

STAGE 8: “IT’S IN MY BLOOD” (ACTIVE FOR LIFE)

The SIXTH stage in South Africa’s LTPD program is, “IT’S IN MY BLOOD” (ACTIVE FOR LIFE). There is no specific age bracket for this particular stage; it includes all ages. Providing opportunities for athletes to remain active in skating for life not only helps promote general health and wellness, but acts as a base from which to draw volunteers and officials.

Participants can enter this stage at essentially any age. If children have been introduced to activity and sport through the Active Start, Fundamentals and Learn to Train programs, they will have developed the necessary motor and movement skills to be confident to remain Active for Life. They may consider continuing in the sport on the recreational or non-national level, or they may become involved in the sport as an official or coach.

PHILOSOPHY: The ACTIVE FOR LIFE stage is entirely focused on providing opportunity for lifelong participation in skating. Social, mental and physical developments are enhanced through involvement. Participants should understand the concept of physical literacy and experience gains in health, wellness and functionality.

General Objectives

- To welcome participation at any level.
- To promote a long-term, physically active and healthy lifestyle through the sport of figure skating.
- To create a seamless system that allows a member at any stage of development to be integrated into the club programming.



The Sensitive Period

In this stage the windows of trainability, or the 5 Ss, are always trainable and individually specified with reference to physiological testing, health issues and constant monitoring.



Guiding Principles

In order to allow athletes to develop and acquire the skills outlined, the ACTIVE FOR LIFE stage must:

- Provide a fun, safe, supportive and cooperative environment from which all participants can learn, progress and improve their skating
- Continue to train the 5 Ss (stamina, strength, speed, suppleness and skills)
- Provide sound information to promote safe skill development.
- Promote the concept of personal achievement and success. Participation is a significant achievement and must be recognized. The acquisition of a skill, test or placement in a competition should be rewarded.

MISSION OF THE COACH

- ACTIVE FOR LIFE -

The mission of the coach is to facilitate life-long participation in the sport for the PLEASURE and WELLNESS derived. Coaches must be knowledgeable on adult development and be aware of the individual needs of skaters as well as program requirements at the grassroots levels through to more competitive adult members. Coaches in the “It’s in my Blood” stage, must have the ability to recognize the physical and cognitive needs of the general public entering out programs.

In addition, coaches must have the tools to recognize deficiencies and develop a plan of action to enhance the physical and cognitive development of the participant, thus making the learning process easier and more productive.



ALL AGES

SPORT SPECIFIC SKILLS:

Skill development and achievement covers basic skills to complex skills. Development will be athlete and coach driven and assessed. Progression must be based on individual needs, understanding, safety and abilities.

MOTOR SKILLS	Tailor made programs to service the needs of the participants (eg Adults) Refer to Learn to Skate and Learn to Train stages)
TECHNICAL	•Tailor made programs to service the needs of the participants (eg Adults) Refer to Learn to Skate and Learn to Train stages)
ARTISTRY	•Tailor made programs to service the needs of the participants (eg Adults) Refer to Learn to Skate and Learn to Train stages)



ALL AGES

General Skills

General skills (i.e physiological, psychological and social) are developed through involvement in the sport, and determines the overall development of the individual.

PHYSIOLOGICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of healthy nutritional strategies. This might include considerations for caloric intake, portion size, low alcohol, salt, fat intake, heart healthy choices, lower cholesterol levels, regulate blood sugars etc • Continued development (or introduction) of the 5Ss The nature and extent of the training of these fundamentals will depend on the participants needs and abilities, however risk/safety management are of utmost importance for all participants. • Suppleness may be the most important area for the Active for Life group and should be trained daily.
PSYCHOLOGICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-confidence, positive outlook and self-esteem. • Consistently demonstrate the ability to set realistic goals with a true sense of a larger picture. • Invest in the emotional education and stability of peers, teammates and others. • Master the ability to focus, refocus and execute the cognitive elements to achieve set goals and tasks. • Focus management strategies: concentration, focus, refocus, managing distractions, positive self-talk, replacing thoughts. • Anxiety management strategies: breathing, relaxation, visualisation • Mental preparation: within a practice and at competition • Knowledge and functional use of the Ideal Performance State
SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage group as well as individual peer dynamics in a variety of sport and social situations. • Participation is paramount: encourage volunteer activities to give back to the sport • Be an active, supportive and positive role model for peers and younger athletes



ALL AGES

On Ice Training

Private lessons should be at the discretion of the participant and can be combined into group instruction. Learn to Skate athletes should be in a group scenario as much as possible but one which is suited to their level and goals.

"IT'S IN MY BLOOD" (ACTIVE FOR LIFE)

	Session length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 to 60 minutes on-ice
	Days / week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 - 6 days / week• 1 to 10 hours/week depending on level/goals
	Weeks / year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 to 40 weeks/year



Off Ice Training

Participants considered in the ACTIVE FOR LIFE stage should be encouraged to participate in off-ice training 52 weeks per year. This will give them a fitness plan for life which not only keeps them healthy and fit, but will enhance their sport activities. Generally, three to five hours per week of various activities which enhance stamina, strength, speed and suppleness is adequate. The specific types of activities will vary upon socio-cultural context, participant interest, instructor availability etc. Some examples of potential exercises include resistance training, yoga, tai chi, core conditioning, walking, running, swimming, dance and movement classes etc.

Proper warm is and cool down techniques should be established. Enforced and practiced. This should involve heart rate elevation, muscle stretching, heart rate recovery etc for all on-ice and off-ice activities.

Competition

Given the multiple levels included in the ACTIVE FOR LIFE stage, there will be different criteria for which reflects the stages of development of the participant. For athletes at the LEARN TO SKATE and TRAIN TO SKATE stage, the focus should be on presentation of skills. As skaters advance. Choreographed programs can be introduced to individuals appropriate to their level of competition.

