



ONTARIO Volleyball

GRASSROOTS VOLLEYBALL

PARENT HANDBOOK

Helping you ensure a safe, healthy and meaningful first volleyball experience for your child ages 14 and under.

inside . . .

Welcome to Volleyball - Parents 2

Types of Grassroots

Volleyball in Ontario 3

- Smashball
- Spikes Volleyball (Indoor & Beach)
- Tripleball
- Hoops & Spikes
- Sitting Volleyball

Promoting Positive Attitudes

and Behaviours 8

- What my child may gain from volleyball
- How do I benefit?
- Understanding what kids want
- What should I do as a parent?
- 5 Things To Talk About With Your Kids

Let's Talk Safety 19

- Indoor Volleyball Safety (including sitting volleyball)
- Beach Volleyball Safety
- Concussions
- Important Safety Resources

Ontario Volleyball's

Athlete Development Pathway 27

- OVA's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Pathway
- What's next after grassroots volleyball?

Welcome to Volleyball PARENTS

As a parent, you go to great lengths to safeguard your children and give them the best opportunities. You enroll them in sports and activities so they can make friends and learn new skills. You buy them the best equipment, remind them to bring it to practice, and help them put it on correctly. You watch practices and games so you can be there for the joyous moments as well as the not so joyous ones.

While the thrill of the performance is exciting and winning results are alluring the best reward is seeing the improved confidence, friendships, and overall growth your child gains through meaningful sport experiences.

This handbook is designed to help you ensure a safe, healthy, and meaningful volleyball experience for your child that will support their competitive spirit, foster positive life skills and values, maximize their personal potential and most importantly
- KEEP IT FUN!



Types of Grassroots Volleyball

IN ONTARIO

Volleyball is one of the top 10 most played sports worldwide with an estimated reach of 900 million players (*via worldatlas.com*). It has evolved into two distinct types – indoor and beach. In fact, when you envision volleyball, you may think of the traditional 6v6 Indoor game or the 2v2 Beach game you see at the Olympics.

However, for children to become more proficient in the skills required for the sport, Ontario Volleyball has modified how children are introduced to gameplay through a variety of ways that:

1. Are developmentally appropriate with softer balls, lower nets, smaller courts and promotes more touches
2. Aligns with Volleyball Canada's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model - specifically encouraging **Physical Literacy**
3. Provide a variety of options for enjoyment and play, no matter your child's skill level or the environment they are playing in: be it on a court, in sand, on grass or in your back yard!
4. Encourages participation in multiple sports and activities to help develop your child's **FUNDamental Movement Skills**.

Smashball® Volleyball



Smashball® is modified volleyball that teaches the game starting with the most exciting skill - the SPIKE - enabling children to fall in-love with the game by being able to execute the 'coolest' skill in volleyball. Your child will progress through the five (5) levels of Smashball which introduces and rewards on court decision making skills and proper technique through a badge system.

Hoops, Spikes & Goals®



Hoops & Spikes and Goals® is a collaborative program between Ontario Basketball, the Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA) and Ontario Soccer with the generous support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The program is designed for children ages 6 to 10 and teaches fundamental movement and multi-sports skills. Hoops, Spikes & Goals is a turnkey program, providing hosts with the full curriculum, participant materials, and coach training required to deliver the programming.

The program provides participants with the competence and confidence to be active for life not only in basketball, volleyball and soccer, but in a variety of activities

Spikes® Volleyball (Indoor & Beach)



SPIKES® is more than just about learning the basics: forearm and overhead passing, hitting, serving, basic team play; and it's more than just building fundamental movement and motor skills. SPIKES® teaches youth communication, safety, and leadership skills, respect, and good sportsmanship and is split into SPIKES® FUNdamentals (ages 6-9), SPIKES® Learn to Train (ages 8-14) and SPIKES® On The Beach programs (ages 8-14).

Programs are tailored to the participants' age and skill levels: meaning different rules and adaptations to the game to make it more inclusive. It includes both indoor and beach volleyball skill development programs, delivered through instructional house leagues and camps.

Tripleball



Tripleball is introduced in the first stages of indoor youth competitions and is designed to provide more opportunities to volley, attack, block, play defense and transition than the adult version of volleyball. The outcome of the game is more dependent on a team's ability to build up a rally and play defense. The transitions encourages coaches to train these aspects of the game more often during practice.

The rules do not allow players to switch positions during the rally, allowing every athlete to experience the challenges of each position develop a wider range of abilities and a deeper understanding of the game. Tripleball is introduced at the 12U competitive level of our OVA Youth Competitions.

