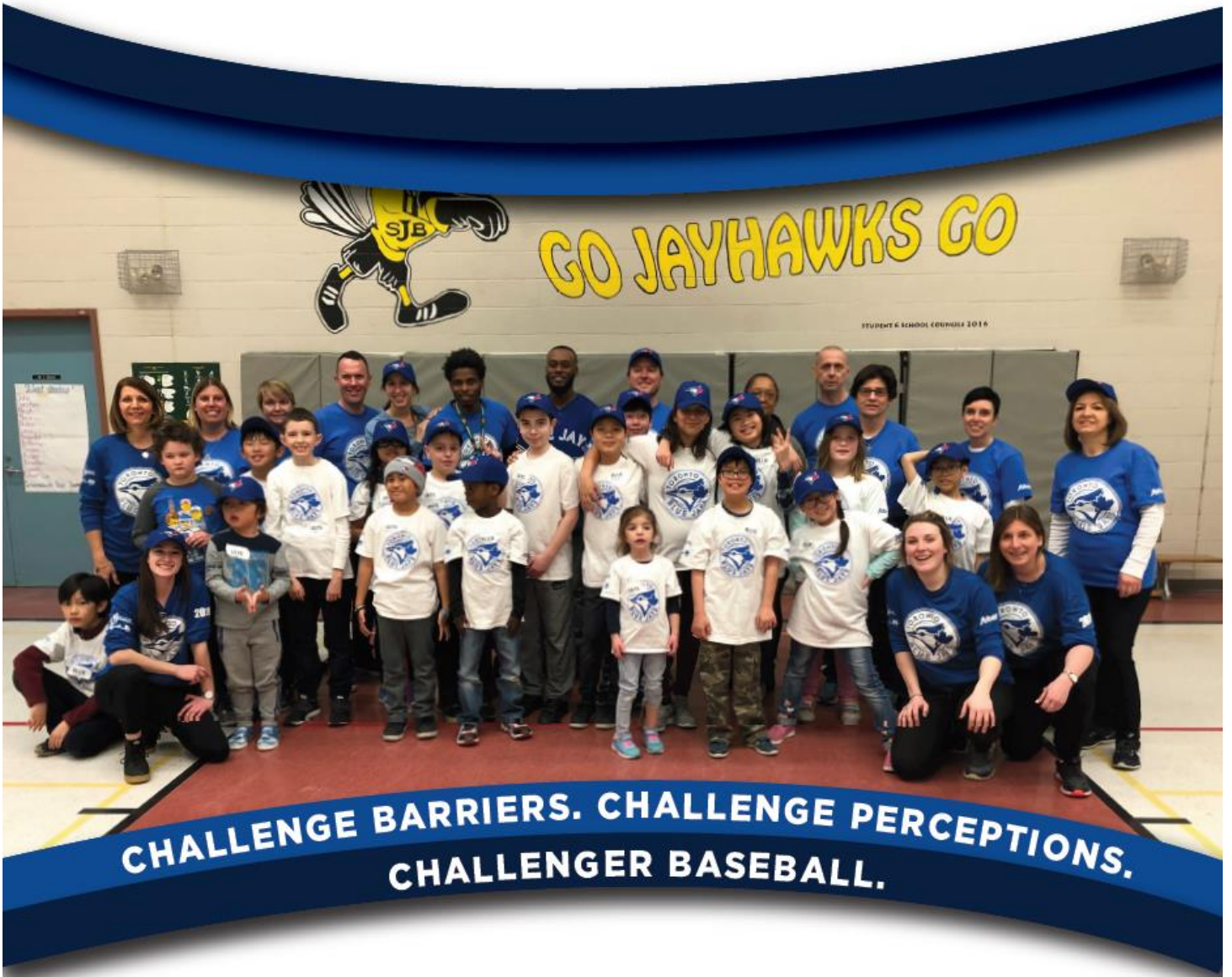


CHALLENGER IN THE SCHOOLS

PROGRAM MANUAL



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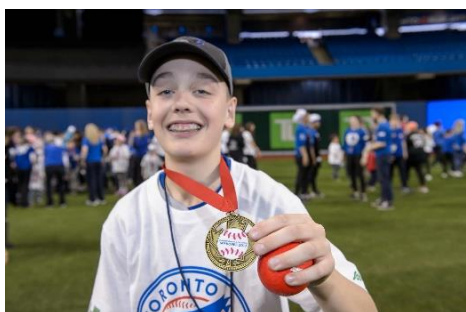
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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK





Welcome to the Challenger Baseball in the Schools Teacher Handbook! This handbook provides in-depth information, activities and resources that you will be able to use in your Challenger in the Schools program. In reading this handbook, we hope you become confident and comfortable planning and leading an exceptional adaptive baseball program. This all-in-one resource is meant to be read thoroughly and carefully before beginning your programming to ensure all participants have an amazing, beneficial experience from day one. Please note any questions you may have and we would be happy to address them.



WHAT IS CHALLENGER BASEBALL?

Challenger Baseball is an adaptive baseball program designed to empower children, youth and adults living with cognitive and/or physical disabilities.

Challenger Baseball is designed in partnership with Baseball Canada, Little League Canada, Little League International and a number of organizations working with children and youth with disabilities. **Challenger in the schools seeks to achieve many significant short and long-term goals for each of the participating athletes in the program:**

	<h2>CONNECTION</h2>	<p>Challenger Baseball focuses on strengthening relationships with self and with others. At each Challenger Baseball session, the goal is to create a fun, safe and inclusive environment where athletes leave feeling as if their teammates and coaches are their family and their best friends.</p>
	<h2>COURAGE</h2>	<p>Challenger Baseball consistently encourages athletes to find their courage to try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the courage to step onto the field or in the gym for the first time, • the courage to step up to the plate when your teammates are watching you; and • The courage to be a part of something that can change yourself and those around you.
	<h2>ACTIVE FOR LIFE</h2>	<p>Challenger Baseball helps curb the growing trend of children and youth living with disabilities opting out of sport and dropping out of activities. This growing trend has tremendous health implications (both physical and mental), for children and adults all across the country. Challenger Baseball is designed to be so inclusive, accessible, fun, safe and rewarding, so that children fall in love with their team and physical activity as a part of their lifestyle.</p>
	<h2>INDEPENDENCE</h2>	<p>Challenger Baseball challenges athletes to step into leadership roles and enhance their leadership skills and confidence at each practice and/or game. It encourages athletes to explore different ways of being a leader and of supporting a team. It emphasizes the importance of trying your hardest, never giving up and instilling these values in the home and community outside of Challenger Baseball.</p>

Challenger Baseball runs in over 200 baseball leagues, schools and organizations across Canada with nearly 7,000 children, youth and adults participating!

WHY IS CHALLENGER BASEBALL SO IMPORTANT?

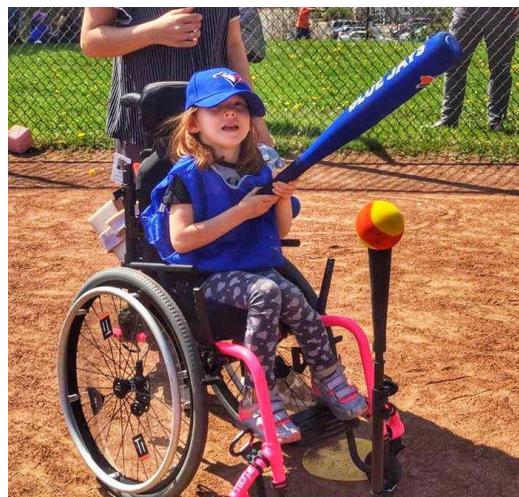
Recently, the *Survey of Young People with a Disability and Sport (SYPDS)* found:

- Only 56% of children and youth living with mental and physical disabilities are participating in sport, play and recreation compared to 87% of those living without disabilities;
- Over one quarter of youth living with physical and cognitive disabilities had not taken part in any sport either in or out of school in the last year, compared to only 6% of young people in the general population; and
- Children with autism spectrum disorder found that only 12% were physically active, pursuing mostly solitary forms of play.

Knowing that **children with disabilities have obesity rates 38% higher than youth without disabilities**, sport, play and recreation programs are highly necessary to encourage healthy and thriving lifestyles among all Canadian children.

Challenger in the Schools carefully weaves physical activity with life-skill development—all through the great game of baseball. We launched this program in the schools after seeing the tremendous success the summertime Challenger Baseball program was having amongst athletes, buddies, coaches and families. We know that there are many kids who haven't been exposed to this program. By integrating the program into schools, more and more children and youth can fall in love with baseball and learn incredible things about themselves and their peers.

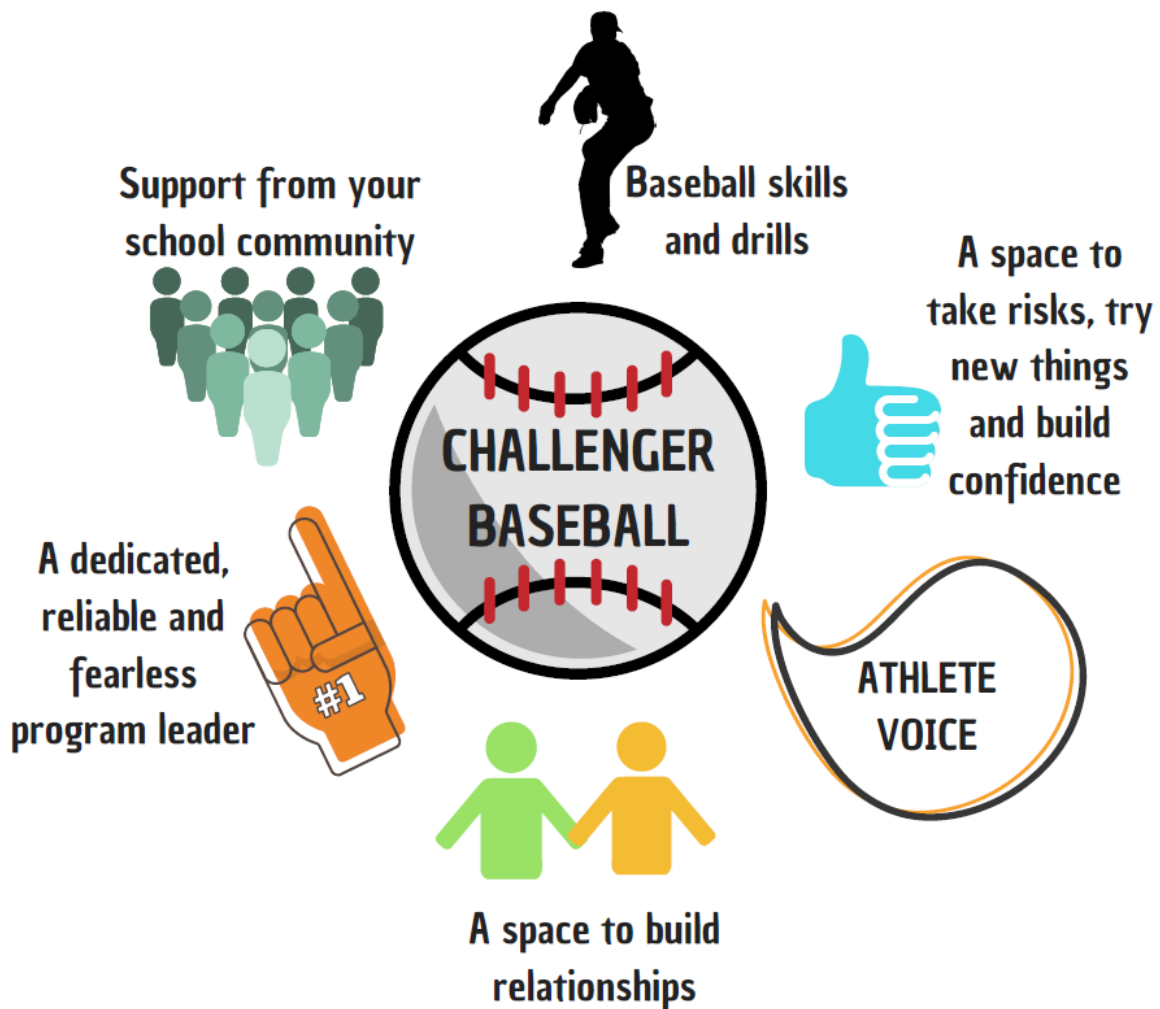
Enhanced baseball skills is a secondary outcome. The main outcome of Challenger Baseball in the Schools is enhanced life-skills that are inherent to baseball – communication, teamwork, leadership, friendship, independence, courage – skills that student-athletes can translate into their everyday lives outside of sport for years to come.



THE CORE COMPONENTS OF YOUR CHALLENGER BASEBALL IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

WHAT SHOULD EVERY CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM INCLUDE?

While each Challenger Baseball in the Schools Program will be uniquely designed to reflect the unique school and specific needs of each student-athlete, all Challenger Baseball programs, regardless of the style of delivery, include the following key features:



“We adapted the Rock Paper Scissors Baseball game into a Stop-Go game where the players has laminated STOP-GO cards that they would hide behind their backs and show. This worked well with the IEP goals we have for many of our students. By the end of the game students were developing greater independence. They picked up on the cheer very quickly and many wanted to practice more during the week.”

- Challenger in the Schools Program Leader, British Columbia

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

Challenger Baseball in the Schools is about so much more than playing baseball. It's a chance for student-athletes to come together, to learn something new, to be physically active, to enhance their leadership skills, to strengthen their courage and to build strong relationships—with themselves, their peers and their leaders. One of the ways that you can determine whether your Challenger Baseball session is working towards the unique goals and outcomes is to ask yourself the following questions at the end of one of your sessions:

- Was I celebrating each individual success? Were the student-athletes celebrating each other's successes?
- Did I ask some of my athletes to step up and help us demonstrate? Did I challenge them to step outside of their comfort zones and then celebrate their courage?
- Did I create an environment where every student-athlete felt welcome, included and safe? Did I make it fun enough that they want to play Challenger Baseball again?
- Did I challenge athletes to take on leadership roles? Did I incorporate athlete voice by asking them for their ideas and feedback?
- Did I encourage them to get to know each other—during drills and outside of drills?

MEANINGFULLY INCORPORATING LIFE-SKILLS INTO YOUR PROGRAMMING

At Jays Care, we are committed to building strong people – strong baseball players are a secondary benefit. Baseball is our vehicle to support children, youth and adults in enhancing their self-esteem and self-confidence, building positive peer and adult relationships, becoming more physically active, falling in love with physical activity, and gaining the necessary skills to become leaders in their school, families and communities. Below are the programmatic goals as well as strategies that you can use to meaningfully integrate life-skill development into your Challenger Baseball in the Schools program.

Helping athletes enhance life skills through Challenger Baseball is simple... it just takes a little bit of planning and a focus on the bigger goals the program focuses on. Below are some examples of ways to develop life skills through Challenger Baseball:

When asked about a highlight of their most recent Challenger Baseball session, an educator from Surrey, BC said...

“we introduced the cheer today and the kids loved it. We had pictures for our non-verbal students and one of our kids even did the cheer on his TouchChat (augmentative communication device)”.



**CHALLENGER BASEBALL
GOAL:**

**STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING YOUR GOAL
INTO YOUR SESSIONS:**

ENHANCED CONNECTION

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making new friends • Developing stronger and more supportive friendships • Learning how to be a trustworthy, kind and reliable friend and teammate • Establishing trusting relationships with coaches and volunteers (i.e. role models) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the athletes to help develop ground rules for their team. Post the rules on the wall and ensure that the athletes stick to the rules – addressing any times when they falter and demonstrating what accountability, apology and forgiveness looks like. • Start each session with an opening circle where athletes can share how their day was (up’s and down’s, roses and thorns) as the team stretches. • Demonstrate what being a good teammate looks like/sounds like. Celebrate athletes verbally after every effort and encourage them to do the same. • Switch partners after each activity. Before starting the activity, challenge athletes to share one personal detail about themselves with their new partner. • During throwing drills, challenge pairs or small teams to learn five things about each other during the drill. • Pair coaches with athletes to do some drills. • At the end of each session, close with a closing circle where athletes can identify anything they noticed other athletes doing that was courageous/kind/helpful, etc. |
|--|--|

ENHANCED COURAGE

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to try new things; • The inner-strength to fail at something and continue trying; • The ability to win and lose with grace and dignity; • The ability to set big goals and develop clear plans for achieving them; • The ability to identify personal strengths; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the importance of having the courage to try new things (like Challenger Baseball!). Reinforce this value at the beginning of every session; • Start by playing simple drills and games, slowly work in new challenges (i.e. using bigger balls, making distances shorter, etc.); • Celebrate athletes each time they have the courage to try something new; • Celebrate athletes in your explanations of new drills/skills (i.e. I saw Ally doing this really well the other day”) • Invite athletes to help in demonstrations; • Normalize challenging aspects of drills. Let athletes know what challenges they might face with a particular drill. Challenge athletes at the beginning of a practice to set one personal goal for the practice |
|--|--|

ENHANCED LEADERSHIP AND INDEPENDENCE

- The ability to lead others;
 - The ability to identify different ways of being a leader on a team;
 - The ability to share your opinions and ideas;
 - The ability to authentically celebrate others;
 - The ability to lead and support others to lead;
 - The ability to persevere in challenging circumstances;
 - The ability to listen to other people's opinions and ideas.
- Provide athletes with choice;
 - Challenge athletes to modify or adapt drills;
 - Select different athletes to lead drills each day;
 - Select different athletes to lead the opening and closing circles;
 - Challenge athletes to volunteer to create new team traditions;
 - Challenge athletes to create a cheer or tradition that celebrates opposing teams when they win;
 - Challenge athletes to create a cheer or tradition when they are losing to bring up spirits and confidence in the team;
 - Challenge athletes to sign up for different roles during practices and games (i.e. time keeper, the player lineup, 1st and 3rd base coaches, warm up leader, etc.).

LOVE OF SPORT AND ENHANCED COMMITMENT TO REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- The desire to be active and participate in play
 - Commitment to being active each and every day
 - Understanding being active can be really fun, exciting and new each time
 - Being curious of different ways to be active including knowledge of sport and activities available to them in their schools and communities
- Encourage and celebrate all unique forms of physical activity for each individual athlete
 - Challenge athletes to make up their own wacky games using the equipment you have
 - Be interested in their sport interests outside of Challenger Baseball and incorporate their knowledge into sessions! Do you athletes play sledge hockey? Wheelchair basketball? Do they like to run?
 - Ask athletes why it's important or why they like to be active – incorporate these questions into an activity or movement game!



