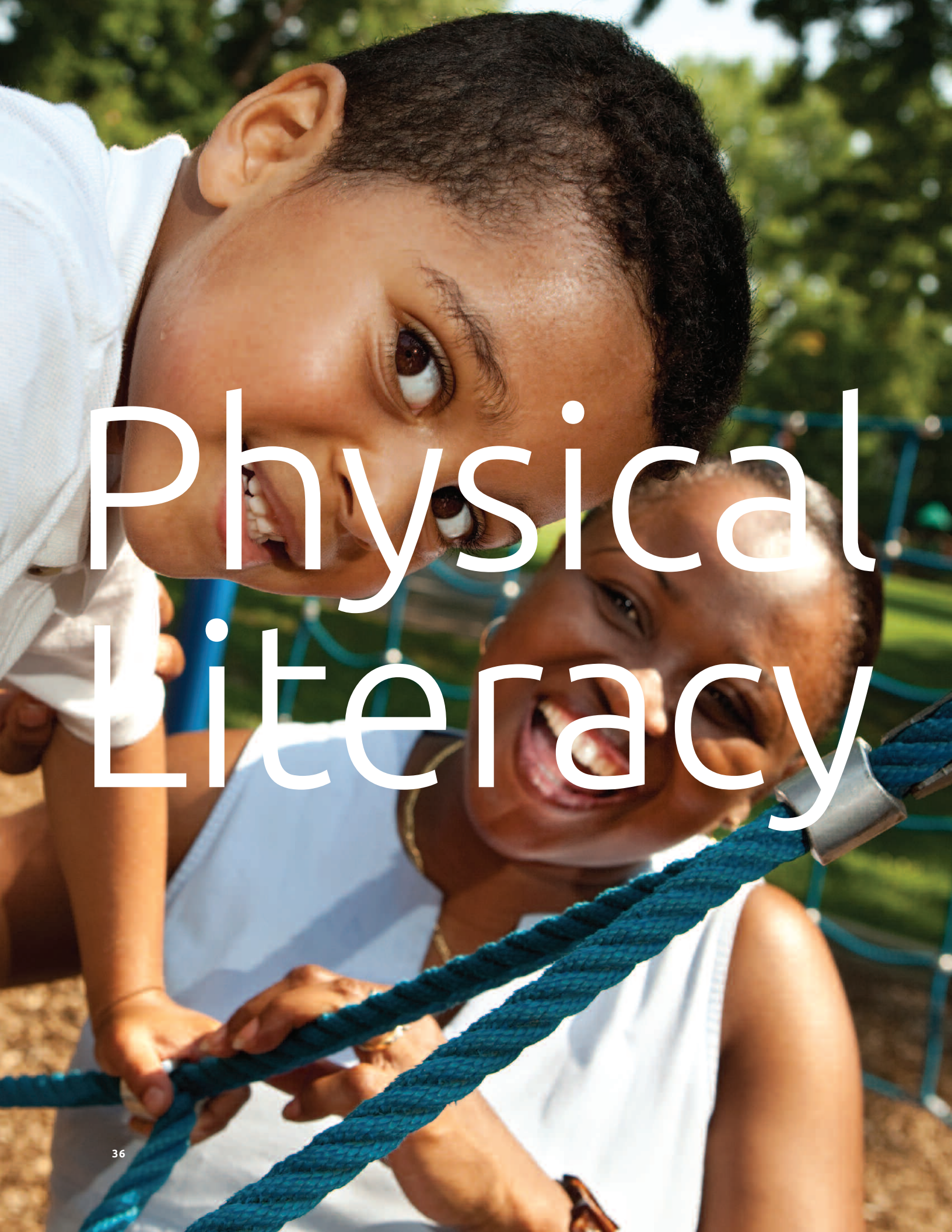
Reinforcement @ Home

Take this opportunity review and practice any of the activities outlined during the first 11 sessions. Mix activities that the athlete seemed to enjoy and excel at with activities that you feel they could improve at.



week 12





Physical Literacy

Conclusion

Congratulations on completing the Special Olympics Canada **Active Start** program. Whether this was your child's first go-around or they were repeating the program, participation has improved their fundamental movement skills and enhanced their physical literacy!