Sitting Volleyball



Sitting volleyball is the same as traditional 6v6 with a libero but the players are sitting on the court with a lower net.

The differences come in the strategies behind the game. Because the net is lower and the court smaller, the sitting game is a lot quicker than the traditional game and athletes must have quick reflexes and hand eye coordination. Because of the speed, athletes must also be able to control the ball in a variety of situations, one arm, two arms, overhead and they all must be able to perform all skills well.

Sitting volleyball is a sport that's growing across Canada both amongst able-bodied and physically disabled athletes alike and is offered both as a recreational and competitive program.

Parents & Players Volleyball (Learn to Play)



The Parents & Players - Learn to Play Program (P&P) aims at providing parents and kids (ages 4-14) with a unique and inspirational first engagement to the sport.

Participating locations will run indoor and beach volleyball grassroots programs over 6-weeks each (1hr/wk) where parents and their children spend quality time on the court together participating in physical literacy activities, volleyball skill development and learning how to relate sports skills to life lessons.

Parents must be fully dedicated to being actively involved in this program as both parent and child participate in the physical portion of the session and work side-by-side to more effectively learn the skills.

For more information about any of these programs, please visit:
www.ontariovolleyball.org





Promoting Positive ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

Aside from exercise, other reasons cited by parents for why they sign their kids up for volleyball is to teach them teamwork, responsibility, respect, leadership, winning and losing with dignity and social skills and resolve conflict.

The following pages will give you strategies to support your child, their coaches, referees and yourself in order to build and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours in volleyball.

At the OVA, we believe volleyball is a great tool for developing confident, courageous and caring people through our sport.



What My Child Will Gain From Volleyball

Physical Benefits

- Improve the ABC's - agility, balance and coordination - along with developing fitness, strength and flexibility
- Improve general health and weight management
- Establish healthy behaviours that they will carry throughout their lives - sport and non-sport related
- Develop FUNdamental Movement Skills - catching, throwing, striking, dribbling (with hands and feet) along with hand/eye coordination

Social Benefits

- Development of leadership, cooperation, communication and interpersonal skills
- Create long lasting friendships - spending time with friends makes children feel valued and increases their happiness
- Increases self confidence by taking charge on court
- Taking interest in accepting responsibility
- Learn how to accept defeat and win graciously
- Determine how to take risks - and develops social/group responsibility and accountability
- Promotes sportsmanship

Personal Benefits

- **Enjoyment factor - a biggy !!!**
- Improves self-esteem and confidence
- Learn how to make friends with diverse backgrounds and skill levels
- Improved ability to concentrate, facilitating better performance at school
- Learn self-discipline, motivation, cooperation, commitment and personal responsibility
- Learn organizational skills and how to share
- Learn how to deal with pressure and stress
- Encourage healthy behaviours (i.e. better eating habits, better sleeping habits, less likely to smoke or use drugs)

Photo Courtesy:
Pakmen Volleyball Club



How Do I Benefit?

The volleyball journey can be tremendously beneficial, not to mention the tangible rewards; medals, prizes and recognition for your child.

However, along with the passion and thrill, the glory of realizing success can come with inevitable challenges as a parent, such as, pressure, insecurity, uncertainty and even fear. This can be a very real aspect of the sport/volleyball experience and a very authentic part of the journey. How you as a parent navigate these challenges will help define the kind of volleyball experience your child will have.

Nevertheless, it's not just your kids that will benefit from playing volleyball:

- You get to be a bigger part of your children's lives by sharing more of their experiences
- Appreciate that your child is having fun, making friends, being active and healthy
- Healthy children mean a reduction in medical costs
- You know where your children are - they are being supervised and having fun
- Their sport participation may be a motivator for you to engage in a more active lifestyle that reduces stress and chronic non-communicable diseases (e.g. heart disease and diabetes)
- You may want to get involved and coach your child in their volleyball programs, which leads to professional development and lifelong learning



Photo Courtesy:
St. Thomas Express Volleyball Club



Understanding What Kids Want

This is what kids have told us they **WANT** from their **PARENTS**

- To support and encourage them
- To let them know they are proud of them
- To watch them play
- To praise them for their efforts
- To understand their sport and show an interest in being involved
- To have realistic expectations of their capabilities

What kids **DON'T WANT** from their **PARENTS**

- To yell at them during or after the game or on the car ride home
- Swearing or disturbing the game
- Abusing the referee, coach or other spectators
- Being pushy and/or critical
- Misplaced enthusiasm
- Using guilt on your child

What kids **WANT** from **VOLLEYBALL**

- To have FUN
- To learn, be challenged and improve
- To be with their friends

What Should I Do as a Parent?