WHAT ARE YOUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CHALLENGER BASEBALL CHAMPION?

The most important role you have as a Challenger Baseball Champion is to **lead a fun, safe, consistent and effective Challenger in Schools program**. As a teacher, Education Assistant and/or support worker, you already have a great sense of who your students are, including their individual strengths, weaknesses, goals, and personality traits that make them unique. Challenger Baseball is no different. The better you know your athletes, the more success you will experience as a coach.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE SIGNED UP TO RUN THIS PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL – *WHAT DOES IT MEAN?*

The role of a Challenger Baseball coach is a volunteer role that requires time and passion to execute in a meaningful way. Utilizing all resources provided, it is the responsibility of the Challenger coach to ensure each session is built into the school day and school week with 110% enthusiasm each time in an effort to meet the program goals.

Here are your **main responsibilities** as a Challenger in the Schools Program Leader:

1. Attend the Jays Care Foundation Challenger Baseball Workshop	2. Deliver a Minimum of 15 Challenger Baseball Sessions Per School Year	3. Submit End-of-Year Surveys (online or paper) from program leaders AND student-athletes
At minimum, 1-2 educators from your school will have attended the Challenger Baseball in the Schools Training-Workshop	<p>At minimum, Challenger Baseball in the Schools program leaders will facilitate 15 Challenger Baseball sessions at your school.</p> <p>Sessions will look different at every school – and that’s okay! Here’s some ideas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. During Physical Education Class b. During Recess c. During in-class time d. Before or after school 	<p>Feedback is required! We ask that you fill out the end-of-program surveys yourself as a Challenger Baseball Champion and help your students do the same.</p> <p>We ask that you submit these surveys (online or paper) no later than 2 weeks after your last Challenger Baseball session.</p>

“The proudest moment in Challenger Baseball for me this year was every Monday morning when the kids told me they were excited for lunchtime Challenger”

– Challenger in the Schools Champion, Ontario

Challenger Coaches are responsible for modelling best practices for our athletes. As Challenger Coaches, we:

- Set the tone for the each session by leading an opening circle and introducing the theme and plan for the day
- Recognize positive qualities in each participant and identify and celebrate them
- Ensure all participants are physically and emotionally safe
- Plan and lead well organized and adaptive sessions according to the Challenger Baseball "wave" (see pg. 19 for more details)
- Clearly explain and demonstrate all activities in an energetic manner
- Work hard to introduce new, fun and creative activities to the children
- Manage time and space effectively
- Keep all participants active and engaged
- Adapt instruction and activities to suit the unique abilities of all participants
- Encourage participants to get involved and model positive behaviors for them
- Give frequent and positive feedback to participants and fellow staff



CHALLENGER COACHES

WHAT YOU NEED TO **KNOW** TO GET THE JOB DONE WELL!






There are many things that great Challenger Baseball champions can do to make a program successful – everyone has their own expertise and creativity to add! As Challenger Baseball champions, we will work on each of these core skills to enhance our coaching confidence in preparation for the launch of our programs and beyond:

-  **KNOW YOUR PLAYERS AND HOW TO SET A POSITIVE TONE:** their likes and dislikes, their current skills and abilities, what motivates them, their anxieties, etc.
-  **KNOW HOW TO FACILITATE ACTIVITIES IN WAYS THAT ENGAGE ALL PLAYERS AND HELP THEM LEARN:** Great Challenger Coaches are great facilitators. This means they know how to get children's attention and keep it. They know how to break instructions down into chunks and demonstrate with their bodies.
-  **KNOW HOW TO PLAN A CHALLENGER SESSION:** Challenger sessions work much better when coaches have a plan that includes a variety of activities that are introduced in what we call "the Challenger Wave".
-  **KNOW SOME FUN ACTIVITIES THAT WILL HELP PLAYERS BUILD RELATIONSHIPS:** ice-breakers and team-building games can be essential in both building relationships and relieving anxiety as players work to find the confidence to try new challenges.
-  **KNOW SOME FUN BASEBALL SKILLS AND DRILLS:** baseball shouldn't be only about playing a game. Baseball drills and skills help players develop confidence and keep baseball practices active and fun.
-  **KNOW SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BASEBALL AND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO TEACH THEM:** Challenger players want to learn baseball skills and continue to develop them. Knowing the fundamentals of baseball and innovative ways of teaching them is integral to helping your players enhance their skills.
-  **KNOW SOME WAYS TO MODIFY ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE EACH PLAYER CAN FULLY ENGAGE:** Each drill and skill doesn't have to look the same for each player. The ability to modify activities quickly to best suit the needs of each player is an important skill for each coach to have.
-  **KNOW WAYS TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENCE AND GOAL-SETTING SO THAT EACH PLAYER CAN WORK ON LIFE SKILLS AS WELL AS THEIR ATHLETIC SKILLS:** Challenger baseball is designed to help each player begin to understand their abilities as an athlete. Athletes thrive when they have the chance enhance their skills and to compete independently.
-  **KNOW HOW TO ASSESS WHETHER THE PROGRAM IS WORKING OR NOT:** Great coaches seek feedback from athletes to determine what is working in the program and what can be done to make it even better.
-  **KNOW HOW TO CELEBRATE YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETES:** Jays care is excited to help celebrate your #UnstoppableKids as they move through their Challenger Baseball journey
-  **KNOW HOW TO USE OUR RESOURCES, INTEGRATE THEMES INTO YOUR CHALLENGER PROGRAM AND WORK TOWARDS INCENTIVES:** We work closely with our Challenger Baseball Advisory Committee, which is made up of experts in the field of education, adaptive physical education, disability, and baseball to develop exciting resources you can use within your programs! Our Appendix includes a series of themes that help to make each month exciting and integrate opportunities for Challenger Athletes to receive prizing and recognition for their hard work.




SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS IN YOUR ATHLETES

Challenger Baseball and Challenger Baseball in the Schools is designed to be a program where program leaders and athletes can bring their best selves to the program each day. In order to create a space where athletes feel empowered to challenge themselves and behave in positive ways, Challenger Baseball program leaders should be very pro-active. Experts at Canucks Autism Network created a cheat-sheet including **five pro-active strategies** you can use to promote positive behaviors in in your athletes at Challenger Baseball:





Structure

	Visual Schedule	Show activities: list, pictures, time, # of reps
	Transition Cues	Signal the switch: countdown, clapping, lights
	Timers & Checklists	Show how much: steps to task, how much time?
	Frontloading	Show what to expect: pictures, video, text
	Review Expected Behaviour	Actively teach what you want to see before activities start. Acknowledge positive behaviour when you see it.



Challenge

	Set up Variations	Plan for diversity/multiple ways to participate.
	No Singling Out	Aim for simultaneous participation at multiple skill levels.
	Breaks	Create a space and give breaks when needed.




Motivation

	30 second check-in	Spend time building rapport.
	Include Athlete Interests	Incorporate favourite topics in games/activities.
	Give Lots of Choice	Used closed choices instead of 'free time.'
	Group Motivation Tools	Use a point system with your group.

Teaching

	Rule of 3/Chunking	3 pieces of info at a time: maximum!
	Show and Say	Don't rely on verbal instruction.
	Visual Cues	Use tape, lines, hoops, and other markers to show.
	Break it Down	If you find yourself repeating: make the task simpler.
	Be Specific/Give Better Feedback	Tell them exactly what they did right.

Social Support

	Strategic Pairing/Grouping	Don't let the kids pick.
	Create Team Rituals	Create team high fives, cheers and goal celebrations.
	Codes of Conduct	For parents and for teammates.
	Zero Tolerance for Bullying	If you see it, stop it.
	Ratios	Get more help if you need it.

WHEN YOU NEED TO INTERVENE, USE THE P.A.C.E. APPROACH:

At Challenger Baseball, we work very hard to ensure that every athlete is treated with respect and that all program leaders manage behaviors with an understanding that challenging behaviors are a type of communication and are almost always the result of a need that is being unmet.

Using the PACE approach, program leaders are able to build meaningful connections with athletes each day, and support athletes in the midst of their toughest moments in a calm, kind and supportive way. **Here's what PACE is all about:**

Being **Playful, Accepting, Curious and Empathic** are the keys to re-connecting and becoming 'in tune' with athletes. Each must be used in a genuine, respectful way in order to increase the emotional bond between you and provide alternatives to the athlete's previous experiences of care.

We use P.A.C.E. because it:

- ✓ Helps you and the athlete feel connected.
- ✓ Helps you and the athlete feel understood.
- ✓ Builds trust between you and the athlete.
- ✓ Builds security between you and the athlete.



DID YOU KNOW...




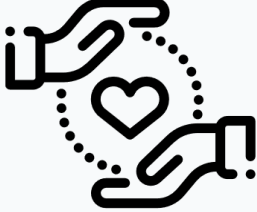
DR. DAN HUGHES, AN ATTACHMENT THEORY EXPERT, DEVELOPED THE PACE MODEL AS A WAY TO SUPPORT ADULTS IN BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN AND TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN IMPORTANT SKILLS IN SELF REGULATION

P- PLAYFULNESS

A- ACCEPTANCE

C- CURIOSITY

E- EMPATHY

<p>P – PLAYFULNESS</p> 	<p>Playfulness is about having fun with and enjoying the athlete by encouraging a connection with you. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Playfulness brings joy and joy brings connection. ✓ It helps athletes understand that they are fun to be with. ✓ Remaining playful helps the athlete remain in tune with you. ✓ By playing together, you can learn about what games, activities can best help you to remain in tune for longer. <p>Being playful can mean having fun with shared games or activities that involve you both (and others). It can also mean sharing smiles, laughs, hugs and closeness.</p>
<p>A – ACCEPTANCE:</p> 	<p>Being accepting means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Not judging the athlete. ✓ Acceptance of the athlete’s behavioural choices (although not necessarily accepting that they are good choices). ✓ Understanding what may lie behind inappropriate behaviour but not condoning the behaviour. ✓ Using appropriate consequences. ✓ Letting the athlete know that they are accepted just as they are and that’s okay.
<p>C – CURIOSITY:</p> 	<p>Curiosity means making best guesses about what’s going on. Curiosity leads to understanding that increase acceptance of the athlete’s past experiences and reasons behind their behaviour. It also allows the athlete to be heard and understood.</p> <p>Coaches are asked to be curious about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Feelings associated with the athlete’s statements (e.g. “I know you hate me!”). ✓ Thoughts associated with their statements. ✓ Implications of these and the coping strategies used by the athlete. ✓ Patterns in behaviour that you may both experience. ✓ How all this may relate to their past experiences of care.
<p>E – EMPATHY:</p> 	<p>Is about ‘feeling’ with another, feeling compassion for their hurts, struggles and suffering.</p> <p>Empathy eventually allows the athlete to acknowledge deeper feelings of fear, sadness, hurt, anger, etc. without fearing judgment.</p> <p>Genuine empathic responses must ‘come from the heart’. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “That makes me really sad to hear you say you think I don’t care for you.” ✓ “I’m sorry that happened to you.” ✓ “That must have been very hard for you.” ✓ “I’m sad that there was so much in your life that you had to try and forget.”

WHAT IS ANOTHER RESOURCE I CAN USE TO MANAGE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR IN MY STUDENT-ATHLETES?

On page 35, you will find the **Recognizing and Responding to Challenging Behaviour Cards** which details each stage (Trigger, Escalation, Explosion and Recovery), and strategies for how to plan ahead, notice the signs, and respond with emphasis on self-care, environment and communication

TRIGGER

NOTICE SIGNS
The athlete is becoming agitated or avoiding a situation.

- Withdrawal - sitting alone; not responding to their name
- Full of energy and unable to sit still (appear silly or wiggly)
- Inattentive or hyper-focused
- Having trouble communicating
- Emotional outbursts (may be saying "I'm bored, I'm not doing that, or I hate it here")
- Expressing worry
- Physical reactions - appears agitated, sweating, trembling, choking, dizziness, falling asleep, toilet accidents, echolalia, stimming

PLAN AHEAD

- Establish Ground Rules at Challenger Baseball
- Define a safe place to go for breaks
- Ensure fidget toys and visuals are available at all times
- Learn about likes, dislikes, allergies and medication

RESPOND

SELF-CARE

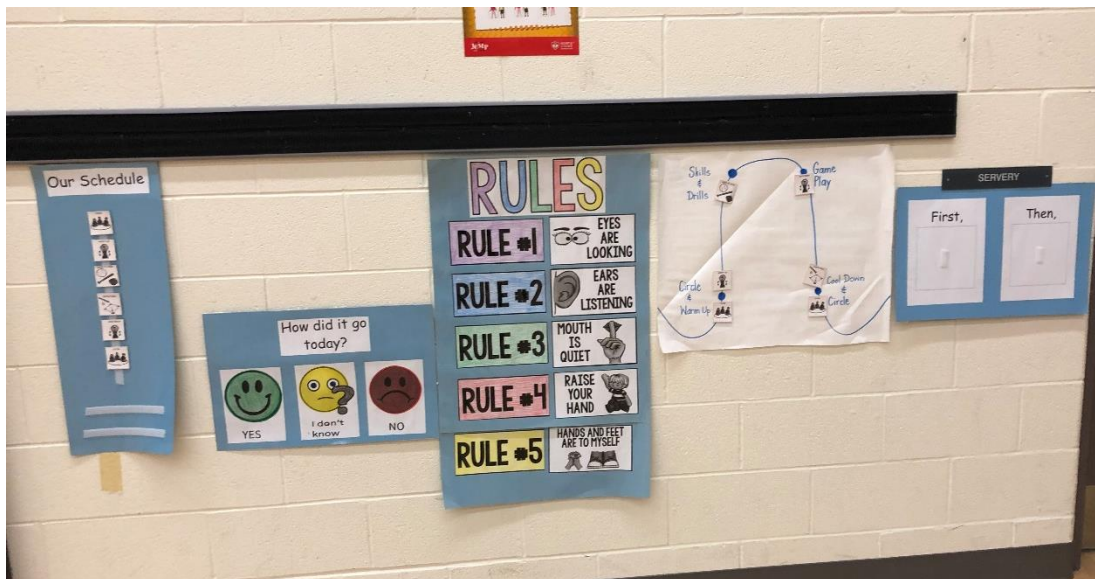
- Check your own assumptions and body language
- Stay calm and take a deep breath

ENVIRONMENT

- Offer a safe, quiet place to go or remove the stimuli that is bothering the athlete
- Allow extra time for the athlete to regulate
- Offer the athlete a drink, food or cool place to sit
- Offer fidget toys

COMMUNICATION

- Utilize visuals if already in place
- Avoid talking loudly, decrease distance between self and athlete
- Model deep breathing, avoid saying "breathe/breath"
- Use a calm, reassuring voice
- Reduce demands, give clear instructions (1 to 2 choices at a time)
- Change your voice tone and gestures to offer encouragement
- Avoid repeating yourself, calling their name or trying to negotiate
- Model visual cues for calming. Refer to visuals for making choices
- Avoid reprimands or threats
- Offer a preferred activity or transition item
- Avoid demanding eye contact and respect personal space
- Don't try to reason or give direction
- Offer a physical outlet



Know Your Athletes

Remember that every student-athlete is coming with a different level of experience, interest, skill and ability. Some student-athletes may find integrating into a structured baseball program very difficult. There are a few key things you can do to help ease every participant into your program:

- ☑ **Incorporate an interest** – Participants may not be intrinsically motivated to try all of the activities, especially the first time. Try building in something that each player likes (e.g., make the obstacle course about ‘passing levels’ to ‘win the game’ if a player likes video games).
- ☑ **Fade from 1:1 adult support to participation with the group** – Some participants may do best with highly support 1:1 interaction with an adult on the side of the gym or field before attempting to join the group. An effective middle step might be to bring 1 peer over to try the activity with the child before joining the large group.
- ☑ **Expect that it might take *time*** – Some participants may not want to participate on the first day.
- ☑ **Focus on building relationships and having fun** – the goal should be that the athlete wants to try again next time! Allow the athlete to watch from the door or the sidelines until he or she is comfortable. Emphasize with the player that you're glad they're here!
- ☑ **Celebrate victories** – Each small victory for players is one more step towards reaching their unique, individual goals. For example, with Challenger Athlete Liam from Nova Scotia we learnt that celebrating his step up to the plate by himself was a catalyst for increased confidence in his own abilities for the rest of the season! All small victories like Liam's add up, helping to snowball new abilities and developing good, lasting habits that bring participants one step closer to achieving their big dreams. When leaders take a moment to celebrate the successes of participants, no matter how small, we're able to create a safe space for growth within Challenger Baseball.
- ☑ **Fill Emotional Tanks Regularly** – Filling the Emotional Tank (E-Tank) of your participants will help to fuel their engagement and performance. People with full tanks perform better, and people with empty tanks aren't able to go as far. Parents, coaches and especially teammates play very important roles as “Tank Fillers.” Teams that spend effort on filling each other's e-tanks continue to work hard and improve, even in tough circumstances. As a Challenger coach, it is important for you to create an environment where you are filling the E-tanks of your participants and encouraging your players to do this for each other.

We have an athlete on our team who wasn't interested in learning to hit a ball off a tee. We learned from his parents that he loves superheroes – that gave us an idea! We found balls with Spiderman, the Hulk, and Captain America on them and next session we gave our athlete the choice of which ball he wanted to use. He had great success hitting the Spiderman ball off the tee!

