



**LACROSSE CANADA
CROSSE CANADA**

LTAD COMMITTEE REPORT

Age Category Recommendations

Box Lacrosse

April 2021

Submitted by:

Duane Bratt, Lacrosse Canada Chair LTAD Committee
Bryan Baxter, Lacrosse Canada Director of Domestic Development
James Buhlman, Lacrosse Canada Program Coordinator
Sylvie Beliveau, Sport for Life Consultant



**Lacrosse Canada
Long-Term Development Committee**

**Recommendation around Box Lacrosse Age Categories
April 2021**

Appendices

- A. Supporting Figures and Charts
- B. LTD Committee Membership
- C. Terms of Reference
- D. LTD Activation Plan
- E. Resources
- F. Committee and Consultation Meetings
- G. What We Heard

Background

Coach Sarcasm

“Although USA Baseball spent nearly 8 years developing this information (LTAD for Baseball), I clearly know more about the game and the development of the youth athlete. I’ll disregard the Long - Term Development Model and the Zone of Proximal Development because I am the League President, and I was the clean - up hitter in High School. Of course, I know better.”

The above sarcastic comment from a coach shows the challenges that exist in implementing Long-Term Development (LTD). Even though lacrosse approved its initial LTD over a decade ago, its implementation has been inconsistent in general and across the country. Obviously more work needs to be done in communicating and implementing LTD. This second attempt at LTD can take these prior efforts, not just in lacrosse, but across all sports, into account in its re-design.

Long-Term Development (LTD) in Sport and Physical Activity is a framework for the development of every child, youth, and adult to enable optimal participation in sport and physical activity. It takes growth, maturation and development, trainability, and sport system alignment into account.

The art of coaching and program design also plays a significant role in our framework - and for coaches who must make multiple day-to-day coaching decisions the framework extrapolates from currently available scientific literature (when no specific research has been undertaken or is available). In doing so we recognize the risk of being wrong—but also recognize that to be world leading we must “push the envelope.” Evidence-based conclusions can only be drawn from



analyzing published research that takes years to accumulate. Athlete development cannot be both fully evidence based and cutting edge.¹

A key LTD concept is the difference between chronological age and developmental age. Chronological age is “the number of years and days elapsed since birth.” Children of the same chronological age can differ by several years in their level of growth and maturation. In contrast, developmental age is the age in years and months of the average youth with the same development as the individual in question. If a 15-year-old has the same development as the average 13-year-old, their developmental age is 13. Developmental age can be based on different body systems, including skeletal maturity or sexual maturity and different systems may give slightly different developmental ages, and therefore should be treated as an approximation unless measured by skilled evaluators with specialized equipment. In sport, developmental age should be used as an indicator of the factors above.

The issue of chronological vs developmental age is not unique to sport. In education, Vygotsky’s *Zone of Proximal Development* is the typical model used to locate a student’s “sweet spot” for learning. In layman’s terms, some children are reading at a 5th grade level in 1st grade and others may be reading right on grade level. The educator is to place the children in these zones where they find the most chance at development – the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). They are challenged, but not overwhelmed. They are also not bored with material they find easy. This is really what most youth sports organizations dance around but do not understand. Each child should be placed in his own ZPD. This might also be what we refer to in our coach education as “The Challenge Zone.”

The framework recognizes that the cognitive, emotional, moral, and psycho-social development of children are important components of maturation, and significantly contribute to progress in sport from introductory play all the way up to and including world-leading performances. Ultimately, both sporting excellence and an active, healthy population are outcomes of a sport and physical activity development process that is top quality, well-designed, inclusive of all, and properly implemented. Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity is a uniquely Canadian, world-leading design - NOW is the time to fully implement it.

Based on clearly defined developmental stages, LTD provides recommendations for ratios of training-to-competition hours, points of emphasis in skills training, formats for competition, and more. When adapted to a specific sport such as lacrosse, it provides coaches and administrators with clear guidelines for designing training and competition programs at every developmental stage to optimize long-term skills acquisition and performance.

Reflecting the principle of continuous learning, in 2019, Canadian Sport for Life released its third edition of Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity. The objective of this new

¹ Greater detail on this is found in the Sport for Life publication Athlete Development Matrix, which, because of the advantage that it provides to coaches, is available only to Canadian National Sport Organizations (NSOs). Additional in-depth technical information on many aspects of Long-Term Development is available in supporting publications available online from sportforlife.ca/resources.



and improved framework is to promote both sporting excellence at the highest international level and life-long engagement in health-enhancing physical activity.

For example, there is an enhanced section on quality sport. Not all sport and physical activity experiences are good. This resource supports leaders to improve the quality of sport and physical activity delivery. We want “good programs, delivered by good people, in good places.” Good programs are developmentally appropriate, based on the physical, cognitive, emotional, and moral stages of development of participants. Quality sport and physical activity ensures that safe sport is an essential element for all people involved. This means that well run programs are developmentally appropriate, safe, and inclusive, foster individual excellence, and optimum health, which leads to quality sport.

Importantly, LTD allows athletes the flexibility to move between competitive and recreational arenas of their sport at almost any time of life. Following early athlete development in the first stages of training (12U and below), athletes may choose to pursue the competitive stream or join a recreational stream for fun and wellness. In this way, LTD supports lifelong wellness for the greatest number of participants even while promoting medal-winning performances.

Ideally, players should be grouped based on their stage of development. However, for organizational purposes, team sports (including lacrosse) use chronological age as the principal way of sorting players. This does not mean that stages of development cannot be embedded into chronological age categories. Addressing these developmental differences will occur in coaching materials and coach education workshops. In fact, the original CLA LTD overview, stages, and competition review documents provided an athlete development pathway within the sport’s chronological age categories.

Key Definitions (Balyi and Way 2016)

Chronological age refers to the number of years and days elapsed since birth. Children of the same chronological age can differ by several years in their level of biological maturation.

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.

General training age refers to the number of years in training, sampling different sports.

Relative age refers to differences in age among children born in the same calendar year

Skeletal age refers to the maturity of the skeleton determined by the degree of ossification of the bone structure. It is a measure of age that takes into consideration how far given bones have progressed toward maturity, not in size, but with respect to shape and position to one another.

Sport-specific training age refers to the number of years since an athlete decided to specialize in one particular sport.



However, there has been discussion within the lacrosse community about whether its chronological age categories remain appropriate. Following the May 2020 CLA Semi-Annual General Meeting, the CLA's LTD Committee was re-constituted and tasked with examining the existing age categories for box lacrosse.

1. Should these age categories (which focus exclusively on chronological age not development age) be adjusted?
2. If so, how could/should they be adjusted?
3. Should the age categories be the same for male and female lacrosse?
4. If age categories are changed, how would the rest of the lacrosse system be impacted? For example, national championships and the coaching program would also need to be revised if the age categories were adjusted.

The Committee used the following timeline:

- Summer 2020 formation of committee that also included Canada Sport for Life and other external advisors.
- Fall 2020 a series of meetings with the LTD Committee.
- December 2020-January 2021 finalization of draft report
- February-March 2021 consultation with members of the Canadian lacrosse community.
- March-April 2021 revision of draft report based upon the consultations and finalize the recommendations.
- May 2021 present recommendations to the CLA box sector and Board of Directors at the CLA Semi-Annual General Meeting.