Create a rewarding, safe and respectful environment by:

- ✓ Encouraging your child's participation - don't force it
- ✓ Praising their efforts
- ✓ Being proud of them
- ✓ Children love to have grown ups on the sidelines. If you can't be there, let them know why
- ✓ Talking to your child about what they want from volleyball
- ✓ Ensuring the first question you ask is NOT "did you win?" Instead ask "did you have fun?"
- ✓ Volunteering to help with a program, team or club as a referee, coach, manager etc
- ✓ Getting to know the coach and his/her coaching philosophy
- ✓ Offering children support in different ways
 - Practice with them if you can
 - Drive them to training when you can (and stay to watch)
 - Organize equipment with them
 - Make yourself available to watch the game or practice
- ✓ Not using guilt on your child to make them "perform better" i.e. do not use guilt as a 'motivator' for your child
- ✓ Encouraging your child to play volleyball at home or on vacations
- ✓ Not living your athletic dreams through your child
- ✓ Not losing perspective - not every child will be an Olympian

On the car ride home

- Point out a good play your child made and good behaviour they exhibited in the session. Avoid criticising or correcting mistakes
- Ask questions like: *Did you have fun?; Did you give it your best effort?; What did you learn from the game?; What was your best play and how did it make you feel?*
- **Remember it is more important to be a good person than to be a good athlete**

70%

of kids **QUIT SPORT**

by the age of 13 because they stop having fun!

The most common reason why -
PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR

(Source - Respect in Sport for Parents)



5 Things To Talk About With Your Kids

.....

1

Motivate them to Try New Things

- Talk to your kids about the **BENEFITS** of playing volleyball, as well as, other sports
- Help them see that playing a new sport can make them **STRONGER** and **BETTER**
- Discuss how the skills they learn through sports can help them reach their **GOALS** in the future
- Discuss with your child why they may be **AFRAID** to try a specific sport or activity

2

Encourage Persistence

- Remind them about the **COMMITMENT** they made to themselves and their team
- Discuss in advance what your child will do if they want to give up using the **WOOP** technique (Wish, Obstacle, Outcome, Plan)
- Discuss how **PERSISTENCE** leads to success
- Discuss examples of **FAMOUS** athletes who have struggled or experienced failure

3

Reframe Losing

- Emphasize personal **MASTERY** and **IMPROVEMENT**
- Teach your child to focus on the **POSITIVE** and celebrate improvement and progress
- Help them **REFLECT** on what they/their team could do better **NEXT** time
- Point out how famous athletes **RESPOND** to losses
- Help your child embrace the **FUN** of sports

4

Reframe Winning

- Emphasize their **EFFORT**, **FOCUS** and **DISCIPLINE**
- Help them understand the connection between winning and their **ACTIONS**
- If your child wins without effort, ensure that they always display good **SPORTSMANSHIP** to the losing team

5

Teach them to handle Constructive Criticism

- Teach your child to view criticism as a price of **ADVICE**
- Give your child the opportunity to **SELF ASSESS** by asking ***“Did that go how you expected it to go?”***

REMEMBER

- Do not give constructive criticism to your child in front of others
- Avoid giving constructive criticism while angry/upset
- Speak **THOUGHTFULLY** and **GENTLY**

Let's Talk SAFETY

Although injury patterns differ between indoor and beach volleyball, there are similar injuries commonly seen between the two sports.

The most common injuries are sprains and strains, mostly to the ankle. Other common injuries include repetitive stress injuries (RSIs) (also called overuse injuries) of the shoulders and knees, as well as finger injuries, broken bones, dislocations, and torn tendons.

Falling on the floor can leave your child with a bump or a bruise, or even a concussion. Colliding with a teammate, opponent, or net post or getting hit with the ball may also cause concussions. Diving in the sand could leave someone with a scratched cornea if sand gets in their eye.

Through simple safety measures the risk of injury can be greatly reduced. Your child will quickly learn to be aware and prevent injuries from happening. These will be reinforced by your child's coaches in every session.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with your child's program safety policies, such as, emergency action plans, concussion policies etc.

Photo Courtesy:
Milton Edge Volleyball Club



INDOOR VOLLEYBALL SAFETY

including sitting volleyball

Gearing Up

Other than a ball and a net, you don't need a lot of gear to play volleyball. Even so, there are a few things to consider when it comes to volleyball gear.

