



CHALLENGER BASEBALL

2020 PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Terminology throughout this manual:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Athlete | Any child, youth or adult participating in Challenger Baseball |
| Buddy | Any youth or adult supporting a Challenger Baseball athlete on the field |
| Coach | Any volunteer, coach, teacher, camp counselor or activity leader leading a Challenger Baseball session |
| Challenger Baseball Session | Practice and game time with Challenger athletes. |

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WHAT IS CHALLENGER BASEBALL?

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

Challenger Baseball is designed in partnership with Baseball Canada, Little League Canada, Little League International and a number of organizations working with children, youth and adults with disabilities such as:



Helping Kids with Physical Disabilities Succeed



Silent



Voice

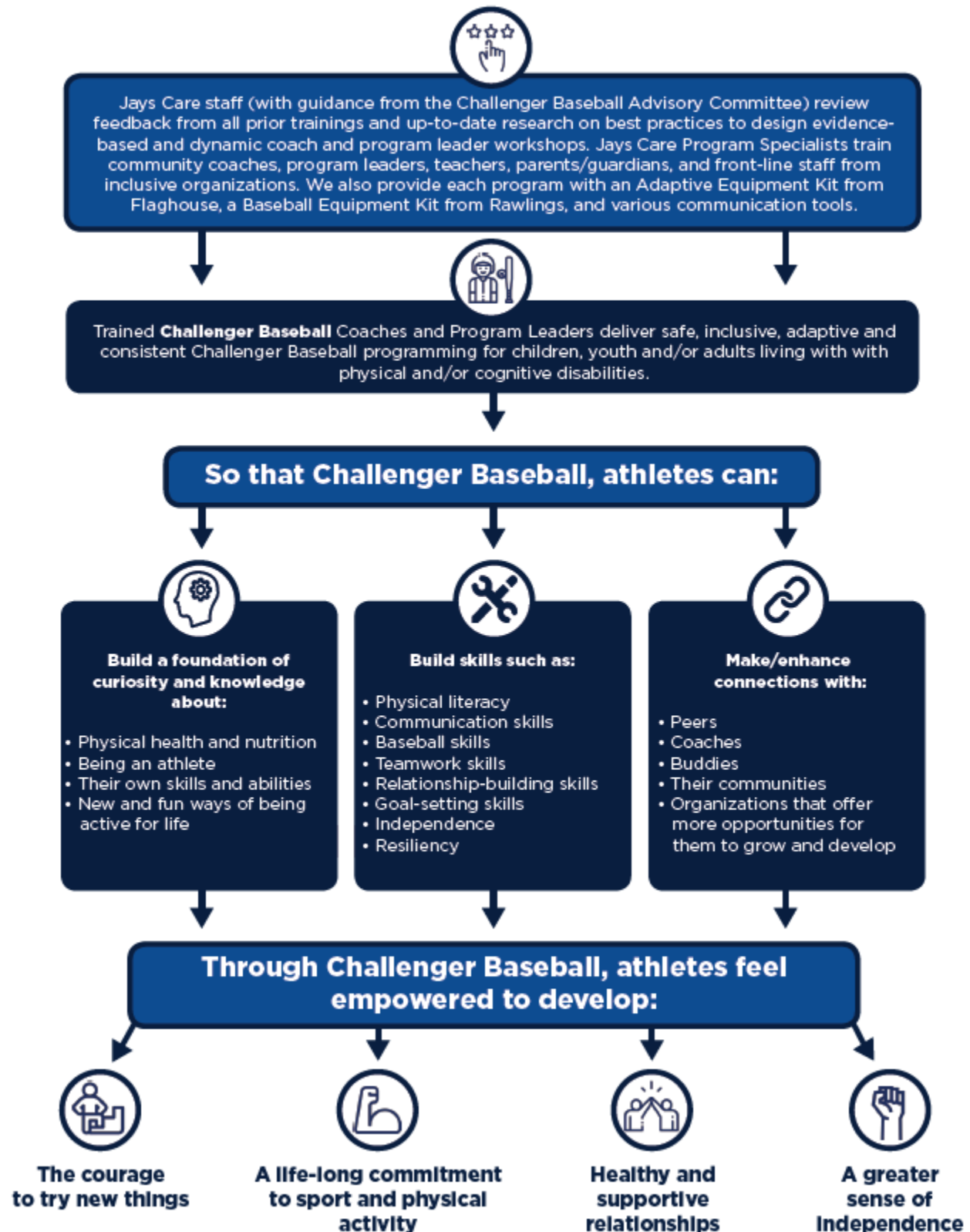


Challenger Baseball seeks to achieve many significant short and long-term goals for each of the unique athletes participating in the program:

| | | |
|---|----------------------|---|
|  | CONNECTION | <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> |
|  | COURAGE | <p>Challenger Baseball consistently encourages athletes to find their courage to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • step onto the field or in the gym for the first time, • step up to the plate when your teammates are watching you; and • be a part of something that can change yourself and those around you. |
|  | LOVE OF SPORT | <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 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> |
|  | INDEPENDENCE | <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 at home and in the community outside of Challenger Baseball.</p> |

Challenger Baseball runs **quality and sustainable programming** in over 200 baseball leagues, schools and organizations across Canada with more than 8,500 children, youth and adults participating!

ENGAGING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS LIVING WITH PHYSICAL AND/OR COGNITIVE DISABILITIES IN SPORT



WHY ARE INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS LIKE CHALLENGER BASEBALL IMPORTANT?

Only **56%** of children and youth living with cognitive and physical disabilities are participating in sport, play and recreation compared to **87%** of those living without disabilities.

Over **25%** 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 the general population.

Nearly **1 in 7** Canadians are living with a disability.

More than **200,000** Canadian children are living with a disability.

The State of the World's Children Study reports that children and youth with disabilities are among the most vulnerable to **violence, abuse, exploitation** and neglect.

According to Healthy People 2010, **31%** of children and adolescents 4 to 11 years of age with disabilities were reported to be sad, unhappy, or depressed compared with 17% of children without disabilities.

In a new study conducted, evidence shows **53%** of children and youth with disabilities have no friends (The Globe and Mail, 2018).

Statistics Canada (2008) reports that families of children and youth with disabilities report higher **distress** and fewer opportunities to engage in **social and recreational activities**.

While social isolation affects children and youth with disabilities, many parents also experience feelings of **isolation, failure and hopelessness**. Parents live with an underlying anxiety and hyper-vigilance of being ready to fight the next battle for their child.

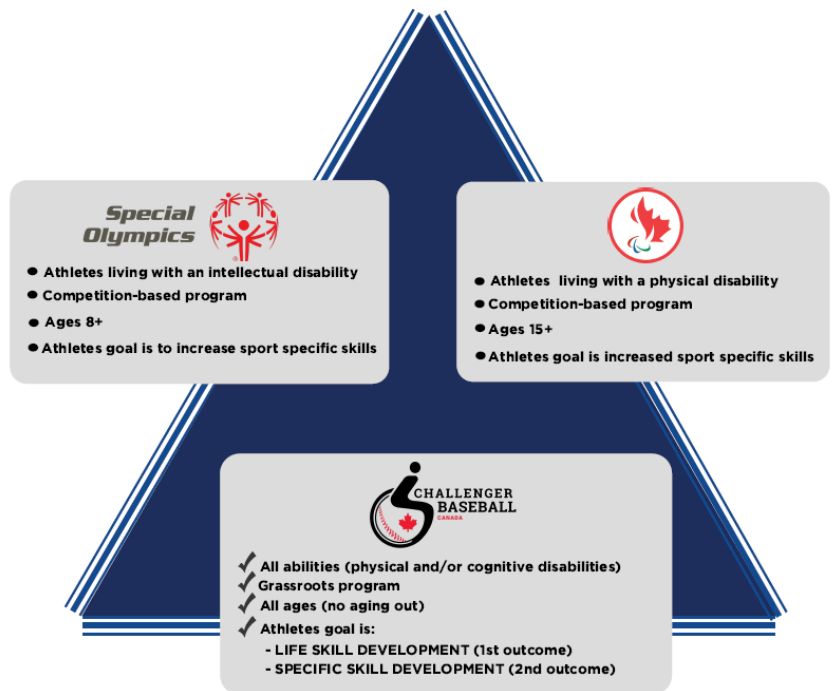


It's remarkably important that every person who runs a Challenger Baseball program feels confident in the WHY of inclusive sports programming. Because without understanding the WHY – it can be hard to find the motivation to explore and remember all the tactics that are required to do it well

WHAT GAP DOES CHALLENGER BASEBALL FILL?

Programs currently exist for athletes living with an intellectual disability looking to increase their sport-specific skills in a competitive environment (Special Olympics) and also athletes living with a physical disability looking to increase their sport-specific skills in a competitive environment (Para Sport).

Challenger Baseball at its core is a grassroots program for athletes of *all ages* and *all abilities* with the goal of increasing or enhancing their life-skills as a result – an increase in baseball or sport-specific skills is a secondary outcome. Working together, we are able to provide a clear, sustainable pathway for our athletes living with physical and/or cognitive disabilities to learn and grow through physical activity in their communities for the long-term.



