

The Critical Role of Volunteers in Promoting, Adopting and Implementing LTAD and CS4L



***PRESENTATION TO THE
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Well, now that we're all together, why are we here?



- *Volunteers are critical to community sport*
- *LTAD is not only important to the development of better athletes, but it also contributes to the overall physical, social and mental development of children and youth*
- *But are the two actually working in the same direction?*

During the next hour, we will try to....

- *Share some thoughts and personal observations on LTAD in the context of a volunteer*
- *Spark – or provoke - a dialogue on the role of volunteers and LTAD and CS4L*

A little bit about us.....



Cal

- *20+ years community sport volunteer experience*
- *Coach, administrator, instructor, evaluator*
- *VP – High Performance with Baseball Manitoba*
- *Member of the Winnipeg Community Sport Alliance*

Phil

- *14+ years community sport volunteer experience*
- *Chair – Winnipeg Community Sport Alliance*
- *Administrator, coach*
- *Basketball, soccer*

The Winnipeg Community Sport Alliance



The Winnipeg Community Sport Alliance....

Who we are



- *A non-profit, volunteer-directed organization whose purpose is to help sport organizations work together to strengthen all sport in Winnipeg*
- *Our members come from a broad cross-section of sports*
- *One of six partners in the development and implementation of the Winnipeg Community Sport Policy*
- *We believe in, and advocate for, LTAD and CS4L principles across sport at all levels*
- *We want to help sport imbed LTAD and CS4L as a foundational aspect of sport programming from the community level through elite programs*

Community and Grassroots Sport....



Community /Grassroots Sport

- *Community, or grassroots, sport in Canada is big – very big (over 125,000 registered athletes in Winnipeg alone)*
- *Every year, there are more sport and recreation options to choose from*
- *The launching pad for every elite athlete and every weekend warrior*
- *Highly reliant on volunteers – coaches, administrators, others – and very few paid staff*
- *Minimal direct funding from government – at any level*

Sport and volunteers....



- *47% of Canadians volunteer in some capacity – contributing over 2 billion hours annually.*
- *Sport and recreation is the beneficiary of almost 20% of those volunteer hours.*

(Statistics Canada 2010)

- *People volunteer to help sport programs primarily because their kids are involved as participants*
- *Significant volunteer turn-over each year as kids move from program to program, age-group to age-group as well as from sport-to-sport*
- *The majority of volunteer hours are contributed by a small core percentage of the total volunteer base*

Long-Term Athlete Development....



- *LTAD is an important evolution in the way we think about sport and athlete development*
- *Presents a more holistic approach to the mental, physical and social development of the young athlete*
- *Better understood by sport and recreation practitioners, though not universally agreed upon*
- *Still something of a mystery to most volunteers*
- *Community sport organizations often see LTAD as another “top-down program” that they don’t have the time or resources to deliver – if they think about it at all*

How many times have we heard these?



- *“Don’t tell me how to coach. I played college ball.”*
- *“If we pick these kids for the team, we can have a really good team.”*
- *“Second place is for losers.”*
- *“Billy just doesn’t get it. I don’t think I can play him there.”*
- *“We just want the kids to have fun.”*
- *“Oh, we don’t keep score. There’s too much pressure with winners and losers.”*

Is LTAD gaining a foothold?



- *Growing prevalence of early sport specialization and intensive training, and an over-emphasis on competition*
- *Within the LTAD model, specialization comes later in the development path*
- *Is early introduction into competitive organized sport harming LTAD efforts?*
- *Do we introduce athletes to elite levels too early?*
- *Where does “fundamentals” end and “sport” begin?*

What does LTAD or CS4L mean to the general volunteer base?



