

QUALITY SPORT CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNITIES AND CLUBS

Based on Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity

Quality sport and physical activity is achieved when the right people do the right things at the right times, resulting in positive experiences for participants. It is based on a Long-Term Development approach. It has been designed with everyone in mind, centring the aspirations of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. This checklist can be used as a tool by community and club leaders to assess and improve the quality of their sport programs.

Good programs, that are developmentally appropriate, are:	
Participant-centred	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ability, age, size, and maturity are all considered when grouping participants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants are actively engaged in the game or activity and fully included by teammates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All holistic aspects of participation are considered, including mental (intellectual and emotional), physical, cultural and spiritual.
Progressive and Challenging	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants are learning and building on their existing skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	There are options to make an activity more or less challenging based on participants' skills and capabilities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In the early stages, participants get to play different positions and/or try different events and sports (physicalliteracy.ca).
Well Planned	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs and practices are well-prepared and are delivered in context of seasonal and annual plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The program is aligned with the national sport organization's Long-Term Athlete Development framework, or when possible, has been designed by a national sport organization (sportforlife.ca/quality-sport-programs).
<input type="checkbox"/>	The club connects participants to developmentally appropriate programs and opportunities, which may include different levels (tiers), types of play, competition, or activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In the early stages, leaders emphasize skill development over winning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In the early stages, programs develop fundamental movement skills, in addition to sport-specific skills.
Designed for Meaningful Competition	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Based on stage of development, the participants are playing small-sided games with fewer players, competing in shorter distances, or playing for modified lengths of time (sportforlife.ca/long-term-development).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules are modified based on the ability and stage of the participants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In the early stages, teams, groups, lines, or categories are balanced so that participants of similar ability compete against each other, giving everyone a chance to struggle and succeed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In the early stages, all participants get to play and practice equally. Elimination competition formats are not used.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Competition is timed appropriately for learning, and is affordable and accessible.

Good people, who are caring and knowledgeable, include:

Coaches, Officials, Instructors, and Teachers

- ☐ Who are trained and qualified (e.g. National Coaching Certification Program [coach.ca], Aboriginal Coaching Modules [aboriginalsportcircle.ca], Gender Equity [womenandsport.ca], Sport for Life certifications [sportforlife.ca], HIGH FIVE® [highfive.org]).
- ☐ Who are provided with, and partake in, ongoing learning opportunities.
- ☐ Who mentor and build capacity for future coaches, officials, instructors, and teachers.
- ☐ Who are screened (coach.ca/responsiblecoaching) and follow policies and procedures on child protection (protectchildren.ca), and injury prevention (parachutecanada.org).
- ☐ Who assess participants' developmental stage, and design programs and practices considering Long-Term Development key factors (e.g. sensitive periods).
- ☐ Who understand developing physical literacy and how to apply it in programs.
- ☐ Who are ethical (truesportpur.ca/true-sport-principles) and demonstrate good social, communication, and leadership skills.
- ☐ Who demonstrate the organization's stated principles and integrate values based sport in training and competition
- ☐ Who use constructive language, communicate equitably and clearly, and involve participants in discussion and feedback.

Parents and Caregivers

- ☐ Who are knowledgeable about and encourage Quality Sport (activeforlife.com).
- ☐ Who are respectful (respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-sport/#parent-program).

Partners and Leaders

- ☐ Who ensure the organization operates with clear lines of responsibility and authority (sirc.ca/policy-makers-government-officials).
- ☐ Who are accountable for decisions, policies, risk management, and operational practices as well as utilizing the latest in active and safe tools.
- ☐ Who regularly assess, continually improve, and modernize governance.
- ☐ Who seek opportunities to engage with programs and organizations in the community, province/territory and nation-wide to advance Quality Sport and increase opportunities for participants.
- ☐ Who use sport for social change and community development.

Good places, that create good feelings, are:

Inclusive and Welcoming

- ☐ Everyone feels safe and that they belong regardless of ability and background (cdpp.ca).
- ☐ Access is affordable and barrier free.

Fun and Fair

- ☐ Facilities and equipment are modified for the ability, size, and stage of the participants.
- ☐ Programs and environments are FUN (changingthegameproject.com/can-youth-sports-fun-competitive).
- ☐ Programs run on a regular basis, have appropriate attendance, and are delivered in a fair manner.

Safe

- ☐ Equipment is in good condition.
- ☐ Facilities are safe; the space is suitable, clean, well lit, and well maintained as well as personnel trained in first aid.
- ☐ Adheres to Safe Sport, the facility has policies and information readily available addressing bullying, harassment, emotional, physical and sexual misconduct, concussions, etc. (sportaide.ca/en).

June 2025