- Hammonds Plains Challenger Baseball, Nova Scotia

Some ideas to promote this type of environment are:

<p>Model and teach the Importance of Filling Emotional Tanks</p>	<p>As a coach, be a frequent filler of emotional tanks. Every program session, find things you can use to fill your players e-tanks. Model tank-filling so that your players will be more inclined to become tank fillers themselves</p>
<p>Use the Buddy System to Make your Participants Tank-Fillers</p>	<p>When you have your participants fill each other's e-tanks, your team will go far. Introduce the "buddy system" by pairing up teammates and getting them used to filling each other's e-tanks. Teams whose members learn to fill each other's e-tanks have great success.</p>
<p>Develop Player-Coaches</p>	<p>A team is a great place to develop leaders, and individuals become leaders by learning how to make decisions. Designate some of your participants to become "player-coaches" and give them an opportunity to lead the team during practices and sessions. As a coach, you won't give up control but you will be involving the players in the decision making process.</p>
<p>Inject Positive energy with the Two-Minute Drill</p>	<p>When you feel energy is low at your practice or session, it is your duty as a coach to inject positivity. This is a time when you intentionally do not critique or correct mistakes—look for that another time. Right now you are giving your players an infusion of energy and you don't want anything to get in the way of that.</p>
<p>Turn Kids Around with Player of the Day</p>	<p>If you notice that one or some of your participants are misbehaving or supremely full of energy, make him/her the "player of the day". Ignore the things they are not doing well and focus solely on things they are doing well. This can make a difference with kids who regularly have empty e-tanks—if they have problems in the classroom or at home.</p>
<p>End Games with a Closing Circle</p>	<p>Right after programming is ideal for focusing on tank filling using a Closing Circle. Get your players into a circle and open the floor for tank-filling comments!</p>



Know How To Facilitate Activities In Ways That Engage And Help All Athletes Learn

Engaging every athlete can be challenging. Here are few tips that can help:

1. Be Prepared

Plan *before* the ball diamond to create a safe, high-quality, transformative experience for all athletes & abilities.

2. Generate Excitement

Get the athletes excited and ready to participate in the activities & game play!

3. Set the Tone!

Encourage teamwork, connection, sportsmanship & fun!

4. Explain & demonstrate

Use clear, concise and core language & instructions.

5. Diversify Communication

Discover new ways to effectively communicate with all athletes (i.e. visual instructions, sign language, leading-questions etc.)

6. Get Involved - Participate!

Be a Super Coach! If you are having fun, then your athletes will too!

7. Play to the Pinnacle

Athletes will be more interested in returning to a game that was stopped while they were having fun and being challenged - this is one way we can encourage our athletes to grow!

8. Tighten the Screw

No need to add a new screw or re-invent the wheel, add a variation or adapt to diversify the original game to keep athletes interested & engaged!

9. Encourage Risk-Taking

Model how to do this appropriately for all abilities. Encourage development of new FMS and emphasize competition against self!

10. Have Fun!



Know How To Plan A Challenger Session

The success of your Challenger Baseball Program depends on your ability to build strong relationships with your athletes, but also on your ability to plan consistent and inclusive programming.

Good planning is very important for a successful session. It is especially important when you are coaching groups with varied abilities!

- Good planning ensures that you know:
 - **what** you want to achieve during a session and **how** you will achieve it
 - **how** to adjust if an activity or game is not working well
- Good planning ensures that your sessions are suitable for
 - the players' stage of development
 - the goals you want to achieve

STEP 1: Think about the goal of your program. Creating this goal with your Challenger Baseball team will help your whole group consider all of the different ways you can achieve it and all of the people who could possibly help you to achieve it.

STEP 2: Support your leadership team. When groups of passionate people come together, they make magic happen! It takes a village of supportive, creative and fearless leaders to help support Challenger Baseball in each school community. Support these people by frontloading them with everything they need to know to do the job well (page 14).

STEP 3: Think about how you want to structure your program with the unique athletes you have. The goal that has been set is for YOUR specific program and YOUR unique athletes. You will likely see differences from other programs - and that is okay! Goals will vary from year to year.

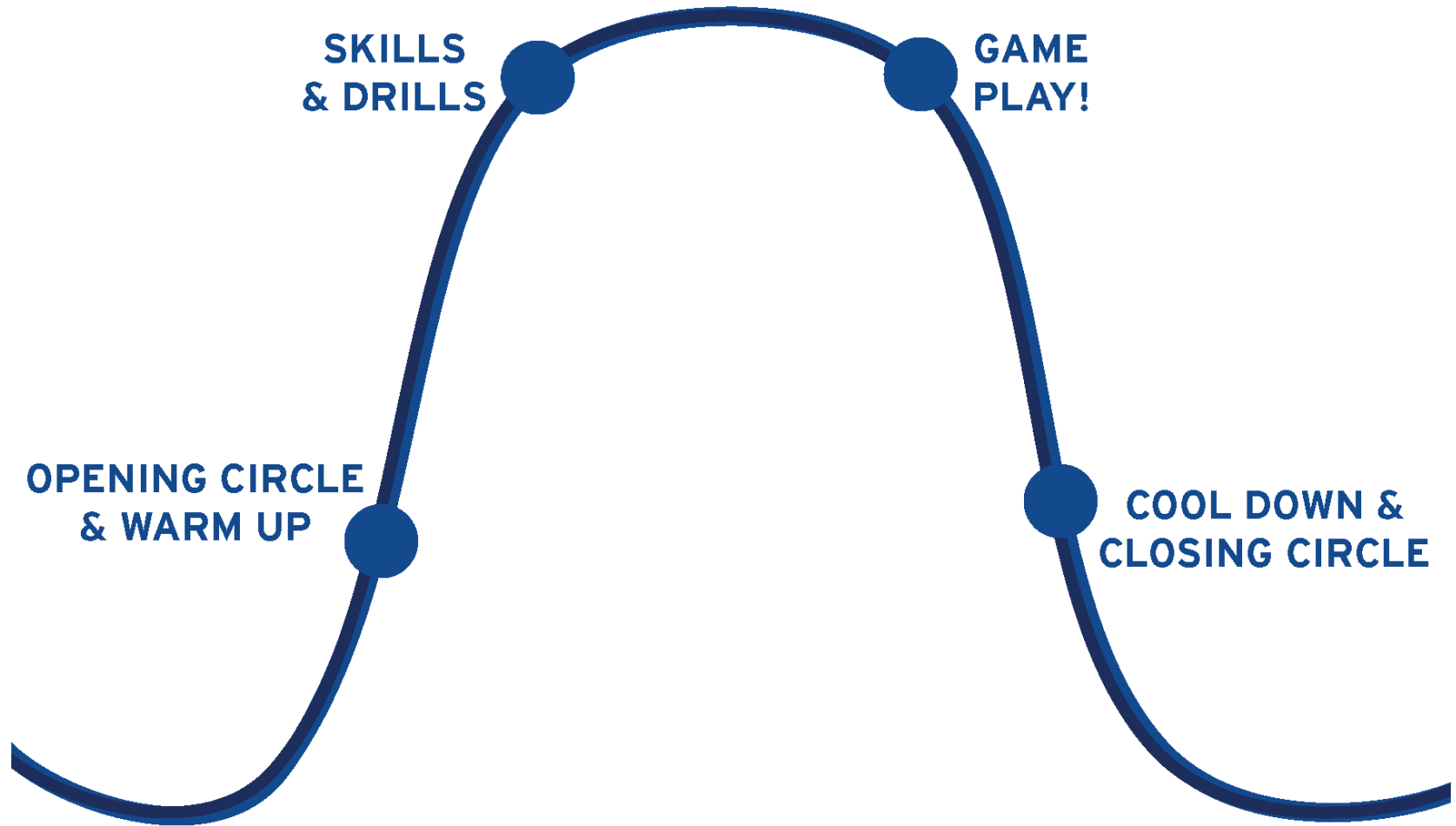
STEP 4: Plan your weekly schedule. Leading a Challenger Baseball program requires time for on-the-ground programming with your athletes as well as planning your sessions, gathering the required equipment, organizing modified games, and assessing your sessions.

The most important consideration in Challenger Baseball is the athletes themselves. All planning decisions are suited to their needs, ability, experience, motivation, physical and emotional maturity and fitness. **One proven way to structure your Challenger Baseball Sessions is by utilizing the Challenger Baseball Program Wave (page 23).**



THE CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM WAVE

A Challenger Baseball Session is typically 60-90 minutes long:



SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PLANNING YOUR CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM USING THE “WAVE” MODEL:

Why is it called a ‘wave’?

It is called a wave because it is based on the energy-level of your group. Typically, when student-athlete first arrive at Challenger Baseball they are either finishing up another class or coming from another type of programming. This is why the session starts with activities to build on their energy and get them engaged. By the middle of the program participants usually have a lot of energy and need to burn off some steam which is why the most high-energy and active games tend to go in the middle. And the end of programming typically involves more low-energy activities like discussion and closing circle to leave everyone focused, feeling good and ready for the rest of their day.

How long does the wave take?

Depending on how you want to run your program in your school, the wave can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours. It is up to you how many activities you include in each part of the wave.

	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Approx. Time	(45 min)	(1 hour)	(1.5 hours)
Opening Circle & Warm-Up	5 min	5 min	10 min
Drills & Skills	15 min	25 min	35 min
Game Play!	20 min	25 min	35 min
Cool-Down & Closing Circle	5 min	5 min	1 min



What type of activities do I use to fill the time and where do I find them?

The benefits of using the wave to plan your Challenger Baseball in the Schools program is that it reminds you to use a *variety* of different activities each time. Suggested activities include:

Welcome and Opening Circle:	A chance to check in with the group and introduce the theme and/or area of focus for the day. A series of movements, activities or dynamic stretched that primes the body and mind for physical activity
Skills and Drills:	Quick activities that provide opportunities for players to work on a particular skill at their own level and outside a formal drill or game setting. Traditional sports that have been modified to be non-competitive and to support teamwork and collaboration.
Game Play:	An opportunity to apply learning in a game setting
Cool Down and Closing Circle:	Gentle activities and/or exercise that gradually help to slow down the body after night-intensity activity. Time to gather feedback from players and to reflect on key learnings

Know Some Fun Activities That Will Help Players Build Relationships

Engaging your student-athletes in big group games is one of the many ways you, as a Challenger Baseball champion, can foster a fun, engaging environment where life-skills can be reinforced through play. You can find a number of our favorite games and activities starting on page 42.

For example, on page 52 you can find a student-athlete favorite, Huckle Buckle!

Know Some Of The Fundamentals Of Baseball And Effective Ways To Teach Them

Knowing the fundamentals of baseball and ways to adapt each skill to your individual student-athletes is a key factor in increasing success. You can find the fundamentals of baseball and modified ways of teaching them starting on page 51.

For example, on page 63 you can find the skill of “throwing” broken down to increase success of teaching this skill!

Know Some Fun Baseball Skills and Drills

Baseball can be so much more than a game; when used intentionally, baseball can be a vehicle to reach those big life skills for your student-athletes alongside increasing their baseball knowledge and mastery. You can find everything you need to plan your baseball sessions starting on page 45.

For example, on page 65 you can find a game called “Chuck and Duck” that is used to help master throwing!

Know Some Ways To Modify Activities To Ensure Each Athlete Can Fully Engage

One of the biggest challenges that you may face as a Challenger Baseball champion is understanding how you can adapt your activities to meet each participant's unique needs while also challenging them.

When adapting activities, remember:

- ✓ Not every strategy will be a good fit for every athlete in every situation
- ✓ Engage players in conversations about their own goals and abilities
- ✓ Work as a team to understand and match appropriate activities
- ✓ Collaborate with parents to understand individual strategies
- ✓ Incorporate an interest

Before each set of baseball skill descriptions in this handbook, you'll find specific adaptations to try for all abilities.

There are an endless number of ways to modify activities. At Challenger, we use the acronym **ADAPT** to help us become talented and creative masters of inclusion:

Maximize participation by **ADAPTing** the:

A	ACTIVITY: Adapt the activity (the pace, rules, number of turns)
D	DIRECTIONS: Adapt the directions or instructions (the way you deliver them, the visual aids you use to help athletes learn)
A	APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT: Adapt the tools you use to play the game (replace small balls with big balls, bats with rackets)
P	PLAY AREA: Adapt the size and boundaries of the area you are playing in (make the boundaries smaller or the distance between bases shorter)
T	TIMELINES: Adapt the amount of time athletes are allotted to test out a new skill (or the pace at which you throw the ball)

When changing any drill or activity, consider the following:

- ✓ The change should be safe.
- ✓ It should include each child.
- ✓ It should be easy to make.
- ✓ It should help each child be independent.

On pages 45-92 of this manual, you will find a variety of skills and drills as well as unique ways to **ADAPT** each activity. Below are some simple strategies to consider when adapting activities to maximize participation:

If you need to change the:	... then consider these strategies:
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever possible, include the child with a disability when making decisions about a change. • Get ideas from the group of children. • Decrease the activity time or increase the rest time. • Reduce the speed of the game or the number players on the field. • Give children who need it more turns or time to complete an action. • Give children choices about how they want to participate in the activity. • Allow plenty of practice time for children to learn new skills or to understand the rules • Provide scaffolded opportunities so that children who need a greater challenge can push themselves to the next level.
Directions/ Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a set routine when leading each session as all children (especially children with disabilities) do better when they know what is going to happen next. • Use simple words to explain the game or the rules. • Give only one instruction at a time and allow all children time to think about what they have heard before expecting them to perform. • Break the skill down into 'mini progressions'. Remember, sometimes small steps are big victories! Fun must be the first goal at all times • Use single meaning words to describe actions (for example "Run to the base" instead of "go to the base"). • Point or gesture when describing activities. Use your whole body to model how the activity works. • Use pictures. For example, pictures can show the action, the equipment, tell the children to stop or praise the children for doing well. • Ask different children to demonstrate the activity for everyone else. • Position children who have difficulty paying attention facing away from distractions. • Focus on one aspect of the game at a time. • Find the best way to use start and stop signals. Some children may need hand signals and others may need physical assistance to stop. • Praise athletes when they achieve success, big or small.
Apparatus/ Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make targets larger or use targets that make a noise when hit. • All children to see and touch equipment prior to playing a game. • Attach string to balls or beanbags so that children in wheelchairs can easily retrieve items independently and continue to practice the skill. • Put brightly coloured streamers or ribbons on targets. • Select balls of different textures, sizes, brighter colours or that make noise. • Use bigger-sized and/or lighter balls (beach balls are awesome!) • Use coloured or numbered bases • Try pool noodles or tennis rackets instead of bats
Play Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a safe area in games of tag, especially for children who move more slowly. Keep the area clear and uncluttered. • Outline or highlight boundaries, base lines, bases, and any other important zone in a game with brightly coloured tape or markers for children with low vision or attention difficulties. • Shorten the base distances. • Show the children the space where the game will be played and physically walk to all important places/zones in front of all children before any game/activity begins.
Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the activity shorter • Allow the child to try for just one turn. Use a countdown strip or a first-then board and tell the child that after they try for one turn, they can have a break/do something else

Know Ways To Promote Independence And Goalsetting So Each Athlete Can Work On Life Skills As Well As Their Athletic Skills

Many well-intentioned coaches adapt activities quickly and forget to consider the importance of promoting the child's independence: *Independent movement can have a dramatic effect on children with disabilities. Often when people modify activities they forget to promote independence.*

For example, in a relay activity, if one child is visually impaired, many coaches will pair that child up with another child who is not visually impaired. This is an easy modification to make, however it does not promote independence. There are several alternative modifications (such as using a guide rope) that promote inclusion at the same time as independence.

- ✓ Start small and build on success both individually and as a group by incorporating themes or items your athletes admire or like, such as superheroes or their favorite colors
- ✓ Teach the concept of time by using a clock or timer to show there is a beginning, middle and end to activities can help encourage patience and transitioning
- ✓ Provide accessible play spaces and equipment such as flat bases that can be easily crossed by those athletes using wheelchairs or walkers, or larger, lighter bats for those who are working on their coordination while hitting a ball off a tee
- ✓ Offer choices and solicit your student-athletes' preferences for equipment and/or activities
- ✓ Provide opportunities for your student-athletes to see themselves succeeding by using a mirror or taking a video on your school's iPad could provide the opportunity for your athlete to feel proud of their accomplishments

DID YOU KNOW?

94.3% of educators believed that the program had a positive impact on increasing children's self-confidence

97.1% of educators believed that the program had a positive impact on improving children's social and emotional well-being.

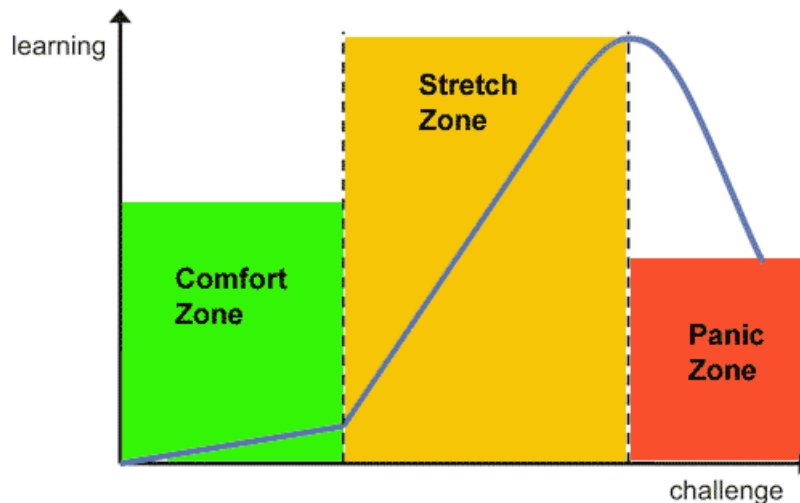
97.1% of educators believed that the program had a positive impact on improving children's social and emotional well-being.

42% of educators observed improved attitude towards homework and learning, as a result of the program.

LEVELING-UP YOUR PROGRAM

Because our athletes are so diverse in growth goals and skills, you may find yourself wondering: “How do I adapt the activities we’re doing so ALL my athletes feel encouraged, challenged, and proud of their accomplishments?”

Finding this balance for your athletes means helping them find their **STRETCH ZONE**:



The **STRETCH ZONE** is the feeling athletes get when:

- ✓ they are experiencing challenge and success;
- ✓ an activity has the right amount of challenge and is developmentally appropriate
- ✓ they are engaged and trying hard
- ✓ the most growth and development is taking place!

For all our unique athletes, “challenge” can look very different: for one athlete challenge can mean picking up a ball off the grass, and for another it can be how quickly they can catch and throw a ball back accurately.

