

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

Recommendations for Local Associations

**Ringette Saskatchewan’s Ultimate Goals – desired end state**

Vision (Why?)

* Retain athletes – keeping children in the sport for life
* Make ringette enjoyable for all no matter the skill
* To prepare for a competition restructure from Ringette Canada – a new restructure that hasn’t been released yet.

Strategy (How?)

* Doing the right things at the right time based on LTAD four pillars technical, physical, psychological, and Life Skills of a child
* To have an athlete-centered approach- placing the needs of the athlete before the interest of anything else
* Increase meaningful competition (end to end) at all levels.

Results (Measures)

* Increase skilled athletes- improving a skill enhances the ability to participate, and increased participation makes things fun
* Increase competitiveness in our excellence stream- if athletes are being taught the right skill at the right time, improvement should be seen at all levels.
* Better results at Westerns, and Nationals

**Ringette Saskatchewan Medium Term Goals- actions that need to take place**

* Coaches and volunteers are knowledgeable about LTAD
* The right actions are taking place in regards to athletes
* Athlete-centered coaching- developing decision makers
* The right skill is being taught at the right time
* Improved skill U14 and below
* Always with an eye on “development-stage” appropriateness (LTAD)
* Focus beyond wins & losses/goals & assists ie. skills outcomes: both team and individual

**Ringette Saskatchewan’s Short-Term Goals- knowledge that needs to increase**

* Get associations more familiar with Ringette Canada’s recommendations in the LTAD Framework and Technical Skills Matrix
* Increased knowledge of athlete-centered programming
* Get coaches, athletes, and volunteers understanding the importance of monitoring growth in young athletes
* Enhance coaches and volunteers with support, resources, and training with LTAD through practice plans, mentorships, and coaching clinics

**Ringette Saskatchewan’s Role in Long Term Athlete Development**

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a seven-stage training, competition and recovery pathway guiding an individual’s experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood. For more information on this can be found [Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L)](http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/)

Ringette Saskatchewan is the sport governing body responsible for administration, promotion, and development of ringette in Saskatchewan. Below

What is RAS doing internally with LTAD?

* RAS has newly developed a strategic plan- a strategic priority is athlete development

What RAS is doing for ourselves with LTAD?

* Aligning RAS athlete development strategic priority with Ringette Canada guidelines

What RAS is doing for associations with LTAD?

* Providing leadership in Saskatchewan for LTAD by developing a set of recommendations for local associations

What RAS is doing externally with LTAD?

* Liaison with Ringette Canada and other Provinces to be more aligned with the most current LTAD guidelines
* RAS wants to be engaged across Canada so Saskatchewan can be an active participant regarding LTAD

**Ringette Canada Long Term Athlete Development Framework**

Ringette Canada held an athlete development conference in 2006 to inform the creation of ringette-specific LTAD model. A committee then developed an LTAD framework for ringette that was endorsed by Ringette Canada at the 2008 Ringette Canada AGM.

[Ringette Canada LTAD Framework Document](http://www.ringette.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Ringette_mag_EN_WEBversion.pdf)

The focus of this document is Long Term Athlete Development, or LTAD, for participants in Ringette. By respecting the principles of LTAD, we will ensure that our programs and structure meet the developmental needs of participants in each stage of LTAD. This document sets out a framework for LTAD in Ringette. When fully implemented, the LTAD framework will provide the optimal environment for athlete development, the pursuit of excellence, and instill a love of the game that keeps athletes in ringette for life.

**Benefits of Long Term Athlete Development- LTAD is the tool for athlete centered**

* Is keeping kids involved in sport; by making it fun and participatory- because sport makes children healthy and happy which helps them gain confidence and learn life skills
* Allowing children the opportunity to become good at something-by allowing all children the same high quality environment even though athletes are not going to the same point in their journey
* Looks at talent development over talent identification – “You don’t want to cut a future star before they’ve had time to shine, nor do you want to drive a kid out of a sport because they didn’t “make the grade” at age 9. Otherwise you’re not only selling the kid short — you’re potentially depriving the game of a future superstar,” (Jim Grove, 2016).

