

# ONTARIO SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## How Soccer in Ontario is Changing



L·T·P·D

long term player development



## Why is soccer changing?

We can do a better job of giving children the best experience possible in our sport that will ensure all players enjoy the game and develop better skills to play soccer for life.

- Increased Retention – More children enjoying themselves, developing skills playing soccer for life.
- Best Practice – The changes we are making to soccer in Ontario and in Canada are consistent with best practice around the world in soccer playing nations.
- Healthy active children – Benefits are wider reaching than just soccer, it involves Canada having a healthier nation and Ontario families having more active children. We are fighting an increase in child obesity and the risk of an inactive nation. The changes we are introducing will lead to children being more active during soccer practices and games, enjoying soccer and progressing on a pathway to an active healthy lifestyle with the right environmental support.

## Benefits to the players

- ✓ Children enjoying soccer more = keep playing soccer for life
- ✓ More touches and time on the ball = improved skill development
- ✓ Players allowed to make more decisions in practice and games = players learn to problem-solve, and be responsible
- ✓ More qualified coaches that understand players' needs at each development stage = increased enjoyment and skill development
- ✓ Clear development pathway = players
  - understand the path to try to become the next Christine Sinclair or Dwayne De Rosario
  - continue to play, stay active and simply enjoy themselves in soccer.
- ✓ The game "grows" as the players grow = Appropriate sizes fields, goals and ball for children

## Why kids play soccer

- To have fun
- To experience thrills
- To be with friends or make new friends
- To do something they are good at
- To feel good about themselves (Increase self-esteem)
- To feel accepted
- To improve and learn new skills
- To be part of a team

"Remember that children do not mean to make 'mistakes' we should make mistakes as a necessary part of learning"

## LTPD 2020 Vision

- Clear integrated pathway ( player, coach, referee, administrator )
- Players needs are put first in all decisions
- Consistency in delivery of all programs throughout the province (Player, Coach and Referee)
- Unity and alignment of all stakeholders involved with strong, credible and trusted leadership
- Financial security to ensure sustainability and ongoing development
- Quality and quantity of players, coaches and referees increased
- Clubs the hub of their communities
- Ontario contributing 70% of players for all national squads



"Our challenge as adults is simple - to help young people fall in love with the game" = Ignite their passion!

## We are not alone

This is a national initiative across all sports in Canada. Every sport has tailored the approach to the needs of their athletes and are at different stages of implementation.



### Canadian Soccer Association (CSA)

is leading this change and all provinces and territories are making the transition to implementing Long term Player Development (LTPD). The CSA LTPD plan is captured in their Wellness to World Cup (W2WC) document volume 1.



Spain, England, Germany, USA, Denmark, Australia and most professional clubs around the world have already implemented or are in the process of implementing a very similar philosophy of player development.



## What change can we expect

- A clear pathway for players of all aspirations in soccer.
- Exciting new age appropriate coaching courses to help our coaches provide the right environment for players to enjoy soccer and improve as they grow and develop.
- Sizes of fields and goals and the number of players on the field U12 and below (3v3, 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9)
- Improved competition formats for players to enjoy and develop, geared to skill development.
- The changes will be phased in over a 7-year period starting with the grassroots, where we continually review and monitor progress.
- Ongoing communication, consultation and support from OSA to help us through this change.