- **Knee Pads** - If your child is playing indoor volleyball, a pair of knee pads can protect their knees when they hit the floor to make a play. If they are new to the sport, they might dive or slide awkwardly, and they'll appreciate the protection. As their skills progress, you may learn how to play without banging their knees, but knee pads are still a good idea.
- **Other Pads and Braces** - Depending on their own preferences or past injuries, some volleyball players wear elbow or forearm pads, ankle or wrist braces, or thumb splints.
- **Shoes** - Volleyball shoes have gummy rubber soles for better traction on gym floors and for moving in multiple directions (*compared to running shoes which are designed for moving in one direction*). They also have extra padding to absorb shocks from all the running and jumping. Choose a pair that fits correctly, and keep them tied securely when they play.
- **Jewellery etc** - Volleyball rules require players to remove all metal hair fasteners, jewelry and other body adornments before practicing or playing.

Warming Up and Stretching

Grassroots volleyball coaches will ensure that your child warms up before they start practicing or playing. This doesn't mean just hitting a couple of spikes or serves. Coaches may ask children to play a game involving dynamic stretching and movement that uses many muscle groups. It's also a good idea to stretch after a game or practice.

While Playing

Discuss these tips before or after the volleyball session with your child to help prevent them from getting injured while playing. Their coaches should reinforce these daily during the program.

- **During play at the net**, try not to step across the center line into the opponent's side of the court. Many ankle sprains happen during play at the net, and a lot of them involve someone landing on an opponent's foot and twisting an ankle
- **Don't hang or pull on the net or net posts.** Your child could bring the net down on someone
- **Check to ensure** the posts don't have any sharp areas, the floor is not uneven or slippery, and protective padding is placed on walls and posts, and that all holes for posts are capped
- **Remind your child** to keep an eye out for your teammates, and "call" the ball when they are going to make a play to reduce the chances of colliding with another player
- **Use the proper technique taught by coaches.** Studies show that players who practice and use the right technique (when spiking or blocking) step on fewer feet and get fewer sprained ankles
- **If your child gets a cramp or feels any pain** while playing or practicing, let them know that they can ask to come out of the practice or game and don't start playing again until the pain goes away or is assessed by a medical professional for more serious injuries - especially concussions! Playing through pain might seem brave, but it can make an injury worse and possibly keep them on them sidelines for longer stretches of time
- **During warm-up's or games**, make sure your child doesn't chase the ball under the net while others are hitting the ball into the court. Kids should run around the outside of the court to retrieve balls



BEACH VOLLEYBALL SAFETY

Playing volleyball in the sand requires even less gear than the indoor game. However, there are still some very important items to consider.

- **Goggles and Sunglasses** - If your child wears glasses, consider getting prescription goggles for volleyball. If they play beach volleyball in the sun, wear shatterproof sunglasses to protect your eyes from the glare and from injury if the glasses break during game play
- **Inspect Sand Courts** - Make sure that there's no broken glass or anything else that could cut your child or others. If the sand is too hot, wear sand socks to avoid damaging the soles of your child's feet.
- **Equipment Storage** - Store Other Equipment and extra balls well off to the sides of the court so no one trips on them
- **Stay Hydrated** - Particularly on hot, sunny days, by drinking plenty of water before, during, and after practices and games. Consider electrolite replacing drinks like coconut water, Pediasure or Hydra-lyte
- **Eat Enough** - Beach volleyball burns significantly more calories than the indoor game due to the resistance of moving in the sand and playing against the elements. Real foods are ideal, but for kids playing non-stop, so-called "sports foods" such as high-sugar gummy bears and energy gels are most helpful. Nuts and other low-carb snacks are not digested fast enough to replace energy stores in the body
- **Don't Chew Gum** - or have anything in your mouth when playing in the sand. It increases the risk of swallowing sand
- **Always Carry a Towel** - a towel is the most useful thing you can carry to the beach. Carry more than one because you'll always find you need a clean one.
- **Bring Shelter** - to have a place to rest and stay out of the sun when not playing

BEACH VOLLEYBALL SAFETY

- **Jewellery etc** - if your child is wearing jewellery they can puncture or scrape their skin or their teammate's skin while playing. Jewellery can also easily be lost in the sand and if not found increases the risk of puncturing someone's under their foot while playing
- **Remind your child** - to keep an eye out for your teammates, and "call" the ball when they are going to make a play to reduce the chances of colliding with another player
- **Protect their Skin** - Use high-SPF sunscreen on any exposed skin, and reapply it every few hours. If the UV index is high cover your arms and legs with UV blocking clothing that is loose fitting, tightly woven and lightweight and put on a wide brimmed hat to reduce the risk of sunburn
- **Check the Weather** - Not only should you monitor heat alerts and UV index but also be aware of quick drops in temperature and air pressure that could leave your child feeling very cold or cause muscle/joint stiffness and headaches. At any sign of nearby lightning, play should be stopped or cancelled and you and your child should find appropriate shelter



CONCUSSIONS AND VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball has the lowest rate of concussions of all youth sports. Despite being a non-contact sport, concussions do occur.