When you consider ways to get each individual athlete into their **STRETCH ZONE**, you will find yourself modifying drills and skills many different ways so that each athlete can make the greatest gains. Here are some questions to consider as you modify drills and skills to **STRETCH** your athletes:

1. Is this modification helping to build a connection between the athlete and their peers, the athlete and their buddy, or the athlete and themselves?
2. Is this modification something new or a progression (big or small!) of a previous activity they have been working on?
3. Am I fostering as much independence as possible through this modification?
4. Are my athletes as active as possible, fully engaged and having fun?

Know How To Assess Whether The Program Is Working Or Not

An essential part of your role is to ensure that you are collecting and gathering feedback from athletes in your program.

What are the different program assessment activities?

At Jays Care, we try to make assessment *fun* for both yourself and your student-athletes. Here are four ways we will incorporate Assessment into Challenger Baseball:

1. **End-of School Year Assessment Forms for Student-Athletes *and* Teachers:** By filling this out yourself and assisting your student-athletes to do the same, either online or via paper, you're helping to actively monitor and evaluate your Challenger Program by sharing your successes, challenges and feedback

Jays Care will provide three separate surveys for your program to use, including:

1. Athlete Survey: Version 1
2. Athlete Survey: Version 2
3. Educator/Program Leader Survey

These surveys are available both in paper format and online.

We kindly ask that you submit all completed surveys no later than two weeks after your last Challenger Baseball session is completed.

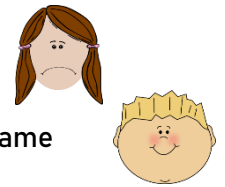
These can be scanned and sent via e-mail to Meghan.Saundercook@Bluejays.com or mailed to:

Toronto Blue Jays Baseball Club
Rogers Centre, Suite 3200
Attn: Meghan Saundercook, Jays Care Foundation
1 Blue Jays Way, Toronto, ON
M5V 1J1

2. **Incorporating Youth Voice:** Actively encourage your student-athletes to tell you what they like about Challenger Baseball, and if they could wave a magic wand, what would make it even better next time! You can use your "Youth Voice Challenges" in the Calendar you have received. You can read more about these challenges on page 32.
3. **Monthly Challenges:** These challenges are essentially assessments designed to celebrate your student-athletes! You can view the monthly challenges on page 31.
4. **Fun Activities with your student-athletes:** Program assessment activities are quick and fun activities that give participants a chance to tell us, what they like about Challenger Baseball and what they hope will change to make the program even better next session. **Here's 3 that you could try:**

Happy Face, Sad Face

In this game, each athlete will line up on any line/wall in a gym. Coach will have a picture of a “Happy Face” on one piece of paper, and a “Sad Face” on another – these pieces of paper are placed at least 5 meters away from each other. To begin, coach will name aspects of that day’s session – for example:



- “I learned how to swing a bat today!”
- “I had fun at practice!”
- “I made a new friend today”
- “I worked hard at practice today”
- “I learned something new today”

If the athlete agrees with the statement, they move toward the “Happy Face”. If the athlete disagrees with the statement, they move towards the “Sad Face”.

Circle Game

Coach will draw a circle in the infield dirt, or use the circle lines in the middle of the gym (can also make a circle with whatever materials you have). All athletes stand on the circle. To begin, coach will name aspects of that day’s session – for example:



- “I learned how to swing a bat today!”
- “I had fun at practice!”
- “I made a new friend today”
- “I worked hard at practice today”
- “I learned something new today”

If the athletes agree with the statement, they step inside the circle.

If they disagree with the statement, they move outside the circle.

This can be done with eyes closed or open. Coach will name other aspects of that day’s session, and the athletes are encouraged to move in and out of the circle if they agree or disagree.

Fill the Bucket

Coach will personify the baseballs as aspects of that day’s session. The athletes will choose to put the baseballs “in the bucket” if they agree, or “throw it away” if they disagree. This will allow you to see any progress in the quality of program delivery as more balls are added to the bucket. For example...

- “I had fun with learning to throw today!”
- “I tried my best when we ran the bases today!”
- “I liked practicing swinging the bat today!”

Why are these assessments important?

Challenger Baseball is designed to be an experience that student-athletes love. A place that feels safe, inclusive, fun and adaptive. In order to make it the best possible experience, we need to understand what the students like about the experience, what they don't like, how they feel and what they think would make it even better. These activities are an easy way for us to ensure that we are designing and adjusting Challenger Baseball to meet the needs of the student-athletes who are in your program.

The more feedback we receive, the more we can grow the Challenger baseball in the Schools program in future years!



The most important role you have as a Challenger Baseball Coach is to **lead a fun, safe, consistent and effective Challenger Baseball program**. Being a Challenger Coach is a tremendous opportunity to grow and develop your own skills, meet amazing children and families, and have a great time doing it. It is also a tremendous responsibility. Great Challenger Coaches are much more than baseball skills instructors. They are:

- teachers of life-skills, friends and a role models for children, parents and other coaches
- organized, prepared, flexible and resourceful enough to meet goals.
- fair and sensitive to everyone's needs.
- patient and enjoy helping others learn and grow, not just in sport, but as a whole person.
- connectors who help children form strong relationships with their peers, and connect parents to each other
- cheer-leaders who celebrate small and large accomplishments for all of their athletes
- Life coaches - helping athletes set small and big goals that challenge them to fulfill their limitless potential

Celebrating Your Student-Athletes!

We believe all of the student-athletes participating in Challenger Baseball are UNSTOPPABLE. They are tenacious, motivated and driven to be the best they can be, to be incredible teammates and to always try their best to reach their goals. These kids strive to get better every day – and deserve to be celebrated for their accomplishments, both big and small!

One of the many you celebrate your exceptional Challenger them to be one of Jays Care's UNSTOPPABLE KIDS. Each year and in every Jays Care program from coast to coast, we ask for nominations from coaches and staff to help us recognize kids who are truly unstoppable.

Unstoppable Kids are recognized in a variety of ways – here are just a few examples:

- Receiving a special Blue Jays prize pack and certificate;
- Being featured on Jays Care's social media storyboard;
- Being featured in Jays Care's annual advertising campaign; and/or
- An invitation to attend exclusive Blue Jays events as a special guest;
- VIP tickets to a Blue Jays Game and/or;
- An invitation to throw out the first pitch at a Blue Jays Game.

If you know a Challenger Baseball athlete who you believe is unstoppable, we want to hear from you! You can find the **Jays Care Unstoppable Kids Nomination Form** in Appendix C.



Incentives, Team Challenges and Resources

Challenger Baseball Visual Communication Resource

The Challenger Baseball Visual Communication Resource was created with our Challenger Baseball Advisory Committee to provide teachers, support workers and buddies with visual tools for communication and motivation that can help contribute to the student-athlete's successes in the Challenger in the Schools program. A **visual tool** is a type of approach that uses pictures to assist with communication, motivation and engagement in an activity for individuals with cognitive, communicative and physical needs.



The Handheld Visual Aid is a portable resource made up of the First/Then board, Wave/Visual Schedule, Baseball Field Visual, 'I'm Working Towards' token board and PECS on one surface. This aid allows teachers, support workers and/or buddies to carry multiple visual tools and PECS at the same time.

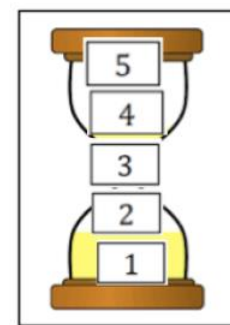
On the two inside pages of the resource there is Velcro™ to hold all of the PECS that can be used throughout a Challenger session.

VISUAL TIMER

The Visual Timer is a tool that helps promote organization and self-regulation skills. Buddies can use this tool in several ways throughout a Challenger session to help the athlete actively engage in the game/activities.

HOW TO USE:

Buddies can use the Visual Timer as a resource to assist with turn taking and transitions as well as a strategy to help the athlete track the skills/drills they are completing. The timer has five pieces/dots of Velcro placed vertically down the middle of the timer image, which corresponds with the numbers 1-5. Once an athlete has accomplished a skill, waited their turn, or completed one minute, the buddy can then request the athlete to remove a number from the timer and hand it to the buddy. Once all five numbers have been detached, then the task has been achieved.




Before using the timer, the buddy should clearly explain what the next steps would be once all five numbers have been removed. The buddy can also decide the amount of numbers that are used each time.

- ✓ **Turn Taking:** “Okay Johnny, there are now 3 people ahead of us to bat... can you please remove the #4?”
- ✓ **Transitions:** “There are 5 more minutes before we start practicing our throwing skills... there are now 4 more minutes.”
- ✓ **Skills/Drills Counter:** “You need to throw the ball 5 times before we move to the next activity.” (After each throw the athlete or buddy can remove numbers)

RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR CARDS

These cards can act as a reminder for recognizing and responding to certain behaviors your athletes may exhibit during their time at Challenger Baseball.

TRIGGER	TRIGGER
<p>NOTICE SIGNS The athlete is becoming agitated or avoiding a situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Withdrawal – sitting alone; not responding to their name ● Full of energy and unable to sit still (appear silly or wiggly) ● Inattentive or hyper-focused ● Having trouble communicating ● Emotional outbursts (may be saying “I’m bored, I’m not doing that, or I hate it here”) ● Expressing worry ● Physical reactions – appears agitated, sweating, trembling, choking, dizziness, falling asleep, toilet accidents, echolalia, stimming <p>PLAN AHEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Ground Rules at Challenger Baseball • Define a safe place to go for breaks • Ensure fidget toys and visuals are available at all times • Learn about likes, dislikes, allergies and medication 	<p>NOTICE SIGNS The athlete is becoming agitated or avoiding a situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Withdrawal – sitting alone; not responding to their name ● Full of energy and unable to sit still (appear silly or wiggly) ● Inattentive or hyper-focused ● Having trouble communicating ● Emotional outbursts (may be saying “I’m bored, I’m not doing that, or I hate it here”) ● Expressing worry ● Physical reactions – appears agitated, sweating, trembling, choking, dizziness, falling asleep, toilet accidents, echolalia, stimming <p>PLAN AHEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Ground Rules at Challenger Baseball • Define a safe place to go for breaks • Ensure fidget toys and visuals are available at all times • Learn about likes, dislikes, allergies and medication
 	 

ESCALATION

NOTICE SIGNS

The athlete is having trouble identifying emotions and communicating their needs. The athlete may be feeling over or under stimulated.

- Loss of some control (especially language)
- Yelling, name calling
- Refusing to follow directions
- Running away from the group
- Not thinking clearly or unable to make decisions
- Appears mad, angry, or frustrated
- Doesn't want to be near anyone, walks away when you approach them
- Physical reactions - sweating, trembling, choking, dizziness, falling asleep, toilet accidents, echolalia, stimming



RESPOND

NOTICE SIGNS

SELF-CARE

- Check your own assumptions and body language
- Stay calm and take a deep breath

ENVIRONMENT

- Offer a safe, quiet place to go or remove the stimuli that is bothering the athlete
- Allow extra time for the athlete to regulate
- Offer a drink, snack, or cool place to rest
- Offer fidget toys

COMMUNICATION

- Utilize visuals if already in place
- Avoid talking loudly, decrease distance between self and athlete
- Model deep breathing, avoid saying "breathe/breath"
- Use a calm, reassuring voice
- Reduce demands, give clear instructions (1 to 2 choices at a time)
- Avoid reprimands or threats try to switch the situation to something fun
- Offer a preferred activity or transition item
- Avoid demanding eye contact and respect personal space

REMEMBER: Challenging behaviour is a way of communicating with you!

EXPLOSION

NOTICE SIGNS

Sometimes even when triggers are recognized and strategies are put into place, athletes may escalate to an explosion phase, and at times it cannot be avoided.

- Repeating phrases
- Swearing, yelling, growling, noises
- Running away
- Throwing objects
- Attempting to harm self or others
- Head banging
- Biting
- Scratching
- Kicking
- Unable to communicate
- Irrational thought
- Unable to answer simple questions
- Unable to respond to name being called
- Appears hyper focused on an act (i.e. wanting to go home)



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RECOVERY

Recovery is very important - this is the opportunity to work through what happened once everyone has returned to a calm state.

Recovery cannot happen when an athlete is still upset. The effects of the explosion state can last for many hours after the situation is over and at times, the athlete may need to go home before recovery between the athletes and the coach/other athletes take place.

NOTICE SIGNS

- Scared
- Apologetic
- Crying
- Intense emotions
- Embarrassed/ashamed
- Regret
- Physical and mental exhaustion
- Thirsty, hungry, tired



RESPOND

SELF-CARE

- Check your own assumptions and body language
- Stay calm and take a deep breath
- Let the athlete know that this will pass and everything will be okay. If you're not feeling calm enough to do this, ask someone else to help

ENVIRONMENT

- Offer a safe, quiet place to go or remove the stimuli that is bothering the athlete, offer soothing items
- Allow extra time for the athlete to regulate
- Offer the athlete a drink, food or cool place to sit
- Protect yourself by decreasing distance, if possible

COMMUNICATION

- Eliminate all demands. Stop talking altogether
- Avoid talking loudly, use calm reassuring voice
- Model deep breathing, avoid saying "breathe/breath"
- Ensure only ONE person is trying to help and calm the athlete
- Ask bystanders to step away to give you and the athlete space
- Avoid repeating yourself, calling their name or trying to negotiate
- Avoid reprimands or threats
- Avoid demanding eye contact and respect personal space
- Don't try to reason or give direction
- Contact Challenger Baseball League Coordinator, Caregiver, or 911 if part of your athlete's plan



CHALLENGER IN THE SCHOOLS

SESSION INCENTIVE PROGRAM



Why Incentives?

Each time you complete a Challenger Baseball session with your participants, you are working towards fun prizes to help celebrate and motivate your whole Challenger team! We will be using the honour system therefore it is your responsibility as a Challenger Baseball Champion to email Meghan at Meghan.Saundercook@bluejays.com once you hit a milestone (10, 15, and 30). Remember, 15 sessions is the minimum so try your best to hit this mark!

What are the Incentives?

You and your Challenger participants have the opportunity to earn:



**OFFICIAL TORONTO
BLUE JAYS T-SHIRTS
AND BASEBALL CAPS**



**THE POSSIBILITY
OF A JAYS CARE
CLINICIAN VISIT!***



**JAYS CARE
PIZZA PARTY!****

*CHALLENGER BASEBALL SESSIONS OR SOBEY'S HEALTH ATHLETE SESSION RUN BY JAYS CARE CLINICIANS WITH YOUR TEAM/CLASS! ONCE YOU REACH 15 SESSIONS, PLEASE REQUEST A SESSION BY EMAILING MEGHAN.SAUNDERCOOK@BLUEJAYS.COM

**ONCE YOU REACH 30 SESSIONS, JAYS CARE WILL ORGANIZE A PIZZA PARTY FOR YOUR TEAM/CLASS. PLEASE EMAIL: MEGHAN.SAUNDERCOOK@BLUEJAYS.COM ONCE YOU HAVE REACHED 30 SESSIONS!

**We always love receiving email updates & pictures from your sessions!
Please feel free to send these to Alysha and Meghan as often as you like!**



JAYS CARE FOUNDATION IS EXCITED TO PARTNER WITH SOBEYS IN PROVIDING CHALLENGER BASEBALL ATHLETES WITH ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RESOURCES ON NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING!

IN THIS MANUAL, YOU WILL SEE SOBEYS IN MANY PLACES INCLUDING....

- SOBEYS HEALTHY ATHLETE SESSIONS
- SOBEYS HEALTHY ATHLETE CHALLENGES
- HEALTHY EATING ADAPTATIONS WITHIN YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES AND ACTIVITIES
- EQUIPMENT

At Jays Care Foundation, we believe in the importance of promoting and practicing physical and nutritious health along with social and emotional well-being among our athletes! As the Challenger Baseball Champion at your school, it is important to understand how you can integrate monthly themes and challenges into your Challenger program in order to help develop healthy, well-rounded athletes! As a Champion, it is your opportunity to challenge yourself to integrate!



This season your school will be sent a **Toronto Blue Jays-themed Interactive Pocket Chart Calendar** as a resource to track your monthly challenges! Each month, coaches have the ability to customize their calendar by choosing a monthly THEME as well as three CHALLENGES that athletes can complete together as a team/class. Each month includes a Kindness Challenge (every 4th of the month), a Sobeys Healthy Athlete Challenge (every 14th of the month) and an Unstoppable Kids Challenge (every 24th of the month)!



MONTHLY CHALLENGES

KINDNESS DAY: Start the month off with an act of KINDNESS! Every 4th of the month try your best to engage in an act of kindness as a class through the Kindness Challenges! Remember, it's very important to be a kind athlete!

SOBEYS HEALTHY ATHLETE DAY! It is important for all athletes to practice healthy eating! Every 14th of the month, engage in a Healthy Athlete Challenge that will have your team discussing about healthy eating as a class!

#UNSTOPPABLEKIDS DAY! Challenge yourself to be the best you! Every 24th of the month complete these challenges as a class to show yourself how #unstoppable you truly are!

Please remember that this is an optional resource that can be used however by participating in these challenges, coaches will not only have the opportunity to weave big life-skills and adaptations into their challenger program and curriculum but the class/team will also be entered into a draw to win exciting Toronto Blue Jays themed prizes or experiences throughout the school year!

Jays Care Foundation will be celebrating the schools with the most completed challenges by the end of the year!

In order to be considered your team/class must...

- Complete at least 8 challenges (one a month)
- Complete one "Practice using your youth voice" Unstoppable Kids Challenge
- Send a picture and/or video of one completed challenge per month to Meghan.Saundercook@bluejays.com
- Submit your end of the year program surveys to Alysha.socha@bluejays.com

Please note: One completed challenge = one school submission (3 submissions max/month). At the end of each month, please email Meghan.Saundercook@bluejays.com with a list of your schools completed challenges and a picture/video of one challenge/month.

TBJ Pocket Chart Calendar Challenge:

The TBJ Pocket Chart Calendar was created to display Challenger in the Schools challenges that will help classes/teams develop life skills while also working towards Toronto Blue Jays themed prizes! This optional resource challenges classes/teams to work together to complete tasks on kindness, healthy eating and what it means to work as a team. The Calendar is not only a great tool to help remind Champions, teams and classes to participate in Challenger Baseball sessions each week but it also helps students develop a better understanding of positive sportsmanship and what it means to be a healthy athlete!

Challenger Baseball Champions have the opportunity to customize the Calendar by choosing a character theme and three challenges that can be completed on the 4th, 14th and 24th of each month.