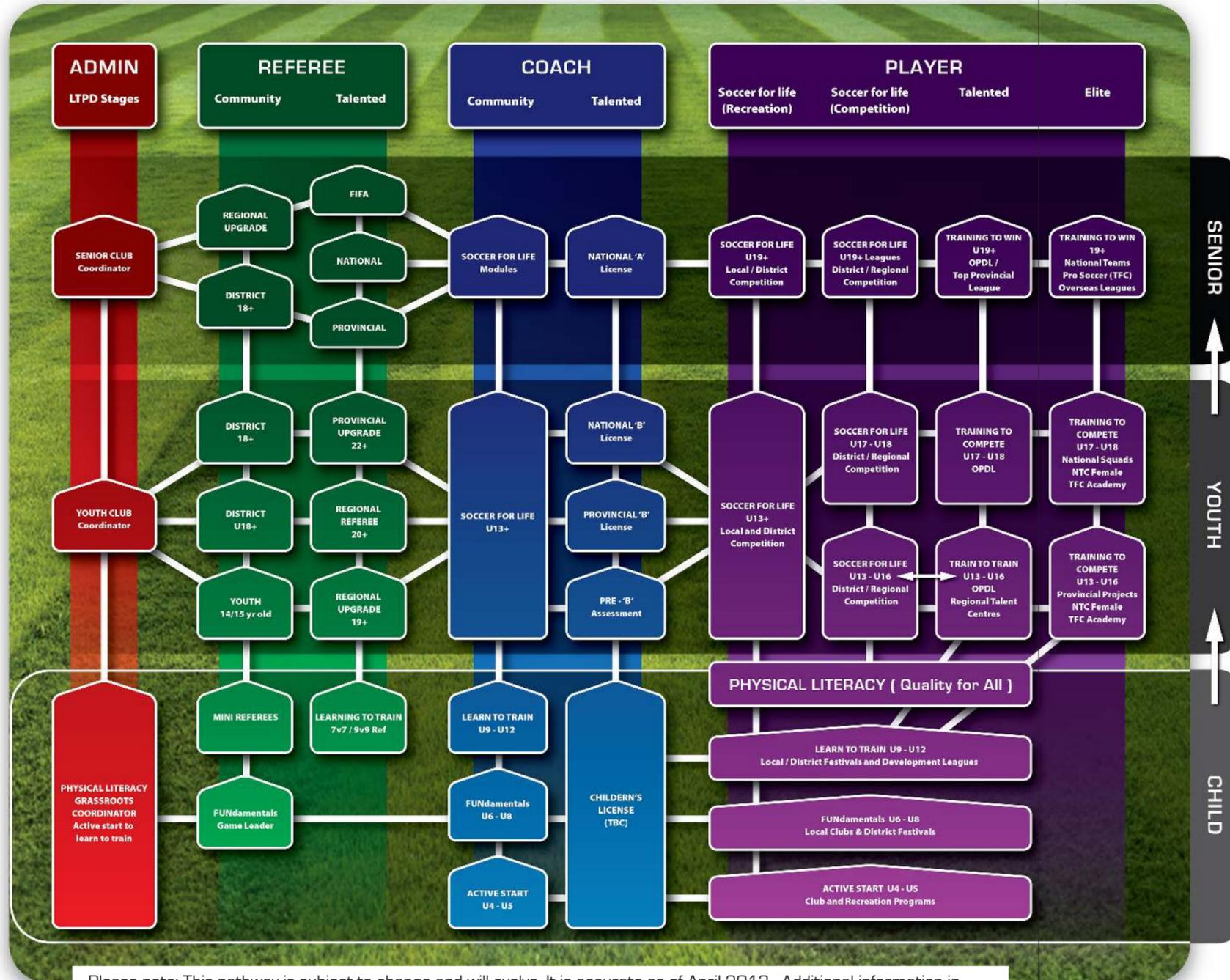
Playing Format	Age
3v3 (no GK)	U6
5v5 with GK (4v4 without GK)	U7, U8
7v7 (including GK)	U9, U10
9v9 (including GK)	U11, U12

## Ontario LTPD Implementation Principles

- (1) The needs of the player should be put first in all decisions.
- (2) Lowering barriers to participation, especially in the early development stages.\*
- (3) Developmental needs of the player will guide decisions, especially in Talent Identification and selection and ongoing scouting
- (4) Balance – Importance of retention and pathways for all (Player, Coach, Referee & Administration).
- (5) Strong foundation in "Participation" starting from active start.
- (6) Communication, consultation and education is critical at all times.
- (7) Consistency and alignment throughout the province, cognizant of geographical challenges.