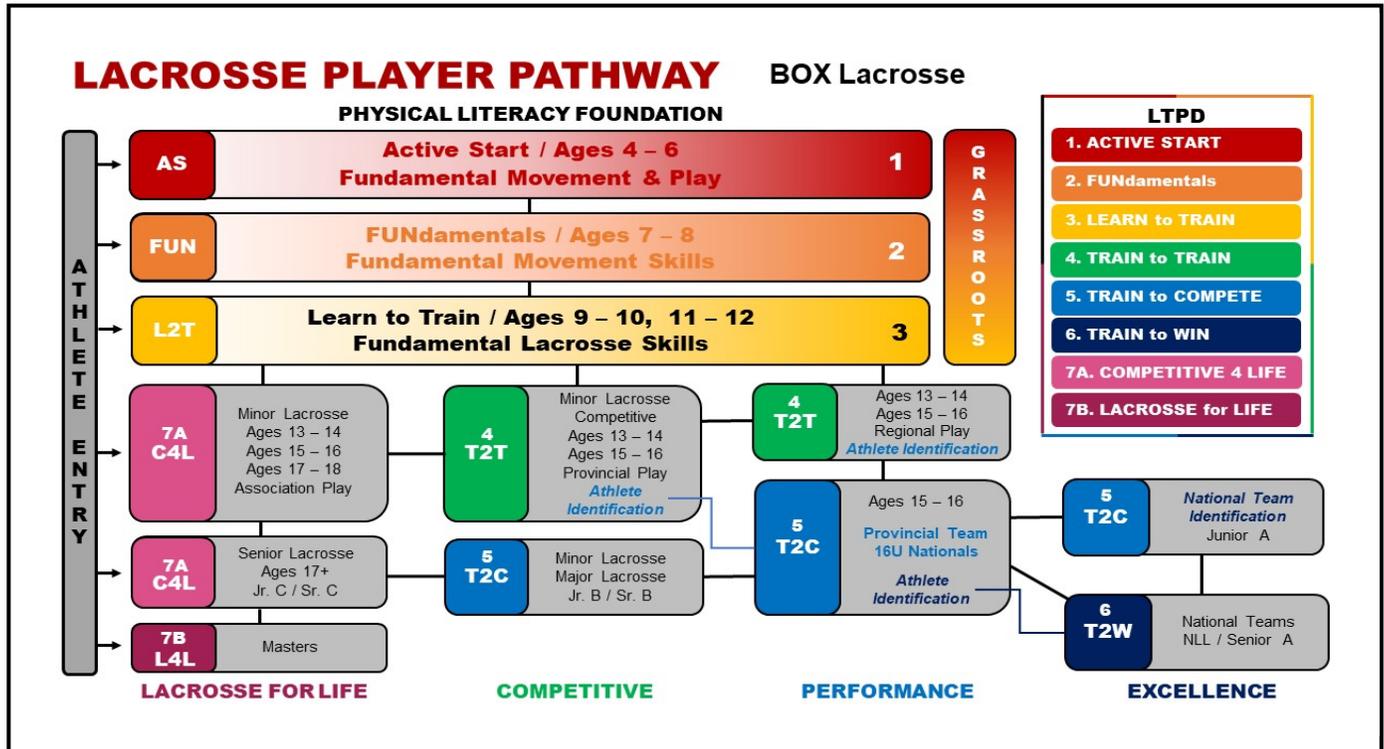
Major Changes from Draft Report to Final Report

The Committee's mandate was to examine all age categories, essentially 4-60+. However, an inordinate amount of time in the consultation process was spent on one age group: the 17-year-olds. This is not surprising given that the debate around adding 17-year-olds to the 16U category is what sparked the reforming of the LTAD Committee. In addition, 17-year-olds are a major transition year: 1) moving from minor lacrosse to major lacrosse; 2) moving from a two to a five-year age category; 3) a majority of players are coming at the end of their growth spurt; and 4) life changes (i.e., part-time jobs, relationships, specializing in other sports) that might impact their continuation in lacrosse. Even though the survey showed majority support for all of the draft recommendations, the Committee found the feedback around 17-year-olds to be convincing. As a result of this consultation process, and deeper conversations and research within the Committee, there have been revisions to the recommendations around 17-year-olds. In particular, the Committee still recommends moving back to 16U and maintaining junior from 17-21. However, it also recommends maintaining the intermediate category of 17-18, but as part of minor lacrosse. Other recommendations - ability to play down and the active for life stream - also support 17-year-olds.

The Committee also heard loud and clear the need for additional evidence to support its recommendations. This evidence was, of course, consulted through the writing stage of the draft report. But a decision was made not to include it in the draft report as it would make the document too long. In this final report, more evidence is included, but as an appendix so as not to disrupt the narrative flow of the recommendations. It does not include all evidence - this would take thousands of pages - but sufficient evidence has been compiled to support the Committee's recommendations. There are also gaps in some data due to the national and provincial lacrosse associations not always having collected information or distributed it in an accessible fashion. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that the evidence presented is compelling.



The lacrosse player (box) pathway was revised to identify the stages of development and age categories. The recommendations around the age categories for box lacrosse flow from this pathway.





Recommendations/Rationale/Implementation

	Recommendations	Rationale	Implementation
1	Keep two-year minor age categories (16U, 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U, 6U), but encourage member associations, zones, local governing bodies, and clubs with sufficient players to run single year age categories (i.e., 16U for 16-year-olds and 16U for 15-year-olds).	LTD emphasizes the concept of development age. Although growth and development are natural processes, the tempo of the maturation process can vary greatly: “A child with a chronological age of 12 years may possess a biological age between nine and fifteen years” (Borms, 1986, p. 5). The biological differences between a 9-year-old and a 15-year-old are huge, and yet despite these biological differences, athletes of the same chronological age are often trained the same way at every age and participate in age group competitions. However, sport systems, for organizational reasons, use chronological age to separate players. Unfortunately, chronological age can magnify the birth effect where January birthdays have a much greater advantage over those born in December. A two-year age category makes things even worse (i.e., a January born 12-year-old is almost three years older than a December born 11-year-old). This is why, if possible, local lacrosse associations should adopt single year age categories.	Local associations will have to determine if they have sufficient numbers to implement properly single age categories in their divisions. This will likely affect male and female divisions differently because all-female divisions typically have fewer players. For inter-provincial competitions (national championships, regional championships, and tournaments) the two-year age category would remain.
2	Maintain the existing CLA policy that junior is 17-21.	17-year-olds are typically at the end of their growth spurt period. Therefore, most 17-year-olds are developmentally ready for the increase in competition that occurs with junior lacrosse. They have the physical, mental, cognitive, emotional, technical, and tactical skills. Junior lacrosse has an elaborate tiering process -JrA, JrB Tier 1, JrB Tier 2, JrB Tier 3, JrC - that can accommodate a range of development stages of players. There will be players that leap quickly to JrA, others may take a few seasons of JrB or JrC, and others will never advance to that level (either because they lack the required lacrosse skills or by choice).	To be consistent with the rest of CLA operating policy, change the junior age category from “21 and under” to “17-21.”
3	Remove the 17U category and revert back to 16U.	A three-year age category is too wide (see recommendation #1). Especially for players that are going through their growth spurt. We believe that the	Revise the CLA’s Operating Policy to “16 and 15.”



		concerns that were raised to have 17-year-olds stay in minor lacrosse are addressed in the maintenance of an intermediate category (see recommendations #4) and maintain a Competitive for Life stream for junior (see recommendation #5).	
4	Maintain Intermediate category of 17-18.	There may be players who would benefit from another year or two of minor lacrosse. This could be due to developmental age, access to a junior team in their community, or fears about moving to a five-year age category. We do not support grouping 17-year-olds with 15- and 16-year-olds. However, grouping 17-year-olds with 18-year-olds makes sense. 17- and 18-year-olds can make a choice between playing junior (and major lacrosse rules, leagues, regulations, etc.) or playing intermediate (and minor lacrosse rules, leagues, regulations, etc.). Those that want to participate in the competitive stream will choose junior, and those that want active/competitive for life will choose intermediate.	To be consistent with the rest of CLA operating policy, change the intermediate age category from “18 and under” to “17-18.” Smaller communities need to recognize the potential danger of splitting cohorts, i.e., taking an existing junior team (17-21) and forming a separate intermediate team (17-18). This may result in insufficient number of players for both teams. Players should also have the ability of moving between intermediate and junior. For example, playing intermediate at 17, but moving to junior at 18. Or playing junior at 17 and moving to intermediate at 18.
5	Create/maintain two pathways for Junior aged players: Competition Stream and Active for Life Stream	The original Stages Documents explicitly discusses Active for Life at the Masters division (35+). But at the junior level we should make the split between the Competition and Active for Life streams. Competition stream is JrA, JrB Tier 1, and JrC. Active for Life already exists and goes by many different names: JrB Tier 2, Intermediate, Recreational lacrosse. However, these leagues should all be 17-21. It is up to member associations to determine the name and whether they should play major or minor rules.	Update and Revise the <i>Lacrosse for Life Stages Documents</i> in 2023.
6	Create/maintain two pathways for Senior aged players: Competition Stream and Active for Life Stream	The original Stages Documents explicitly discusses Active for Life at the Masters division (35+). But at the senior level we should make the split between the Competition and Active for Life	Update and Revise the <i>Lacrosse for Life Stages Documents</i> in 2023



