



## QUALITY STANDARDS FOR KIDS TENNIS



# PROGRAM BRIEF

## INTRODUCTION

*Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* is a joint initiative between Tennis Canada, the Provincial Tennis Associations (TC/PTA) and supported by the Tennis Professionals Associations (TPA). The goal is to raise the quality and consistency of children's tennis programs in an effort to provide safe environments & positive experiences that promote life-long participation in tennis.

### Why Quality Matters

Research has shown that a child's early experiences in sport can have a long-lasting impact on physical activity levels and continued sport participation as an adult. These early experiences are heavily influenced by a child's need for i) positive interactions with peers and coaches, ii) the belief that they can develop skill and iii) a safe environment where they feel protected.

**"A child's early experience in sport can have a long-lasting impact on physical activity levels and sport participation as an adult."**

Meeting these needs through high quality, relevant programming is critical to providing the positive experiences that motivate children to continue playing tennis.

When kids keep playing tennis, everyone benefits. Children stay active and learn a game that can be enjoyed for life, Deliverers see improved retention rates and our collective goal to grow the game is achieved.

## WHAT ARE THE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR KIDS TENNIS

In recognizing the importance of a child's early experience in tennis, TC/PTA and the TPA have developed a research-based framework to provide Deliverers of children's tennis programs with resources to achieve quality programming.

These resources help Deliverers review, evaluate and improve their programs while strengthening credibility with parents and participants by clearly communicating program expectations. The framework applies to all levels of tennis programming, from recreational to elite, for children aged 6-12.



The framework serves to:

1. identify **Key Characteristics** of successful children's tennis programming
2. assist Deliverers in **Communicating their Commitment** to quality
3. provide **Self-Assessment** tools to measure success and strive for continuous improvement
4. provide **Training & Education** to Deliverers in the practices that lead to safe and positive environments that produce quality programs

*Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* is not an accreditation. Rather, Deliverers will declare their commitment to deliver quality programming and use the available resources for continuous improvement and success.

## THE FRAMEWORK

### 1. IDENTIFYING THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITY PROGRAMS

There are many factors that influence a child's experiences in tennis but certain key characteristics are consistently observed in quality programs.

These characteristics are based on the latest research in child health & development, the High Five national curriculum, the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) and best practices of the most highly regarded tennis and sport programs in Canada.



#### The Six Key Characteristics of Quality kids programs are:

1. [Caring Instructor](#)
2. [Making Friends](#)
3. [Active Participation](#)
4. [Appropriate Challenge](#)
5. [Opportunity for Skill Improvement](#)
6. [Fun](#)

For detailed information on the specific behaviours and actions that lead to the Six Key Characteristics, please see the [Self-Assessment Checklist](#).

### 2. COMMUNICATING A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Communicating your intention to deliver a quality program is important for several reasons:

- Gain recognition as a quality program in your community
- Improve communication with parents and participants with clear program expectations
- Educate parents and participants on the characteristics of quality programs so that everyone's goals are aligned

Several communication and informational resources are available to make conveying your commitment to *Quality Standards for Kids* easier. These resources include:



### Communication Tools

- *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* poster
- Communication Kit to access print and graphics materials (ie. Logos, watermarks, web banners)

### Information Tools

- Dedicated URL for quality standards resources on PTA and TPA websites which can be shared throughout your own materials



## **3. PROVIDING SELF ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

Engaging in self-assessment is an important practice to review, evaluate and improve program offerings. The Self-Assessment Checklist builds on the Six Key Characteristics by identifying specific behaviours and actions that will lead to delivering a quality program.

The [Self-Assessment Checklist](#) can be utilized by all Deliverers including:

- Certified Coaches (i.e. Instructors, Coaches, Club Pros)
- Supervisors (i.e. Head Pros, Camp Leaders, Community Recreation Programmers)
- Organizations (i.e. Clubs, Parks & Rec, Boys & Girls Clubs)

The Self-Assessment Checklist is a useful tool for tennis programs to measure success, identify strengths and weaknesses and strive for continuous improvement.

## **4. PROVIDING TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

Training and education materials have been developed to help program Deliverers create optimal tennis environments that meet children's needs. These materials are available through the following:

- Tennis Canada Certification Program
- Professional Development Workshops
- Professional Development Online Education
- Reference materials on the PTA and TPA websites that outline the Quality Standards initiative along with information about Safeguarding Tennis.

# USING THE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR KIDS TENNIS FRAMEWORK TO BECOME A QUALITY PROGRAM

## 1. MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT



Use the 6 Key Characteristics and Communication tools to make your commitment to quality programming for kids' tennis by:

- ✓ Integrating the Six Key Characteristics into program delivery
- ✓ Communicating the program's commitment to *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* by:
  - displaying the *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* poster in a visible location at your facility
  - providing a link to the PTA or TPA quality standards informational pages on your facility's website
  - including information about the quality standards in all program communications (i.e. brochures, flyers, websites etc)
  - Ensure all coaches and volunteers have conducted background checks prior to involvement

## 2. CONTINUE YOUR COMMITMENT

Commit to continuous improvement by pursuing the following:

- ✓ hire TPA certified coaches
- ✓ maintain up-to-date background checks for all coaches and volunteers
- ✓ engage in on-going periodic evaluation of your programs using the Self-Assessment Check List
- ✓ consider the *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* professional development training

The link between early experiences in sport and continued participation is so strong that TC/PTA and the TPA encourage all Deliverers of tennis programs to consider the *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis*. When a quality program is delivered, kids experience fun and success and they are inspired to stay involved in tennis. *Let quality lead the way to grow the game!*