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To: Ontario Soccer Association Membership
From: Alex Chiet – OSA Chief Technical Officer
Date: Wednesday 21st September 2011
Re: Long Term Player Development - Statement

This past weekend, the Board of Directors of the Ontario Soccer Association unanimously endorsed the OSA Technical Advisory Council plan for the phased-in implementation of Long-Term Player Development (LTPD).

This was a “key step” in our efforts to introduce this important initiative across the province. It means, in simple terms, that the Presidents of every District in Ontario have given their personal stamp of approval to LTPD.

That said, I also know that it will be more important than ever to continue to provide you with as much information as possible so that you, in turn, can explain LTPD and respond to the expected concerns and questions that will inevitably arise in the weeks and months to come.

As many of you know, there are already some misconceptions “out there” about what LTPD is. We need to be clear in responding thoughtfully to any misinformation that we come across and also the concerns or questions that people may have.

While I’m sure Long-Term Player Development is generally understood in broad terms, let me go over some fundamental concepts about LTPD:

- LTPD is not just a fad—here today and gone tomorrow. It is an approach to player development that is already successfully in place in some of the best soccer-playing countries around the world.
- The science and research behind LTPD is clear. The background research on the benefits of LTPD is exhaustive.
- For the recreational player, at the early ages, (what we call Active Start, FUNdamentals and Learn to Train) we will emphasize physical literacy and building basic athleticism in young athletes while developing programs that most importantly make the sport fun—and keep kids playing soccer.
- Over time we will be re-shaping our League structures so they make more sense geographically and in terms of competition and player development.
- We will de-emphasize, at the earlier ages, scores, standings and things like promotion and relegation that **a)** are counter-productive to best-practices in coaching, and **b)** hinder player creativity and individual skills development.
- For the competitive and “elite” player, we will provide an environment that focuses on skill development, understanding the game and decision-making—as is done in the top soccer countries.



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- We will better train and develop these talented young players, and will also identify more of them at the local and regional level so more good players receive the best coaching available and have the opportunity to progress to play for our provincial and national teams.

We have been planning the rollout of LTPD and how we can phase-in certain elements to ensure we will be in a position to implement the approach on a broader scale in 2013 and beyond. With that in mind, I want to remind you of the upcoming Learning Facilitator workshops on November 5-6, 2011. This development workshop is essential as the OSA Learning Facilitators will be the people “coaching the coaches” as we enhance the coaching curriculum as part of our focus on player development.

Also, the new Coaching courses will start in January, as we begin to roll out the emphasis on skills development. These courses will deal specifically with the first four stages of LTPD:

- Active Start (U4 – U6 female and male players)
- Fundamentals (U6 – U8 female, U6 – U9 male players)
- Learning to train (U8 – U11 female, U9 – U12 male players)
- Active for Life (11 + females, 12 + male players)

Importantly, we will be hosting five separate Club Head coaching workshops across Ontario, starting in November. (We will be contacting districts shortly with dates and locations.)

Because of these important initiatives, our annual Coaches Conference will now be held, as we announced earlier, a bit later than usual—on February 26, 2012.

I recognize that communication, as I mentioned above, will be pivotal in the days to come and throughout the next several months. You hopefully received earlier e-mail updates from me, and if not, please let me know. (I realize that sometimes people may not receive the information as intended. Please also visit the OSA web site for updates or contact the OSA office.) As leaders in this project, we are all responsible for educating parents and all key stakeholders by delivering accurate information and important messages to build awareness of what LTPD is—and isn't.

We will continue our consultations at the District and Club levels throughout 2012 via workshops and related communication efforts, to outline and further refine our intended direction and plans in 2013 and beyond.



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I appreciate your support, and will continue to lean on you to not only help with the transition to LTPD, but to continue your efforts to make the soccer experience the absolute best it can be for all of our players, their parents, coaches and referees for years to come.

Kind Regards

Alex Chiet
OSA Chief Technical Officer