



# PGA

## PGA SPORTS ACADEMY – PARENT’S GUIDE

### PURPOSE /MISSION:

The PGA Sports Academy program is a collaborative framework based on research and best practices from PGA Professionals, PGA Education, allied associations and the long term player development (LTPD) standards for junior golf adopted by the PGA World Alliance. The PGA Sports Academy’s main focus is on developing core golfers that will have pathways to continue to play golf socially or competitively based on each individual’s desire. It is imperative that every parent/participant understands the process of LTPD in the PGA Sports Academy program so that they have a clear understanding of what each PGA Professional is trying to accomplish with each participant so that they can reach their potential and enjoy the sport of golf for a lifetime.

### LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT (LTPD):

At the heart of the PGA Sports Academy is Long Term Player Development (LTPD). The goal of Long Term Player Development in the PGA Sports Academy is to develop each individual’s physical and golf skills in a steady progression based on age and ability. We know that through scientific research there are “windows of opportunity” where accelerated skill development should occur. We also know that if these windows are missed, it will be very difficult for individuals to obtain specific high-level skills as they mature because the simple skills are not in place.

The time between the ages of 9 to 16 is critical to laying down the foundation for a solid skill base as each youth progresses in the sport of golf. A solid golf skill base is not established by limiting each individual to only hitting and practicing golf shots every day. Fundamental movements and skills should be introduced through fun and games at an early age. Fundamental sports skills should follow and include basic universal sports skills such as running, jumping and throwing. Without, the basic movement skills a child will have difficulty learning and excelling in most sports including golf.

Developmental age is a very important factor in Long Term Player Development. Developmental age refers to the degree of physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional maturity. Physical developmental age can be determined by skeletal maturity or bone age after which mental, cognitive and emotional maturity is incorporated. LTPD requires the identification of early, average, and late maturers in order to help design appropriate training and programs for each individual based on their needs. The beginning of a growth spurt and the peak of a growth spurt are very significant considerations in training and developing youth in an appropriate manner. In this respect developmental age differs from chronological age, which refers to the number of years elapsed since birth.

Each youth that goes through the PGA Sports Academy will most likely participate in some activities that may appear to have no correlation to traditional golf instruction and other golf programs that you have seen in the past. Activities such as kicking a soccer ball and hitting a tee ball with a baseball bat may seem to have no relationship to golf but the reality is that they are establishing the fundamental physical and motor skills to perform a golf swing that requires timing, balance and coordination. If a child does not initially possess the physical and motor skills to make a golf swing, then those skills need to be developed in order to make learning golf easier and more enjoyable for them. Long Term Player Development provides the legs that will teach each participant in the PGA Sports Academy to learn how to walk before they can run.

## PGA SPORTS ACADEMY CURRICULUM OVERVIEW:

The PGA Sports Academy will help youth learn to play golf and have fun in the process. The PGA Sports Academy has three levels which are called Sport, Player and Champion. Each level has five areas that will help youth learn, develop and practice the skills to become a better golfer and enjoy the sport of golf:

### **Fitness and Nutrition**

### **Golf Skill Development**

### **Sportsmanship, Etiquette and Rules**

### **Golf and "Near Golf" Experiences**

### **Golf and Physical Assessments**

Each level will develop the necessary physical and golf skills to practice, improve and enjoy the sport of golf.

Youth will be tested before they begin each level to determine their level of experience which will help establish and measure goals for the participant and PGA Professional. At the end of each level each participant will be tested again and will receive a score based on their skill level. The PGA Sports Academy will give each participant a practice program to improve their skills and set the goal to become a Champion.

**It is important to note that the suggested ages for each level and assessment are suggested general guidelines to help determine the proper starting point for each participant in the PGA Sports Academy. Each individual's starting point in the PGA Sports Academy will vary based on factors such as golf skills, physical skills, motor skills and emotional maturity.**

## PGA SPORTS ACADEMY PHYSICAL AND GOLF SKILL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS

### Physical Development

- Fundamental movement skills
- Coordination development
- Motor skill development
- Athletic movement development

### Golf Skill Development

- Instruction emphasis
- Fundamentals (progression for each level)
- Rhythm and balance
- Short game and long game
- Understanding performance on the golf course

### Equipment Progression

- Non-Golf (baseball bat, hockey stick, etc.)
- Near Golf (SNAG, Almost Golf, Birdieball, etc.)
- Golf (junior fitted and adult fitted clubs) are very significant considerations in training and developing youth in an appropriate manner. In this respect developmental age differs from chronological age, which refers to the number of years elapsed since birth.

## SPORT LEVEL (AGE 5-9) Content, Practice and Assessments:

### Sportsmanship, Etiquette and Rules

- History of golf
- Golf terminology
- Introductory rules and scoring
- Safety
- Etiquette
- Pace of play

### Fitness and Nutrition

- Hydration
- Throwing
- Skipping
- Striking
- Kicking
- Balance

### Golf Skill Development

- Equipment
- Grip
- Posture
- Alignment
- Contact
- Balance
- Tempo
- Chipping
- Putting

### Golf and “Near Golf Experiences”

- Hybrid golf (combining golf and other sports)
- Putting

## PLAYER LEVEL (AGE 10-13) Content, Practice and Assessments:

### Sportsmanship, Etiquette and Rules

- Etiquette
- Rules
- Pace of play

### Fitness and Nutrition

- Balanced nutritional plan
- Consistent eating pattern
- Posture
- Jumping
- Movement and coordination

### Golf Skill Development

- Target and alignment
- Full swing
- Putting (reading greens and distance putting)
- Pitching
- Introductory Bunker Play

### Golf and “Near Golf Experiences”

- Introduce playing golf in a scramble format
- Putting course

## CHAMPION LEVEL (AGE 14-17) Content, Practice and Assessments:

### Sportsmanship, Etiquette and Rules

- Etiquette
- Rules
- Pace of play

### Fitness and Nutrition

- Eating before, during and after golf
- Hydration before, during and after golf
- Jumping
- Upper body strength
- Lower body strength

### Golf Skill Development

- Target and alignment
- Full swing
- Maximizing club performance
- Course management
- Chipping
- Putting (reading greens and distance putting)
- Pitching
- Bunker Play

### Golf and “Near Golf Experiences”

- Putting games
- Getting up and down with a wedge games
- Driver and iron accuracy games

## ASSESSMENTS

**ASSESSMENTS** are the fifth area of the PGA Sports Academy that assess the participant’s skills acquired for each level. Participants are tested at the end of each level for Sportsmanship, Etiquette and Rules, Fitness and Nutrition and Golf Skill Development. Each area may have multiple skill tests within each area (example: Golf Skill Development-chipping, putting and full swing). Each participant’s score for that skill will determine their level of achievement within the PGA Sports Academy.