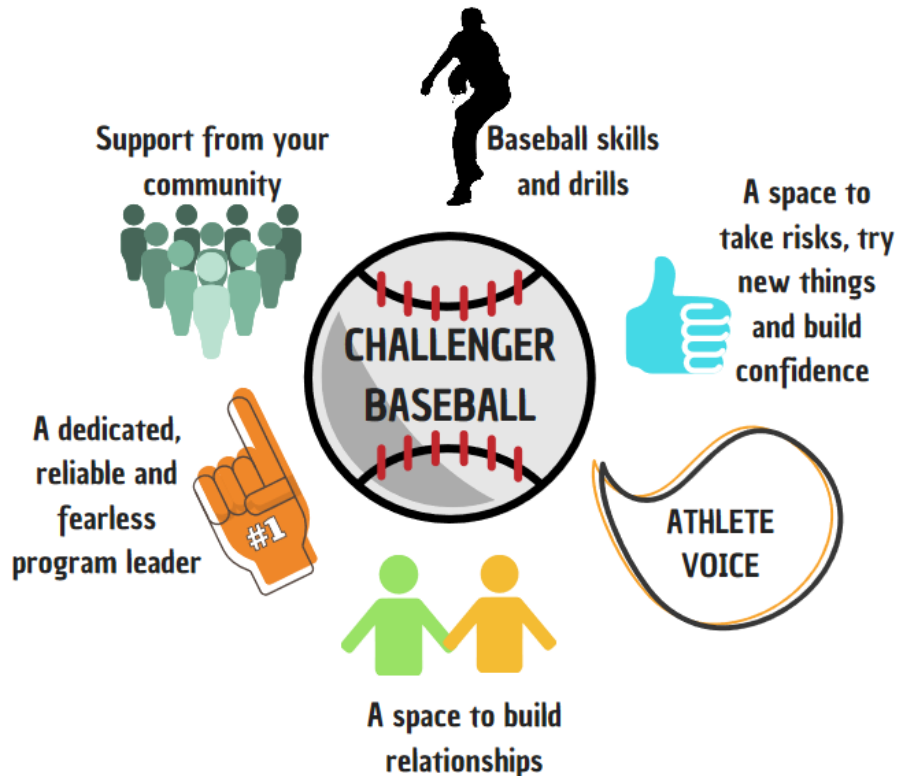
Enhanced baseball skills is a secondary outcome. The main outcome of Challenger Baseball is enhanced life-skills that are inherent to baseball - communication, teamwork, leadership, friendship, independence, courage - all skills athletes can translate into their everyday lives outside of sport for years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



CORE COMPONENTS OF YOUR CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM

WHAT SHOULD EVERY CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM INCLUDE?

While each Challenger Baseball Program will be uniquely designed to reflect their individual athletes, all Challenger Baseball programs, regardless of the style of delivery, include the following key components:



“SCIENTISTS HAVE RECENTLY DETERMINED THAT IT TAKES APPROXIMATELY 400 REPETITIONS TO CREATE A NEW SYNAPSE IN THE BRAIN - UNLESS IT’S DONE THROUGH PLAY, IN WHICH CASE, IT TAKES BETWEEN 10-20 REPETITIONS”

- DR. KARYN PURVIS; INTERNATIONALLY-RENOVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT EXPERT

HOW DO YOU ACCOMPLISH THIS AS A COACH, COORDINATOR OR BUDDY?

Challenger Baseball is about so much more than playing baseball. One of the ways that you can determine whether your Challenger Baseball session is working towards the unique goals and outcomes if your athletes is to **ask yourself the following questions at the end of one of your sessions:**

- ☑ Was I celebrating each individual success?
- ☑ Were the 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 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?

Assisting with Challenger Baseball was something completely different than what I have done with regards to coaching individuals with disabilities! I developed new light on it and had to develop a new skill in explaining tasks!

- Challenger Baseball Coach



MEANINGFULLY INCORPORATING LIFE-SKILLS INTO YOUR CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM

At Challenger Baseball, we are committed to building strong people using baseball as the vehicle. Below are the programmatic goals as well as strategies that you can use to meaningfully integrate life-skill development into your Challenger Baseball program:

| ENHANCED CONNECTIONS WITH THEMSELVES AND OTHERS | |
|--|--|
| THIS LOOKS LIKE THE ABILITY TO: | STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING INTO YOUR SESSIONS: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make new friends • develop stronger and more supportive friendships • be a trustworthy, kind and reliable friend and teammate • establish 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 AND WILLINGNESS TO TRY NEW THINGS | |
| THIS LOOKS LIKE THE ABILITY TO: | STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING INTO YOUR SESSIONS: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try new things • fail at something and continue trying • win and lose with grace and dignity • set big goals and develop clear plans for achieving them; • 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 session to set one personal goal for the session.

ENHANCED LEADERSHIP AND INDEPENDENCE

| THIS LOOKS LIKE THE ABILITY TO: | STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING INTO YOUR SESSIONS: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead others • identify different ways of being a leader on a team • share your opinions and ideas • authentically celebrate others • lead and support others to lead • persevere in challenging circumstances • listen to other people’s opinions and ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide athletes with choice. • Challenge athletes to modify at 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.). |

INCREASED LOVE OF SPORT AND COMMITMENT TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

| THIS LOOKS LIKE THE ABILITY TO: | STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING INTO YOUR SESSIONS: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN CHALLENGER BASEBALL?

The most important role you have as a Challenger Baseball Coach, Coordinator, Buddy or other volunteer is to **lead a fun, safe, consistent and effective Challenger Baseball program**. You will work hard to gain a great sense of who your athletes are, including their individual strengths, weaknesses, goals, and personality traits that make them unique. The better you know your athletes, the more success you will experience.

VARIOUS ROLES THAT SUPPORT CHALLENGER BASEBALL

| LEAGUE COORDINATORS | COACHES | BUDDIES | VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS |
|--|---|--|---|
| VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROGRAM LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATION WITH JAYS CARE, THEIR PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS | VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING, LEADING AND EXECUTING POSITIVE, ADAPTIVE AND FUN CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAMMING EACH WEEK | VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WORKING 1-ON-1 WITH THEIR CHALLENGER BASEBALL ATHLETE(S), ENSURING THEY'RE WORKING TOWARDS THEIR UNIQUE AND INDIVIDUAL GOALS AND PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE | VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THEIR PROGRAM HAS ENOUGH COMMITTED, PASSIONATE AND MOTIVATED PERSON-POWER TO BE SUSTAINABLE AND WILDLY SUCCESSFUL |



The role of a Challenger Baseball Coach, Coordinator or Buddy 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 whole leadership team within your program to ensure each session is built with 110% enthusiasm each time in an effort to meet the program goals.

THREE BIG RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN LEADING CHALLENGER BASEBALL:

1

KNOW YOUR
UNIQUE
ATHLETES

2

FACILITATE ACTIVITIES
IN WAYS THAT ENGAGE
AND CHALLENGE ALL
ATHLETES

3

PLAN YOUR
CHALLENGER
BASEBALL
SESSIONS

1. Know your unique athletes

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

- ☑ **Incorporate an interest** – Athletes 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 an athlete likes video games).
- ☑ **Expect that it might take *time*** - Some athlete may not want to participate on the first day – and that’s okay! Small steps are still steps towards positive outcomes and should be celebrated!
- ☑ **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 athletes 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 athletes 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, Coordinator or Buddy, it is important for you to create an environment where you are filling the E-tanks of your athletes and encouraging your athletes to do this for each other.



2. Facilitate activities in ways that engage/challenge all athletes

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

Facilitating GREAT Activities

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!



3. Plan your Challenger Baseball sessions

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 community as coaches and volunteers. Support these people by frontloading them with everything they need to know to do the job well (page 25).

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 46).**

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.

Top 5 Considerations for New Challenger Baseball Leagues

Congratulations! You have officially completed your program Charter and are feeling excited to start your community's new Challenger Baseball League. So, what's next? Throughout this section, you will find the **Top 5 Things to Consider** when starting your new league – all written by Challenger Baseball leagues who themselves have gone through the process of bringing their new program to life. These tools, strategies, and tips will help to ensure your new Challenger Baseball League is set up for success in it's first year.

These **Top 5 Considerations for New Challenger Baseball Leagues** are:

1. Building your team
2. Recruitment
3. Getting to know your families
4. Team Engagement, and
5. Assessing the impact of your Challenger Baseball program

1. Building Your Team

Starting a new Challenger Baseball league in your community requires a lot of time and commitment. You are not expected to do it alone! As the league coordinator, you are the main point of contact from your league to Jays Care Foundation. Page 8 of the [New League Start-Up Kit](#) shows the supports many new leagues start with across Canada.

Some examples of these support persons are a:

- Volunteer/Buddy Coordinator,
- Field Coordinator, and
- Parent Liaison

You can read about these support persons in your [New League Start-Up Kit](#).

What makes individual Challenger Baseball league successful is their uniqueness – not every program runs the exact same. Feel free to personalize your support systems based on the need that fits with your league.

2. Recruitment

Recruiting Challenger Baseball athletes, buddies and coaches is one of the most important tasks when starting your new Challenger Baseball community. On page 16 of the [New League Start-Up Kit](#), you can find a few recruitment techniques that have worked for Challenger Baseball leagues across Canada in the past. Here are a few other innovative ways to recruit and inspire people in your community to get involved

For more information or to discuss recruitment techniques, please e-mail our Program Specialist, Inclusive Programs Meghan Saundercook at meghan.saundercook@bluejays.com

Reach out to **local schools** for students – both athletes *and* students looking to gain community service hours.

Don't limit yourself to youth. Reach out to other various members of your community by posting on community boards at your local community centre.

Utilize your connection to your local Little League and/or Minor Baseball Association. Many leagues across Canada encourage their mainstream youth baseball teams to volunteer as Buddies with Challenger Baseball – this can help a new Challenger Baseball program become a part of their baseball organization's DNA.

Be active in the community to make your league known by volunteering or attending community events.

3. Getting to Know Your Families

Knowing your athletes and their families is a key element to building a successful Challenger Baseball community! As a League Coordinator, one of your commitments is to ensure your league is a place your athletes feel excited to come to while continually feeling safe and engaged. One of the basic ways you can accomplish this is to connect with your Challenger Baseball families ahead of the season to set expectations, frontload them with information that will ease their family's transition into this new program, and open the feedback chain between parents and/or guardians with you as the league coordinator.