The Kindness Challenge (every 4th of the month) encourages athletes to engage in an act of kindness for themselves, their classmates and their school by teaching them the importance of being kind to one another and what it means to show positive sportsmanship on and off the field!

The Sobeys Healthy Athlete Challenge (every 14th of the month) inspires students to learn about what it means to eat healthy and why it is important for athletes to live a healthy lifestyle!

The #UNSTOPPABLEKIDS Challenge (every 24th of the month) guides students to work together to complete tasks as a team while teaching them what it means to practice using their youth voice!

The pocket chart calendar package includes...

- 12 month of the year cards
- 12 theme cards with corresponding questions
- 50 challenge cards (Kindness, Healthy Athlete, Unstoppable kids challenges)
- 32 number cards (including 23/30 & 24/31)
- 7 days of the week cards
- 2 happy birthday cards
- 11 holiday/celebration cards
- 3 "Challenger Baseball Today!" cards



Although both resources are optional to use, they each provide new opportunities for athletes to become fully engaged in Challenger in the Schools programming!

CHALLENGER IN THE SCHOOLS

ACTIVITY GUIDE



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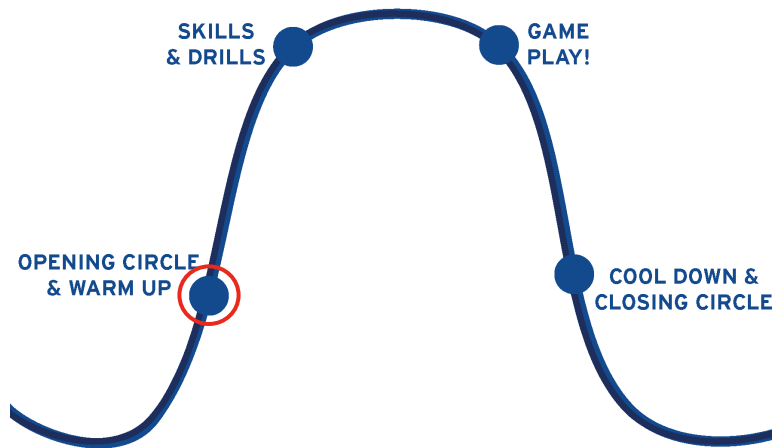
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PART 1: INTRODUCTION & WARM UP ACTIVITIES

OPENING CIRCLE



What is an Opening Circle?

At the beginning of every Challenger Baseball session, we encourage you to plan some kind of welcome activity for the group to introduce the schedule and the theme/life-skill for the session. By setting aside this time each week, athletes are given a sense of safety and consistency, knowing there will always be a set routine when they arrive. It also encourages athletes to participate regularly knowing that each week their presence will be noted and attendance will be taken.

Why Lead an Opening Circle?

For you, the Program Leader, it gives you time to ease into your program and read the group as they enter. If everyone seems to have low energy you may wish to adjust the schedule or add some energizers. If you choose to review your schedule for the day with athletes, this is also a great time to get feedback on the session before you even begin. If children are really not looking forward to an activity you plan on running you have one last opportunity to change things up!

What Should an Opening Circle Include?

- Check attendance and review last session
- Post a schedule and introduce the theme and life-skill for the session
- Ask athletes for input: should anything be added or adapted?
- Introductions to new participants or guests

- ☑ Group check-in and/or review of what you learned/did last session

What are Some Sample Check-In Activities?

The following are a list of questions/prompts you may wish to use to check in with your group. The idea is to get the group to identify their personal thoughts/feelings/ideas and to get comfortable sharing with the group or with their buddy:

1. *Finish the sentence: The most fun I have had in the past week is...*
2. *Name your favorite super hero or cartoon character.*
3. *Name your favorite color*
4. *What was the last helpful thing you did?*
5. *How do you think others would describe you in two words? Complete with their buddy*
6. *Using only facial expression and body language, show how you feel now?*
7. *What animal do you feel like today?*
8. *Name a movie, book or song that describes how you felt yesterday.*
9. *Name the last movie you watched or last book you read*
10. *Tell the group a funny thing about you*
11. *When you sing, what song do you sing?*

If your group is less inclined to share about themselves personally, you might also want to post a picture or quote and have the group reflect on how the topic or theme relates to what they've been doing in their Challenger Baseball Program (e.g. Teamwork, cooperation, community, etc.)

You could also ask your group to pick an object they see that describes how they are feeling.

REMEMBER: A great opening discussion can help to warm up the minds of the student-athletes you work with. It can prepare them for the session ahead and make them better equipped to learn from the activities you lead.



FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT STRETCHES

You have just gathered your athletes into a circle to open the day and introduced your life-skill and/or theme for the session. Now it is time to get moving!

You can begin with some fundamental movement stretches and move into an active warm-up.

Our favorite tips and tricks for facilitating STRETCHING exercises with student-athletes of all abilities include:

When you think...	Try this...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- "put your arms above your head"- "touch your toes"- "jumping jacks"- "take 3 giant steps back"- "lunge left/right"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- "reach as high as you can!"- "reach as low as you can go!"- "starfish and toy soldier!"- "move backward for the count of 1..2..3"- "engage your belly and move left/right"

Neck

Side bend stretch

- While standing bend your neck to the left and hold for 1-2 seconds, then bend to the right. Perform 8-10 reps per side. Move your head up and down holding each position for 1-2 seconds. Start looking forward and rotate your head all the way around slowly, do 5 rotations each way.
- Try instructing your athletes to move their heads in a "yes" motion (up and down) and a "no" motion (from side to side)



Arms

Circles

- Rotate your arms forward in a circle beginning with 5 small, then 5 medium, and lastly 5 large rotations. Do the same backwards starting with large first, medium second and small last.



Shrugs

- Start with your arms and hands pressed against your side
- Raise your shoulders straight up until you feel a squeeze, lower them back down slowly
- Bring your shoulders straight up like the other exercise except you will roll your shoulders backwards.
- This time roll your shoulders forward.

Rotator

- Start with your elbow bent at 90 degrees, tucked against your side, palms facing up
- Move your elbows back and forth in small movements, squeezing your shoulders at the back
- Do the same motion with your palm facing down
- For the last one, crisscross your arms over and under in front of your body quickly, palms facing up

Bear Hug

- Start with your arms at your sides
- Swing your arms up in front of you, cross them and grab the back of your shoulder. Hold for 1-2 seconds the switch. Do 10-15 repetitions.

Teapot

- Bend to one side and bring your arm over the top of your head. Hold for 8-10 seconds and repeat 3 times for each side.



Hips and Legs

Quad-stretch

- Stand straight. Bend one leg and hold your ankle or the top of your foot. Pull until your heel is close to your bottom. You can use a wall or a teammate to balance. Hold for 10 seconds. Switch legs.

Groin butterfly

- In a sitting position with your back straight, bend your knees and place the bottoms of your feet together. Pull your feet towards your groin. Place your elbows on your knees and gently push the knees toward the floor. Hold for 10 seconds, rest and repeat.



DYNAMIC STRETCHES

Encourage athletes to “follow coach” or “follow the leader” to actively demonstrate dynamic stretching. Athletes stand a safe distance from one another and move across the gym or playground and back. Be creative! Possible movement include:

To Start...	Progress to...
Skipping	Skip with arm circles
Big steps forward	Lunge and twist body
Side-shuffle	One legged jump into air with arm swing, alternate feet
Backpedal	Crab walk
Lunge	Wheelbarrow
Hop (2 or 1 leg)	<i>Open the barn door</i> – Lift leg up then rotate out like opening a door
High Knees	<i>Close the barn door</i> – Lift leg to side and rotate forward/in front like closing a door
Heel Kicks	Knee circles
<i>Frankenstein kicks</i> – step forward kick leg up to hands high as you can	Side shuffle with hugs
<i>Scoop grass</i> – step forward reach down keeping leg straight and brush grass forward, alternate legs	Karaoke/grape vine



ACTIVE WARM-UP GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Some examples include:

Blob Tag



Equipment: N/A

How to Play:

- Ensure there is a large play area that is safe and clear of obstacles.
- Before playing, let everyone know the boundaries of the playing area; if anyone exceeds those boundaries they will be part of the blob.
- Ask the group for 3 volunteers and ask them to be holding hands at all times – the “blob”.
- Purpose of the game: don't be touched by the blob
- If the blob touches a person that person becomes part of the blob and must hold hands with a person on either end.
- The game ends when the blob catches the last participant.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase the challenge by increasing the PLAY AREA, or changing the TIMELINE of the game by only allowing for 2 minutes for the blob to capture each athlete.
- ✓ Increase success by changing the PLAY AREA. Adjust to a smaller space to increase success and quickness of play.
- ✓ You could also add a large, soft ball to the “blob” in which they can use to throw and tag other athletes below the waist to add them to the blob.

Cone Up, Cone Down



Equipment: Cones



How to Play:

- Spread at least 15-20 cones out randomly in an area.
- Divide athletes into 2 teams.
- One team will try to knock over the cones (Down team), while the other team will try to set them right side up (Up team).
- Play the game for about 2 minutes.
- The team with the most cones either knocked down or up wins.
- Ensure that athletes are not kicking the cones.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by changing the ACTIVITY. Instead of having two teams, have all the athletes work together to try to knock down all the cones as fast as they can, or try to set them up as fast as they can.
- ✓ You could also switch the direction they're turning the cones mid-way through. For example, if they start out knocking over all the cones, instruct the athletes to place the cones right-side up when you clap your hands, blow your whistle, or say a secret word (something silly to get their attention, or baseball-oriented to get them used to fielding-position).

Crows and Cranes



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Divide participants into two equal teams.
- Have teams face each other across from an imaginary line. You could use a rope divider if you like.
- Mark a home base for each team about 20 meters away from the line.
- Assign one side to be "Crows" and the other to be "Cranes."
- Stand at the end of the group in the center so all athletes can see and hear you.

Explain that:

- If "Crows" are called, the Cranes must turn and run a short distance to their "base" before the Crows tag them. If any Cranes are tagged, they become Crows, and head to the other side for another round.
- The same applies when "Cranes" are called.
- The game ends when everyone is on one side.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by changing the DIRECTIONS/INSTRUCTIONS. Instead of having the crows and cranes run to a safe area, have them only turn one-step to work on decision making and listening to instructions instead of running and catching.
- ✓ You could also change the name of the game to "Baseballs" and "Bats" to keep with a baseball theme – or whatever theme you choose to motivate your athletes!

Everybody It



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Mark a large playing area with clear boundaries. Explain the boundaries to athletes.

- Athletes are to spread out over the field or gym.
- Explain that:
 - When you say, “go” all participants should try and tag each other and, at the same time, try to avoid being tagged.
 - If a athlete is tagged, he/she must stand stationary and try to touch other participants.
 - The last person to be tagged wins.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by changing the ACTIVITY. Before you begin, decide with your athlete on one “code word” like PIZZA or BASEBALL and when you say that word aloud, all athletes have to touch the floor, or run and touch any wall before they can continue playing the tag game.
- ✓ Increase success by incorporating a “safe zone” such as the lined-circle in the middle of a gym floor in which they can’t be tagged to take a break. Only allow the athletes to remain in the “safe zone” for 10 seconds before they have to re-enter the tag game!

Huckle Buckle



Equipment: N/A

How to Play:

- Divide athletes into 2 lines and ask the lines to face each other. The 2 participants facing each other are partners.
- Partners should stand across from each other on either side of the playing area (20m apart).
- Explain and demonstrate that:
- When you say “huckle buckle knees”, all partners should run as fast as they can into the middle of the playing area and touch knees. They should then run as fast as they can back to their start point
- They should repeat this for whichever body parts you name (i.e. “huckle buckle feet”, “huckle buckle shoulders”, “huckle buckle elbows”).
- To make it more complicated, you can call out a mix where participants have to decide how to make it work, for example “Huckle buckle hand to foot”, “huckle buckle knee to elbow”.
- If you call “huckle buckle huckle buckle”, all partners need to run into the middle, stand back-to-back, link arms, and try to sit down on the ground and then get back up.
- The object of the game is to be as fast as possible. The last teams to arrive at their starting place will be eliminated.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by not eliminating any of your athletes– continue the game until you run out of combinations of body parts to call out! You could also have one partner stand or sit stationary, while the other partner runs towards them. Swap partners after a few rounds!

Messy Backyard



Equipment: Baseballs

How to Play:

- Create a playing area. At both ends will be each teams designated “backyard” (use cones to make the boundaries).
- Divide participants into two groups and line them up on opposite sides of a designated area.
- Coach places the balls in the middle of the playing area.
- When the coach says “go”, athletes run into the middle, pick up balls and run to their opposing team’s “backyard” and place the ball there.
- Athletes may take balls from their backyard and place them in the opposing team’s backyard.
- 6. After a designated amount of time, the team with the least number of balls in their backyard wins.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge: Adjust the **TIMELINE** of the activity by giving the athletes 30 seconds to see how many balls they can put in the other groups “backyard”. You can increase the time, and add more balls or assign an athlete to be the “neighbour across the street” who steals the balls from backyards and puts them back into play.

Four Corners



Equipment: Hula Hoops (or dots), coloured balls that match hula hoop colours, bucket



How to Play:

- Place one hula hoop at each corner of the playing field
- Place corresponding coloured balls into a bucket
- Instruct to the group to choose a corner to stand at
- Choose (at random) a ball from the bucket
- Have the group at the corresponding coloured hula hoop do the chicken dance!
- Put the ball back in and instruct for everyone to move to a new corner



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Instead of hula hoops use adaptive equipment such as cones or coloured dots as the corner markers
- ✓ Have a volunteer stand at each corner and hold the corresponding colour in the air for all to see!

RPS Baseball Battle



Equipment: Colored dots



How to Play:

- Place colored dots in a winding line (shaped like a snake)
- Have two teams start on either end of the dot pattern
- Once the game begins, the first person in each line will move onto the dots until they meet up with the opposite team member
- Both team members will play rock, paper, scissors
- The winner of RPS continues along the dot pattern. The other athlete moves back to the back of their team line
- The game ends once someone from the opposite team has reached the opposite end of the line from where they started!



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the length of the line and the distance between dots
- ✓ Use RPS dice

Mingle!



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Explain and demonstrate 3 different baseball themed poses (feel free to create your own!)
 - a. Pitcher – One hand pointing and one hand above your head (throwing an invisible ball)
 - b. Catcher – Hold both hands high above your head to one side
 - c. Batter – Hold hands together behind head (holding an invisible baseball bat), bent knees
- Explain that when a pose is called out loud, the team is to freeze in their pose
- Once the word “MINGLE” is called the athletes unfreeze out of their pose and move around their environment until the next pose is called

**Adaptation Examples:**

- ✓ Add additional poses. Before you do this, ensure that you gather the groups attention and explain the movements needed to create the new pose
- ✓ Create team poses such as a pitcher & catcher or a batter & a ball! When MINGLE is called, the partners have to move away from each other and once the pose is called they have to move through the crowd to find each other to create the pose!
- ✓ Use pictures to show what the pose looks like and hold pictures into the air once the pose is called

Shark Attack

Equipment: Hula Hoops (or coloured dots), pool noodles (optional)

**How to Play:**

- Place hula hoops randomly around the field/indoor space
- Choose 2/3 sharks (dependent on group size)
- Explain that when MINGLE is called, the groups is to move around the hula hoops
- When SHARK ATTACK is called, athletes are expected to move to the inside of a hula hoop (one foot or hand)
- If a shark touches an athlete while running towards a hula hoop, they then become a shark too!
- Play until there are more sharks then athletes!

**Adaptation Examples:**

- ✓ Use pinnies to help visualize the sharks!
- ✓ Adaptive equipment instead of hula hoops including coloured dots or cones
- ✓ Provide the sharks with pool noodles to help them tag the athletes!

Red Light, Green Light

Equipment: Cones (green, yellow, red)

**How to Play:**

- This game helps to demonstrate how to move around the bases!
- Everyone starts at home plate
- Once green light is called (or a green cone is held in the air) athletes run around the bases
- If red light is called (or a red cone is held in the air), athletes have to freeze where they are

- Yellow light can be added when green light and red light have been mastered. Once yellow light is called (or a yellow cone is held into the air) athletes move around the bases in slow motion



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Have the athletes move around the bases more than one time. Each athlete can keep track of the amount of times they have passed home plate.

Noodle Grab



Equipment: Noodles



How to Play:

- This game works on athlete's ready positions (fielding)
- Split the team up into multiple teams
- Place 5+ noodles on the other side of the space, directly in front of each team
- The first person in the group is expected to move across the space, grab a noodle and bring it back to the group
- The noodle is passed to the second person in the group who carries the noodle to get another one from the pile
- The two noodles are then passed to the third person in line who is expected to get a third noodle
- Continue until all of the noodles are in hand and passed to the last person in the group, and returned back to the original pile



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Cut full noodles in half to create more noodles
- ✓ Increase/decrease distance of noodles from group
- ✓ Use sponges or other materials that pose a challenge to hold all at once

Catch the Dragon's Tail



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Divide athletes into groups.
- Ask each group to line up single file and place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.
- Explain and demonstrate that:

- When you say "GO" the person in the front of the line tries to catch the person at the back of the line. The line cannot come apart.
- Rotate the group from front to back or back to front for each round of play.
- Once the group has caught their own tail once or twice, have them try to catch the tail of a different "snake" or "worm".



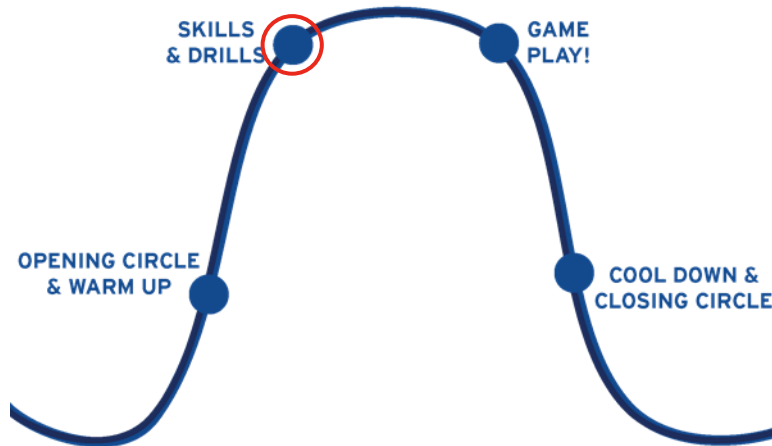
Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by changing the ACTIVITY. The bigger the group size, the harder to catch the "tail" becomes. See which group can catch the "tail" the fastest!
- ✓ Increase success by instead of instructing the athletes to "catch" the tail, the goal of the game is for the group to work together to allow the "head" and the "tail" of the snake or worm to high five each other! This allows all athletes in the group to work together as a team to move their bodies in a way that will allow the first person in line and the last person in line to come close enough to high five.