Special Olympics Canada hopes that you and your young athlete have had a beneficial and positive experience with the **Active Start** program and that your participation is the beginning of a long-standing relationship with us. We offer athletes of all ages amazing sport opportunities as they progress along our Long Term Athlete Development Model; these range from recreational activities, to local competitions, all the way to possibly representing Canada at a Special Olympics World Games.

The major role of the **Active Start** program is to prepare children aged 2-6 for future physical fitness and sporting activities and all the benefits associated with a life in sport. While the **Active Start** program is a great beginning, it is not the end of a child's involvement with Special Olympics. To provide further development opportunities, Special Olympics Canada has created the **FUNDamentals** program so that children aged 7-12 can begin to develop more focused sport specific skills. The **FUNDamentals** program strives to provide young athletes with in-depth introduction to sport-related motor skills, training, and competition while maintaining an atmosphere of fun and meaningful interaction. An additional role is providing continued education about nutrition, physical fitness, and the importance of the support of the family unit in developing a healthy athlete.

Depending on your child's age, we look forward to seeing them again at the next **Active Start** program in your community, or welcoming you into a **FUNDamentals** program, as they continue their journey through a lifetime of sport! For more information regarding either program, please contact your local Special Olympics Chapter representative.

Appendix A

Activity Space

Activities are designed for participation outside (in a park, the back yard, driveway) or inside (a basement, rec room, or gymnasium). We have tried to make most of the activities in this guide conducive to small spaces. Please be aware of your surroundings and ensure that there is ample space to conduct an activity. Athlete safety should always be the primary concern.

Proper Clothing

We encourage all participants to wear loose fitting, athletic attire as well as proper running shoes when performing the activities outlined in this guide. Wearing proper clothing and footwear will help participants function at a high level, get the most out of the activity, and ensure personal safety.

Equipment

The activities in this guide can be completed with minimal equipment. The following is a list of necessary items; all of which are generally available at a local hardware, sporting goods or “dollar” store.

- Beach Ball
- Large Bouncy (soft rubber) Ball
- Soccer Ball
- Tennis Ball
- Stringy / Koosh Ball
- Bean Bag
- Scarf
- Rope
- Masking or Painter’sTape
- Pylons
- Hula-Hoop
- Paddle or Foam / Plastic Bat

FLAGHOUSE is the official Special Olympics Canada Active Start equipment supplier. We have partnered with them to create an ACTIVE START @ HOME EQUIPMENT KIT. This kit consists of the items listed above as well as a few other items that can help enhance the activities outlined in this guide. It can be purchased by calling:

FLAGHOUSE CANADA
1-800-265-6900

Ask for Customer Service

When speaking to a representative, please reference the Active Start @ Home Kit

Head, Shoulders, Knees, Toes

Head, shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes
And eyes and ears and mouth and nose
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes
Repeat the verse, faster each time.

If You're Happy And You Know It

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap clap)
If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp)
If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)
If you're happy and you know it, touch your toes (touch your toes)
If you're happy and you know it, touch your toes (touch your toes)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, touch your toes (touch your toes)
If you're happy and you know it, raise your hands (raise your hands)
If you're happy and you know it, raise your hands (raise your hands)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, raise your hands (raise your hands)
If you're happy and you know it, jump up and down (jump up and down)
If you're happy and you know it, jump up and down (jump up and down)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, jump up and down (jump up and down)

Appendix C

Balance - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Offer hand or use wall for support; progress to less support from the wall or hand as balance is gained.
- Encourage athlete to focus ahead by looking forward and slightly down.
Cue: Pick a place or object to focus on.
- Encourage arms to be held at side.
Cue: Airplane Arms.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• needs assistance• slowly shuffles feet• leads with dominant foot• focuses eyes on feet• holds body tensely and rigidly
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• loses balance easily• over-uses arms (extraneous movement)• begins to demonstrate alternative foot pattern• spaces feet poorly• focuses eyes down
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintains balance while using alternative stepping action• maintains upright posture• maintains balance by using arms as needed• focuses eyes ahead