You can find helpful tips to engage your new Challenger Baseball families in the [New League Start-Up Kit](#) on page 21. Below you can find a few common ways Challenger Baseball Leagues across Canada have positively engaged their families to set their new league up for success:

- a) **Host a team meeting** prior to the start of your Challenger Baseball Season to frontload all families with their uniforms for the season, expectations of the league, ways families can be involved and any additional information families may need prior to the first day of Challenger Baseball
- b) **Work with families** to ensure all participants are fully participating and engaged
- c) **Host kick off events** to allow your families the opportunities to meet before the season starts



4. Team Engagement

Engaging your new Challenger Baseball team outside of practice can be a great way to get to know your families and allow athletes to build on their social skills outside of Challenger Baseball. Team engagement opportunities can include functions or celebrations that bring the team together in a fun and meaningful way. You can find ideas of team engagement activities other Challenger Baseball leagues have been successful in hosting and/or attending on page 22 of the [New League Start-Up Kit](#). A few ideas to get you started are listed below:

- a) **Attend the Challenger Baseball National Jamboree with your Team:** Each year in the summer, Jays Care Foundation hosts the National Jamboree at the Rogers Centre, inviting leagues from around the country to a sensory-inclusive Rogers Centre to play on a big-league field. Here, athletes are celebrated for all their hard work and dedication throughout the Challenger Baseball season. You can find more information about the National Jamboree [here](#).
- b) **Create Awards for your Athletes:** Many Challenger Baseball Leagues have weekly, bi-weekly, and/or year end awards for all their athletes. This can be a great initiative and could also act as motivation for athletes and buddies to work towards throughout the Challenger Baseball season. You can find examples of these awards on Page 22 of your [New League Start-Up Kit](#)

4. Assessing the Impact of your Challenger Baseball Program

Assessing the impact of a Challenger Baseball program allows League Coordinators to see if the program is working. It gives our athletes, families and community members the opportunity to voice their opinion on what they love, do not like, and want to see more of within the league. It can also give families and/or community members the chance to reach out and offer their help in a bigger capacity! Page 21 of the [New League Start-Up Kit](#) has some suggestions that leagues across Canada have used in the past.

Feedback doesn't have to be scary – it is a gift to help all of us ensure we are always making forward progress to meet the needs of our athletes, parents, coaches, coordinators and buddies. A few ways to continually assess the impact of your program can include:

- a) **End-of-Program Surveys:** A great method to gain feedback is through End-of-Program Surveys to evaluate how the program is doing, and pinpoint areas for improvement. Jays Care will send you a copy of these surveys (available in both physical copy and online) to be conducted by all athletes, parents, buddies and coaches at the end of their season. Jays Care requires all League Coordinators to send the survey links to their Challenger Baseball communities and/or scan and submit all their surveys by the end of the season to help in reporting to

national and local donors, as well as to help establish ways to consistently improve the program and learn from best practices.

- b) **Season Awards:** A great method to see how Challenger Baseball has impacted athletes, buddies and families is to have awards at the end of the season. Members of your Challenger Baseball community can nominate individuals they feel have gone above and beyond throughout the season. Having these personal stories connected to the program gives you, the League Coordinator, an advocacy piece when growing your league in future years.
- c) **“Today I feel” Check-ins:** Having your athletes tell you how they are feeling before every Challenger Baseball session gives coaches and volunteers a starting point on how their athletes are feeling.



- d) **Games you can play:** Where the West Wind Blows (found on page 112 of the Activity Guide) is one example of a great way to see how buddies and athletes are feeling. By asking questions such as “I feel like I learned a new skill today” gives feedback without formally asking.



Top 5 Considerations for Your Growing Challenger Baseball Leagues

Congratulations on running a Challenger Baseball league in your community! If your league is experiencing an increase in registration and attention from athletes, buddies, and families from season to season then your program may be at the stage where it is ready to GROW! In this section, you will find resources and tools from seasoned Challenger Baseball programs who experienced growth across Canada, to help prepare you for this exciting evolution. Developed from the NEW Challenger Baseball Start-Up Toolkit Resource, below you will find the **TOP 5 Things to Consider** when growing your league:

1. Facing Growth
2. Events and Celebrations
3. Using the Resources Available to You
4. Fundraising
5. Social Media Presence



1. Facing Growth

Managing a growing league can be very exciting but also nerve-racking so please remember what **an honor** it is that your program is facing growth – it means that you are taking all the right steps! When facing growth, it is important to acknowledge the growth that is happening and to create a plan for when it becomes a reality.

Here are some growth strategies that you can keep in mind:

- a) **Split the group** from one team to several teams based on age, ability level, or divisions. It is very important to place athletes in a level where they will feel challenged and successful on a team that is best suited for their needs!

*Hamilton Challenger Baseball Association, for example, uses a **coaches check-list** to help place their athletes in a league that is best suited to them! Hamilton has 4 divisions: Junior Recreational, Semi Competitive (15+ looking for more challenge), Competitive Division (21+ competition based) and Sr. Recreational (18+ who require 1-1 support).*

- b) **Retain** more experienced Challenger Baseball athletes by giving them the opportunity to step into a leadership role on the diamond. There are several athletes who are now participating as athletes for the first hour of Challenger Baseball and buddying for the second hour. You can also offer athletes to become assistant coaches if this interests them too!
- c) **Engage** your families by giving them the opportunity to play a larger role in the program! Try your best to use the people that are available to you to help support

the growth of the league by creating roles such as Buddy Coordinator, Parent Liaison Coordinator, Fundraising Coordinator, Assistant Coach etc. You can find more information about delegating roles on page 33 in the Start-Up Kit.

2. Events and Celebrations

Celebrating your athletes, buddies and families by hosting events is a great way to take your program to the next level! More information and resources around hosting Challenger Baseball events, such as a Challenger Baseball Event Planning Tool and ideas can be found on page 20 under “Bells and Whistles” in the Start-up kit. Below are some examples of events and celebrations that current Challenger Baseball Leagues host:

Opening and Closing Days:

Hosting an Opening Day can be a great way to introduce athletes to their coaches, teammates and buddies and to help everyone feel comfortable, excited and prepared for the fun season ahead! A Closing Day allows athletes to feel celebrated for the hard work and dedication they put into the season and leaves them excited to play Challenger Baseball the following year. Please see below for an example of an Opening Day schedule that can be used to frontload families, buddies and coaches prior to the first day:

EXAMPLE OPENING DAY SCHEDULE:

- 9:30am – 9:45am – Meet & Greet: Meet your coach, buddies and teammates!
- 9:45am – 10:00am – Opening Ceremonies/Opening Circle
- 10:00am – 11:00am – Station Rotations
- 11:00am – TBD – Pizza Celebration or BBQ



Buddy Events

Buddy events can be monumental in creating a positive space where volunteers feel valued and celebrated for their work and support throughout the season. Events that are planned specifically to celebrate buddies can impact retention from year to year as it allows volunteers to create lasting memories and to help them feel a part of the Challenger Baseball family. It is important to highlight to your volunteers that Challenger Baseball programs could not run and be as successful as they are without their help.

*An example of a volunteer specific event is a **Buddy BBQ** hosted at the end of the season with athletes and families invited. Here, athletes and families can present stories and thank-you's to their buddies while Coaches and Coordinators can present Buddies with certificates, raffles and food!*

Off-Season Team Events

Gathering families and volunteers in the off-season can be a neat way to keep the magic of Challenger Baseball alive year-round! Off-season events can include bowling nights, holiday dances or get-togethers (i.e. Halloween Dance), Creative Emporium visits, or renting a gym once a month for recreational activities. You can find more information about off-season events on page 20 in the Start-Up Kit.

“Our community of families with children with disabilities look for things to do to stimulate our children and with opportunities like [off-season events], it creates an environment where we’re all a part of the same family”

– Parent of Challenger Baseball Athlete



3. Using the Resources Available to You

Challenger Baseball Resources are tested and true strategies that have been created with our Advisory Committee to help fill behaviour, communication and motivation needs between athletes and their Buddies/Coaches at Challenger Baseball. These resources are a great way to contribute to athlete success and add consistency within your program as it evolves. It is essential that Coordinators, Coaches, and Buddies feel comfortable manipulating each resource so for more information about how to use the different resources available to you please visit the [Challenger Baseball Visual Resource Manual](#)

In the following chart, you will find common behavioural needs that may come up at Challenger Baseball that can be regulated using one of the Challenger Baseball Resources available to you:

| Common athlete behaviours and/or needs: | Challenger Baseball Resources that can be used to help meet the athlete's needs: |
|---|--|
| <i>Do some of your athletes come to Challenger Baseball dysregulated and you're unsure about how to interact with them?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zone of Regulation Banner • White board |
| <i>Does your athlete communicate via communication board or ASL?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenger Baseball Visual Communication Resources (VCR) • ASL Cards • ASL Poster • White board |
| <i>Do you have new buddies/volunteers that help at Challenger Baseball each week? (i.e. baseball teams)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddy Cards • Buddy Posters |
| <i>Does motivation help your athlete to succeed? (i.e. your athlete only wants to bat and not field and requires motivation to do so)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First/Then Board (VCR) • "I'm working towards..." Board (VCR) • Timer • Whiteboard |
| <i>Do your athletes thrive on knowing what to expect throughout the day and using visual schedules?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAVE Poster • WAVE graphic (VCR) • Timer • White board |

4. Fundraising

As leagues continue to grow, costs may begin to increase so it is important to ensure that fundraising ideas, plans and supports are in place for this exciting shift! Remember that fundraising takes preparation and time, so it is essential that roles and duties are allocated to others in order to support the process. Below are a variety of creative ways that Challenger Baseball leagues are fundraising for their programs across Canada:

- ✓ Raffles
- ✓ Approaching local businesses
- ✓ Online Auctions (i.e. 32auctions.com)
- ✓ Valentines Day Dance \$5/ticket
- ✓ Run/Walk/Move-A-Thon
- ✓ Receiving sponsors by placing business logos on athlete jerseys


A copy of a sponsorship letter, that can be used to approach local business, can be found on page 65 in the [Start-Up Kit](#). For more information on fundraising strategies, tips and techniques for community sports teams, please visit

<https://www.charityauctionstoday.com/p/sport-fundraising-ideas/>



5. Social Media Presence






Boosting your online presence can be a great way to take your league to the next level in order to reach more athletes, buddies, families and community members! The [Challenger Baseball Online Guidelines](#) was created to help set up the ideal Challenger Baseball online presence. You can also find more ideas about how to be more active on social media on page 15 of the Start-Up Kit. Below are some GO's and WHOA's that can help keep your social media exciting and up-to-date:

| ✓ GO! | X WHOA! |
|---|--|
| ✓ Ensure that your language online is up-to-date – try your best to use inclusive language! | X People can be deterred from joining a program if the league is using outdated language. For more information on inclusive language please email Meghan.Saundercook@bluejays.com |
| ✓ Make sure you are using the current Challenger Baseball logo!  | X The old Challenger Baseball logo no longer represents Challenger Baseball Canada so please ensure you are using the up-to-date logo! |
| ✓ Engage with @Jayscare on Instagram and Twitter! | |
| ✓ Create an email account, Instagram page, Facebook page, Twitter account or website for your Challenger Baseball program to help stay connected with your families and volunteers! | |
| ✓ Refer to the <i>Challenger Baseball Online Presence Guidelines</i> and the <i>Challenger Baseball Start-Up Kit</i> for more information! | |




SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS IN YOUR ATHLETES

Challenger Baseball is designed to be a program where Coaches, Coordinators, Buddies, volunteers and athletes can bring their best selves to the baseball diamond 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. |

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER STRATEGIES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR IN MY ATHLETES?