		streams. Competition stream is SrA and SrB. Active for Life is SrC. Although these players are Active for Life, they should still play major rules.	
7	The Committee has considered the issue of extending the junior age category to include 22-year-olds. It has determined that there is little development argument that can justify making this extension.	From a development component, there is typically little difference between a 20-, 21-, 22-, or 23-year-olds. Therefore, other team sports use different age cuts for the junior category. Hockey limits it to 20-year-olds (but Major Junior A allows three 21-year-olds per team), but football limits it to 22-year-olds. Clearly, these are more arbitrary restrictions than tied directly into player development. Therefore, the Committee recommends that junior remain at 21-year-olds. It is the Committee's view that the 22-year-old proposal stemmed from two events: 1) the issue of 17-year-olds (which has been addressed in Recommendations #2-4); and 2) losing the 2020 season which prevented the 1999 birth year from playing their final lacrosse season.	
8	Using the concept of development age, players should have the opportunity of playing in a higher age category.	The existing lacrosse system, through the process of calling up, is good at moving players to older age categories. For example, a 12-year-old who has matured quicker than his peers, can have the opportunity of more appropriate competition at the 14U level.	Member associations will design regulations around registering in a higher age category or calling up.
9	Using the concept of development age, players should have the opportunity of playing in a lower age category.	The existing lacrosse system is not very good at moving players to younger age categories. Typically, there may only be a handful of players that are allowed to play "down" each season. In addition, there are usually restrictions (i.e., bans on provincials and/or tournaments). Notwithstanding their chronological age, late developing athletes should be permitted to play at their appropriate developmental level without restrictions. The only exception is that "overage" players should not be on an "A" team unless there is no team in their normal chronological age division in their geographical area.	Criteria for playing "down" should include PhV, birthdate, school year, lacrosse experience, assessment of mental, technical, and tactical development. In coaching materials, include how to measure PhV.
10	There should be a no distinction between male and female age categories.	Other than the growth spurt window in the development of girls, when growth starts earlier than most boys, where the focus on training may differ, where	

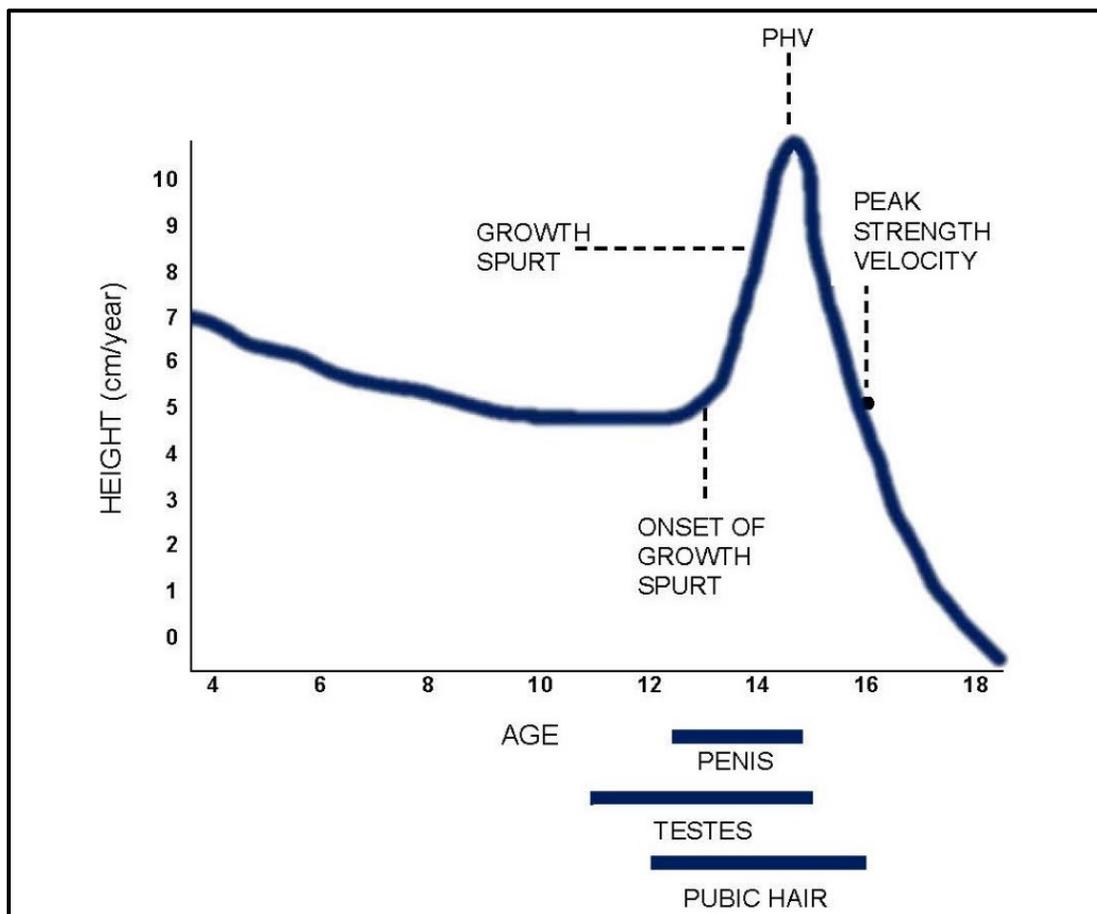


		quality skill acquisition may need to be top notch before the touch point of growth spurt, there are little evidence that the age, past growth spurt differ from the boys/men.	
11	Investigate the advantages and disadvantages of different types of male/female playing environments.	Three playing environments exist: separate male and female playing divisions; females playing on male teams; an all-female team playing in a male division. It is the availability of female players that govern the choice of playing environments.	Research into when/if/how to separate male and female players.



