

WHAT is LTAD?

The LTAD model is at the core of the LISPA framework (Figure 1):

- It is a participant-centred approach to the delivery of sport.
- It seeks to maximise everyone's participation and potential in sport and lay the foundation to achieve Physical Literacy.
- It does so by providing a seven-stage progression from childhood to adulthood (See Figure 1) which includes the key features of the sporting experience that should be present at each stage to ensure personal potential is maximised.

In a nutshell, LTAD consists of 4 main phases broken down into 7 stages.

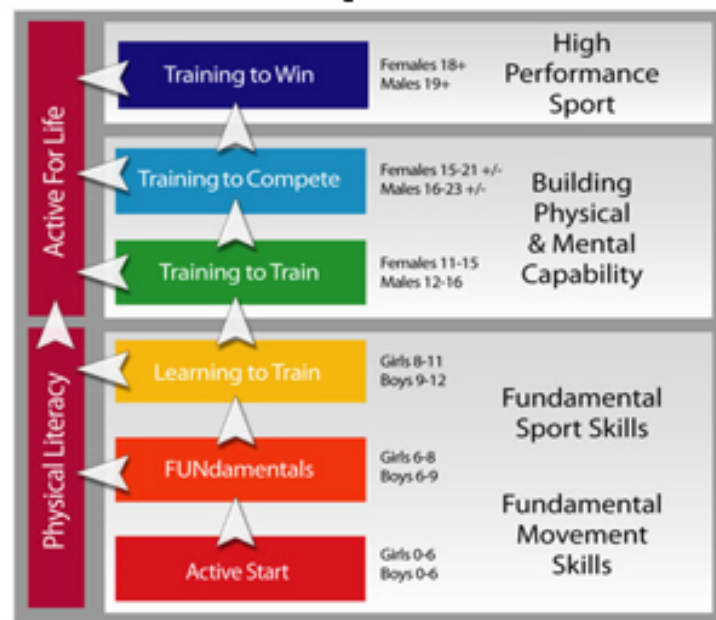
- **Phase 1 - Active Start, FUNdamentals and Learning to Play & Practice** - Focuses on children up to 12 and the development of a broad range of FUNdamental Movement Skills (FMS) and Fundamental Sport/Game Skills (FSS/FGS). These generic skills become the foundation for sport specific skills and tactics in due course.
- **Phase 2 - Training to Train and Training to Compete** - Young athletes concentrate on building the necessary physical and mental capability to be able to progressively increase performance and sustain the demands of a more intense sporting experience.
- **Phase 3 - Training to Win** - Revolves around the maximisation of performance in a competitive environment.
- **Phase 4 - Active For Life** - A parallel track which can be accessed at any time by those who wish to continue taking part in sport and physical activity for the rest of their lives.

“Physical literacy can be described as the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.”

(Whitehead, 2014)



Figure 1



WHY LTAD?

By focusing on the specific needs of the participants at their different stages of development, LTAD helps coaches and teachers:

- Maximise enjoyment and individual potential and development by focusing on the building blocks of each stage and building a solid base of generic movement and sport skills
- Match the content of the sessions and programmes to the individual needs of the participants (focus on developmental and training age, not chronological age)
- Avoid the dangers of imposing adult programs on young children (i.e. burnout, injury, dropout.)
- Maintain a healthy balance of competition and training
- See competition as a means to an end (participant personal improvement), and not an end in itself (just winning)
- Ensure that participants have a wide array of skills which allows them to try different sports and indeed swap sport if they wish

HOW to implement LTAD within LISPA?

Active Start focuses on providing infants, toddlers and preschoolers with opportunities to participate in **daily physical activity** that promotes **movement and communication** and develops **confidence and self-esteem**. **Unstructured physical activity and active play** is recommended.