On page 62, 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

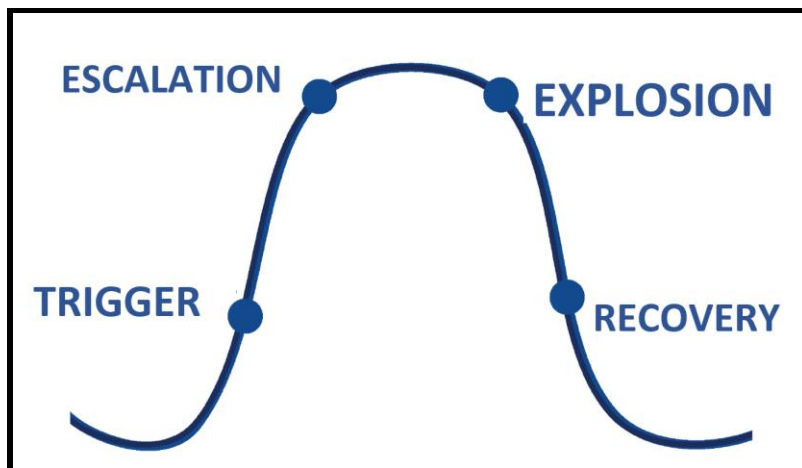
- Check your own assumptions and body language
- Stay calm and take a deep breath

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



STRATEGY #1: S.T.A.R.T.S – FOR PREVENTION

“Every great program STARTS with these things”




There are 6 things you can keep in mind before running any programming with children and youth that have proven to help significantly reduce challenging behaviours and help kids from travelling along the wave.

| | |
|----------|---|
| S | Schedule – is there a schedule on the wall for everyone to see? Schedules/plans help kids (especially those who have experienced trauma) feel a greater sense of control and calm. |
| T | Trigger check – have I scanned the room and plan for any potential triggers for my kids? Have I thought about how I’m going to group/pair up my kids so they are most likely to be successful? |
| A | Acknowledgement – Am I ready to acknowledge every kid when they walk into program? Am I ready to celebrate and acknowledge all of their efforts? |
| R | Rationale – have I created plan to motivate the kids? Will they feel inspired to participate based on my motivation plan? |
| T | Transition times – have I considered fun things for kids to do during transition times? (I.e. when they are waiting for their turn up at bat). Am I prepared to give time cues so kids have warnings before transitions? Have I given kids permission to bring/use transition items? Do I have fidget toys available? Do I have my CB timer available? |
| S | Show – have I modeled/demonstrated/shown the kids what it is I want them to do? Children with learning disabilities (and in fact, all children) learn much more effectively when they can see an example of what they should be doing. |



STRATEGY #2: IMPACTFUL INTERACTIONS– PREVENTION

As soon as athlete's step onto the diamond it is important to interact with them in a way that makes them feel special and acknowledged, to pro-actively impact their behaviour before Challenger Baseball begins. Here are 3 ways that you can have a quick, but meaningful, interaction with all your athletes:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>3-Way Hello (Triple Play!)</p>  | <p><i>The power of connection:</i> “Nice to see you this morning Brian! Sue, isn’t it nice to see Brian?”</p> |
| <p>Positive Pass</p>  | <p><i>Acknowledging the athletes name + a positive quality about them:</i> “Mackenzie, wicked pitching arm!”; I notice you</p> |
| <p>30 Second Lock-In</p>  | <p><i>Lock-In with individual athletes through the power of listening:</i> *Spend at least 30 seconds actually “locking into” each athlete at some point throughout your session to make them feel heard.</p> |



STRATEGY #3: H.A.L.T ACRONYM- FOR INTERVENTION

This behaviour management tool is used once athletes begin to enter the “Trigger and Escalation” phases. This acronym is effective because it helps coaches, coordinators and buddies understand what may be causing the behaviour and lead towards a way to resolve the problem:

HALT
H – Hungry?
A – Angry?
L – Lonely?
T – Tired?

Here is some additional information to help you explain this acronym:

H is for HUNGRY: Is it possible that the athlete is hungry? Even adults with mature self-control can get irritable and impatient when we are hungry so it’s that much more difficult for a child to control their emotions if he/she is hungry. Children need to eat frequently with several small nutritious meals and snacks per day. Sometimes a behaviour can be thwarted by simply suggesting a child grabs a snack or water.

A is for ANGRY: Has the child been disappointed or frustrated? Think about what has been going on in the past, remembering that what might seem minor to an adult can be very important to a child.

L is for LONELY: Children who feel that they are not getting enough attention, or who have been alone a lot, will often seek attention in negative ways. For a child, negative attention is preferable to no attention at all. Demands, crying, explosions and sibling conflict can often be prevented by offering a child your undivided attention. You can offer to play a game, go for a walk around the diamond, have some water together or take a quick break. Listen to truly connect with kids.

T is for TIRED: Just as adults may have a bad day after a late night or restless night’s sleep, so do children. And children are less able to control their behavior than adults are. Kids need a LOT of sleep. Preschoolers need on average 10- 12 hours per day and teenagers need 9 ½ hours.

So before giving consequences for challenging behaviour, think of **HALT**. Consider if a nap or rest, a snack, or some positive attention will solve the behaviour challenge.

STRATEGY #4: “BE THE ROCK” – FOR INTERVENTION

One of the most common mistakes that adults make when interacting with a child who is experiencing the explosion stage is engaging them in questions and consequences too early. Strategy #4 is all about learning that kids cannot **RELATE** before they **REGULATE**. As athletes begin to emerge into the escalation stage, their heart rate escalates which results in a greater chance of explosion. It is very important to recognize how you can support them through this tough experience and one way is *entrainment*.

Entrainment is the ability to draw along with yourself. It is the art of using your voice, your tone, your volume, your temp, your body language to draw others along with you. It's like being a tuning fork for others. Daycare workers, therapists and comedians are all very skilled at entrainment.”

If we want athletes to be able to calm down, find their recovery state and be able to explain to use what is going on and how to prevent escalations in the future – we need to be a rock in their storm. We need to be calm and patient, and an elixir to escalated heart-rates. By being a rock – we can help them calm down and regulate. They can only relate to us when they are regulated.

BE THE ROCK IN THEIR STORM
HELP THEM REGULATE
ONCE THEY REGULATE, THEY CAN RELATE

POSITIVELY ENGAGING PARENTS AND/OR GUARDIANS

There are lots of creative ways to inform and engage parents and/or guardians at your Challenger Baseball program. Below are a few ideas you can use to ensure parents/guardians feel both informed and aware of how best to engage in your unique program:

- Create a **Parent Welcome Letter** or the start of the season. Let them know the details of the program, rules and regulations, any big dates they can look forward to (ie: launch and wrap up), and roles they can play as volunteers, supporters and spectators.
- Post **“Spectator Rules”** on the walls or on the batting cage to help guide parents and supporters in terms of ways they can engage.
- Set up a **Poster-Making Station** so parents can create signs and cheer on their athletes - ask the first parent/spectator who arrives to lead it.
- Create a **“Celebration Corner”**. Ask a parent/spectator to run it.

CELEBRATION CORNER

Help celebrate the great athletes you see here today! It's easy!

1. Grab a word bubble.

To:

It was awesome to see....

From, your fan:

2. Fill one in for any athlete or coach you notice who has done something great today.
3. Stick it on the Celebration Corner Board or on the field fence
4. Stick as many up as you want!

POSTER MAKING STATION

Cheer on your athletes!

1. Grab a poster or a blank sheet of paper and some markers.
2. Create a sign that shows your athlete how awesome you think they are!



Sport Parents Code of Conduct

Parents Agreement

- 1) Remember that children are involved in sport for their enjoyment not yours 
- 2) Respect all decisions made by coaches, referees and officials
- 3) Be a role model by supporting your child 
- 4) Do not coach your child in games or training 
- 5) Respect the rights of all players
- 6) Applaud effort and hard work, as well as success 
- 7) Avoid criticising any player on the pitch or at training 
- 8) Encourage children to play according to the rules 
- 9) Do not force your child to participate in sport 
- 10) Do not shout or criticise players if they make a mistake 
- 11) Do not be rude towards players, other parents, coaches and officials 
- 12) Applaud the opposition as well as your own team 



 @BelievePHQ

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PARENTS EXHIBIT CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS?

As a coach, you will be responsible for addressing any concerns a parent might bring to the ball field or programming space. It's important to remember that parents are your customers and your athlete's greatest advocates and allies. The more information you can provide them before the program starts, the fewer issues you will have during the season.

But – when issues do arise, remember to use the same tips that salespeople are trained in for de-escalating challenging customers. **Once a parent has regulated, they are much better equipped to relate and then work with you on potential solutions.**



DID YOU KNOW...

THE SAME TIPS THAT GREAT SALES PEOPLE ARE TAUGHT TO MANAGE ANGRY OR AGGRESSIVE CUSTOMERS CAN BE VERY HELPFUL WHEN DEALING WITH CHALLENGING PARENTS OR GUARDIANS...