PART 2: BASEBALL DRILLS & SKILLS

DRILLS & SKILLS



Athletes are now warmed up, energized and feeling good. Next, introduce the one or two skills you will be working on for the day and begin your skills and drills.

In this Handbook, you will find multiple drills for each of the four skills:

1. Fielding,
2. Throwing,
3. Hitting, and
4. Base running

You'll also find modified games that have strong baseball elements which means your athletes will be working on skills and not even realizing it because they are too busy having fun!



1. FIELDING

Remember: “Alligator to the snow, belly button, and throw”

- Feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart, athletic stance (sit in an invisible chair)
- Knees bent, weight forward, head up and facing the ball
- Follow the ball into your glove (alligator arms ready to chomp)
- Other hand covers the ball after it enters the glove (chomp)
- Bring both hands up to your stomach (belly button)
- Throw to coach/teammate/target

Glove position: Ball above waist, fingers up. Ball below waist, fingers down.



Alligator to the snow



Fingers to the sky

WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR FIELDING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix B*

PHYSICAL	VISUAL	AUDITORY	INTELLECTUAL/ASD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scoop ball set <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Velcro balls and gloves <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decrease distance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use cones to balance balls at a higher level for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fill beach balls with rice to create sound <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide the athlete with a verbal clue “ready” before the ball is released out of the throwers hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always ensure that your face and lips are visible when explaining instructions. Try your best to never talk with your back to the athlete/group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pair verbal instructions with visual demonstrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use clear and concise language when explaining instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use pictures to help communicate instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include a physical demonstration after explaining instructions

<p>adaptive games/activities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use cones to create boundaries or position placement</p>	<p>“ball” once the ball has been released from the throwers hand into the air or onto the ground</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Write instructions down (dry-erase boards)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try to learn basic ASL or establish clear gestures for common phrases such as “ready position” and “great catch”</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance to athlete ability</p>
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Alligator Chomp



Equipment: 1 ball per pair, no gloves

- Divide participants into pairs.
- Ask athletes to stand 5 feet away from each other.
- Athletes roll ground balls back and forth
- Once they succeed in fielding 10 balls they can move further apart



Adaptation Examples:

Instead of standing, adapt the ACTIVITY by instructing your athletes to complete the activity sitting or kneeling to start. As an alternative to partners, instruct your athletes to complete this activity by rolling/bouncing the ball off a wall!

Alligator Shuffle



Equipment: 1 ball per pair, gloves

- Divide athletes into pairs, they start 5-10 feet apart depending on ability.
- For this drill, athletes take turns as the roller and the receiver.
- Throw ground balls straight and to partners left and right
- Fielders shuffle sideways to field ground ball in middle of their feet



Adaptation Examples:

To increase the challenge, adapt the DIRECTIONS by instructing your athletes to clap before they field the ball. The TIMELINES can also be adjusted by rolling the ball slower or faster to decrease or increase the challenge.

Pop-up Communication



Equipment: Gloves, 10-15 balls, bat

- Divide athletes into two lines
- First two run out and turn back to face coach who throws a pop fly or ground ball. Athletes must decide who is going to make the catch and who will cover.

- Athletes must use verbal communication in this drill and yell “mine” to indicate they are ready to catch the ball and avoid collisions



Adaptation Examples:

Increase success by completing this drill in larger groups with multiple balls thrown. Call the athletes name who should catch the ball, and instruct all other athletes to run and touch the wall.

High Low



Equipment: 1 ball for each pair, gloves (optional)

- Have athletes pair up and stand approximately 5-10 feet apart.
- Give each pair 1 ball.
- Once athletes are positioned, each player takes turns throwing the ball back and forth to each other.
- If the ball is thrown above the waist, athletes should receive the ball with their thumbs together and fingers pointed upward (fingers to the sky)
- If the ball is thrown below the waist, athletes should receive the ball with their little fingers touching (pinky) and the rest of their fingers pointed downward (alligator to the snow).



Adaptation Examples:

Increase success by completing this activity as a group. Coach calls “up high” for fingers to the sky and “down low” for alligator to the snow. Once this repetition becomes too easy, allow for partner work on their own!

Speedy Scoop



Equipment: 1 ball for each group, gloves (optional)

- First in line runs to ball, rolls grounder back to 2nd in line. 2nd in line fields throws back to first person.
- First person places ball on ground, goes to back of line.
- Person who just threw runs out next.



Adaptation Examples:

Increase success by adjusting the DIRECTIONS of the activity. Instead of having your athletes line up, group them in groups of 4 (standing in a square) or 3 (standing in a triangle). The goal of the “Speedy Scoop” is to move the ball sound the shape using “alligator to the snow” or “fingers to the sky”.

Swamp Escape + Hungry Hippos



Equipment: Big bucket of 20-25 balls, extra bucket

Part 1: Swamp Escape

- All athletes surround the coach in a big circle. The coach has a big bucket of balls.

- Athletes get in fielding position and the coach begins rolling/bouncing balls out around the circle.
- Athletes must field the ball, run in and drop the ball back in the bucket. The goal is to keep everyone in the swamp (bucket) and not let anyone escape.

Part 2: Hungry Hippos

- Divide the group up into 2 teams and the coach will stand in the middle of both teams.
- The coach will throw or hit out all the balls into the designated playing area
- When the coach says “HUNGRY HIPPOS”, all athletes run out into the playing area.
- Athletes will retrieve the balls, place it in their respective team bucket and keep going.
- Team with the most balls in their bucket wins



Adaptation Examples:

Increase the challenge by changing the ACTIVITY. Instruct your athletes to work in partners, picking up the ball in one hand each!

Grab and GO!



Equipment: 1 ball for each pair, gloves (optional)

- Have athletes pair up and stand approximately 5-10 feet apart.
- Give each pair 1 ball and place the ball in the middle between the pair.
- Once athletes are positioned, the coach will start describing different body parts for athletes to touch, similar to Simon Says (i.e. nose, elbow, ears, hair etc.)
- When the coach says “BALL”, all athletes must reach for the ball in the middle.
- The first athlete to get the ball before their partner gets 1 point.
- The ball will be placed back in the middle to be played again.



Adaptation Examples:

Increase the challenge by increasing or decreasing the distance between pairs. The ball could also be placed on a tee to ensure that it is at a level height for all athletes and abilities involved.



2. THROWING

Remember: “Surf Board. Make a T. Point to where you want to throw. Wave HELLO! Buckle your seatbelt”

- Start by facing the target, Hold the ball.
- Reach back with the throwing hand, elbow bent hand up and wrist straight (**Wave HI**).
- Glove hand should be in front of the body (**Make a T**) Point to your target with glove hand (Point to where you want to throw!)
- Move forward with glove hand foot toward the target, back foot pivots naturally
- Release the ball at the your arms peak/apex. Bend forward and follow through, to the outside of your glove hand knee (**Buckle your seatbelt**)

Remember: Keep your eyes on the target during the entire motion



Make a T



Buckle the seatbelt

WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR THROWING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix B*

PHYSICAL	VISUAL	AUDITORY	INTELLECTUAL/ASD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scoop ball set <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Velcro balls and gloves <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use bean bags instead of balls if the athlete is having difficulty holding a ball <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a balloon instead of a ball – work towards using a ball by slowing down the pace with a balloon <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add rice to a balloon or beach ball to give it sound <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use larger balls, Jingle Bell Balls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always ensure that your face and lips are visible when explaining instructions. Try your best to never talk with your back to the athlete/group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pair verbal instructions with visual demonstrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use clear and concise language when explaining instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use pictures to help communicate instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include a physical demonstration after explaining instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ If using a target, vary the targets height ☑ Decrease throwing distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Tape a ball with bright yellow tape ☑ If using a target, provide a sound behind the target (beep, clap) ☑ Provide the athlete with a verbal clue <p>“ready” before the ball is released out of the throwers hand</p> <p>“ball” once the ball has been released</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Write instructions down (dry-erase board) ☑ Try to learn basic ASL or establish clear gestures for phrases (ex. thumbs up = ready?) 	<p>weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Adapt distance to athlete ability
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Criss-Cross Toss



Equipment: 1 ball for each pair

- Divide athletes into pairs.
- Ask pairs to sit cross-legged 10-15 feet apart.
- Holding the ball across the seams, with non-throwing hand supporting the throwing elbow, player throw/flip the ball back and forth.

Adaptation Examples:



Increase success by instructing athletes to say their partners name before throwing, exchange compliments, list positions on the baseball field, types of fruit etc.

Knight Toss



Equipment: 1 ball for each pair

- Divide athletes into pairs.
- Ask pairs to kneel 15-20 feet apart.
- Throwing knee on the ground, glove hand knee up
- Start with hands at mid-chest.
 - Player places non-throwing hand in front of them
 - Player places throwing hand behind them
- After 10 successful throws back and forth athletes can move further back



Adaptation Examples:

Instead of kneeling, ask athletes to sit in a chair or stand. Increase success by making this drill an individual drill instead of partnered – incorporate a target (hula hoop or bucket) instead of having a partner catch.

To progress to partners, instruct the partner who is catching to show a target with both hands which thrower tries to hit.

Pattern Throw



Equipment: 3-4 balls, gloves (optional)

- Divide athletes into groups of four (square) or five (star).
- Athletes should be positioned 10-20 feet apart depending
- You can do multiple rounds as follows:
 - Round 1 - Ball is thrown to the left.
 - Round 2 - Ball is thrown to the right.
 - Round 3 - Ball is thrown across then right or left
 - Round 4 - Random order
 - Switch player positions after every round



Adaptation Examples:

To increase the challenge, change the ACTIVITY. Instruct athletes to throw with other hand, get in catching stance to receive ball, 2-3 balls at once and go around multiple times.

Chuck and Duck



Equipment: 1 ball per group

- Divide so each group has at least 4 members
- First person runs out about 10-15 feet
- They turn and toss the ball back to the person in line, who catches and throws it back. The person in line who threw the ball ducks down. The ball is thrown to the next person until everyone in line is down. The player who ran out returns to the back of the line and the next person runs out. Go until each group member has gone



Adaptation Examples:

Adjust the DIRECTIONS by instructing athletes to roll the ball between their legs instead of throwing to their group.

To increase success, instruct athletes to say their favorite food, colour, TV show etc. before throwing the ball!

Duck Hunt



Equipment: 1 ball per person, wall/target area

- Find a wall
- Each athlete receives a ball
- Using artwork, tape, brick lines, hula hoops, buckets etc. have each athlete select a target
- Have them begin sitting down from a close distance. Once they have hit the target 3-5 times they can move back to a more challenging distance

**Adaptation Examples:**

To increase success, adjust the PLAY AREA depending on the ability of the athlete.

To increase the challenge, incorporate their non-dominant hand to throw towards the target!

Siege

Equipment: 5-6 balls, hula hoops/targets

- Divide athletes into 2 teams on opposite sides of the gym or play area
- Place 6-8 targets on each side of the gym
- Every player on one side of the gym is given a ball
- On GO they throw over to the other side of the gym, trying to hit or land in the target. The other team gathers and throws back trying to do the same.
- The first team to hit all the targets wins
- For the first round athletes sit in between targets no closer than 2 feet from a target and try to deflect without moving from their sitting position
- Next round athletes can elect 2 defenders who can try to deflect balls away. Defenders must rotate after each team throw.

**Adaptation Examples:**

To increase or decrease the challenge, adjust the PLAY AREA by making it bigger or smaller.

Instead of playing the game with two opposing teams, have your group on one big team working together to hit all the targets on the opposite side of the gym.

10-Pin Knockdown

Equipment: 7-10 balls, 20 pylons, tall cones or buckets

**How to Play:**

- Mark a suitable playing area
- Mark a dividing line at the halfway point.
- Divide the participants into 2 teams.
- Give each team 10 pylons and have participants spread them out on their side.
- On "go" participants try and knock down the cones from the other team's side.
- They are to ROLL the balls onto the other side and the opposing team must wait until the ball has stopped rolling or has gone out of the boundary to retrieve it. Athletes cannot try to block a ball
- The game ends once a team's pylons are all knocked down.

**Adaptation Examples:**

- ✓ Increase success by changing the ACTIVITY. Have all athletes play on the same team, where the tall cones are set up an appropriate distance from them. Work as a team to knock over all the cones as fast as possible!
- ✓ Use different techniques for knocking over the cones to work on different skills: rolling bigger balls, or throwing them underhand. Work up to throwing smaller balls overhand!
- ✓ Lastly, you could increase success by increasing the number of cones to knock over in a smaller surface area. Work up to less cones, large area!

4-Corner Dodgeball



Equipment: Dodgeball, 20 pylons

How to Play:

- Divide participants into 4 teams and the play area into 4 quadrants.
- Assign each team to a quadrant.
- Spread 5 pylons out in each team's quadrant.
- Explain and demonstrate:
 - Each team must stay in their own quadrant to receive and throw the ball.
 - The object of the game is to knock down the other teams' pylons.
 - When a team has all their pylons knocked down they are to keep playing and try to knock down the other team's pylons.
 - The game ends when only one team has any pylons left standing.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase the challenge by increasing the size of the play area. A larger area with fewer cones will make the game more challenging.
- ✓ Add colour! Coach calls the colour cones each team should knock over for points!

Perfect Pass



Equipment: Hula Hoops, cones, any type of ball

How to Play:

- Start by placing down a bunch of hula hoops along the floor, the more the better.
- Then make some teams of anywhere from 3-5 athletes who start lined up behind cones in a relay-style setup.
- Give each team a type of ball (depending which type of sport or throw you'd like to practice).
- When the game starts, the first person from each team runs to a hoop on the floor and stands in it, waiting to receive a pass from the second person in their teams line.
- A catch made with both feet in the hula hoop is a great thing, because then that player can bring the hula hoop home and add it as a point to their teams total (if the catch is NOT made, then the hoop does NOT return home = 0 points earned).
- Then the next person goes out to a hoop to catch another throw, etc, etc.

- The game continues like that. Teams try to get the most points by collecting the most hoops, or try to beat their own best score each round.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Instead of throwing and catching the ball, have each athlete run to pick up a ball from the field and bring it back to their team, placing it in a bucket. Athletes go one at a time. Whichever team fills their bucket first, wins!

Zipper



Equipment: Balls



How to Play:

- Athletes stand across from one another in a straight line (this will work best if you ask athletes to get a partner and stand 10 feet away from them in a straight line).
- Ball starts at one end and gets tossed diagonally back and forth (like a zipper pattern), proceeding up the lines.
- Have a timer so the athletes race the clock. Can make it competitive with large number of athletes; first group of 2 lines to get the ball through wins



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by adjusting the TIMELINES. Allow for as much or as little of time depending on the ability of you athletes. Instead of standing, instruct your athletes to kneel or sit on the group to complete the game!



Baseball Bowling

Equipment: 1 ball per athlete, 10-12 buckets



How to Play:

- Divide athletes into 2 teams on opposite sides of the gym or play area
- Place 10-12 buckets in a tower in between teams
- Every player on one side of the gym is given a ball
- On GO they throw their balls trying to knock the tower down. The other team fields the balls.
- The team that threw the balls are now responsible for re-building the tower for the other team to knock down.



Adaptation Examples:

To increase or decrease the challenge, adjust the PLAY AREA by making it bigger or smaller.

Instead of playing the game with two opposing teams, have your group on one big team working together to hit all the buckets while standing in a semi-circle.

3. BATTING

Remember: “Surf board. Salt shaker – throw it over your shoulder! Swing – Squish the bug”

- Feet shoulder width apart, athletic stance or “**surf board**”
- Grip bat in front of you, one hand over the other like a “**salt shaker**”
- Point your toes towards home plate. Hands over your shoulder “**throw salt over your shoulder**”
- Elbows slightly bent if able
- Lean towards the pitcher, throw hands toward the ball, bringing bat through the zone to hit the ball (**Squish the bug – with back foot or instruct with bat depending on mobility**)

Remember: Stay balanced, follow the ball with your eyes to the bat



Salt shaker – over the shoulder



Squish the bug

WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR BATTING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix B*

PHYSICAL	VISUAL	AUDITORY	INTELLECTUAL/ASD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Choice of a tee or a pitch ☑ Variety of bats (sizes, weights) ☑ Use a tennis racket or flat bat ☑ Variety of balls (sizes, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Choice of a tee or a pitch ☑ Use a tennis racket or flat bat (oversized bat face) ☑ Variety of balls (sizes, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Choice of a tee or a pitch ☑ Always ensure that your face and lips are visible when explaining instructions. Try your best to never talk with your back to the athlete/group ☑ Pair verbal instructions with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Choice of a tee or a pitch ☑ Use clear and concise language when explaining instructions ☑ Use pictures to help communicate instructions ☑ Include a physical demonstration after explaining instructions

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduce pitching distance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sound clues – “drop bat, run” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bright balls/bats wrapped in bright yellow tape <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Verbal cues when batting without a tee “ready” before the ball is released out of the pitchers hand “ball” once the ball has been released into the air from the pitchers hand	visual demonstrations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Write instructions down (dry-erase board) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try to learn basic ASL or establish clear gestures such as tee, pitch, great job, try again!	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance to athlete ability
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Tee Time



Equipment: 10-15 balls, screen/fence, 1 tee + bat

- Place a batting tee 3-4 feet away from a wall.
- Hitter places a ball on the tee, sets up, and takes a swing when ready.
- After 4-6 swings, athletes switch.
- Divide athletes up among 3 or more tees:
 - 1 hitter per tee.
 - On your command, athletes take ready positions, swing, then gather up baseballs and place them back on the tee.
 - **NOTE:** this set up is designed for maximum safety. The more hitting tees a team has, the more coaches should take caution for the drill.
 - Emphasis should be placed on quick hands and "swinging through the ball."