**Recommendations for Local Associations**

1. Introduce the right ringette skills and concepts at the right times in an athlete’s life

How to try this:

* coaches and volunteers will be supported to do this through resources with Ringette Canada LTAD Framework, Athlete Development Matrix, and RAS specific resources
  + - Practice to competition ratio- not so much emphasis on competition- look at the ratio for practices to competition for the right stage. Not just practices on ice are included in the ratio but all dryland training is included to practice and competition ratio.

1. Meaningful Competition in league games to build confidence and provide positive competitive experiences- scores be closer, equal amount of time in defensive and offensive zone for later stages, and games not be determined before entering ice

How to try this:

* + - More match ups between teams that are closer in caliber and less games between ones that are further in caliber
    - Fewer games with non- peer teams in different age groups and/or tiers
    - Monitor games scores first half and if lopsided scores are happening changes should be made second half
    - Survey at the end of the season if they felt the games were meaningful
    - Use the proposed Competition Review and Restructuring Report to measure meaningful competition from Ringette Canada.

1. Try cross ice games from U9 below to optimize participation, skill development and enjoyment. - LTAD framework suggests “modified game situations” and no “formal competitive events” for this developmental stage (Fundamentals).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CB_Ygapyl7c>

How to try this:

* Reduce the ice surface to match the size of players to increase opportunities to be involved in play
* Game is played in one end of the ice (blue line to end boards)
* Play either 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 (coaches choice depending on perceived flow of play)
* Frequent line changes and goalie rotations
* Bingo dabbers to make a blue line down the middle and goal creases. Blue line ensures that this core feature of the game is present and that there is emphasis on passing/teamwork.
* Small area practices
* Break children into small groups and have them rotate through drill stations – keeps children engaged, and confines them to smaller spaces to increase skill development

1. U10 Introduction to game format with modified rules and organized game play in a manner to maximize leaning opportunities for all children

How to try this:

* Cross-ice games
* Small area practices
* Break children into small groups and have them rotate through drill stations – keeps children engaged, and confines them to smaller spaces to increase skill development

1. Mini nets U10 and below

Why:

* Helps retain goalies- by the net not being so intimidating for a child to stand in
* Builds a goalies confidence to want to play in net
* Helps the child with shooting
* Maximizes goalie participation

1. Strongly recommend or policy implementation on no shortening the bench because sport is just as important as life lessons as sport itself.

How to try this:

* Ask yourself is winning a ringette game more important than a child experiencing youth ringette?
* Read this article <http://www.mahockey.org/news_article/show/589716-why-no-child-should-be-sitting>
* Want coaches to focus on the individual development and not taking short cuts to win

1. No shot clock in U12- try this in your association for a recommended two games

Why:

* There is too much important skills to work on then to worry about shot clock.

1. U12 tournaments must have a skills competition prior to Christmas- RAS Sanctioning Policy states this as requirement to host

Why?

* Doesn’t put all the emphasis on the competition of the tournament but also introduces the athlete to skill development
* Wants coaches to get the whole team involved- not just the “stars”
* Associations hosting should try to get every individual on the team contributing to the overall team result in skills competition

1. Equal amount of games for U12 tournaments

Why:

* Learn to Train stage as children are still learning the foundation skills and confidence. Children might not have those yet to choose the competitive stream until over the age of 12.

1. No medals awarded for U12 and below for placing- Less emphasis on competition of tournaments

How to try this:

* Incorporate more jamboree and festivals

1. 18+ division: to make league play enjoyable so that we retain these athletes, who not only play but often are coaches and/or parents of young ringette players.

How to achieve this:

* Try a survey to see how your association can help the problem of deterring Open players from leaving the sport-this could help better understand what they want and need to stay active for life and give back to our sport in other forms such as coaching, officiating, and being directors.