1. USE THEIR NAME
2. USE ACTIVE LISTENING
3. SLOW DOWN AND SUSPEND JUDGEMENT
4. CATEGORIZE
5. SHOW EMPATHY
6. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
7. APOLOGIZE
8. FIX IT/ACTION STEPS
9. FOLLOW-UP



ALWAYS REMEMBER...

BE THE ROCK IN THE STORM

REGULATE BEFORE YOU RELATE

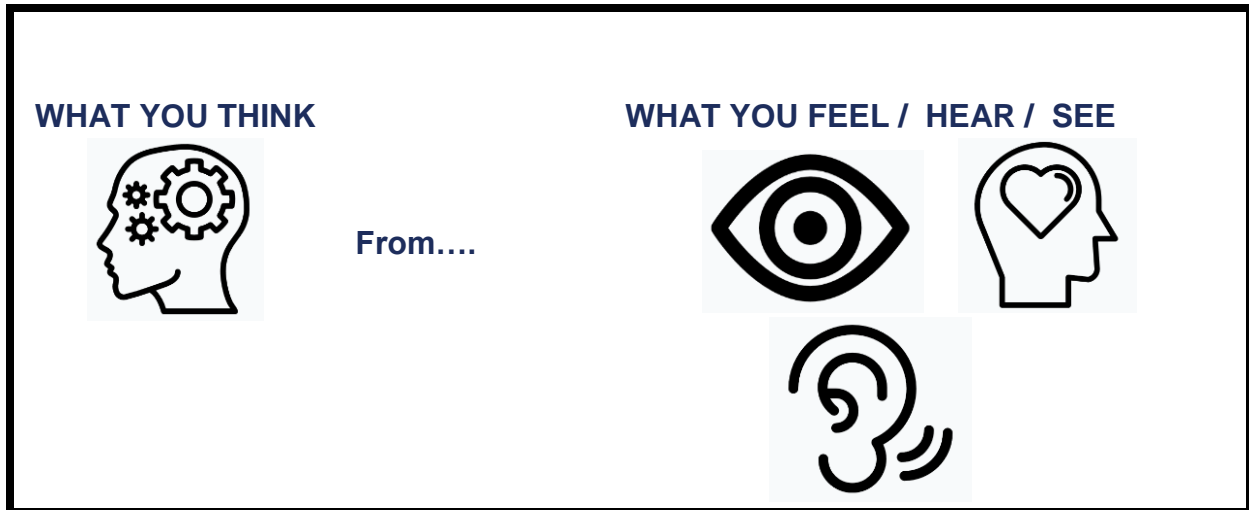
GET THEM TO SAY YES (I.E. DO YOU FEEL LIKE I HAVE ADDRESSED YOUR CONCERNS?)

STAY AWAY FROM CLICHES (I.E. CALM DOWN)



HOW CAN YOU GIVE PARENTS FEEDBACK WHEN THEY ARE MAKING YOUR PROGRAM MORE CHALLENGING?

One of the biggest challenges in giving feedback to ANYONE is being able to separate:

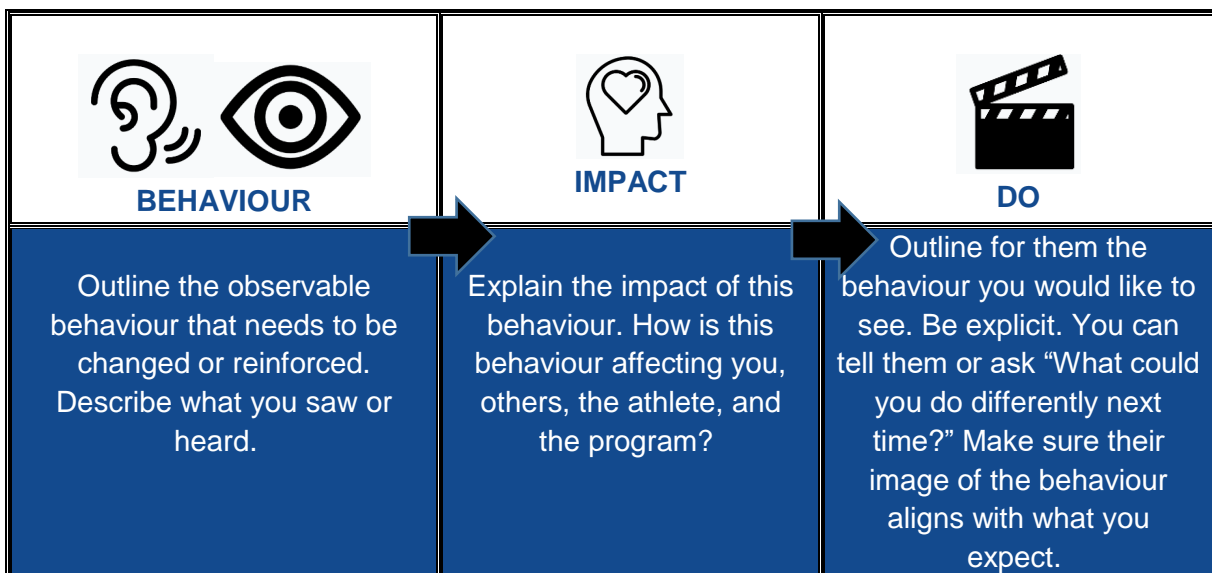


People can argue (and often get offended) by what people THINK. But it is much harder to argue with, and much easier to absorb and reflect on what people FEEL, SEE and HEAR.

So, when giving parents feedback try these two tactics and you may find them more open and willing to respond and address their own behaviors:

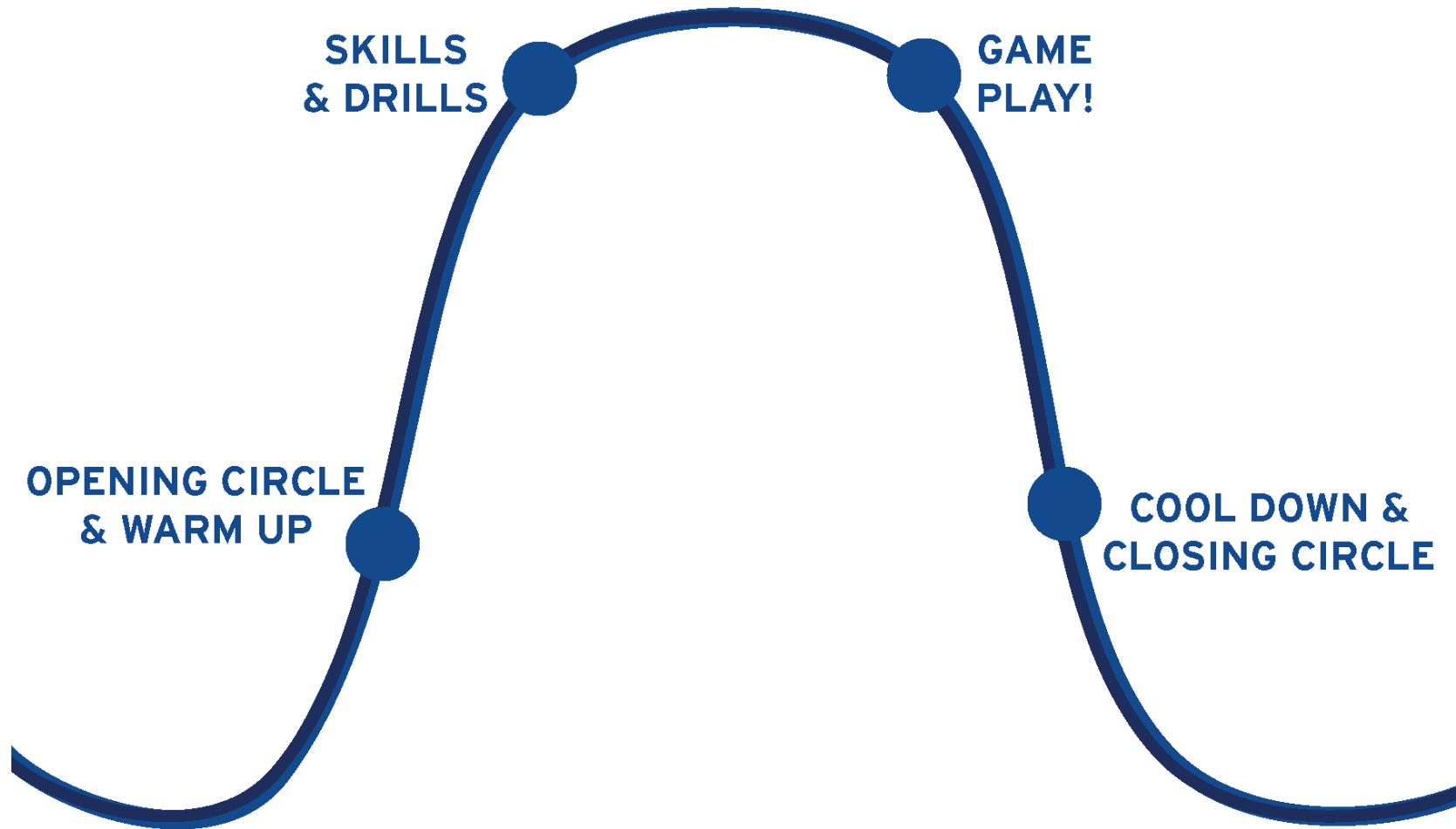
1. Identify what you have felt, seen or heard that is disruptive.
2. Find a moment to speak to the parent alone.
3. And then use the BID model below to address the issue.

THE BID MODEL:



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 athletes first arrive at Challenger Baseball they are either finishing up their day 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 athletes 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, the wave can take anywhere from 45 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 | 10 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 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 |

You can find suggested activities many Challenger Baseball programs include as staples in their program starting on page 69 in the Activity Guide.

DELIVER THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BASEBALL IN A FUN WAY

Know some fun activities that will help players build relationships

Engaging your 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 69.

For example, on page 76 you can find an athlete favorite, Huckle Buckle!