Adaptation Examples:

Increase the challenge of this game by adjusting the DIRECTIONS or INSTRUCTIONS. Instruct athletes to try swinging from both sides; try it with their eyes closed, on one knee, standing on one foot, or aiming for a target

Driving Range



Equipment: 1 tee and bat per hitter, 25-30 whiffle balls

- Athletes hit whiffle balls off a tee into a marked playing area with different point values based on distance.

- Each batter gets a set amount of swings or time to get as many points as possible. Can work in groups or make teams.

**Adaptation Examples:**

Increase success by involving more athletes! Allow those who aren't up to bat to be the fielders – once the ball is put into play, the fielders have to run to pick up the ball, and put the ball back to a bucket. Try having two teams of fielders, and the group that ends up with the most wiffle balls wins!

Soft Toss

Equipment: 15-20 balls, 1 bat per hitter, screen/fence/wall

- Divide athletes into groups of 2-3. Give each group 6-10 balls.
- Have athletes find an area next to a fence or wall.
- Get one player to kneel in front and to the side of the hitter and toss a ball with little or no arc in front of them.
- After the hitter has had 8-10 swings, athletes switch.

**Adaptation Examples:**

Increase success by adjusting the EQUIPMENT. Allow athletes to choose which size ball they get to hit (larger and lighter would be easier than smaller and harder). Increase success by having coach throw the pitches to the hitter.

**Swing and Sprint**

Equipment: 15-20 whiffle or tennis balls, 1 bat per hitter, pylons, ball bucket

- Divide group as follows:
 - 1 player hitting
 - 1 player fielding/gathering balls
 - 1 player pitching underhand to batter
- Batter hits a ball from the pitcher. They leave the bat at home plate, run out and become a fielder.
- The pitcher runs in and becomes a hitter. The fielder runs in and becomes a hitter.
- Continue rotating one swing at a time.

**Adaptation Examples:**

Increase success by using tennis racquets and tennis balls instead of bats/baseballs, incorporate a tee, or add more fielders. To further increase chance of success, coach can pitch!

Master Blaster



Equipment: 1 set of bases, 1 bat, 4-5 balls

- Divide athletes into three equal groups. Put one group at first base. Have a second group line up behind third base. The last group will be up to bat.
- Batters can receive a pitch or hit off the tee. Each base team has one player on the bag ready to run.
- When the ball is hit the player takes off around the bases.
- Meanwhile, both runners at first and third take off running after the batted ball.
- Both of the athletes have to run and touch the ball.
- Count how many bases the batter-runner touches before both of the athletes touch the ball.
- The team at bat counts each base they touch to get a cumulative team total.
- Once all the batting team group bats once have the groups rotate one base. Batting goes to first, first goes to third and third comes home.



Adaptation Examples:

Increase success by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Instead of having multiple groups, have athletes work in partners (one is the hitter, one is the runner). Once the hitter puts the ball into play, they try to run around the bases as many times as they can. Meanwhile, the runner runs to pick up the ball and put it back on the tee as fast as they can, before the hitter makes it to home plate!

Baseball Golf



Equipment: 1 ball per player, 1 bucket or trash can

- Divide athletes into teams of 4 and have each group form a line. Give a ball to each player.
- Place a trash can/bucket at a point a distance from the athletes (i.e. 30 meters away from where they're standing).
- Athletes on each team take turns hitting the ball into the trash can/bucket. Athletes can either use a tee or they can "self-hit."
- As you move towards the bucket, you are counting your hits to the bucket
- Player with the least number of hits into the trash can/bucket, wins.



Adaptation Examples:

Adjust the PLAY AREA by changing the distance between the batter and the bin/bucket to increase or decrease success.

Increase success by instead of counting the number of hits, count the number of balls that made it into the bin/bucket!

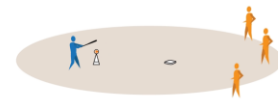
Race to the Base



Equipment: 1 bat, 1 base, 1 ball, 1 pylon or tee

How to Play:

- Divide athletes into small groups (e.g., four to six).
- Set up a tee for the batter to hit the ball off of. Place a base in front of the tee at a distance appropriate for their skill level.
- In each group, one athlete begins as the batter and the other athletes are the fielders.
- The batter hits a ball off the tee and attempts to run to the base and back to the tee as many times as possible before one of the fielders places the ball back on top of the tee.
- The batter is out if the ball is caught before it hits the ground or when the ball is returned to the tee and the batter is between the tee & the other base.



Optional: One point is scored for each time the batter gets back to the tee safely.

Once the batter has had three turns at bat, athletes rotate so that each participant has a turn as a batter.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge: Adjust the ACTIVITY by playing in larger groups with the home base in the middle, and the batter can now hit in any direction, including behind.
- ✓ Increase success by letting your athletes choose how they want to strike the ball (e.g., tennis racquet, arm/hand).

Apple to Bucket



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Divide participants into small groups (e.g., 3-6)
- Each group divides into one “Tree” (batter) and two to five “Buckets” (fielders).
- Each group sets up a batting tee with a ball.
- The “Tree” hits its “Apple” (ball) off the batting tee and toward the “Buckets.”
- If a “Bucket” catches the “Apple” before it hits the ground, that “Bucket” is awarded 1 point.
- If the “Tree” succeeds in having its “Apple” hit the ground before a “Bucket” can catch it, the “Tree” is awarded 1 point.
- Once the “Buckets” have caught three “Apples,” the round is over, and one of the “Buckets” takes a turn as the “Tree.”
- This continues for as many rounds as there are participants. Once all rounds have been completed, the groups play again to try to beat their score.
- The leader asks open-ended questions to help



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge: Adjust the ACTIVITY by using a larger object to hit (e.g., beach ball, soft-skinned ball) or throwing the object instead of batting it.
 - ✓ Increase success by checking-in with each athlete to ask how they would like to try this activity.
-



4. BASE RUNNING

- Run hard and be safe!
- Banana turn at first
- Counter-clockwise (1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, home)



WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR BASE RUNNING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix B*

PHYSICAL	VISUAL	AUDITORY	INTELLECTUAL/ASD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use flat bases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a maraca or fill a water bottle with rice to help the athlete communicate their desired speed (slower shake, slower speed; faster shake, faster speed) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduce base distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark bases or playing areas with bright yellow tape <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use honking bases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place pylons behind/beside the base to help the athlete feel the base marker <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outline the base path with a different floor textures (spot markers, mats) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarize the athlete with the placement of the bases—tour them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always ensure that your face and lips are visible when explaining instructions. Try your best to never talk with your back to the athlete/group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pair verbal instructions with visual demonstrations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Write instructions down (dry-erase board) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try to learn basic ASL or establish clear gestures such as run, first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use clear and concise language when explaining instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use pictures to help communicate instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include a physical demonstration after explaining instructions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of balls (size, weight, colour, texture) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance of bases to athlete ability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use typical bases, honking bases, flat bases or cones to

	<p>around the bases before the session begins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Buddy can assist by ... ☑ Holding athletes hand ☑ Having the athlete hold onto the buddies forearm ☑ Holding the same piece of material/string when running to help guide the athlete ☑ Using verbal cues for the athlete to follow at a short distance <p>Have rope set up around the bases that the athlete can follow on their own. Tape can be used on the rope for directional cues. A PVC tube can be attached to the rope to allow the athlete to hold the tube and follow the rope</p>	<p>base, second base, third base, home plate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Use red & green cones to show the athlete when to run (green, run; red, stop) 	<p>help the athlete distinguish where to run</p>
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Musical Bases



Equipment: Bases

- Place 3-4 athletes at each base
- On GO athletes begin moving around the bases (walking, jogging or running)
- Ideally play music
- When it stops athletes must run to the closest base quickly as possible
- Last 2 will become pitchers
- Pitchers stand on the mound and can roll 1 ball on the ground during the next round, trying to hit/tag runners
- The final 2 in the next group become pitchers and the pitchers re-enter as runners again
- Runners see how many times they can make it around the bases



Adaptation Examples:

Increase success by allowing athletes to choose the music!

Base Sprint



Equipment: Bases

- Everyone begins at home
- Coach yells out a base and athletes must get there as quickly as possible



Adaptation Examples:

Increase or decrease the challenge by adjusting the **TIMELINE** of the activity. Allow enough time for all athletes to reach the base *or* count down 10 seconds from 10!

Round Trip Relay



Equipment: Bases, cones

- Divide athletes into two equal teams. One team will stand at 2nd base and the other team will stand at home plate.
- The coach will stand in the middle of the field near the pitcher's mound.
- When the coach says **GO**, the race starts.
- Each player has to run all four bases
- As athletes approach the base from which they started from, the next player in line stands in front of the base and gets into ready position.
- The next player in line can leave the base after his/her partner has touched it with their foot/chair
- The first team to get all of their athletes around the base paths wins.



Adaptation Examples:

Increase or decrease the challenge by instructing athletes to walk/speed walk/run/hop/skip/walk backwards/run in partners, etc...

Clean up Crew



Equipment: 20-25 various objects, bases

- Place objects in between each base
- Divide into team of 2-3
- The first person runs the bases and collects a maximum of 3 objects along the way.
- They can only grab 1 per base (E.g. 1 before first, 1 before second, 1 before third)
- Next person goes once the person in front has reached home. Team with the most objects wins



Adaptation Examples:

Instead of groups, have each athlete complete this task individually to increase success. As they're running around, instruct athletes which colour cones to collect!

Fox and the Rabbit



Equipment: Bases

- Divide into partners
- One has a ball standing on home plate and the other begins with a head start
- On GO person with ball (Fox) has to tag runner (Rabbit)
- If the Fox reaches second without getting tagged they get a point and rabbit gets a point if they are able to tag
- Switch partners and do the same from second to home



Adaptation Examples:

Increase or decrease the challenge by adjusting the PLAY AREA. Choose the diamond size – larger diamond = larger challenge!

Circle Run



Equipment: Beanbags



How to Play:

- Divide athletes into 4 equal teams. Ask each team to sit next to each other and to form one giant circle (all teams sitting in it).
- Place 3 beanbags in the center of the circle.
- Give each athlete in each team a number, starting with 1. There should be four number 1's, four number 2's, four number 3's)
- Explain and demonstrate that:
 - When you call a number, the athletes who have that number should stand up, run clockwise around the outside of the circle, run into the center of the circle through their original spot and try to pick up one of the beanbags in the center of the circle.
 - The challenge is to be fast enough that you can get a beanbag.
 - Every time a baseball is collected, a team wins a point.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ To increase success, you could also call out your athletes' names or colours instead of assigning them numbers.
 - ✓ Instead of running around the circle, have them grab the beanbag and then sit/stand in a different spot than where they started.
-

Rock, Paper, Scissors, Baseball



Equipment: 4 cones or 4 bases

How to Play:

- Set up a baseball diamond using pylons, setting up a first, second, third and home “base.”
- All athletes start off at home plate, challenging someone else at home plate to play RPS with.
- The winning partner runs to first base and the other partner stays at home plate to find someone else to play RPS with until they win.
- Once at first base, participants find a partner to play RPS with and the winner advances; the other partner stays at first.
- At second base, athletes find another partner to play RPS with, if they win they advance to third, if they lose they go back to first; same rules apply at third base as the winner advances and the other partner, goes back a base.
- The goal of the game is to be among the first five participants to make it back to home plate!



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by allowing your athletes as much time as they need to move around the bases. Alternatively, you could put a time limit of 60 seconds to speed up their decision-making when playing RPS.

Initiative Relay



Equipment: 2 pylons

How to Play:

- Divide the athletes into 4 equal teams.
- Explain that this is a relay race. The first team to complete the race and sit down in their line wins!
- Place 1 pylon as the starting marker and the other one about 20-30 feet out.
- Each athlete on the team must run a different way (forwards, backwards, hopping on both feet, one foot, etc.) to the other pylon and back. Give teams a few minutes to decide who will move which way.
- First team who has all athletes run the race each with a different movement wins!

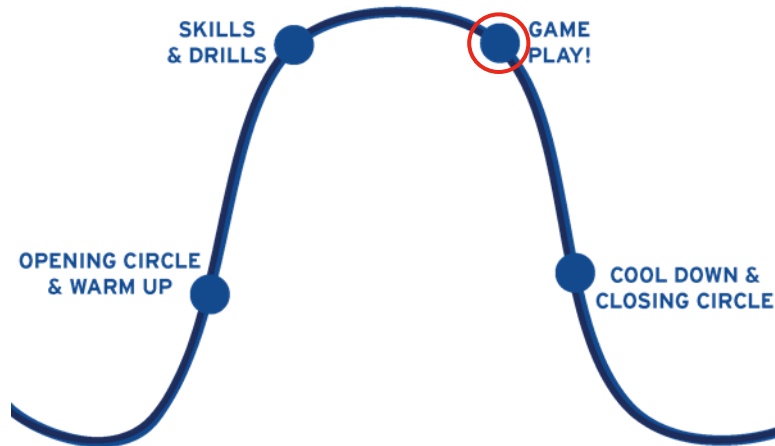


Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by adjusting the PLAY AREA. Make the distance to walk or run shorter or longer depending on the athletes' ability.
- ✓ Increase success by assigning each athlete a different movement, or allowing them to complete their movements in partners!

PART 3: GAME PLAY!

LET'S PLAY BALL!



At this point in a Challenger Baseball session, athletes are excited to use the skills they've worked on earlier in a game-like scenario! Challenger Baseball is played a little differently at each league depending on the individual difference and abilities of the athletes.

Some fun modifications to consider when playing an adapted game of baseball in a gym or outdoors could include:

- ☑ Everyone bats!
- ☑ Record "outs" but allow student-athletes to remain on base
- ☑ Stacking bases (allowing more than one athlete on a base at a time)
- ☑ Last batter means everyone runs home!

This is also a great time to include additional Big Group Games in your session!



5

WAYS TO PLAY



1.

POINT SYSTEM

TRACK POINTS AS ATHLETES MOVE AROUND THE BASES!

2.

RACE TO THE BASE

FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RACE TO THE BASE UNDER "BATTING" IN THE ACTIVITY GUIDE!

3.

BASE STACKING

ALLOW FOR MORE THAN ONE ATHLETE ON A BASE AT THE SAME TIME. ENCOURAGE ATHLETES TO MOVE AROUND THE BASES TOGETHER!

4.

BASEBALL IN 5

USE YOUR HAND TO BAT THE BALL AND RACE AROUND THE BASES!

5.

BASEBALL TENNIS

IT'S RACE TO THE BASE + TENNIS COMBINED! HIT THE BALL TO THE OPPOSING TEAM'S COURT AND HAVE THE OPPOSING TEAM PASS THREE TIMES BEFORE PLACING THE BALL BACK ON THE TEE AND SCREAMING "FREEZE!"

ALTERNATIVE BIG GROUP GAMES

Hold the Orange



Equipment: One ball/object per partner group

How to Play:

- This relay game is played in pairs.
- Every pair stands face to face with each other and try to pinch a ball (or other object, depending on what you have on hand and on ability) between their elbows/shoulders/hips/foreheads without using their hands.
- An adaptation would be for each pair to use one of their hands as well!
- Every pair has to complete a distance without dropping the object between them. Make it a fun balancing-race game!



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Instruct athletes to work in groups of three, rather than pairs.
- ✓ Increase success by prompting slow and steady movements, focusing on mindful movements and not speed.

Chuck the Chicken



Equipment: Rubber chicken or a ball

How to Play:

- Divide the athletes into 2 teams.
- One team stands in a line (one behind the other), while the other team link their elbows together and makes a tight circle.
- The team in the line starts with the rubber chicken and passes it to the back of their line going under the legs and over their heads.
- While they are doing this, the other team selects one person to run around the circle of participants as many times as possible.
- When the chicken/ball gets to the back of the line, the first person yells “Chuck the Chicken” and throws in anywhere inside the boundaries.
- The roles switch now, as the group that chucked the chicken forms the circle and picks one person to run around.
- Athletes are to keep note what number they have left off as they will continue the second, third, etc. time around.
- The game ends when a team reaches the number 30.





Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by changing the ACTIVITY. Instead of two teams, have all athletes work together as one team to see how fast they can pass the chicken/ball in an “uphill” (over the head) then “downhill” (under the legs) fashion.

Group Juggle



Equipment: Baseballs, beanbags, soft objects.



How to Play:

- Ask participants to form a circle with their hands out in front of them.
- Begin the game by passing the ball to someone across the circle. Ask participants to continue to pass the ball to other participants in the circle who have not yet received the ball. Continue until every participant has received and thrown the ball and the ball is back at its starting place.
- Ask participants to try to remember the pattern they threw the ball in. Attempt to repeat the same order.
- Once participants are confident in the order (they know who will be throwing the ball to them, and who they should be throwing the ball to), add a second ball to the process.
- Ensure that participants are following the same order all the time.
- Each time the group is successful, add another ball.
- To ensure safety, ask participants to say the name of the participant they are passing to.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by adjusting the EQUIPMENT. Use multiple larger, lighter balls to increase chance of success.

Park Ranger



Equipment: N/A



How to Play:

- Ask for two volunteers to play the role of Park Rangers. They should stand in the middle of the field.
- Ask the rest of the athletes to stand at one end of the field or play area. They should line up shoulder to shoulder. Challenge each of them to decide on an animal that they want to be for this game. It can be any animal – but they need to keep it a secret.
- Explain and demonstrate that:
 - The park rangers will say a characteristic of certain animals (i.e. “If your animal has a beak...feathers...four legs, etc. cross the field”).
 - If any of the athletes have selected an animal with that characteristic, they must run across to the end line and try not to get tagged by the Park Rangers.
 - If a Park Ranger tags them, they become a tree and are able to tag others while standing in a stationary position.
 - The game ends when only one animal remains.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by adjusting the PLAY AREA. The distance between where the athletes start and finish can be made longer or shorter depending on ability. You can swap out animals for any other topic of interest to your athletes!

