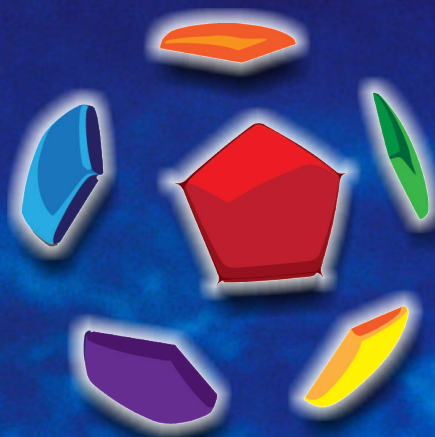


# Ontario's Path to the Future



# L·T·P·D

long term player development

Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) is mandated by the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA), so the question is not whether we do this, but how. We must do it well to get it “right” so it benefits our young players and the future of soccer in Ontario.

We understand that change is often uncomfortable but this is the time to shift the landscape so the game, and our players, will be better off 10 years from now.

This is one of the most important initiatives in our sport in many years. It will be crucial for the districts, clubs and coaches to get behind this and demonstrate their leadership and support.

Without getting into all the science and research (and it is available), LTPD is absolutely considered to be “best practice” by top soccer nations.

This is a turning point for soccer in Ontario and in Canada and we need everyone's support.



## Education

In a nutshell, the philosophy of LTPD is very simple and practical: for “recreational” players, we not only want them to develop basic physical literacy and be fit, but also receive excellent instruction and have fun. By giving them a strong foundation players are more likely to stay in the sport, if they so choose, hopefully for life.

For the player with the desire and or talent who wants “more”, LTPD creates more time on the ball, advanced coaching approaches, great training, challenge, and the opportunity to play “up” or “down” (depending on size, physical maturity, etc.).

Importantly, there will be opportunities for more talented players to be identified at the local and regional level. Rather than one “provincial” team with maybe the same 20 players receiving specialized attention year after year, we will have players identified in many more regions across the province. This will increase the number of players who will have a legitimate opportunity to be “identified”, and not only when they are 12 or 13.

Youth players tend to be chosen because of their size and speed at this young age, although there are many other critical components to player development. We have missed late bloomers, by the very nature of our selection process, causing us to miss some great talent.

LTPD is not “new” in the rest of the soccer world. In fact, it's so “not new” that most countries don't even use the terminology. It is just the way soccer bodies in those countries develop players, run competition and set up their structure, to ensure the focus is on developing players, not on youngsters “winning games”.

Research has proven that, to get the very best out of a player's potential, they need certain things to be available to them at certain stages of their physical and mental development in the sport. LTPD will provide this.

What we are doing currently isn't working. It's not that clubs aren't doing some very good work, because they are. But we need to shift away from emphasizing (at the early ages) too many games and the focus on winning. Instead, we will emphasize improved coaching approaches, more time on the ball and real skills development.

We aren't stopping competition at all. Kids will still play plenty of “games”, but we are moving toward a different culture, a different mindset.

The scope of this approach and what is required to implement changes, even phased in over time, is huge.

The truth is, right now in Ontario, we have a disconnected, confusing, highly fragmented “player pathway”. So confusing in fact, that it is not really much of a pathway at all.

Coaching education is changing. The new CSA Physical Literacy first stream of coaching courses are now ready for delivery in January 2012. They involve a new exciting methodology and philosophy that places the player at the centre of the learning experience.

**“When patterns are broken new worlds emerge”  
- Tuli Kupferberg**



## Consultation and Information Gathering

We recognize there will be push back, from some coaches and many parents, perhaps. We want to provide coaches, clubs and districts with all the assistance we can.

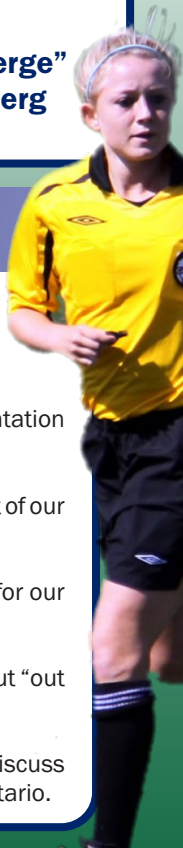
We will be phasing in LTPD, starting with pilot projects in 2012 and initial implementation at the early ages in 2013. This will be phased in over a 6-8 year period.

We do not want to implement sudden changes, to the detriment and disappointment of our players.

As we move through this process, we will be working hand in hand to do this right for our players, our coaches and our referees. This will require patience from all of us.

Importantly, we need to stem the widespread misinformation that continues to be put “out there”.