Appendix A Supporting Figures and Charts

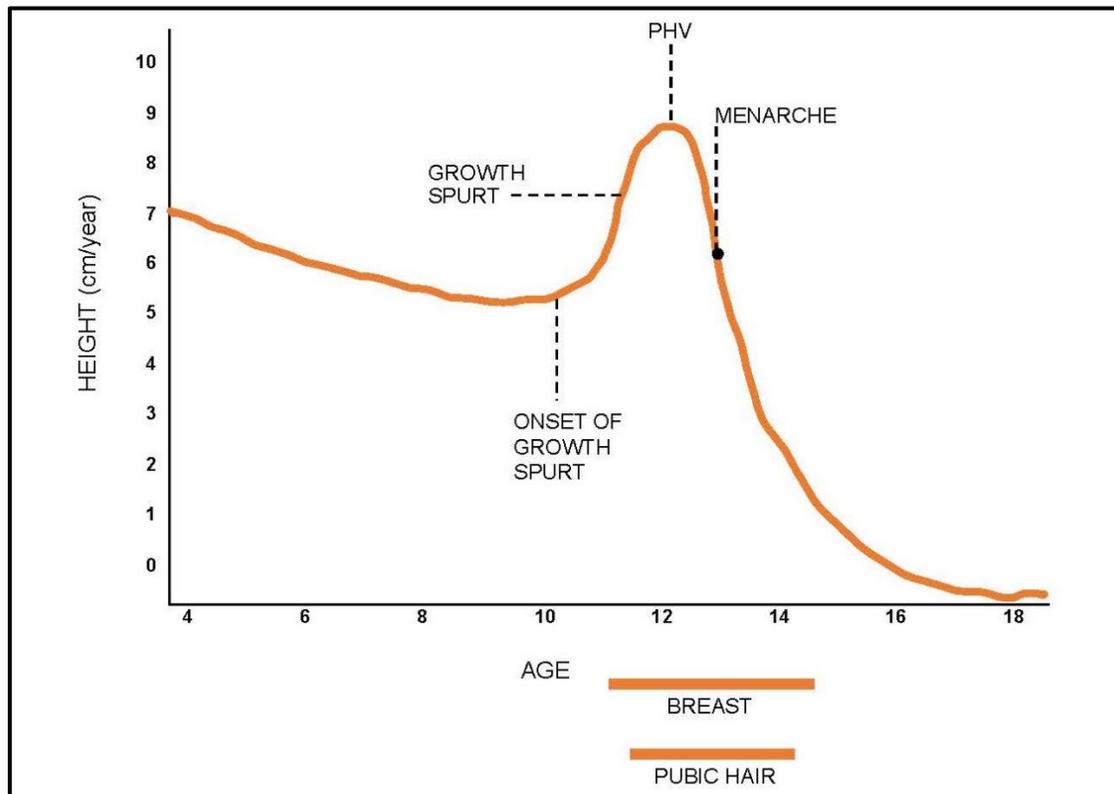
Figure 1
Maturity Events in Boys
(modified by Balyi & Way 2016 after Ross & Marfell-Jones 1991)



“PHV in boys is more intense than in girls and on average about two years later. Growth of the testes, pubic hair, and penis are related to the maturational process. Peak Strength Velocity (PSV) comes a year or so after PHV. Thus, there is pronounced late gain in strength characteristics of the male athlete. As with girls, the developmental sequence for male athletes may occur two or more years earlier or later than average. Early maturing boys may have as much as a four-year physiological advantage over their late-maturing peers. Eventually, the late maturer will catch up when they experience their growth spurt” (Ross & Marfell-Jones, 1991).



Figure 2
Maturity Events in Girls
(modified by Balyi & Way 2016 after Ross & Marfell-Jones 1991)



“PHV in girls occurs at about 12 years of age. Usually, the first physical sign of adolescence is breast budding, which occurs slightly after the onset of the growth spurt. Shortly thereafter, pubic hair begins to grow. Menarche, or the onset of menstruation, comes rather late in the growth spurt, occurring after PHV is achieved. The sequence of developmental events may normally occur two or even more years earlier or later than average” (Ross & Marfell-Jones, 1991).



Figure 3

Maturation in Girls and Boys
(Modified by Bayli & Way 2016 from Tanner 1973)

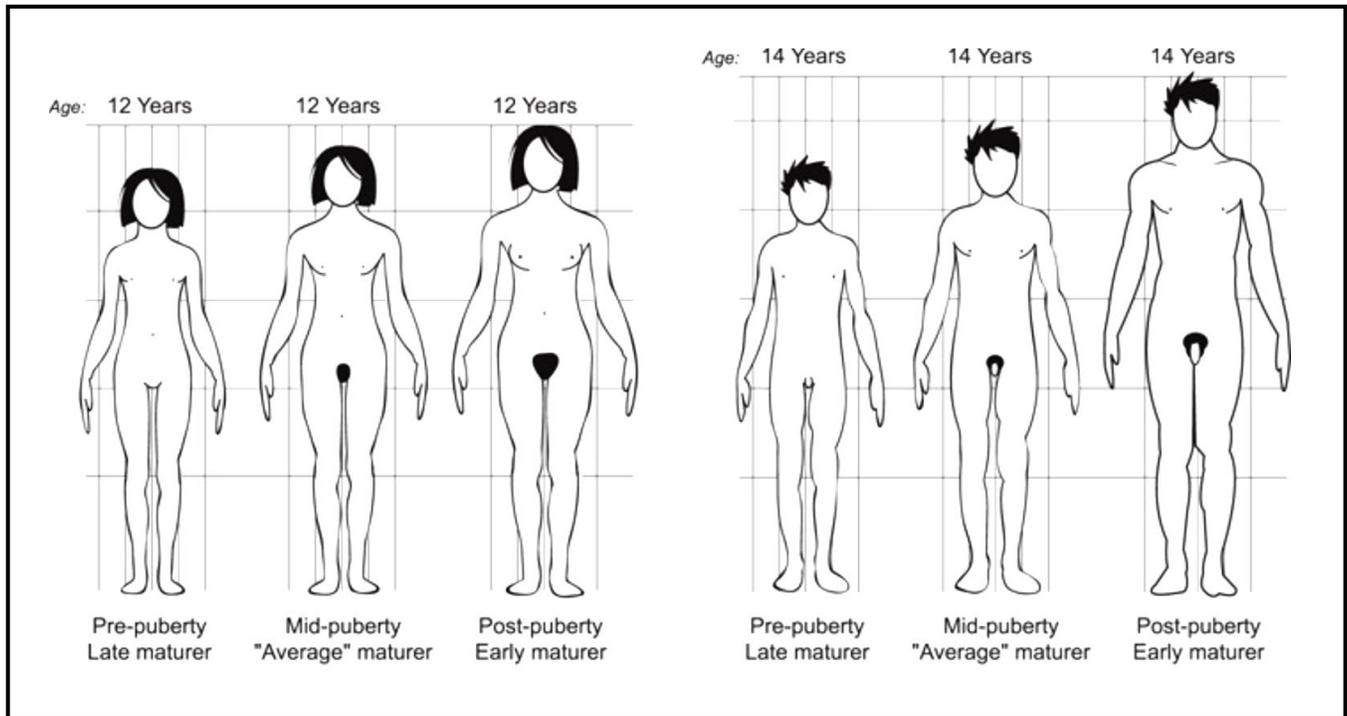




Figure 4

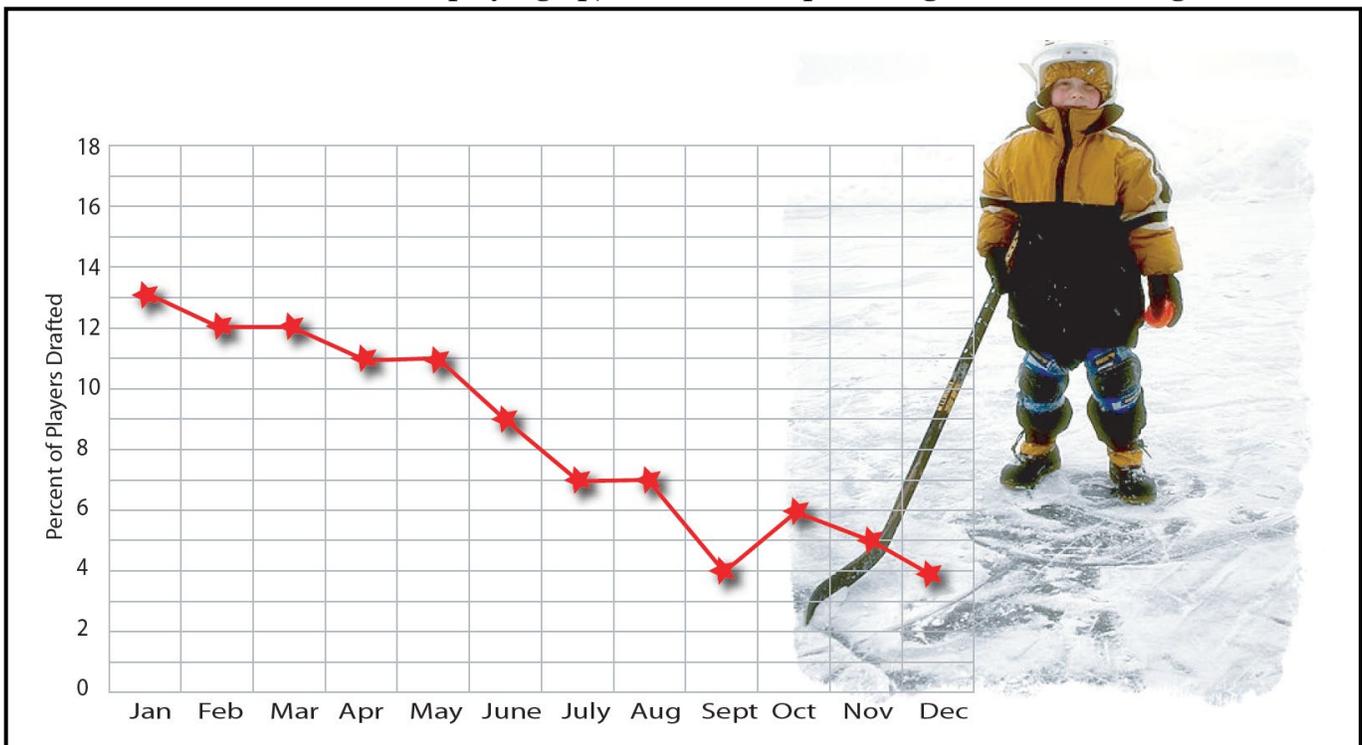
**Distribution of Birth months of Drafted Ontario Hockey League,
Western Hockey League, and Quebec Major League Players
(Barnsley, Thompson & Barnsley, 1985)**

