

Growth and Development

What is development and why is it important to understand in sport?

Development is a process that occurs throughout a lifespan. It is the process of change in functioning that occurs as a consequence of both maturation and experience. It is important to understand in relation to sport because children will develop at different rates, which will impact on their sporting ability, as well as their ability to understand coach instructions and interact with teammates among others.

How will my child physically develop?

Physical development occurs in a dynamic and non-linear fashion, whereby children and adolescents will grow quickly, slowly, nor not noticing much change. Differences in physical development due to maturation can often explain why certain children may appear more (or less) dominant within a sporting environment.

How will my child cognitively develop?

Cognitive development refers to changes in learning, thinking, and remembering. It is the development of mental activities such as acquiring knowledge and problem solving and it changes substantially throughout childhood and adolescence.

How will my child develop psycho-socially?

Psychosocial development refers to a child's developing ability to interact in a social world. Psycho-social development occurs through a number of stages throughout our life, with children's main relationships shifting from parents/caregivers and family members to neighbours, peers, and friends.

How can I support my child's development in and through sport?

Understand that your child is not a mini-adult, rather an individual who is cognitively, physically, and socially developing. Children cannot do everything adults can do so ensuring sport opportunities are developmentally appropriate is critical.