# LTPD Pathway

This pathway demonstrates the holistic approach being taken to moving soccer forward in Ontario. The player, coach, referee and administrator all have a pathway in our game and retention and increasing the quality and quantity members in each pathway is our goal.



Please note: This pathway is subject to change and will evolve. It is accurate as of April 2013. Additional information in key areas is in development to provide further detail.

**Unity;** we need to work together toward a shared vision [OSA, District Associations, Clubs, Leagues, Municipalities and School Boards].

## Physical Literacy / Grassroots (U12 and below)

Every player has talent and we want to give every player the best opportunity to play soccer and remain active for life. This is the most important part of the player pathway. This is where we give children their first experience in soccer. Ensuring this first experience is fun and enjoyable and revolves around child-friendly soccer (LTPD) is essential. Over 70% of The Ontario Soccer Association's membership are in these development stages and ensuring players come back, with a smile the following season should be the goal for every coach and club. The majority of clubs in our membership all play a pivotal role across these very important development stages.

## Soccer for Life (U13+ Recreation and Competitive)

From U13 forward players have 3 clear avenues available to them depending on their motivation, aspirations and potential.

## Soccer for Life U13+ (Recreation)

Is for the player who enjoys the game, wants to stay fit and play soccer with their friends but not commit to increased training or travel. Players in this pathway are likely to train once per week and play once per week or only play matches. Soccer in this pathway will most likely occur within a club, at a local level between neighbouring clubs or communities, or in a District League at a Recreational Level.

## Soccer for Life U13+ (Competitive)

Is for the player who is more driven and motivated to progress in soccer that is prepared to dedicate more time to soccer through training to compete at a higher level. That competition will be at a district or regional level. However the level of commitment and ability of the player increases the further the player progresses within the competitive structure. For example a regional league will be a very high standard of soccer where players will be training 2 - 3 times per week and playing once per week whereas in a district league players would be training 1-2 times per week and playing once per week. Players can move between the competitive and talented pathway depending on their development and progression in the game.

## U13+ Talented Pathway

Is for the aspiring Christine Sinclair or Dwayne De Rosario! It is for the player who has the potential, motivation and aspirations to play at the highest levels of the game in Ontario, Canada or overseas. The Talented pathway will begin at the Ontario Player Development League (OPDL), an exciting new high-performance league introduced in 2014. The OPDL requires players ensure soccer is their main focus where they will train 3-4 times per week and play once per week for a 28-week period with the appropriate support and periodization. Players will undergo ongoing monitoring and development as they are identified for Regional Talent Centres, Provincial Projects and CSA National Programs. Player movement between OPDL organizations and competitive clubs in regional leagues is expected as players progress and develop at different rates.

**“Every Club is critical, it is up to each Club to choose their place or role in a player’s development”**

Partner role alignment	
Organization	Responsibility
OSA	Lead and communicate the technical vision for the province to all key stakeholders (District Associations, Clubs, Leagues and partners). Supports the implementation of the technical vision throughout Ontario through program delivery, training, communication and resource development in key coach, referee, competition and event program areas.
District Associations	Implement and communicate the LTPD vision through the delivery of recreational and competitive soccer. Districts work very closely with member Clubs and Leagues to communicate and support the delivery of OSA programs and conduct core soccer administration, registration and technical support functions of players, coaches and referees in alignment with OSA.
Clubs	Provide a stimulating and enjoyable environment for players and coaches to support their development and growth in soccer. Clubs provide training for all players and competition for recreational players. Clubs communicate and support the OSA and District technical vision and provide core administration and organization functions for players, coaches and referees.
Leagues	In alignment with LTPD technical direction and regulations, Leagues provide an enjoyable and satisfying competitive platform for all players at the appropriate competition level. This involves core communication, administration, scheduling and other league functions at all league levels.