There can be serious advantages or disadvantages when athletes compete all year in the same age group based on their birth date. This is because, depending on when they are born, they may always be the oldest or the youngest.

Children who are always the oldest in their age group tend to be larger, stronger, and more skilled than their younger teammates and, often, this causes coaches to believe they are overall better players. As a result, coaches often give them more attention and playing time; in the end, this tends to make them better players and provides them with more opportunities to advance to higher levels of play. These biased percentages have occurred for over two decades (see Figure 4 below).

For example, in 2007, more than 13% of hockey players who played in major junior hockey were born in January while only 4% were born in December. This is called the relative age effect. The relative age effect exists in many sports. Bayli and Way 2016 include charts from track and field, swimming, soccer, and tennis.

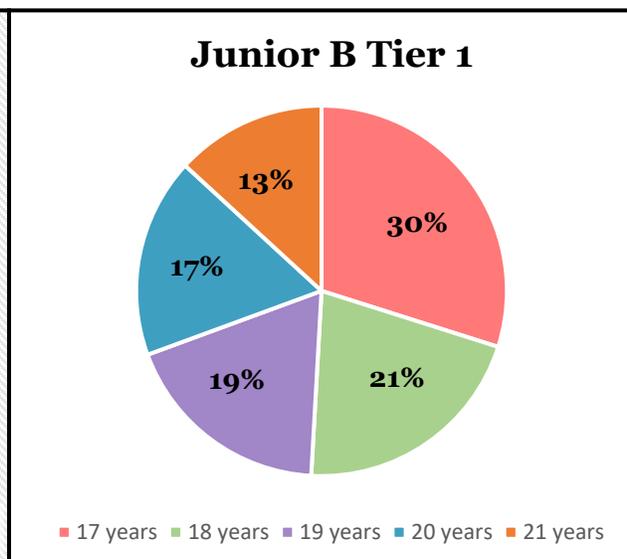
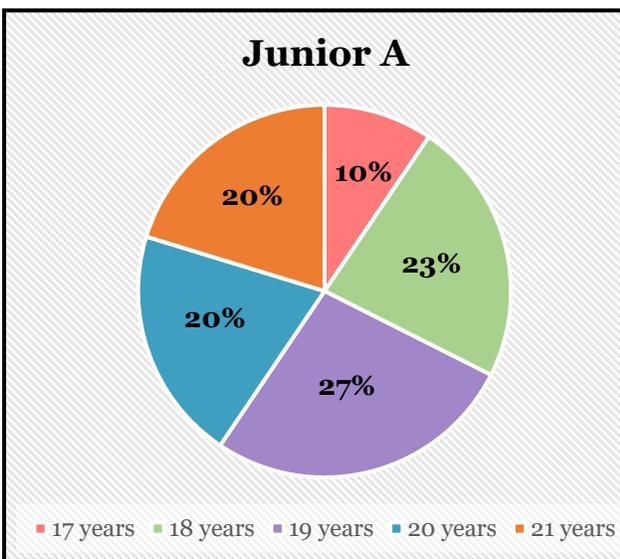
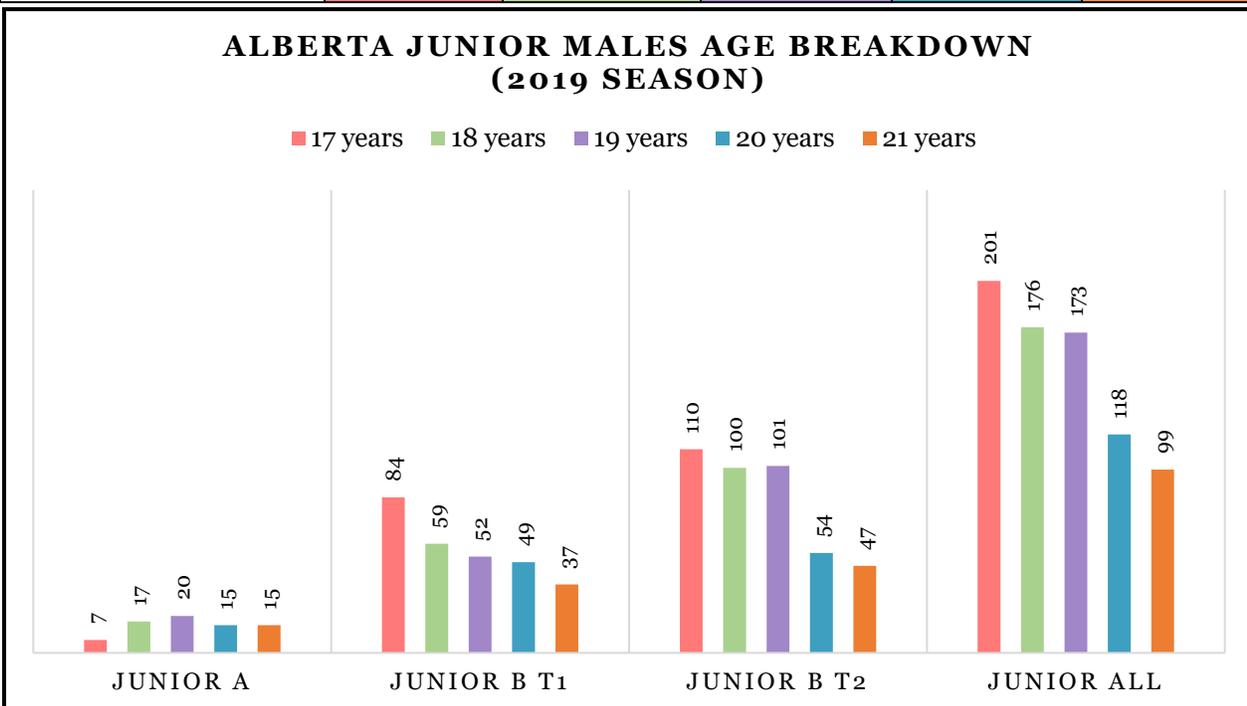
The recommendations made in this report are designed to find ways to reduce the relative age effect. For example, using (when possible) single age instead of dual age groups in minor lacrosse. The recommendations around playing up/down also help to mitigate the relative age effect.