Know some of the fundamentals of baseball and effective ways to teach them adapted for your unique athletes

Knowing the fundamentals of baseball and ways to adapt each skill to your individual athletes is a key factor in increasing success. You can find the fundamentals of baseball and modified ways of teaching them starting on page 82.

For example, on page 86 of the 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 athletes alongside increasing their baseball knowledge and mastery. You can find everything you need to plan your baseball sessions starting on page 82.

For example, on page 89 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 athlete’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

At the bottom of each activity listed 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 Baseball, we use the acronym **ADAPT** to help us become talented and creative masters of inclusion:

Maximize participation by **ADAPT**ing 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**.

In the Activity Guide portion 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. • 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 • Break the skill down into ‘mini progressions’. • 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. • 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 athletes may need hand signals and others may need physical assistance to stop. |
| 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 some strategies to consider when working with athletes who use assistive devices

In Challenger Baseball, we center our programming around equity, which means providing each of our unique athletes what adaptations, modifications, time, equipment and/or strategies they need in order to be successful *and* challenged to reach new heights. Did you know that more than 8 out of 10 individuals use some form on assistive devices? Below, you will find ten different strategies you can use while working with athletes who use assistive devices:

1: Treat your athlete like you would any other athlete.

Be mindful of your tone, language and unconscious bias when conversing with your athletes. Lack of physical power does not mean lack of cognitive power, drive and motivation. Their assistive device is an extension of their body, just like an arm or leg.



2: It is okay to ask questions.

It is better to ask questions than to make assumptions of how you can help. Asking questions gives a great opportunity to learn more about your athletes and how you can make their Challenger Baseball experience the best it can be.

3: Assistive devices doesn't only mean wheelchair or walker.

Mobility aids or assistive devices does not strictly mean a wheelchair or walker. Other assistive devices our athletes may use include scooters, canes, crutches, prosthetic devices, orthotic devices, hearing aids, voice recognition programs, and sensory items.

All of these assistive devices are unique to each athlete and can help them be successful while playing Challenger Baseball.

4: Feel free to offer a hand, but don't be an opportunity thief.

If you see one of your athletes struggling to accomplish an activity at Challenger Baseball, ask if they could use some assistance or how you could modify the activity *then* work up to the progression. The opportunity we give our athletes to be independent and try activities on their own first is a gift. It can be very tempting to jump right in and help but be sure to ask how you can help first. If your athlete rejects your help, that's okay too. We're learning together how we can best support each other!

5: Prioritize Eye Contact.

While communicating with your athlete you want to make sure that you are always using eye contact. By using eye contact you are showing your athlete that you are tuned into what they are saying and paying attention. Depending on your athlete getting down to eye level may also be a great option.

6: Be patient.

You will learn the best way to support each of your athletes, and it's okay if this doesn't happen immediately. Some of your athletes may still be getting used to their assistive device. When meeting your new athletes, communication and patience is key. You want to make sure you give them the space and time to settle into the safe space you create with their unique assistive device.

7: Always ask before you touch their assistive device.

Be aware of personal space. We don't grab, move, or touch things that don't belong to us without asking first. This concept is also true for our athletes' assistive devices. For example, touching an athlete's wheelchair without permission is the same as touching someone's arm or back without permission. Remember strategy #2 - it's okay to ask questions!

8: Always be ready and willing to modify and adapt in any situation.

No two athletes require the same support, modifications, motivations and adaptations. Just because you may have two athletes who use wheelchairs, does not mean they need or want the exact same support - just like do not expect two athletes living with Autism to be the same. Some of our athletes who use wheelchairs do not necessarily need their device all the time. Sometimes, our athletes will use their wheelchair to conserve their energy and will choose to walk for a short amount of time within your Challenger Baseball Session.

9: Continually Observe.

Observe your athletes to see what they are able to do independently and where they require support. While observing you can find different ways you can modify and adapt activities while promoting their independence. Your athletes will surprise you as they continually learn, develop and grow within your program. Continual observation is key!

10: You'll make mistakes - and that's okay!

When working with your athletes who use walkers, wheelchairs, or other assistive devices, you will always try your best to use inclusive language and modify accordingly. Our athletes are our best teachers. We are human. We are always learning, and we will all make mistakes. That is okay!

Bonus *11: Be Open Minded

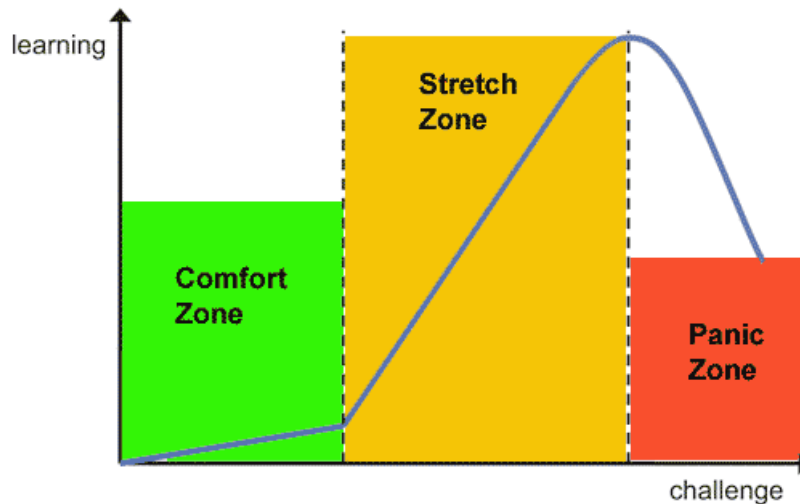
Be willing to learn from your athletes. Being open minded helps us to learn so much about what we can do to support all our individual athletes, and help them work towards their unique goals. Let your athlete be your teacher as well you be their teacher.



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?

4 WAYS TO LEVEL-UP YOUR CHALLENGER BASEBALL PROGRAM USING THE STRETCH ZONE



MODIFY THE ACTIVITY

2-3 athletes are ready for additional challenge

Using the ADAPT model for modifying activities, skills and drills, allow your athletes to choose their challenge within each chosen activity. You'll still be completing the same skill or drill with your group - with the addition of unique modifications for each individual athlete.

RALLY-CAP IT

5-7 athletes are ready for additional challenge

Using this strategy for structuring your sessions, you will split your team into 3 even groups. Group 1 will be completing a skill or drill in the outfield, while Group 2 and group 3 are engaged in a baseball game. Each group rotates through all three stations throughout the practice.



INCORPORATE A SKILLS COMPETITION

10-12 athletes are ready for additional challenge

Using this strategy with your athletes, the competition is against themselves! Include a) how far they can hit the ball, b) how fast they can move around the bases, c) how far they can throw the ball, etc... Celebrate each individual victory!



CONSIDER ADDING ADDITIONAL TEAMS

15+ athletes are ready for additional challenge

As your program grows, there will come a time when your athletes should be split into 2 or more teams based on their ability levels and growth goals. Congratulations on our growing team!



KNOW HOW TO ASSESS WHETHER YOUR PROGRAM IS WORKING

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

WHAT ARE DIFFERENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES?

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

1. **End-of-Program Assessment forms for athletes, Coaches/Coordinators/Volunteers/Buddies, and Parents:** By filling this out yourself and assisting your Challenger Baseball athletes and families to do the same, either online or via paper, you're helping to actively monitor and evaluate your Challenger Baseball 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. **Coach, Coordinator, Buddy or Volunteer Survey, and**
4. **Parents and/or Guardian 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 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!

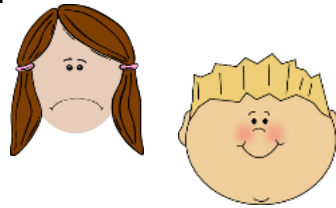
3. **Fun activities with your athletes:** Program assessment activities are quick and fun activities that give athletes a chance to tell us, what they like about Challenger Baseball and what they hope will change to make the program even better next session.

Fun assessment activities to lead with your athletes

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 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 our athletes 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 athletes who are in your program.

The more feedback we receive, the more we can grow Challenger Baseball in future years!



CELEBRATING YOUR ATHLETES

We believe all 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 athletes strive to get better every day – and deserve to be celebrated for their accomplishments, both big and small!

One of the many things you can do to celebrate your exceptional Challenger athletes is to nominate 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 athletes 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 B.

When a child started hitting by themselves for the first time (no tee). To see that smile and confidence was incredible! Also, cannot forget that child who may have been reluctant at the 1st of the season to play or hit, who now has the confidence to go up to bat make a small hit (big to us) is a huge milestone. It is amazingly heartwarming to watch and brings tears of joy!

– Parent of Challenger Baseball Athlete



Paige McNally
Age 10
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Challenger Baseball

Sometimes the world can feel like a big place. But my determination and attitude are bigger.

Athlete, coach, teammate and fierce cheerleader. Paige does it all. As an unstoppable kid in Challenger Baseball, Paige challenges EVERYONE to try their hardest in EVERYTHING they do. Challenger Baseball gives kids with disabilities across Canada the chance to play and learn key life skills.

JAYS CARE
FOUNDATION

#UnstoppableKids JaysCare.com/UnstoppableKids

CHALLENGER BASEBALL VISUAL COMMUNICATION RESOURCE

The Challenger Baseball Visual Communication Resource was created with our Challenger Baseball Advisory Committee to provide coaches and buddies with visual tools for communication and motivation that can help contribute to athlete success in the Challenger Baseball 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.

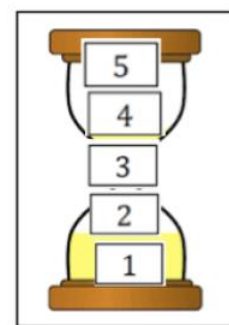
On the two inside pages of the resource there is Velcro™ to hold all of the PECS that can be used throughout a Challenger session.

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 | RESPOND |
|---|---|
| <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 <div style="text-align: center;">   </div> | <p>SELF-CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your own assumptions and body language • Stay calm and take a deep breath <p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |

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



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)



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!

RESPOND

During this time the ability to cope is still compromised. The athlete may easily express more challenging behaviour. Talking about what went wrong or even trying to fix it can reignite emotions. Save recovery for when the athlete has had a few hours to recoup (if they have gone home, offer recovery next time).

