

# SPECIAL OLYMPICS QUALITY SPORT CHECKLIST

Quality Sport and physical activity are achieved when the right people do the right things at the right times, resulting in positive experiences for everyone involved in Special Olympics. This Special Olympics Quality Sport Checklist\* defines the elements that lead to quality sport experiences in any sport program. This customized checklist can be used as a tool by chapter and club leaders to identify areas in their sport programs which they may wish to improve. It is recommended that users of the checklist visit their Provincial/Territorial [Chapter websites](#) or resources to confirm Chapter specifics.

1. Complete the Quality Sport Checklist separately with at least one other person from your organization/club/program.
2. Compare your interpretations and reflections.
3. Identify an area that would be:
  - the easiest to address, and
  - the most impactful to address.
4. Go to the [Quality Sport web page](#) for ideas and resources.

<b>GOOD PEOPLE</b> , who are caring and knowledgeable, include:	
<b>Coaches and Volunteers Who:</b>	
Are Trained and Qualified	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coaches are trained in appropriate SOC and sport technical NCCP training, along with completion (including evaluation) of the Making Ethical Decisions module (MED) [ <a href="http://coach.ca/nccp-make-ethical-decisions">coach.ca/nccp-make-ethical-decisions</a> ]. Check minimum standards and requirement for your P/T Chapter through Coaching Association of Canada.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coaches are provided with, and partake in, ongoing learning opportunities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOC eLearning modules on the Locker [<a href="http://thelocker.coach.ca/onlinelearning#SPE">thelocker.coach.ca/onlinelearning#SPE</a>]</li> <li>• Coaching Athletes with Autism</li> <li>• Coaching Athletes with Down syndrome</li> <li>• Diversity and Inclusion in Action</li> <li>• CAC Coaching Athletes with a Disability Module [<a href="http://coach.ca/nccp-coaching-athletes-disability">coach.ca/nccp-coaching-athletes-disability</a>]</li> <li>• Aboriginal Coaching Modules [<a href="http://aboriginalsportcircle.ca">aboriginalsportcircle.ca</a>]</li> <li>• Gender Equity [<a href="http://WomenandSport.ca">WomenandSport.ca</a>]</li> <li>• Physical Literacy Instructor Program [<a href="http://sportforlife.ca">sportforlife.ca</a>]</li> <li>• HIGH FIVE® [<a href="http://highfive.org">highfive.org</a>].</li> <li>• Other regional or provincial/territorial workshops</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support mentorship and build capacity for future coaches and volunteers.

Prioritize Safety and Meet Coaching/Training Standards for Special Olympics Canada (check minimum standards and requirements for your P/T Chapter) Including:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Current Criminal Reference Check with vulnerable sector is on file with P/T Chapter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Code of conduct is read and signed by all volunteers and staff.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The completion of Safe Sport (CAC) or Respect in Sport eLearning modules.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementation of Safe Sport policies which are focused on creating sporting environments free of harassment, abuse and discrimination.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The “Rule of Two” is implemented to ensure open and observable interactions and there is support of the Responsible Coaching Movement. [ <a href="http://coach.ca/responsible-coaching-movement">coach.ca/responsible-coaching-movement</a> ]
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adherence to the mission, vision and values of Special Olympics Canada. [ <a href="http://www.specialolympics.ca/learn/about-special-olympics-canada/our-mission">www.specialolympics.ca/learn/about-special-olympics-canada/our-mission</a> ]
Take an Athlete-Centered approach (Athlete needs are prioritized when planning and delivering programs and competitions)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the organization’s stated principles and integrate values-based sport in training and competition.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use language appropriate to the athlete’s ability and comprehension, have the capacity to communicate equitably and clearly, and involve participants in discussion and feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand and consider the athlete’s developmental stage and abilities when implementing programs ([ <a href="http://sportforlife.ca/ltd">sportforlife.ca/ltd</a> ]) and Special Olympics athlete section (page 30-) of the <i>SOC Introduction to Competition Sport Resource</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand developing physical literacy and how to apply it in programs across <b>all ages</b> ( <i>Developing Physical Literacy – Building a New Normal for All Canadians</i> [ <a href="http://sportforlife.ca/dpl">sportforlife.ca/dpl</a> ]).
<b>Parents, Caregivers and Supports, Who:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are respectful [ <a href="http://respectinsport.com/parent-program">respectinsport.com/parent-program</a> ].
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive and seek out information to improve their knowledge on potential benefits [ <a href="http://www.specialolympics.ca/learn/special-olympics-programs/benefits-our-programs">www.specialolympics.ca/learn/special-olympics-programs/benefits-our-programs</a> ] of sport and physical activity for their SO athlete and how to support them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support the consistent participation and meaningful involvement of athletes in programming and competition.
<b>Organizational Administration (Chapters and Communities), that:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Align with the Special Olympics mission, vision and values [ <a href="http://www.specialolympics.ca/learn/about-special-olympics-canada/our-mission">www.specialolympics.ca/learn/about-special-olympics-canada/our-mission</a> ].
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are accountable for decisions, policies, risk management, and operational practices as well as utilizing the latest in active and safe tools.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regularly assess, continually improve, and modernize governance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek opportunities to engage with programs and organizations in the community, province/territory and nation-wide to advance Quality Sport and increase opportunities for participants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use sport for social change and community development [ <a href="http://www.specialolympics.org/our-work?locale=en">www.specialolympics.org/our-work?locale=en</a> ].

