

Quebec Cricket Federation Inc.

Long Term Athlete Development

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a systemic approach being developed and adopted by Cricket Quebec to maximize a participant's potential and involvement in our sport. The LTAD framework aims to define optimal training, competition and recovery throughout an athlete's career to enable him / her to reach his / her full potential in cricket and as an athlete. Tailoring a child's sports development program to suit basic principles of growth and maturation, especially during the 'critical' early years of their development, enables him / her to:

- Reach full potential
- Increase lifelong participation in cricket and other physical activities

The LTAD model is split into stages in which a player will move from simple to more complex skills and from general to cricket related skills. For example, a beginner may start by learning basic throwing and hitting actions and then once this has been mastered he / she will progress onto more advanced skills.

This framework will set out recommended training sequences and skills developments for the participant from the Active Start stage (5 and under) to the Active for Life Stage (adult recreational). It will address the physical, mental, emotional and technical needs of the athlete as they pass through each stage of development.

Where has it come from?

A combination of recent research and the knowledge of coaches from around the world are being used to write the LTAD model. The program will be sport-science supported and based on the best data and research available. Our work will be based on the work of Canadian sport scientists, such as Istvan Bayyi, and focuses on key, common principle of individual development, which many sports organizations consider good practice in long-term planning for athletes.

Many leading sports stars have also attributed part of their success to participating in different sports and activities at a young age by giving them a wider base of sports skills. Our goal will be to develop our players to their maximum potential by training and enhancing all the athletic skills that contribute to their success.

What will this mean for your child?

During your child's first few years of cricket, the emphasis will be on physical literacy. Time should be spent learning the ABC'S of athleticism (Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed) to teach them how to control his / her own bodies. For this reason, your child may take part in exercises that do not look relevant to cricket but are supporting their development. Games and other sports will teach your child to throw the ball (basic hitting actions), catch it (hand-eye coordination), change direction and run properly. At each stage the child will be trained in the optimal systems and programs to maximize his / her potential as a ballplayer and as a long-term participant in sport.

What has this got to do with cricket?

Cricket Quebec is looking to provide children with the all skills needed to take part in physical activity throughout their lifetimes. We are looking further into the future than teaching the skills to win games or tournaments tomorrow if it may have a detrimental effect on them taking part at a later age.

It is thought that taking part in cricket-specific training too early can lead to an early drop out rate, create muscle imbalances and also neglect teaching the fundamental skills needed for most sports. In fact, research shows that early specialization in most team sports results in these outcomes.

Research has also shown that it is during childhood that people are best at learning physical skills. For this reason we are advising coaches and parents to teach transferable skills first that will allow your child to become proficient in a number of different sports and therefore increase their chances of being physically active throughout their lifetime. For example, if your child learns to catch and throw a ball successfully, an avenue to take part in other ball sports is opened.

Who else is using LTAD?

The Council of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for Sport have endorsed and established the goal of the implementation of a Long Term Athlete Development program throughout the sport community in Quebec. Sport Quebec has been working with National Sport Organizations to develop sport-specific programs according to an overall framework established by an expert group of sport scientists.

To date, over 57 sports in Quebec have started the process of designing and putting into place LTAD programs. There has been a sharing of best practices among resource personnel and National bodies and the overall program is gaining momentum.

Cricket Quebec is in the wave of sports to start the LTAD process to create the best opportunities for all children.

Various national sporting groups in the UK and Ireland are approximately 18 months ahead of their Canadian counterparts in the development of LTAD programs and we are using their experiences and best practices in process development to ensure we have the most comprehensive and effective system possible. Cricket Quebec had been considering the development of programs.

Where will Cricket's LTAD model come from?

Cricket Quebec commenced work on a LTAD model and framework for cricket. Project Workgroup was appointed and work has progressed rapidly. There is an ongoing review of the work being completed by others since the appointment of the Project team.

We will be consulting with a wide range of coaches, sports scientists and experienced volunteers from across Quebec to represent the views of the whole cricket community. Their knowledge and expertise will be used as input to form the LTAD framework for cricket in Quebec.

We will be conducting data collection and a review of available research to test the existing programs and to make recommendations on optimal systems and programs. We will be seeking the collaboration of the provincial cricket organizations and local cricket communities to make sure we have as comprehensive a system as possible.

In developing this model and framework, Cricket Quebec is currently in the process of reviewing our programs in line with LTAD principles. Our competition programs, coach education system, elite play structure and development initiatives will all evolve to be consistent with the principles established within this underpinning model.

One of the principles to be adopted will be a continuous improvement regime where the system will be benchmarked against the most current developmental principles and upgraded regularly. It will be a living document that provides a planning framework to enable us to always deliver the most appropriate training.

Cricket Quebec LTAD resources

Cricket Quebec will continually update this section to provide access to the most current materials and programs as they are developed.

We will add a range of LTAD resources designed to help all Coaches, Teachers, Players and Parents understand the stages that each player goes through and also the training principles and activities at each stage.

Rally Cap Program

This has been designed by Cricket Quebec staff to ensure that a child's entry into the game of cricket is appropriate and enjoyable. Stressing the proper FUNdamentals, it describes a program of activities for under 15.

Initiation Coach Program

This program for entry level coaches has been designed under the National Coach Certification Program to address the needs of coaches handling children entering the game of cricket and playing in the Community Sport context.