DEBRIEFING

- Talk about how hard it must have been for them, let them know things they did that went well
- Try to figure out what triggered the challenging behaviour and discuss what can make it easier in the future for both the athlete and yourself
- Remember your own self-care. Take some time to talk about the situation with your Challenger Baseball Coordinator or Provincial Coordinator
- Review your plan. What needs to be changed? What worked well?

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 BASEBALL

2020 ACTIVITY GUIDE

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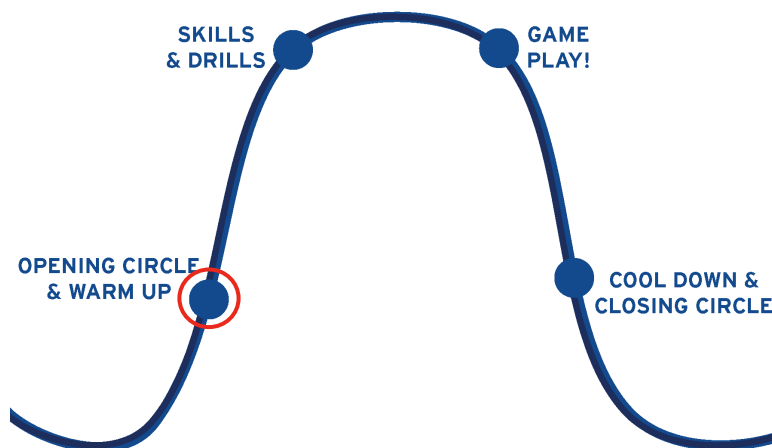
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PART 1: OPENING CIRCLE & WARM UP ACTIVITIES

OPENING CIRCLE AND WARM UP ACTIVITIES



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 athletes you work with. It can prepare them for the session ahead and make them better equipped to learn from the activities you lead.

WARM- UP STRETCHES, ACTIVITIES AND GAMES



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 Stretch

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Side Bend Stretch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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) |
|--------------------------|---|

Arm Stretches

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Circles | <p>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.</p> |
| Shrugs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 | <p>Bent 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.</p> |

| Hips and Leg Stretches | |
|------------------------|--|
| Quad-stretch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>The game ends when the blob catches the last participant.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <p>How to Play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 | Baseball |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>6. After a designated amount of time, the team with the least number of balls in their backyard wins.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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! |

| Rock, Paper Scissors BATTLE! | |
|------------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | Coloured Dots |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase/decrease the length of the line and the distance between dots ✓ Use RPS dice |

| Mingle! | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | N/A |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and demonstrate 3 different baseball themed poses (feel free to create your own!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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) |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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! <p>Play until there are more sharks then athletes!</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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) |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. |

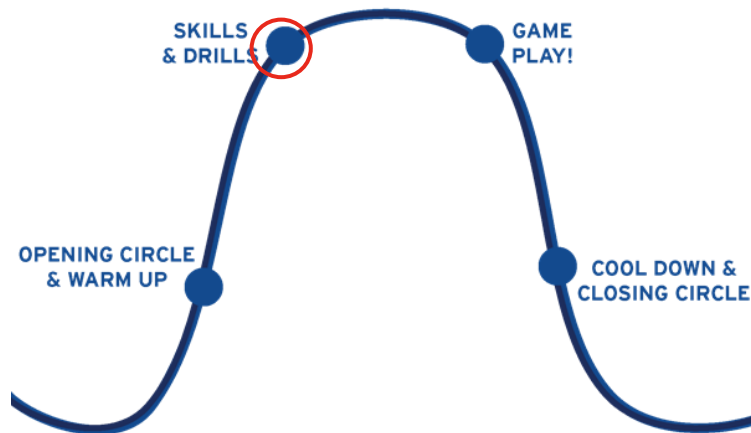
| Noodle Tag | |
|--------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | Noodles |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This game works on athlete's ready positions (fielding) • Split the team up into multiple teams • Place 5+ noodles on the other side of the space, directly in front of each team |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>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</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. ✓ 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. |

| Catch the Dragon’s Trail | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | N/A |
| THE WAVE | Opening Circle & Warm Up |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Once the group has caught their own tail once or twice, have them try to catch the tail of a different "snake" or "worm".</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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

SKILLS & DRILLS



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

OR

Alligator as low as you can go



Fingers to the sky



WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR FIELDING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix A*

| 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 adaptive games/activities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use cones to create boundaries or position placement | <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 <p>“ready” before the ball is released out of the throwers hand</p> <p>“ball” once the ball has been released from the throwers hand into the air or onto the ground</p> | <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 boards) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try to learn basic ASL or establish clear gestures for common phrases such as “ready position” and “great catch” | <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), Jingle Bell Balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance to athlete ability |

| Alligator Chomp | |
|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 1 ball per pair, no gloves |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | 1 ball for each pair, gloves (optional) |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | Noodles |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and Hungry Hippos

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | Big bucket of 20-25 balls, extra bucket |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <p>Part 1: Swamp Escape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Part 2: Hungry Hippos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | Increase the challenge by changing the ACTIVITY. Instruct your athletes to work in partners, picking up the ball in one hand each! |

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 A*

| 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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If using a target, vary the targets height <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decrease throwing distance | <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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tape a ball with bright yellow tape <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If using a target, provide a sound behind the target (beep, clap) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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"> <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 for phrases (ex. thumbs up = ready?) | <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), Jingle Bell Balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance to athlete ability |

Criss Cross Toss

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | 1 ball for each pair |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 | <p>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.</p> <p>To progress to partners, instruct the partner who is catching to show a target with both hands which thrower tries to hit.</p> |

Pattern Throw

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 3-4 balls, gloves (optional) |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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| EQUIPMENT | 1 ball per person, wall/target area |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

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| | To increase the challenge, incorporate their non-dominant hand to throw towards the target! |
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| Siege | |
|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 5-6 balls, hula hoops/targets |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <p>To increase or decrease the challenge, adjust the PLAY AREA by making it bigger or smaller.</p> <p>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.</p> |

| 10-Pin Knockdown | |
|--------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 7-10 balls, 20 pylons, tall cones or buckets |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>The game ends once a team’s pylons are all knocked down.</p> |

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| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. <p>The game ends when only one team has any pylons left standing.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>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.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase success by adjusting the ACTIVITY. Instead of throwing and catching the ball, have each athlete run to pick up a call 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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! |

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!



SWING!



Squish the bug!

WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE ADAPTATIONS FOR BATTING?

**Equipment referenced can be found in Appendix A*

| PHYSICAL | VISUAL | AUDITORY | INTELLECTUAL/ASD |
|---|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice of a tee or a pitch <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Variety of bats (sizes, weights) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a tennis racket or flat bat <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Variety of balls (sizes, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduce pitching distance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice of a tee or a pitch <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a tennis racket or flat bat (oversized bat face) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Variety of balls (sizes, weight, colour, texture), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls <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 <p>“ready” before the ball is released out of the pitchers hand</p> <p>“ball” once the ball has been released into the air from the pitchers hand</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice of a tee or a pitch <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 tee, pitch, great job, try again! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice of a tee or a pitch <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), Jingle Bell Balls, wiffle balls <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adapt distance to athlete ability |

Tee Time

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 10-15 balls, screen/fence, 1 tee + bat |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 whiffle balls wins! |

Soft Toss

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|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 15-20 balls, 1 bat per hitter, screen/fence/wall |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide group as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <p>Adjust the PLAY AREA by changing the distance between the batter and the bin/bucket to increase or decrease success.</p> <p>Increase success by instead of counting the number of hits, count the number of balls that made it into the bin/bucket!</p> |

| Race to the Base | |
|-------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | 1 bat, 1 base, 1 ball, 1 pylon or tee |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <p>How to Play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. <p>Optional: One point is scored for each time the batter gets back to the tee safely.</p> <p>Once the batter has had three turns at bat, athletes rotate so that each participant has a turn as a batter.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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

- GO GO GO 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 A*

| 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) | <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) | <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, weight, colour, texture) |

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|--|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduce base distance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarize the athlete with the placement of the bases—tour them around the bases before the session begins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buddy can assist by ... <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holding athletes hand <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Having the athlete hold onto the buddies forearm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holding the same piece of material/string when running to help guide the athlete <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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> | <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 base, second base, third base, home plate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use red & green cones to show the athlete when to run (green, run; red, stop) | <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 help the athlete distinguish where to run |
|--|---|---|--|

Musical Bases

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | Bases |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | Bases |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>or</i> count down 10 seconds from 10! |

Round Trip Relay

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | Bases, cones |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

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| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | Increase or decrease the challenge by instructing athletes to walk/speed walk/run/hop/skip/walk backwards/ run in partners, etc... |
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Clean Up Crew

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| EQUIPMENT | 20-25 various objects, bases |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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! |

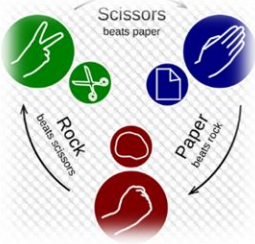
Fox and the Rabbit

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | Bases |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 athletes 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you call a number, the athletes who have that number should stand up, run clockwise around the outside of the |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | <p>circle, run into the center of the circle through their <u>original spot</u> and try to pick up one of the beanbags in the center of the circle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <u>stays</u> 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! <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. |

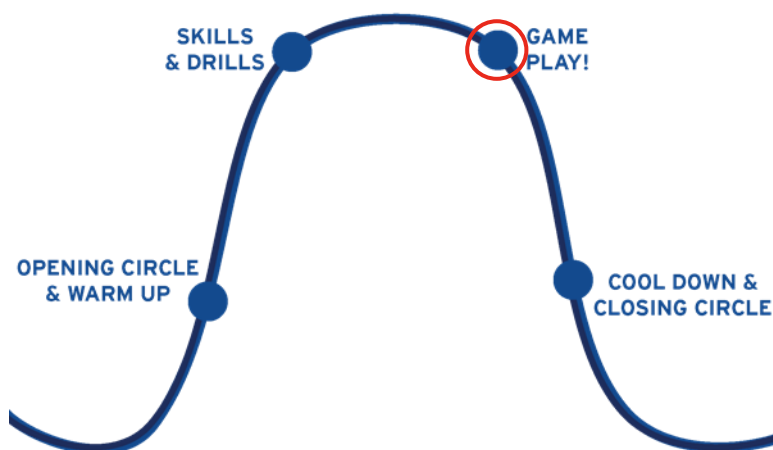
Initiative Relay

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | 2 pylons |
| THE WAVE | Skills & Drills |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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!