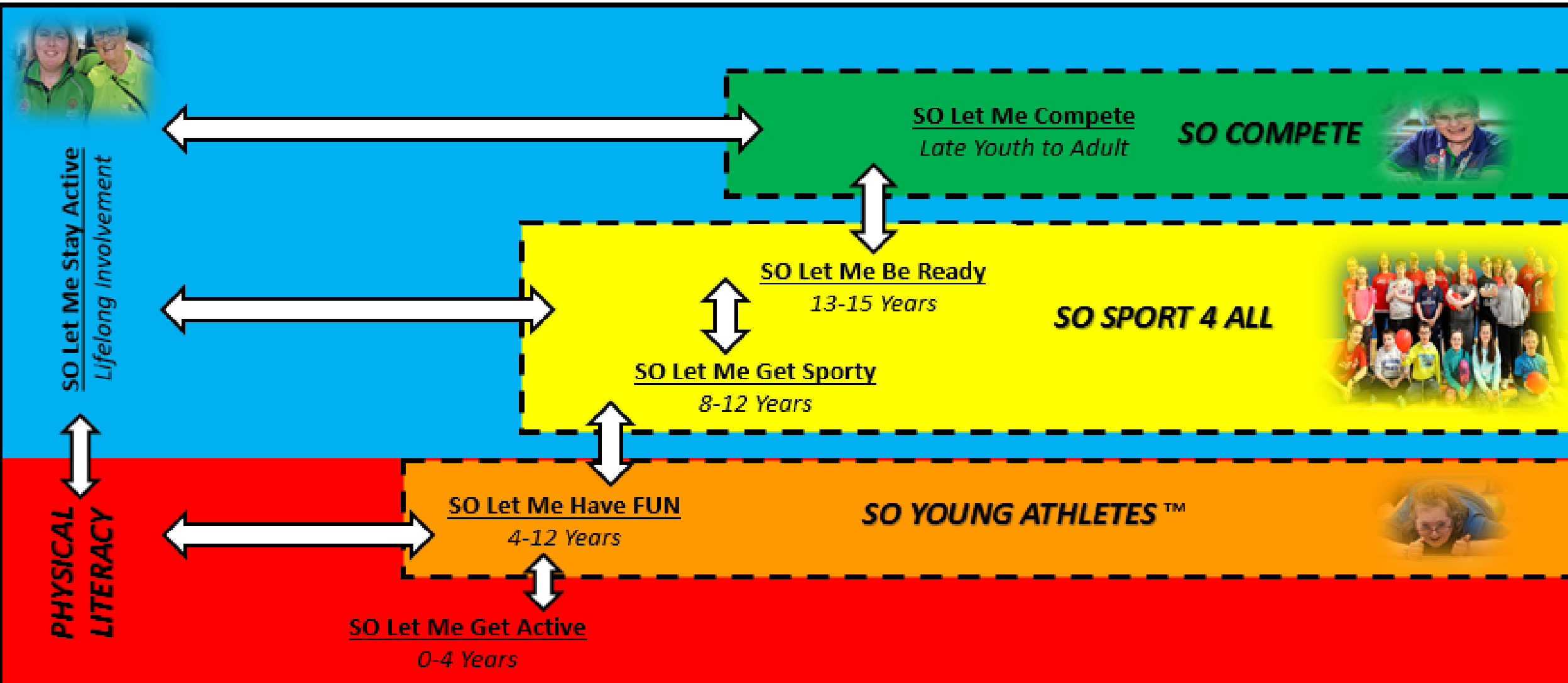
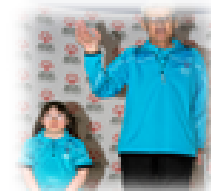
The **FUNDamental** phase provides a positive, enjoyable and fun approach to foster a love of sport and physical activity. Fundamental Movement Skills are **learned through play** and basic, appropriate and enjoyable games. **Participation in a wide range of physical activities** is encouraged so that a child can experience the social and psychological benefits of being physically active.

The **Learning to Play and Practice** phase recognises that not all individuals want to pursue organised sports. Therefore those who do not will be equipped during this phase with many of the **skills necessary to allow them to remain active throughout their lives**. This phase still focuses on the **social and fun element of sport** and further develops fundamental and some sports specific skills.

SO Active for Life Pathway



Special Olympics
Ireland



NOTE – SO Let Me Get Active starts and takes place outside SO and continues throughout the pathway – SOI Programmes start at Young Athletes™

SO – Special Olympics