We will be gathering important information and having province-wide meetings to discuss concepts to ensure everyone is working together on the best way forward for all of Ontario.



**“It's the constant and determined effort that breaks down all resistance and sweeps away all obstacles”**

**- Claude M. Bristol**

# FORM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

## Implementation

We are absolutely moving ahead with LTPD but want to consult widely so that we create the best possible “made-in-Ontario” solution for our players, coaches, referees, clubs and districts.

We are working on a new competitive structure that will:

- be optimal for our young players and
- respect the challenges each district will face in this transition period.

LTPD will be phased, gradual and deliverable from The OSA, through to the districts, clubs, coaches, referees and players. (We will have more detail and much more in the way of specifics for you early in 2012.)

New coaching curriculum is in place and we will roll out new coaching courses early in the New Year.

We are developing a unified, consistent pathway. A model everyone can understand and that is right for all players, coaches and referees.

We have to communicate with each other to share and address any and all concerns and we will need to communicate with all interested parties to deliver a clear and unified message around LTPD.

## Communication

We will continue to provide regular updates for districts and clubs on all stages of LTPD throughout 2012.

- Development of updated LTPD content on the OSA and supporting websites.
- Development of LTPD videos to support and reinforce key messages
- Regular website updates
- Develop specific Q&A's for parents and coaches
- Regular communication via e-mail and web site for players, coaches, parents, club and district head coaches and technical directors.
- Consultation schedule developed for 2012
- Development of Ontario specific LTPD information and brochures.

## Outcome of October Technical Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting

- TAC has endorsed re-shaping the OSA league and competitive structure.
- Leagues will no longer be focused on “promotion” and “relegation”. Instead, the onus will be on individual clubs to meet approved standards.
- The specific criteria that will establish the “standard” clubs will be asked to meet is being researched by TAC.
- The approval process will be thorough and fully transparent.

**"The best time to plant an oak tree was 20 years ago, the second best time is today"**

**- Proverb**



## Specific Action Steps in 2011-2012

- The OSA has endorsed a phased in approach that will see LTPD gradually implemented between 2012 and 2018, beginning with the youngest ages (4-8). Some clubs are already moving in this direction, and pilot projects will be introduced throughout 2012 to pave the way for broader implementation in 2013.
- New “Learning Facilitator” workshops will begin in November 2011, with coaching programs being introduced in January that will reflect the greater emphasis on player-centred coaching.
- Creating coaching resources for each development stage in 2012.
- OSA Coaches Conference – scheduled for February 26, 2012.
- Province-wide meetings and consultation.

## Ontario's Path to the Future

**"It is the responsibility of leadership to provide opportunity and the responsibility of individuals to contribute"**

**- William Pollard**

## Overarching Principles to LTPD

A guide to making decisions for Ontario Implementation;

1. The needs of the player will 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 with regard to Talent Identification and Selection and ongoing scouting.
4. Balance - importance of retention and pathways for all (player, coach, referee and administration).
5. Strong foundation in "Participation" starting from bottom up.
6. Communication and education is critical at all times.
7. Consistency and alignment throughout the province, cognizant of geographical challenges.



## Ontario Club Head Coaches LTPD Checklist

The implementation of Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) principles will be crucial for all clubs across the province. As we have stressed in earlier updates, while LTPD will be phased-in over time, it remains vital that all clubs are at least moving in this direction.

Here are some considerations as you look at what you are delivering now and what needs to be done to implement the Canadian Soccer Association's (CSA) mandated changes beginning in 2013 and beyond:

- Have you familiarized yourself with the Wellness to World Cup documents, which explain in detail the tremendous benefits of LTPD?
- On a scale of 1-10, how prepared is your club to adapt LTPD principles in your programs (coaching standards, field requirements, parent information, etc.) beginning in 2013?
- Are you comfortable answering questions from your coaches and also from parents about the rationale for LTPD?
- Have you conducted an inventory of your coaches' current qualifications and what they will need to do in terms of certification upgrades to meet minimum LTPD requirements?
- Are your coaches aware of the upcoming changes?
- Have you informed parents that changes to the competitive structure are coming?
- Have you hosted parent meetings to update them about your club's plans for the implementation of LTPD?
- Have you developed an LTPD implementation plan for 2013-2018
- Have you been in contact with clubs who have piloted or have already started to informally implement LTPD at the U7-U8 age groups?
- Do you know who to contact if you have questions?



## Ontario's Path to the Future



**CANADIAN  
SPORT FOR LIFE**



7601 Martin Grove Rd.  
Vaughan, ON L4L 9E4  
t. 905.264.9390  
f. 905.264.9445



[www.ontariosoccer.net](http://www.ontariosoccer.net)