A Concussion:

- Is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);
- May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
- Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (In fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness); and,
- Cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs.

Definition cited from Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Concussion Guideline.

At the OVA we are committed to the long term health of our athletes. We work closely with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport in Ontario to ensure that current and relevant health information is available to our members.

For detailed information on concussion prevention, identification, management and treatment, we invite you to visit the Ministry's Concussion Program webpage via:

www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/concussions/

We also invite you to check out the OVA Concussion Policy and Guidelines via our website.

IMPORTANT SAFETY RESOURCES

In addition to the information provided in this publication, the OVA provides resources and educational material that will be updated organically. For the safety of your child we strongly encourage you to become familiar and stay up-date with the list below:



RIS is an accessible, online resource in the prevention of bullying, abuse, harassment, and discrimination (BAHD). The program's mission is to empower participants to recognize signs of BAHD and eliminate it from the game.



The purpose of the OVA Code of Conduct is to ensure a safe and positive environment within OVA programs, activities, and events by making all individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behavior consistent with the values of the OVA.



The OVA values the safety, rights and well being of our athletes and their families. It is the responsibility of every OVA club, coach, volunteer, parent and staff member to participate in the effort to create a safe environment for all OVA participants

**ATHLETE
TIPS & TUTORIALS**

To assist you with improving the sport performance of your child, we also provide you more advanced information about nutrition, mental performance, as well as, strength and conditioning.

These resources can be found and continuously updated via:

www.ontariovolleyball.org/player-resources

Ontario Volleyball's ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

The Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) strategy created for volleyball is largely based on a LTAD Model developed by the Canadian Sport for Life expert team. Most practitioners agree that this model (or variations thereof) should underpin the development of sport in Canada and increasingly become the common language of sports development.

By applying this Canadian LTAD model to volleyball, development has been divided into a series of stages with each stage having unique development goals. Only by building a sport foundation in each phase can players optimally prepare to meet their volleyball goals.

Whether your child intends to stay in the sport for pure fun and enjoyment or if they seek to compete at the highest level - the diagram on page 26 provides a guided pathway for their journey in the sport of volleyball.

To find out more about LTAD, Volleyball Canada's and the OVA's athlete pathway and Canadian Sport for Life, please visit:

www.ontariovolleyball.org/athlete-development

Figure 1:

Ontario Volleyball and Volleyball Canada's Athlete Development Pathway

Active Start

Males & Females 0-6

FUNDamentals

Males 6-9

Females 6-8

Learning to Train

Males 9-12

Females 8-11

Training to Train

Males 12-16

Females 11-15

Learning to Compete

Indoor Volleyball

- Males 17-19

- Females 16-18

Beach Volleyball

- Males 16-20

- Females 15-19

Training to Compete

Indoor Volleyball

- Males 20-21

- Females 19-21

Beach Volleyball

- Males 18-24

- Females 17-23

Learning to Win

Indoor Volleyball

- Males 22-25

- Females 21-24

Beach Volleyball

- Males 22-28

- Females 21-27

Training to Win

Indoor Volleyball

- Males 26-34

- Females 25-32

Beach Volleyball

- Males 26-34

- Females 25-32

Active for Life

Enter at any age



Grassroots Programs

Indoor & Beach Club Programs

OVA Team Ontario Indoor & Beach Programs

College University & International Professional Volleyball

Volleyball Canada National Team Programs

OVA Beach Leagues

What's Next AFTER GRASSROOTS?

If your child has completed the grassroots levels and would like to continue in the sport of volleyball or beach volleyball, you can enroll them in a house league or competitive volleyball program near you.

- OVA member clubs across the province have house leagues, skill development programs and competitive (rep) programs that fit your child's desired level of play - each with Volleyball Canada certified
- coaches that will help improve your child's level of play and enjoyment of the sport.

You can use the ***OVA's Club Finder*** to find an easily accessible program near you via our website.

Your child can also discover how to get involved in volleyball as an indoor and/or beach athlete, as well as the various development opportunities and resources available to you. for your and your child under the ***"Parents & Players"*** tab of our website.







ONTARIO Volleyball

**111-60 Scarsdale Rd.
Toronto, ON M3B 2R7**

**Telephone: 416.426.7316
Toll Free: 1.800.372.1568**

Email: info@ontariovolleyball.org

WWW.ONTARIOVOLLEYBALL.ORG