Alberta Junior Lacrosse Males Age Breakdown (2019 season)

Age	17 years	18 years	19 years	20 years	21 years
Junior A	7 (10%)	17 (23%)	20 (27%)	15 (20%)	15 (20%)
Junior B Tier 1	84 (30%)	59 (21%)	52 (19%)	49 (17%)	37 (13%)
Junior B Tier 2	110 (27%)	100 (24%)	101 (25%)	54 (13%)	47 (11%)
Junior Total (All)	201 (26%)	176 (23%)	173 (23%)	118 (15%)	99 (13%)



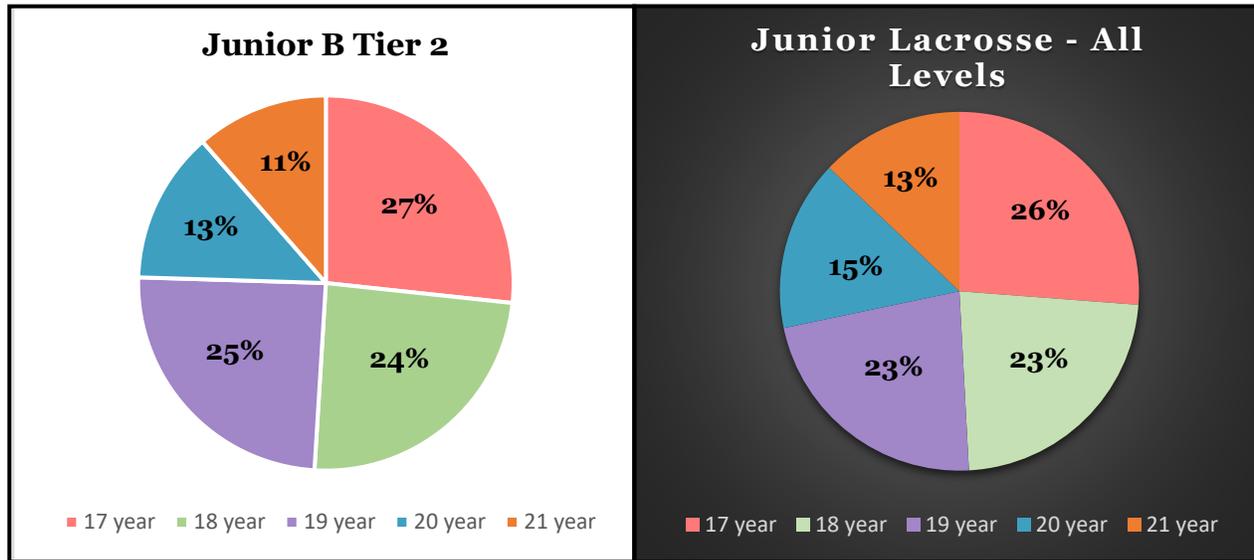


Figure 6

Alberta Junior Lacrosse Females Age Breakdown (2019 season)

Age	17 years	18 years	19 years	20 years	21 years
Junior B	49 (32%)	42 (28%)	22 (15%)	23 (15%)	15 (10%)