## GOOD PLACES, that create good feelings, are:

Inclusive and Welcoming	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Everyone feels safe and that they belong regardless of ability and background (Canadian Disability Participation Project: [ <a href="http://cdpp.ca">cdpp.ca</a> ], <i>A Blueprint for Building Quality Participation in Sport for Children and Youth with Intellectual Disabilities</i> : [ <a href="http://t.co/V6HN7dPCIS">t.co/V6HN7dPCIS</a> ]).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Access is affordable and barrier free.
Challenging, Fun and Fair	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities and equipment are modified for the ability, size, and LTAD stream of the participants (when necessary).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs and environments, rules and policies are designed to balance positive development, fun, and safety.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program runs on a regular basis – once a week for 8 weeks at a minimum.
Safe	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Equipment is in good condition.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities are safe and inclusive; the space is welcoming, suitable, clean, well-lit, and well-maintained. Personnel are trained in first aid.
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is adherence to Safe Sport principles; the facility has policies and information readily available addressing bullying, harassment, emotional, physical and sexual misconduct, concussions, emergency action plan and up to date medical information for each athlete.
<input type="checkbox"/>	There are appropriate environments that engage participants effectively for the LTAD stream ( <i>Discovery, Active for Life, Sport Excellence</i> ).

## GOOD PROGRAMS, that are developmentally appropriate, consider:

Appropriate Ratios	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ratios are in place for athlete safety and supervision. SOC recommends a ratio of coach to athletes 1:4 (summer) and 1:3 (winter and young athletes).
Athlete-Centered Planning and Delivery	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ability, age, size, and maturity are all considered when grouping Special Olympics athletes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Athletes are actively engaged in the game or activity and fully included by teammates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All holistic aspects of participation are considered, including learning/cognitive, social/emotional, and physical/motor domains ( <i>SOC Competition Introduction Sport Reference Guide</i> ).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Athlete motivation is considered when organizing training and practices and identifying competitions (e.g. skill development, fun activities, involving peers and friends).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs include appropriate reinforcements (e.g. music, videos, verbal praise, encouragement, positive extrinsic reinforcement).
Progressions and Appropriate Challenge	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Athletes are learning and building on their existing skills.

<input type="checkbox"/>	There are options to make an activity more or less challenging based on the athlete's skills and capabilities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Based on interest and ability and context, participants get to play different positions and/or try different events and sports [ <a href="http://physicalliteracy.ca">physicalliteracy.ca</a> ].
<input type="checkbox"/>	Skill development and technique are taught through correction, skill analysis and feedback.
Holistic Planning	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs and practices are well-prepared and are delivered to meet the needs of the athletes and in alignment with the LTAD stream ( <i>Discovery, Active for Life, Excellence</i> ).
<input type="checkbox"/>	The program is aligned with Special Olympics LTAD 2.0, along with appropriate consideration of the National Sport Organization's Long Term Development Framework [ <a href="http://sportforlife.ca/sport-frameworks">sportforlife.ca/sport-frameworks</a> ].
<input type="checkbox"/>	The club connects participants to developmentally appropriate programs and opportunities, which may include different contexts, types of play, generic clubs, competition, or activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs incorporate coach and volunteer mentors to build capacity and succession planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Programs reinforce healthy behaviours through information, training and connecting to service providers (i.e. Healthy Athletes [ <a href="http://www.specialolympics.ca/learn/special-olympics-programs/healthy-athletes">www.specialolympics.ca/learn/special-olympics-programs/healthy-athletes</a> ], Fitness and Health programs, etc.).
Meaningful Participation and Competition	
<input type="checkbox"/>	In order to optimize development, where appropriate, the participants play small-sided games with fewer players, compete in shorter distances, or play for modified lengths of time. These strategies allow for maximum engagement and time actively involved in a practice or a game.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules are modified in practice/training based on the ability and context of the participants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Various competition models are considered to best suit athlete's development, competence and ensure meaningful participation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where appropriate based on the athlete stream, teams, groups, lines, or categories are balanced so that participants of similar ability compete against each other, giving everyone a chance to be challenged and succeed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All participants get to play and practice equally.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Competition is timed appropriately for learning and is affordable and accessible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Qualified and trained officials are recruited to oversee competitions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A Teaching Games for understanding approach is applied wherever possible [ <a href="http://www.playsport.net/about-playsport/teaching-games-understanding-tgfu-approach">www.playsport.net/about-playsport/teaching-games-understanding-tgfu-approach</a> ].

\*Extracted from Sport for Life's Long-Term Athlete Development 2.0: Supporting Quality Sport Experiences