GAME PLAY



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!
- ☑ Put buckets at each base – batter stops moving around the bases once the ball(s) is/are placed in any bucket!
- ☑ 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!

ALTERNATIVE BIG GROUP GAMES

| Hold the Orange | |
|----------------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | One ball/object per partner group |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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! <p>Every pair has to complete a distance without dropping the object between them. Make it a fun balancing-race game!</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>If you get to the ball first, you will throw it back to the coach and your team gets a point</p> |
| 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) |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>GIANTS</u>: put their hands up over their heads; ○ <u>WIZARDS</u>: put their hands out straight in front of them wiggling their fingers; or ○ <u>ELVES</u>: 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." |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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. |

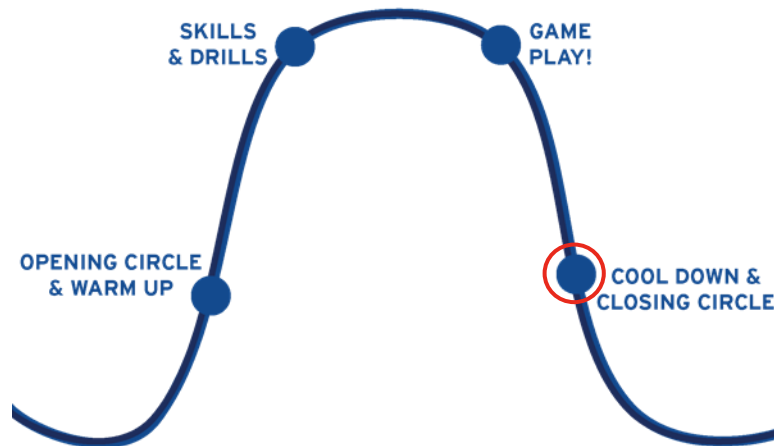
| Elephant Ball | |
|----------------------|--|
| EQUIPMENT | 1 ball (large and soft) |
| THE WAVE | Game Play |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide the athletes into groups • Ask each athlete to stand with their legs spread a part (a bit more than shoulder width) and ensure each 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. |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the ball goes through their legs the <u>first time</u>, they are to use only one arm now. If the ball goes through the <u>second time</u> 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 <p>The game ends when there is one person in the circle facing inward.</p> |
| ADAPTATION EXAMPLES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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

COOL DOWN & CLOSING CIRCLE



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 |
| THE WAVE | Cool Down |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask athletes to form a circle standing up. • Stand in the middle of the circle. • Explain and demonstrate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 lovteammate who...”. |



| Tip the Fruit Bowl | |
|----------------------------|---|
| EQUIPMENT | N/A |
| THE WAVE | Cool Down |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the athletes to sit in a large circle. • Assign each participant one of 4 fruit names (apple, orange, pear, banana). • Challenge one athletes 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 athletes in the middle is also trying to sit in an empty spot. • One athletes will be without a spot and will then have to sit in the middle and call out the next fruit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 |
| THE WAVE | Cool Down |
| HOW TO PLAY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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": <p>GREEN Lights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good try! ○ Practice makes perfect! ○ Great throw! <p>RED Lights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. |

APPENDIX A: EQUIPMENT

FLAGHOUSE[®]
Enriching lives. Delivering solutions.™







In partnership with **FlagHouse Inc.** we are able to provide specialized equipment allowing each Challenger Baseball League 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 |  | ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS BLOCKS | 2 |  |
| JINGLE BELL BALL | Set of 6 |  | SPOT MARKER SET | 1 |  |
| SOFT PLAYGROUND BALL | Set of 6 |  | INFLATOR + INFLATING NEEDLES | 1 each |  |
| MULTI-BUCKETS | 1 Dozen |  | SOFT FLEX MARKERS (50) | 1 Set |  |
| 30 INCH. HOOP BAG & 30" NO KINK HOOPS | 1 bag and 1 dozen hoops |  | SOUND STEPS (6/SET) | 1 Set |  |
| GIANT EQUIPMENT BAG | 1 |  | FLYWEIGHT BALL | 6 |  |

In partnership with **Rawlings** we are able to provide foam baseball equipment allowing each Challenger Baseball League to play indoors and/or outdoors.



The items in your Baseball Equipment Kit include:

| ITEM | QUANTITY | | ITEM | QUANTITY | |
|----------------------------|----------|--|----------------|----------|--|
| 5 PIECE THROWDOWN BASE SET | 2 |  | WIFFLE BALLS | 12 |  |
| FOLDING T'S | 2 |  | BLASTBALL BATS | 4 |  |
| BLASTBALLS | 20 |  | EQUIPMENT BAG | 1 |  |

APPENDIX B: UNSTOPPABLE KIDS NOMINATION FORM



Jays Care Foundation's #UnstoppableKids program is designed to celebrate children and youth coast to coast in Canada. They are the leaders of tomorrow because all #UnstoppableKids are tenacious, motivated, incredible teammates, and are driven to be the best they can be as they work towards their goals.

#UNSTOPPABLEKIDS HAVE BEEN CELEBRATED BY...

- ① Travelling to the Rogers Centre to be featured in Jays Care's #UnstoppableKids communication campaigns
- ① Attending exclusive Toronto Blue Jays events as special guests, including the annual Curve Ball Gala
- ① Throwing the Ceremonial First Pitch at a Blue Jays game
- ① Being featured on Jays Care's website and social media channels
- ① Receiving a Toronto Blue Jays prize pack and tickets to a game!



TO BE CONSIDERED, THE PARTICIPANT MUST:

- ① Be a current Jays Care program participant between the ages of 6-24
- ① Be involved in their program for a minimum of 1 year
- ① Have demonstrated the following core values as a program participant:
 - ① Leadership
 - ① Dedication
 - ① Aspirations
 - ① Teamwork





#UnstoppableKids Nomination Form

Nominee (Child/Youth) Information

Full Name: _____ Age: _____

City/Town: _____ Province/Territory: _____

Jays Care Program: _____

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Relationship to the Nominee: _____

Organization: _____

Position with Jays Care Program (If applicable): _____

Please list two (2) other individuals that can support this nomination:

Full Name: _____ Full Name: _____

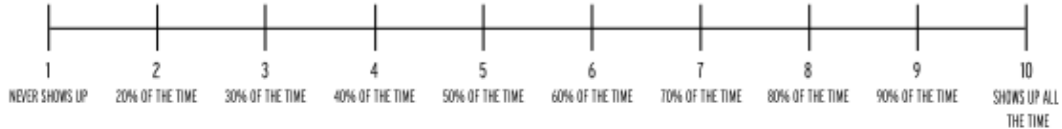
Relationship to Nominee: _____ Relationship to Nominee: _____

Phone Number: _____ Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____ E-mail: _____

Please answer the following questions about your #UnstoppableKids nominee with as much detail as possible:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how is your nominees attendance and punctuality in their program?



2. How does the nominee show their leadership qualities in their program? _____

3. How does the nominee demonstrate their motivation to participate in programming? _____

4. How does the nominee demonstrate their ability to motivate and inspire others? _____

5. How does the nominee show their positive attitude and help encourage a safe and inclusive environment? _____

6. Give an example of when the nominee showed their courage? (For example, stepped out of their comfort zone or tried something new).

APPENDIX C: CHALLENGER BASEBALL SESSION BUILDER

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

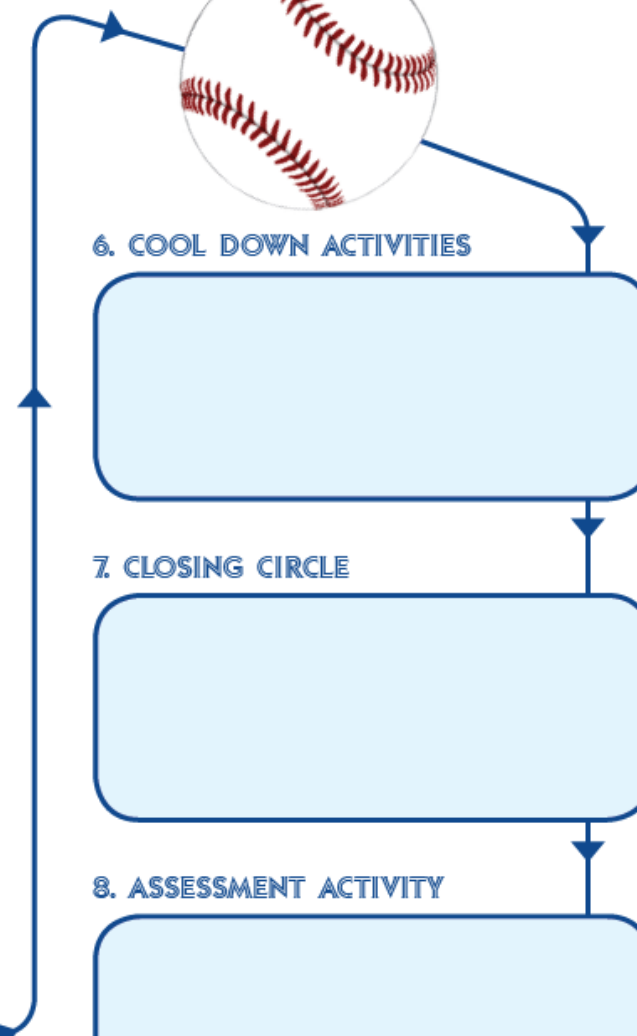
5. LETS PLAY BALL!



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
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

LET'S 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. LET'S 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