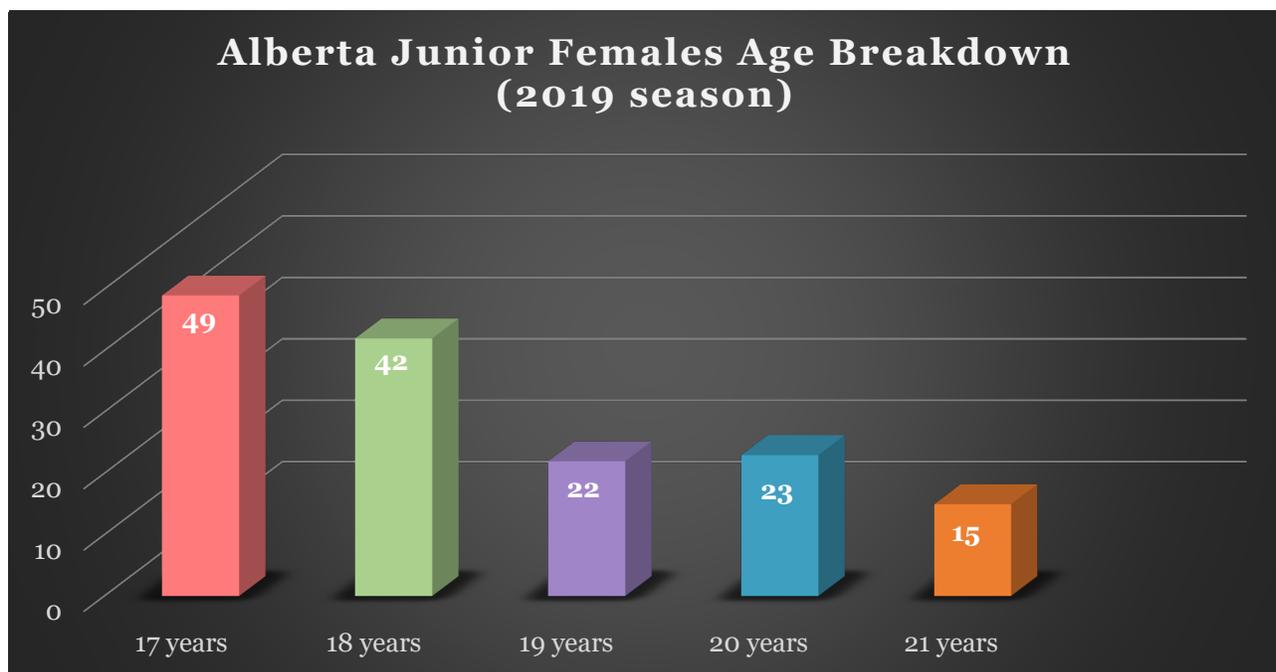




Figure 7

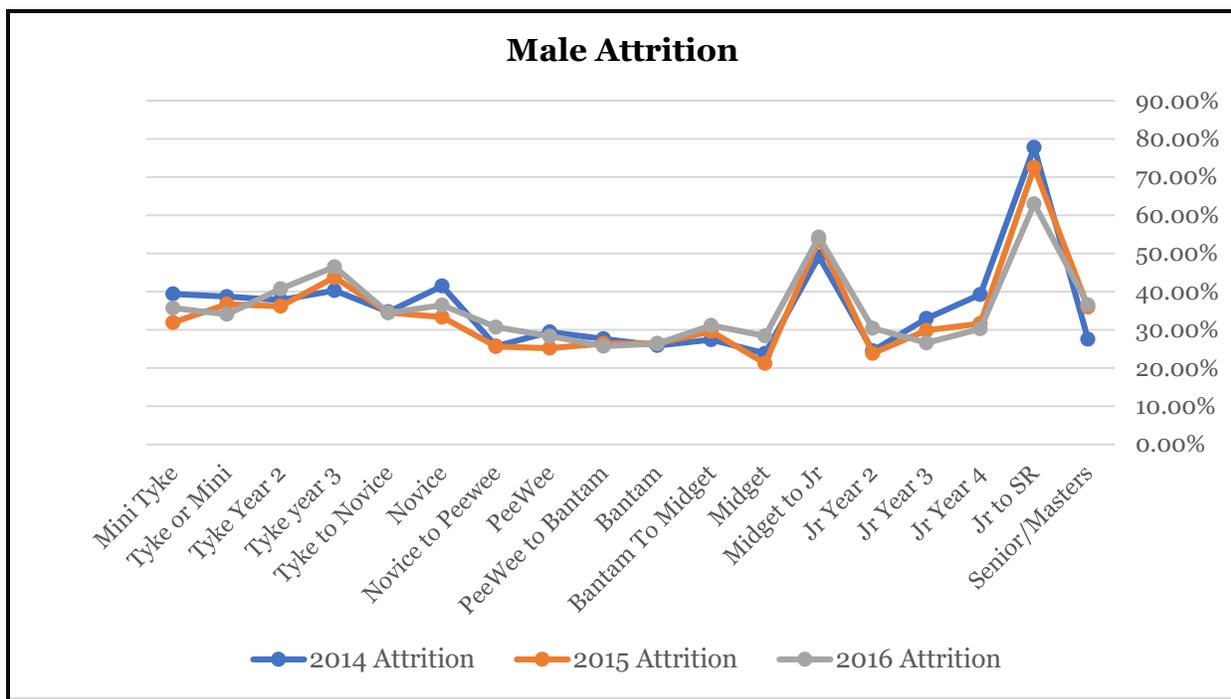
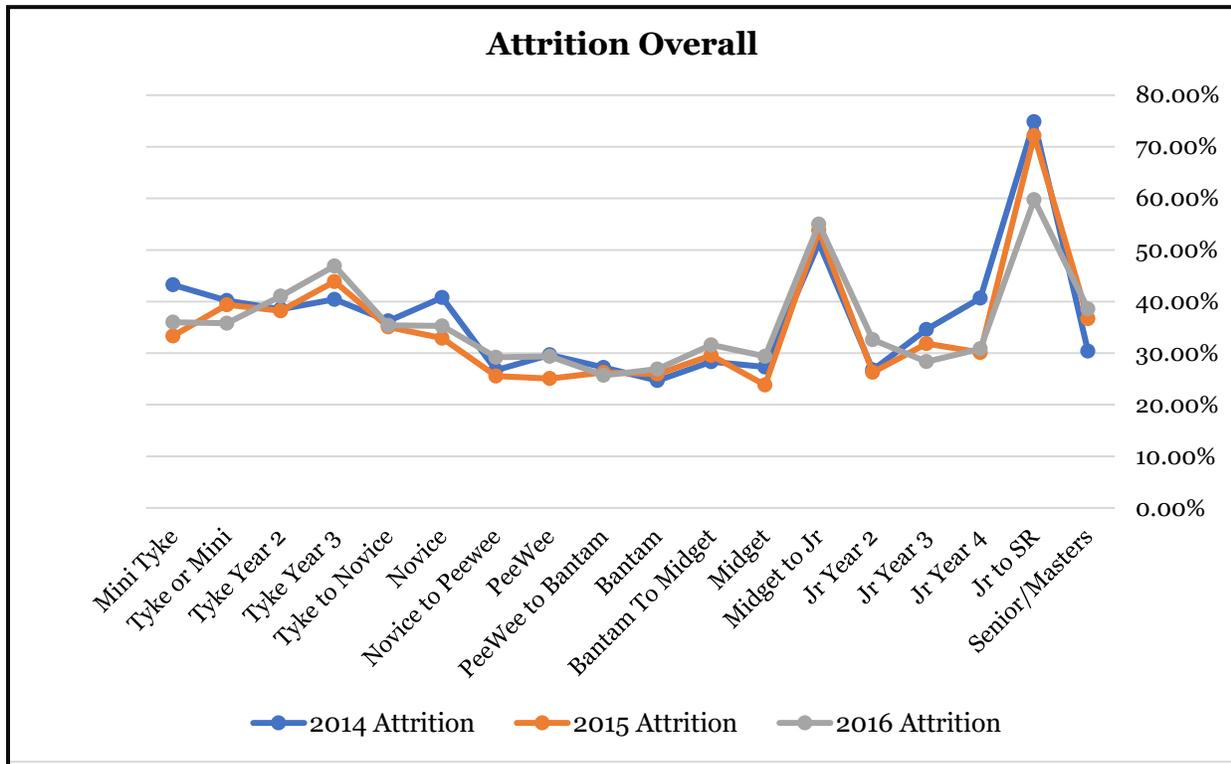
Age distribution of a sample of Jr A Hockey teams (2020-2021 season)

	Calgary Hitmen (WHL Major Junior)	Calgary Canucks (AJHL JrA)
21-year-olds (2000)	3	4
20-year-olds (2001)	6	9
19-year-olds (2002)	5	7
18-year-olds (2003)	6	3
17-year-olds (2004)	2	1



Figure 8

Alberta Lacrosse Attrition (2014-2016)



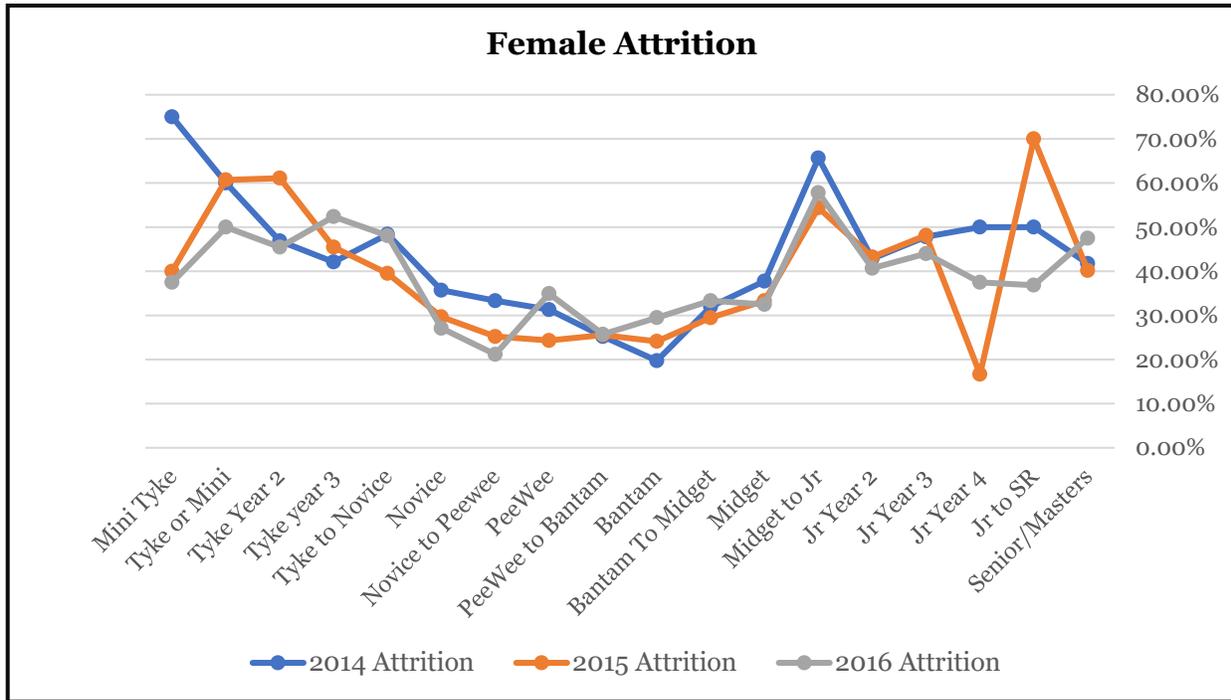




Figure 9
Box Lacrosse Attrition Survey: Answers by Division
(Alberta Retention Report 2016)

	Sr.	Jr.	Midget	Bantam	Pee Wee	Novice	Tyke
Moved/Relocated	10.00%	10.90%	2.10%	4.30%	2.50%	3.90%	2.80%
Focusing on another sport. Please specify which sport.	3.50%	3.90%	12.40%	19.20%	22.90%	23.40%	32.20%
Injured/Healing from an injury. Please Describe.	15.90%	9.30%	7.90%	6.00%	5.50%	2.70%	0.00%
No longer can commit the time, due to work, school, etc. Please explain	24.70%	24.00%	12.80%	6.00%	2.10%	2.30%	1.70%
Registration Fees were too high.	8.20%	6.20%	3.30%	5.10%	2.50%	1.60%	4.00%
Played Lacrosse but did not enjoy it. Please explain.	3.50%	3.10%	4.10%	8.50%	15.70%	15.20%	15.80%
Too much Travel.	5.30%	0.80%	1.20%	3.00%	4.70%	3.50%	4.50%
Was not receiving enough technical training at practice.	1.80%	3.10%	7.90%	5.10%	8.50%	7.00%	2.30%
Was not satisfied with the coaching. Please explain.	7.60%	6.20%	11.20%	13.20%	12.70%	12.50%	6.80%
Schedule	5.90%	7.80%	4.50%	2.60%	2.50%	6.30%	6.20%
Did not receive enough playing time.	2.90%	5.40%	2.90%	3.40%	2.50%	3.10%	1.70%
Other reasons. Please explain.	10.60%	19.40%	29.80%	23.50%	17.80%	18.40%	22.00%