Running - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Demonstrate how to slightly bend elbows while swing arms freely forward and backward at the sides.
Cue: Remind them to have swinging L's (arm position) while running.
- Encourage them to keep their heads up and eyes forward.
Cue: Laser beam eyes - remind them to pick a target and point their laser beam eyes at target.
- Encourage them to slow down when changing directions.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses arms for force production only slightly • moves with heavy, flat-footed steps • uses wider base of support and feet may turn out • resembles a fast walk
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displays some lift off ground (flight between steps) • swings arms sideways • doesn't display full extension of push-off leg • displays less knee drive forward • focuses eyes ahead; body may travel vertically (up and down)
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a little bit of a lift while running, extending supporting leg at push off. There should be some lift off the ground with minimal flight between steps. • bends arms at 90-degree angles and swings in a forward and backward motion • swings arms in opposition to feet • brings recovery foot close to the backside • focuses eyes ahead

Appendix C

Jumping - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Provide verbal cues to encourage a backward swing and a full forward swing of the arms.
 - Cue:** For backward swing, reach backwards to the wall.
 - Cue:** For backward swing, push arms back.
 - Cue:** For forward swing, reach through for a favourite toy.
 - Cue:** For forward swing, hit the superman position.
- Bend Knees.
 - Cue:** Push down like a coiled spring to explode off the floor.
 - Cue:** Cue: Athlete pretends they are a frog and “bounces” multiple times which will help them with bending knees when jumping.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• displays little or no knee bending on takeoff or landing• leads with one foot on takeoff• uses arms in an unproductive (or counterproductive) manner• may bend head down
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• makes a small, preparatory crouch• initiates jump by arm action with some forward swing• takes off and / or lands unevenly• displays incomplete extension at takeoff
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• takes off and lands on two feet (toe-ball-heel)• bends knees and body at the waist in preparation for the jump• swings arms fully in a backward-forward direction• extends body in flight• focuses eyes ahead

Ball Rolling - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Use the follow-through hand to point in the direction the ball is intended to go.
Cue: Wave at the target when you are finished throwing.
- Encourage athlete to watch the target
Cue: Wave at target when you are finished throwing.
- To reduce the bouncing of the ball, pretend it is a delicate egg;
Cue: Gently, softly. Don't break the egg.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bats or pushes ball • holds ball between hands with palms facing each other • displays the straddle stance • bends sharply at waist • swings arm through the legs • lifts trunk as the ball is released • focuses eyes on the ball
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • places one foot ahead of the other • holds ball with one hand on top, the other on the bottom • swings arm backwards • displays limited knee bend • focuses eyes alternately on the ball and the target • displays limited follow-through on forward swing
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses eyes on target • rolls ball with a backward and forward arm swing (one arm) • steps forward with leg opposite to the hand holding the ball • bends knees and releases the ball along the floor • follows through with a hand pointing to the target

Appendix C

Underhand Throwing - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Have athlete make a full arm swing movement, backwards and through.
Cue: Swing their arms like an elephant trunk.
- Point toes at target.
Cue: Your foot is a flashlight and you want it to light up the target.
- Use large targets then progress to smaller ones.
- Tell athlete that they want their hand to be pointing at the target when they are finished their toss.
- Release ball around waist level.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• positions feet together• doesn't step forward• throws from chest using a two-hand push• doesn't backswing or follow-through• uses more of a sidearm action
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• positions feet together• may step forward with foot on same side as throwing arm• displays minimal backswing• displays poor timing in releasing ball• makes mostly a wrist flick action
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• focuses eyes on the target• uses a full backward and forward arm swing• transfers weight from back to front foot• steps forward with foot opposite to throwing arm• releases object in front of the body at about waist height• follows through with hand pointing to the target