**NB:** These roles only touch on technical areas of responsibility and cover key themes at a very high level.

**Player Movement** – We need to encourage player movement at the right time in their development.

“We are making the game more child friendly to develop better players”



## Transition and Assistance

We are working through a transition in our competitive structure as we phase in change over the next 7 years. Our initial focus has been the physical literacy development stages (grassroots) because that is where most of our players are. We have produced two LTPD Matrices (Recreation and Development) that will provide further information about what child-friendly competition needs to look like from U4 to U12. Please look at our Game Organization Guide (Physical Literacy), League Management Guide (Learn to Train), Guide to Festivals and Field Organization Guide for support and guidance.

Year	U12 and Below (Grassroots)	
	Recreation	Development
2013	LTPD Matrices strongly recommended	
2014	Matrices strongly recommended	Matrices mandated



*NB: OSA will be working to ensure all Soccer U12 and below (recreation included) across the province is meeting the development needs of the children within 5 years*

The transition we are moving through for competition moves to Soccer for Life Leagues (U13+) in 2014 for the U13 player. This transition involves simplifying the pyramid for play to Local, District, Regional and Provincial (OPDL) soccer.

## 4 Cornered Approach

Technical / Tactical, Physical, Social / Emotional and Psychological

### 7 Year Phase In

Change in any area of life is challenging; excellence is our goal. We will continue to review and monitor our progress from talking to our membership to make the appropriate adjustments as we move forward.

- Regular communication and education through
  - Membership messages
  - Re-developing our website so that the right information is easier to find
  - Developing videos to support this transition
  - Production of further documents to support the change
- Increasing the quality and quantity of coach education and referee courses delivered
- Champions available to come out and speak to your parents, coaches and administrators.
- Answering your questions [ltpdquestions@soccer.on.ca](mailto:ltpdquestions@soccer.on.ca)

# Parent Checklist (Quality Soccer programs)

As a parent, if you can answer yes to the following questions your child is playing in a soccer in a club that is doing a great job in implementing LTPD by providing a child-friendly soccer environment that will ensure the player enjoys soccer and becomes a better player.

## Are Your Kids Playing Like Kids?

### Are Your Kids Playing Like Kids?

- Is your child playing small-sided soccer games?
- Is your child participating on smaller soccer fields?
- Is your child using smaller soccer goal sizes and smaller soccer balls?
- Is your child's soccer equipment modified for their size?
- Have the rules of their game been modified for children?
- Has scoring been modified?
- Has soccer game and practice durations been modified?

### Does Your Child Love Playing?

- Is your child smiling and laughing most of the time?
- Does your child look forward to practices and games?
- Does your child want to play, outside of normal practice times?
- Does your child make up different games outside of the structured program, as a fun extra challenge?

### Are You Giving Your Child The Right To Try?

- Do you support your child even when they make a mistake?
- Do you see your child trying things their own way?
- Do you encourage them without telling them what to do?
- Does your child feel confident trying something new?



## Acknowledgements

OSA would like to acknowledge the other readily available documents we referenced in creating this brochure.

**Canadian Soccer Association** - Wellness to World Cup publications  
**Canadian Sport for Life** - Various Long-Term Athlete Documentation  
**The FA** - Child Friendly Football documentation  
**New Zealand Football** - Whole of Football Plan  
**US Youth Soccer** - Player Development Model  
**Belgium FA** - Developing Grassroots Football



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## OSA Support

OSA Recreation Matrix  
OSA Development Matrices  
OSA Game Organization Guide - Physical Literacy U4 - U12  
OSA League Management Guide - Learning to Train U8 - U12  
OSA League Management Guide - Soccer for Life 13+ (In development )  
OSA Field Organization Guide  
Guide to Festivals in Ontario



Please ensure this brochure is read in conjunction with other OSA LTPD documents that are found on the OSA website <http://www.ontariosoccer.net/LTPD/LTPDResources.aspx>