Steal the Bacon



Equipment: Baseballs

How to Play:

- Divide athletes into 2 equal teams and line them up on opposite sides of the room or field.
- Give each athlete a number that matches them with a person on opposite team (i.e. one's will be directly across from each other).
- Place 'bacon' (baseball) in the middle of the room
- Call out a number (i.e. one's) and one's from both teams will run to the middle and try to beat the opposing player to steal the bacon.
- If you get to the ball first, you will throw it back to the coach and your team gets a point



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge: Adjust the rules of the ACTIVITY by calling out each athlete's name instead of number. Call out "athletes who are wearing BLUE!" or choose another colour or aspect about them to keep your athletes engaged!

Giants, Wizards and Elves



Equipment:

- 6-7 cones or pylons (depending on how big your space is)



How to Play:

- Divide participants into 2 teams and designate 2 safety zones, one on each team's side.
- Using several pylons (depending on how large your space is), spread them out along a designated middle area that is equal distance to both team's "safety zones."
- Each team then gets in a huddle and picks one of the actions below to do as a team (they all do the same action):
 - GIANTS: put their hands up over their heads;
 - WIZARDS: put their hands out straight in front of them wiggling their fingers; or
 - ELVES: make pointy ears on their head with their pointy fingers.
- Once teams have decided their action, both teams stand facing each other at the middle line. On the count of 3, each team does their action.

- *Note: GIANTS beat elves, ELVES beat wizards and WIZARDS beat giants, so the winning team must try to tag as many members on the other team as possible before they reach their “safety zone.”
- Members tagged become a part of the other team.
- The goal of the game is to tag all participants so they are all on one team.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by incorporating an interest into the game. For example, “Spiderman–Batman–Flash” instead of Giants–Wizards–Elves!

Catch the Bat



Equipment: 1 plastic baseball bat



How to Play:

- Ask all athletes to form a circle and ask for one athlete to start in the middle of the circle.
- Assign each athlete a number starting with 1.
- The athlete in the middle stands with their finger on the tip of the bat.
- Without warning, the athlete then says a number and let’s go of the bat.
- The athlete assigned to that number runs forward and tries to grab the bat before it hits the ground. If the athlete catches it before it hits the ground the athlete in the middle comes back and says another number. If it hits the ground, the athlete whose number was called is now in the middle.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by changing the APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT. Instead of a bat, place a ball in the middle and call two numbers at the same time. The first athlete to grab the ball wins, and the other becomes the caller!
- ✓ Increase success by having the teacher call out the number instead of one of the athletes.
- ✓ You could also increase the size of the bat – a bigger, longer and lighter bat will be easier to catch than a smaller, heavier bat.

Elephant Ball



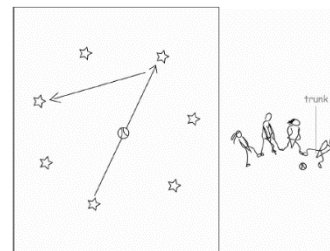
Equipment:

- 1 ball (large and soft)



How to Play:

- Divide the athletes into groups



- Ask each athlete to stand with their legs spread a part (a bit more than shoulder width) and ensure each participant's feet are touching the participant beside them so there is no space
- Demonstrate for the participants on how they should have their hand clasped together in front of them (forming a ball) and as though their arms are like an elephant's trunk when they raise it.
- The children cannot move their legs but use their "elephant trunk" (arms and hands) to hit the ball and protect their space.
- If the ball goes through their legs the first time, they are to use only one arm now. If the ball goes through the second time they are to turn around so their back is toward the play and can hit the ball when it is coming between their legs.
- The goal is to get the ball through the legs of the other participants but to also protect the space between your own legs and stop the ball
- The game ends when there is one person in the circle facing inward.



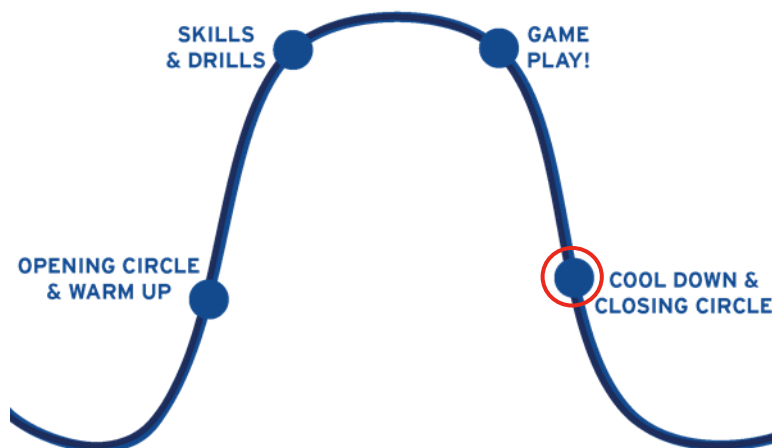
Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by having athletes sit in the floor, making a big "V" with their legs instead of standing up. You could also instruct all athletes to sit in a chair, and play the game with bats or pool noodles, working on dexterity.



PART 4: COOL DOWN AND CLOSING CIRCLE

COOLING DOWN & CLOSING OUT YOUR SESSION



The skills and drills are complete, the game has been played and everyone had a blast! Before you bring everyone in to the closing circle to wrap up the day, talk about the life-skill and plan for next time, we have to **cool down!**

This is very important, especially after high levels of activity. It helps muscles recover and helps athletes get into a good routine for transitioning to their next class or activity on their schedule for the day.



COOL DOWN GAMES

Where the West Wind Blows



Equipment: N/A

How to Play:

- Ask athletes to form a circle standing up.
- Stand in the middle of the circle.
- Explain and demonstrate that:
 - You will begin each sentence by saying “the wind blows for anyone who...” and then you will add a descriptor. For example, “anyone who is wearing black socks”, “anyone who has ever seen a bear”, “anyone who is a Blue Jays fan,” “anyone who has younger siblings”, etc.
 - If you say something that is true for any of the athletes, those athletes should run across the circle and stand in a different spot in the circle.
- After practicing a few times, explain that you will try to find a spot as well. The last participant to find a spot will take the place in the middle of the circle and be the caller for the next round.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Instead of saying “the west wind blows if...”, say “I love my teammate who...”.

Tip the Fruit Bowl



Equipment: N/A

How to Play:

- Ask the athletes to sit in a large circle.
- Assign each participant one of 4 fruit names (apple, orange, pear, banana).
- Challenge one athlete to sit in the middle and call out one of the four fruits.
- Each athlete that is associated with that fruit gets up and tries to find an empty spot. The athlete in the middle is also trying to sit in an empty spot.
- One athlete will be without a spot and will then have to sit in the middle and call out the next fruit.
- The goal of the game is to not be the last one in the middle.



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase success by adjusting the PLAY AREA. Change the space in between your athletes to adhere to their abilities. Instead of a circle, have them sit/stand in a line instead!

Traffic Lights



Equipment: N/A

How to Play:

- This activity helps to reinforce and strengthen athlete's skills at remaining positive and to offer positives solutions to those who might sometimes think "I can't do this!" or "I'm no good!".
- Gather athletes in a group, and explain that when you say a sentence that is negative, the athletes will yell "RED LIGHT" and when coach says something positive, the athletes will yell "GREEN LIGHT":

GREEN Lights:

- Good try!
- Practice makes perfect!
- Great throw!

RED Lights:

- I can't do this!
- I can't swing a bat!
- I'm no good at baseball!
- I'm too tired to play!



Adaptation Examples:

- ✓ Increase/decrease the challenge by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Prompt your athletes for RED LIGHT and GREEN LIGHT answers.

ACTIVE COOL DOWN ACTIVITIES

Good Game



Split group into 2 teams and line-up to shake hands like you would after a baseball game. Have them shake hands:

- Round 1 - Normal shake
 - Round 2 - Highest hi-5 you can
 - Round 3 - Lowest high 5 you can
 - Round 4 - Lean as far away as possible, reach out and touch fingertips
 - Round 5 - Have athletes or coach suggest and create one
-

The Wave



Just like a bunch of fans at the Rogers Centre, line up and begin a wave. You can do small to big like below or big to small:

- Wave 1 – Just your fingers
- Wave 2 – Only up to your elbow
- Wave 3 – Your whole arm
- Wave 4 – Your whole upper body
- Wave 5 – Your entire body

Action Story



Begin in a circle standing or sitting. One leader (player or coach) tells a story. Every time they say one of four words others must perform a corresponding action. Great way to use creativity, have fun and build vital connections.

Example:

“Yawn”	Everyone stretches out and pretends to yawn
“Suddenly”	Everyone makes a surprised expression and twitch/jump their body
“The”	Everyone sits down or stands up
“Eagle”	Everyone slowly flaps their arms like a majestic eagle landing from high above

Pinocchio



Everyone stands in a circle and a leader is chosen (player or coach). The leader casts a magical spell that turns everyone to a block of wood. Slowly, the spell is lifted and the leader tells people what they can move.

- Example: “Abracadabra kalamazoo! A magical spell has been cast upon you! You are all now blocks of wood, your eyes are closed and you cannot move, but don’t worry! I will lift the spell soon. Open your eyes! Oh wow! You can use your eyes again! Look all around and see the colours! What’s this? You can move your head now!”
- Continue until you reach your feet and toes.

Mirror



Everyone finds a partner and stands facing each other. One is a leader the other a follower.

- The follower must mirror every movement the leader performs. For example if the leader lifts their right arm the follower must do the same and at the same speed.
- Remind that the exercise is to be done at a medium to slow pace to avoid any strains or injury.

Stretching Circuit



This is a great way to teach the names of muscles and how to stretch them.

- Create stations, and post a card at each one with the name and picture of a muscle and a description of how to stretch it.
- Kids perform the movement on the card. Rotate every 20 seconds.

Muscle Mix



Place athletes in pairs, in a scattered formation.

- Call out various directions: “Touch biceps to biceps, touch patella to patella,” etc.
- Each pair performs the movements.
- When you call out, “Muscle mix,” the partners split and form new pairs.
- You also find a partner, and the child without a partner is the new leader. (If there is an odd number of athletes, pair with the athlete who’s left and perform the moves as you call out directions; when partners change, choose another leader.)

Circles in the Sky



While marching on the spot, children raise arms overhead.

- Children pretend they are drawing circles in the sky. Children keep arms overhead and draw a variety of shapes.

Climb the Ladder



Children stand with feet slightly apart.

- Move arms and legs up and down as if climbing a ladder to the sky.
- Climb a ladder for 20 – 30 steps.

Skating on the Spot



While standing on the spot, imitate a skating motion by extending the right then left leg away from the body at a back/side angle.

- Swing the arms.
- Continue this skating motion for 15 – 20 counts.
- Variation: children can “skate” around the gym either by pretending to have skates or by standing on scrap paper, and using the paper as skates.

Deep Breaths and Hug



Slowly take a deep breath in through the nose and out through the mouth. Repeat three times.

- Wrap arms around shoulders and give self a big hug and a pat on the back.
-

Tree in the Wind



- Stand with both arms overhead, feet placed wide apart, and knees slightly bent.
- Gently wave arms from side to side and forward like a tree in the wind.
-

Slow Leak



- Stand, arms circled over their heads, pretending to be a great big balloon.
- Pretend there is a hole in the balloon and the air is slowly leaking out.
 - Move slowly downward to the floor, until the balloon has no more air.
-

Strolling on the Spot








- Begin by standing on the spot. Stroll one step forward, then one step back, one step forward, then one step back gently swinging arms by sides. Do not raise arms above waist. Continue “strolling” on the spot for 20 – 30 counts.
-



APPENDIX A: EQUIPMENT

In partnership with **FlagHouse Inc.** we are able to provide specialized equipment allowing each Challenger in the Schools program to be creative and adapt their programming to meet the needs and unique goals of each athlete.

The items in your Adaptive Baseball Equipment Kit include:

ITEM	Quantity	
6 INCH. KNOBBY BALL	Set of 5	
JINGLE BELL BALL	Set of 6	
SOFT PLAYGROUND BALL	Set of 6	
MULTI-BUCKETS	1 Dozen	
30" NO KINK-HOOPS	1 Dozen	

30 INCH. HOOP BAG 1



GIANT EQUIPMENT BAG 1



HOT - COLOUR
FLYWEIGHT BALL 3



LARGE FLYWEIGHT
BALL 3



FLAGHOUSE ROCK-
PAPER-SCISSORS
BLOCKS 2



INFLATOR + INFLATING
NEEDLES 1 each



**SOFT FLEX
MARKERS (50)** 1 Set



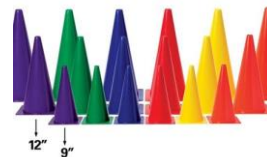
SOUND STEPS (6/SET) 1 Set



**KEEPERS! SPOT
MARKER SET** 1 Set



12" COLOUR CONE SET 6 Cones



**KEEPERS! PLASTIC
BASEBALL SET** 1 Set







**BUCKET FRUITS AND
VEGGIES** 1 Set



In partnership with **Rawlings** we are able to provide foam baseball equipment allowing each Challenger in the Schools program play indoors and/or outdoors.

The items in your Baseball Equipment Kit include:

ITEM	Quantity	
5 PIECE THROWDOWN BASE SET	2	
FOLDING T'S	4	
BLASTBALL BATS	6	
BLASTBALLS	30	

WIFFLE BALLS

24



EQUIPMENT BAG

1



RAWLINGS PLUSH
SOFTEE BALL

2



APPENDIX B: UNSTOPPABLE KIDS NOMINATION FORM



JAYS CARE UNSTOPPABLE KIDS



#UNSTOPPABLEKIDS

Jays Care's Unstoppable Kids are the leaders of tomorrow. They are **tenacious, motivated, incredible teammates** and **driven to be the best they can be** as they work towards their goals.

Each year, Jays Care and the Toronto Blue Jays proudly celebrate stories of Unstoppable Kids from all across Canada. In Jays Care programs from coast to coast, we ask for nominations to help us recognize kids who are truly **UNSTOPPABLE!**

In the past #UNSTOPPABLEKIDS HAVE BEEN CELEBRATED BY...

- Travelling to the Rogers Centre to be featured in Jays Care Unstoppable Kids campaigns
- Attending exclusive Toronto Blue Jays events as special guests, including the annual Curve Ball Gala
- Throwing the first pitch at a Blue Jays game
- Being featured on Jays Care's website and social media channels
- Receiving a TBJ prize pack / tickets!



In order to be considered, the participant must...

- ★ Be a current Jays Care program participant between the ages of 6-24 & involved in the program for at least 1 year
- ★ Have demonstrated the following core values throughout their time as a program participant:

Aspiration

Has goals or dreams he/she wants to achieve, works hard towards daily goals or has ideas about self-improvement, is courageous in trying new things

Leadership

Speaks his/her mind, taking ownership of a task or challenge, inspiring or motivating others, displaying a positive attitude

Teamwork

Able to work well with peers, able to solve, dispute or challenge with respect, supportive & helpful to staff, looks out for teammates well-being, includes everyone

Dedication

Always trying their best, handles defeat with good grace, finds ways to improve, continues to try even when faced with barriers, good attendance record

If you know a child or youth who is currently participating in a Jays Care Program, and who you believe is unstoppable, we want to hear from you!



NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE (CHILD/YOUTH) INFORMATION

Full name: _____ Date of nomination _____
(MM/DD/YY)

Jays Care Program: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt Size: _____

City/town/First Nation: _____ Province: _____

Parent/Guardian full name: _____

Using the table below, place an X in the column that best represents your nominee's efforts in each of the skills listed:

#UNSTOPPABLEKIDS Criteria	1 None of the time	2 Some of the time	3 Most of the time	4 All of the time
Attendance: <i>S/He attends program & has good attendance...</i>				
Leadership: <i>S/He is a leader among peers...</i>				
Motivation: <i>S/He is motivated to participate...</i>				
Positive attitude: <i>S/He demonstrates a positive attitude...</i>				
Love of baseball: <i>S/He has a passion & love for baseball ...</i>				
Inclusion: <i>S/He works hard to include and welcome everyone</i>				
Helpfulness: <i>S/He offers to help in programming & beyond</i>				
Courage: <i>S/He demonstrates courage to try new things</i>				



NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Full name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship to child/youth being nominated: _____ Email: _____

Are there any other adults that can support this nomination?

Full name: _____ Role: _____ Phone Number: _____

Full name: _____ Role: _____ Phone Number: _____



Please use this space to tell us how your nominee has demonstrated excellent leadership, dedication, teamwork and/or aspiration skills (800 words max):

Please feel free to attach an additional page if necessary.
ONCE COMPLETE, PLEASE SCAN YOUR COMPLETED NOMINATION FORM AND EMAIL TO
Unstoppablekids@bluejays.com





CHALLENGER BASEBALL IN THE SCHOOLS

SESSION BUILDER TOOLKIT

CHALLENGE PERCEPTIONS. CHALLENGE BARRIERS. CHALLENGER BASEBALL.

LETS PLAY CHALLENGER BASEBALL!

DATE: _____ **SESSION #** _____

FOCUS: (circle) THROWING HITTING FIELDING/ CATCHING BASE RUNNING

THEME: (circle) FRIENDSHIP COMMUNICATION INDEPENDENCE CONFIDENCE KINDNESS
 PROBLEM SOLVING TEAMWORK LEADERSHIP COURAGE RESILIENCE

1. OPENING CIRCLE

2. WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

3. ENERGIZERS/MODIFIED GAMES

4. SKILLS AND DRILLS

5. LETS PLAY BALL!



6. COOL DOWN ACTIVITIES

7. CLOSING CIRCLE

8. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

LETS PLAY CHALLENGER BASEBALL!

DATE: _____ SESSION # _____

FOCUS: (circle) THROWING HITTING FIELDING/ CATCHING BASE RUNNING

THEME: (circle) FRIENDSHIP COMMUNICATION INDEPENDENCE CONFIDENCE KINDNESS
PROBLEM SOLVING TEAMWORK LEADERSHIP COURAGE RESILIENCE

1. OPENING CIRCLE

2. WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

3. ENERGIZERS/MODIFIED GAMES

4. SKILLS AND DRILLS

5. LETS PLAY BALL!



6. COOL DOWN ACTIVITIES

7. CLOSING CIRCLE

8. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

LETS PLAY CHALLENGER BASEBALL!

DATE: _____ SESSION # _____

FOCUS: (circle) THROWING HITTING FIELDING/ CATCHING BASE RUNNING

THEME: (circle) FRIENDSHIP COMMUNICATION INDEPENDENCE CONFIDENCE KINDNESS
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