Catching - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Use soft, flexible objects such as scarves and lightweight, slow-moving beach balls for initial catching.
- Progress from large to smaller balls.
- Use brightly-coloured objects that are distinguishable from the background.
Cue: Ready; watch the ball; keep your eyes on the ball.
- Have athlete move directly into the path of the ball.
Cue: Get behind the ball; make your tummy the target.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displays poor tracking of the object • extends arms in preparation with palms up • uses a scooping action with the arms • shies away from the object (turns head away) • uses the body to catch the ball • positions feet together
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positions one foot ahead of the other • holds elbows at sides at 90-degree angles • points palms inwards with thumbs • brings object back to the chest and traps it • often displays poor timing when catching
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses eyes on the object throughout the catch • positions the body in the path of the object • positions one foot slightly ahead of the other in a balanced stance • catches object with hands • relaxes arms and absorbs the force of the object

Appendix C

Overhand Throwing - Teaching Cues and Key Charact

Teaching Cues

- If an athlete is losing balance while throwing, take the body out of the throw and have them sit while practicing, then progress to kneeling and then to standing.
- Before throwing, bend and hold object at shoulder height behind ear.
Cue: Non-throwing arm is pointed at the target so the arms form a J-shape.
- Rotate hips during throw so that opposite shoulder is in line with the target at completion of throw.
- Focus eyes on target.
Cue: Laser eyes

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• stands facing target• holds elbows tightly against the body with elbow action mainly in the forward direction• displays little or no trunk rotation• doesn't shift body weight• positions feet together• displays little or no follow-through
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• steps forward on the same leg as throwing arm• holds ball behind the head• rotates shoulder towards throwing side• shifts body weight from back to front• uses arm action that is forward and high over the head
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• focuses eyes on the target• bends and holds elbow back at shoulder height behind the ear• rotates hips so that the opposite shoulder is in line with the target• steps forward with the foot that is opposite to the throwing arm• shifts weight from back to front• leads the throw with the elbow and follows down and across the body

Kicking - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Use markers beside the ball to have athlete step beside ball.
Cue: Stand behind and slightly to the side of the ball.
Cue: Step forwards onto the marker with your non-kicking foot.
- Focus eyes on the ball
Cue: Watch the ball
- Have the athlete swing the kicking leg back and then fully through the hip.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doesn't prepare or follow through • kicks at the ball • uses arms for balance • initiates kick at knee • tends to use toes • uses dominant leg • holds body stiffly
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does some preparation • keeps the kicking leg bent • tends to use the top of the foot • exhibits improved balance and body control • relaxes body more
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses eyes on the ball at contact • steps beside the ball with the non-kicking foot • bends body at waist, initiating kick from hip • bends kicking leg (knee over ball) to contact the ball with shoelaces • swings arms in opposition to kicking foot • follows through with kicking leg pointing to the target

Appendix C

Striking - Teaching Cues and Key Characteristics

Teaching Cues

- Start with stationary objects, and then advance to moving ones. Progress from striking off a tee, to a suspended hanging ball or balloon, to a slow-moving ball.
Cue: Keep eyes on target
- Use large objects to start.
Cue: Use a beach ball on a tee and work down to a tennis or softball
- Stress making a big swing to get the elbows away from the body
Cue: Do a big back swing and follow through.
Cue: Extend elbows at contact and follow-through.

Phase	Key Characteristics
INITIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses a vertical chopping action when swinging• is stationary and stands with feet together• faces the direction of the ball with the trunk• does not rotate the trunk• does not transfer body weight
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• turns trunk with limited hip rotation• does some weight transfer• positions feet shoulder-width apart• holds elbow close to the body and slightly bent• makes a somewhat horizontal swinging action
MATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• focuses eyes on the object being struck• displays preparatory back swing• rotates hips and trunk in full striking action• transfers weight from back to front• follows through along swinging path

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