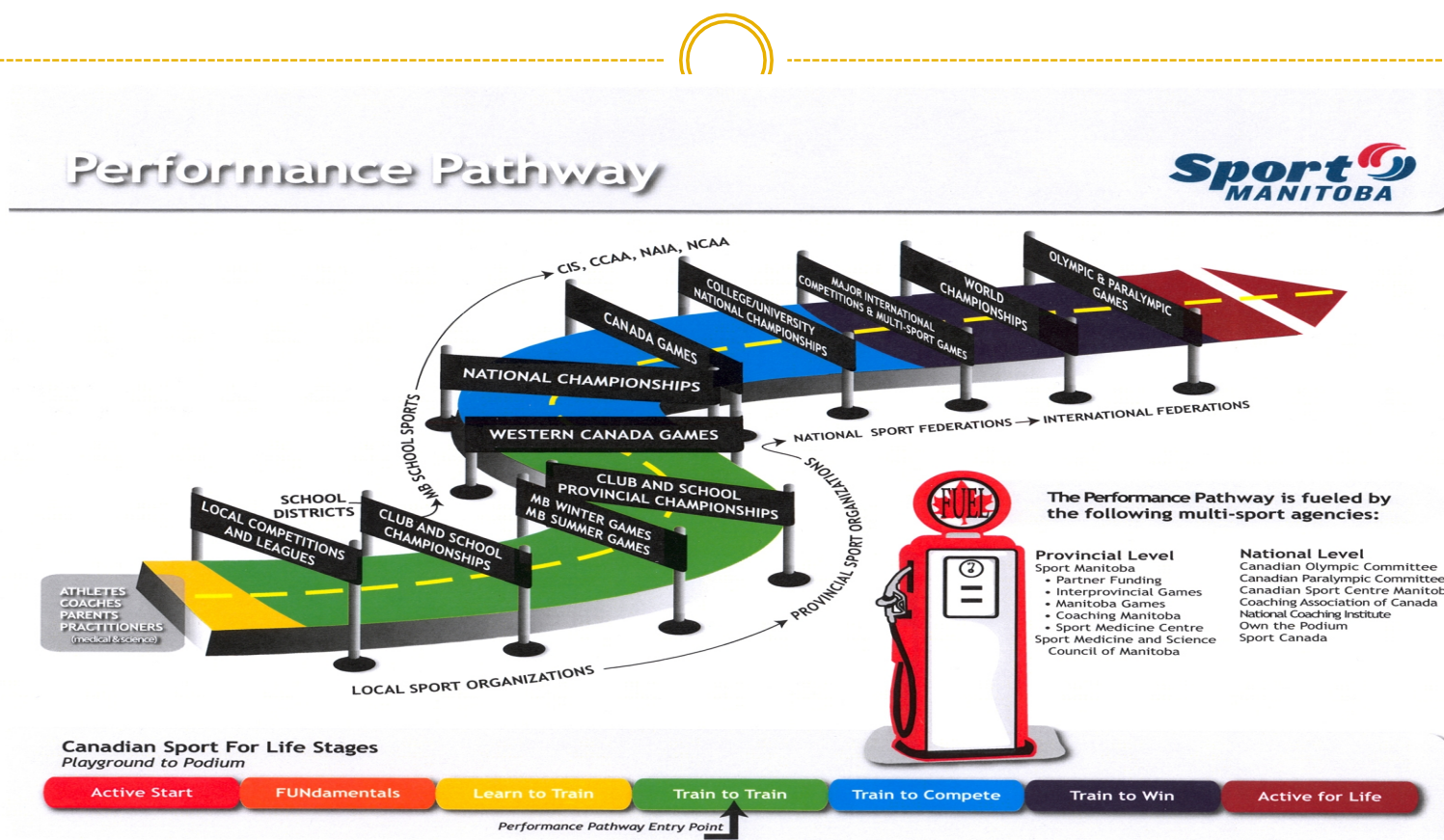
- *What is LTAD anyway?*
- *Many are not sure what these concepts are, or where they can go to learn more*
- *Growing number of first-time coaches who have never played the sport*
- *The demands on and expectations of volunteers, especially coaches, in terms of certification and training is growing*
- *Important that LTAD and CS4L are not seen as an additional responsibility layered on – can't be seen as one more thing the volunteer "must" do*

NSO's and PSO's can do better....



- *It's not clear what their commitment to LTAD and CS4L is*
- *Most have some mention and inclusion of LTAD in their policies, programming and resources*
- *Many link directly to information and resources developed by CS4L*
- *Most Manitoba PSO's refer to LTAD resources available from their NSO, but few made it sport-specific*
- *Much of the LTAD information is found under "Athlete" or "Player" tabs; little is found under "Coaching"*

The Performance Pathway....



So where are we now?



- *We preach LTAD, but we don't take effective steps to ensure it takes hold at the front lines of sport.*
- *It's not good enough to simply tell people – parents, coaches - about LTAD and why we should follow it.*
- *We need to actively engage the people who have the most direct and profound impact on LTAD acceptance and adoption – the coaches and other volunteers.*
- *Good intentions do not equal effective implementation.*
- *If the people setting the teams, running the practices, and managing the games don't know about or believe in LTAD, then its nothing more than rhetoric.*

How do we change this?



Osmosis?

- *Incremental introduction and adoption of LTAD – oriented programming*
- *Build it and they will come*
- *Influence rather than direct*

Or

Immersion?

- *Active revision and updating of models, resources and programming*
- *Aggressive promotion and communication and support from all partners and stakeholders*

Thoughts on moving forward.....



- *Develop and deliver LTAD and CS4L resources that resonate with volunteer coaches, administrators and parents, not just the paid sport practitioner*
- *Simplify the message - work with the volunteer base to develop ways to make those resources easy to find and easy to use and easy to understand*
- *More emphasis is needed on the benefits of implementing LTAD, including the progressive development of skills with age-appropriate competition models*
- *Weave LTAD concepts and content into the fabric of coaching education and training programs at all levels*

Thoughts on moving forward.....



- *Help parents understand how LTAD contributes to their child's overall growth and development, and what an age-appropriate development path looks like*
- *Continue to utilize LTAD and CS4L as foundational elements in the development of "community sport policies" in communities across Canada*
- *Foster, and expect, more "on-the-ground" support and leadership from everyone with a role in the sport and recreation sector to build LTAD and CS4L principles into community and grassroots sport programming*

Without volunteers....



- *Community and grassroots sport programs don't exist*
- *Kids don't get an opportunity to play sports*
- *There are no mentors and teachers of the game*
- *There are no coaches*

.....

THERE IS NO GAME



Winnipeg Community Sport Alliance



*Help us make LTAD and CS4L
part of what we do...*

without us knowing it

THANK YOU!



Questions?