



# Baseball Canada Long-Term Participant Development



## Stage 4: Train to Train (12-16)

This stage aligns with the adolescent growth spurt and is a critical period for building athletic foundations. Players typically compete at club “Rep/Select” levels, provincial leagues, and early national championships (13U, 15U, 16U Girls). Skill refinement accelerates, and players often begin to favour a primary position while still benefiting from multi-position and multi-sport participation.



Rapid physical growth can temporarily affect coordination and performance. Monitoring growth and ensuring proper recovery are essential. This stage emphasizes developing whole-body speed, aerobic fitness, and strength, including the introduction of free weights under qualified supervision with strict attention to technique.

Training frequency increases (often 6–9 sessions per week), combining baseball practices, conditioning, and participation in other sports. Multi-sport involvement remains valuable for overall athleticism and injury prevention.

Equally important are personal development outcomes. Programs should foster fun, friendships, confidence, and balance between sport, school, and social life. Athletes begin formal competitions with rankings and structured training plans (periodization). Mental skills, ethical decision-making, respect for opponents, and commitment to clean sport are emphasized.

### How Can Coach support?

- Monitor growth and encourage balanced training.
- Ensure the environment is fun, friendly, and supportive.
- Help cultivate lifelong skills like teamwork, managing stress, healthy habits (encourage nutrition, rest), and balancing sport with school/personal life.
- Ethics matter—teach respect for opponents, fair play, sportsmanship, and drug-free values.
- Mental Preparation Matters - Support your players in building confidence, coping with competition pressure, and enjoying the game.