**Figure 10
Sport Retention in the United States**

AGE CHILDREN QUIT REGULARLY PLAYING A SPORT (AGES 3-18)

SPORT	AVG. AGE OF LAST REGULAR PARTICIPATION	AVG. LENGTH IN YEARS OF PARTICIPATION
Baseball	10.5	3.3
Basketball	11.2	3.2
Bicycling	9.5	2.5
Cross Country	12.7	1.7*
Field Hockey	11.4	5.1
Flag Football	10.4	4.1
Tackle Football	11.9	2.8
Golf	11.8	2.8
Gymnastics	8.7	3.0
Ice Hockey	10.9	3.1
Lacrosse	11.2	2.2
Martial Arts	9.2	2.6
Skateboarding	12.0	2.8
Skiing/Snowboarding	12.1	4.3
Soccer	9.1	3.0
Softball	10.4	2.8
Swimming	10.2	3.2
Tennis	10.9	1.9
Track and Field	13.0	2.0*
Volleyball	12.3	2.0*
Wrestling	9.8	1.6
All Sports	10.5	2.9

* These sports have low average lengths of participation due to kids starting these sports later.

Source: Aspen Institute/Utah State University 2019 National Youth Sport Survey (1,032 youth sports parents).



Figure 11
Comparative Team Sports Age Categories (Canada)

Recommended Box Lacrosse	Hockey	Basketball	Baseball	Football	Soccer	Ringette
Senior (22+)	Senior (21+)	Senior (20+)	Senior (21+)	Senior (23+)	Senior (20+)	Senior (20+)
Junior (17-21)	Junior (18-20) CHL allows 3 21-year-olds. Underage players are permitted.	U19 (18-19)	Junior (19-21)	Junior (17-22)	U19 (18-19)	U19 (17-19)
Intermediate (17-18)	U18 (15-17)	U17 (17)	18U (16-18)	U18 (17-18)	U17 (16-17)	U16 (15-16)
16U (15-16)	U15 (13-14)	U16 (16)	15U (14-15)	U16 (15-16)	U15 (14-15)	U14 (13-14)
14U (13-14)	U13 (11-12)	U15 (15)	13U (12-13)	U14 (13-14)	U13 (12-13)	U12 (11-12)
12U (11-12)	U11 (9-10)	U14 (13-14)	11U (10-11)	U12 (11-12)	U11 (10-11)	U10 (9-10)
10U (9-10)	U9 (7-8)	U12 (12)	9U (8-9)	U10 (9-10)	U9 (8-9)	Active Start (5-8)
8U (7-8)	U7 (4-6)	U11 (11)	Rally Cap (4-7)	U8 (5-8)	U7 (6-7)	
6U (4-6)		U10 (10)			U5 (4-5)	



**LACROSSE CANADA
CROSSE CANADA**

INFO@LACROSSE.CA
LACROSSE.CA
18 RUE LOUISA STREET, SUITE 310
OTTAWA, ON K1R 6Y6

Appendix B LTD Committee Membership

Chair:

Duane Bratt, Lacrosse Canada National Resource Person

Members:

Bryan Baxter, Lacrosse Canada Director of Domestic Development

Sylvie Beliveau, Canada Sport for Life and Former LTAD Soccer Canada Lead

James Buhlman, Lacrosse Canada Program Director

Andre LaChance, Canada Sport for Life and Baseball Canada

Dorothy Paul, Canada Sport for Life specializing in Indigenous athletes.

Ron Yeung, Basketball Canada



Appendix C

LTAD Committee Terms of Reference

Name	LTAD Committee
Mandate	<p>The LTAD Committee is an operating committee of the Canadian Lacrosse Association (CLA). It is responsible for leading and advising the CLA and its partners in the development of a Long-Term Athlete Development Plan for Lacrosse and for the development of new programs, events and/or projects that will foster developmentally appropriate opportunities in the sport of Lacrosse.</p>
Key Duties	<p>The Committee will perform the following key duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare plans for LTAD integration and implementation for lacrosse in Canada, with the intent to support the optimal preparation of athletes in all LTAD stages.• Determine annually whether any proposed policy, program or rule revisions that are technical in nature and required for alignment with LTAD will be submitted to the appropriate sector and to submit proposed program and rule revisions to the appropriate sector in writing.• Provide input as requested to the Board of Directors in furtherance of policies on LTAD.• Align the CLA's NCCP materials with the CLA's LTAD plan.• Liaise with the Members on all issues relating to LTAD.• Liaise with other Committees on issues of mutual concern.• Report on progress on a regular basis through its Meeting Minutes or communications to the CLA Board.• Prepare an LTAD plan for athletes with a disability.• Prepare a Long-Term Officials Development Plan.• Perform such additional tasks as may be delegated to the Committee by the Board from time-to-time.
Authority	<p>The Committee is an advisor to the CLA Board, Sectors and other committees on matters related to the CLA's LTAD program and initiatives. The Committee, with approval from the Board, may establish sub-committees or task forces to deal with specific issues in relation to the mandate of the Committee.</p>
Composition	<p>The Committee will be composed of 4-5 persons. The Board will designate the Chairperson of the committee. The CLA Director Domestic Development and CLA Program Coordinator will members of the Committee.</p> <p>The Board appoints members to the Committee at the Annual Meeting. Should a vacancy occur on the Committee, for whatever reason, the Board may appoint a qualified person to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the vacant position's term. The Board may remove any member of the Committee.</p>
Meetings	<p>The Committee will meet by telephone or in person, as required. Meetings will be at the call of the Chair. Minutes shall be kept and provided to the CLA Executive Director within 30 days of the meeting, who then shall distribute them as appropriate.</p>



Resources	The Committee will receive the necessary resources from the CLA to fulfill its mandate. The Committee may, from time to time, receive administrative support from the CLA National Office.
Reporting	The Committee will report at every meeting of the Board and will submit a written report at every meeting of the Members.
Approval and Review	These Terms of Reference were prepared by the Planning and Governance Committee and were approved by the CLA Board on November 14, 2014. The Board will review these Terms of Reference on a regular basis, with input from the Committee as required.
Other	The provisions of the CLA's Bylaws and Regulations as they relate to the LTAD Committee will also apply.



Appendix D LTAD Activation Plan

Strategic Outcome	Output and Impact	2021 Focus	2022 Focus	2023 Focus	Strategic Plan Link
A. Evaluate current athlete pathway to ensure various entry and exits points are considered	<p>Output: A revised male and female pathways are created</p> <p>Impact: Clear pathways are communicated, understood, and implemented including appropriate tiering and specialization principles</p>	Through data, validate actual pathways are reflecting the reality of male and female athletes (Is the pathway actually happening ?)	Build a strategy for the late entry for both male and female athletes so ALL athletes find appropriate training & competition environment to fit their needs	Position the role of the private lacrosse organizations in the national landscape and determine inclusion or not.	
B. Ensure LTD principles and concepts are aligned with all coach education material and resources produced by Lacrosse Canada	<p>Output: Create an education platform for LTD to assist coaches in understanding the growth and development concepts.</p> <p>Impact: With a better understanding of child development, coaches can ensure that their sessions are aligned with the LTD model of development</p>	Through existing documents, identify clear coaches' roles and responsibilities at each stage of development while position the role of winning at each stage of development	Enhance current coaching legislation to encourage for more coach certification or more coaching requirements for various trained and certified status of the NCCP. Implement a robust recruitment and retention strategy for evaluators.	Identify key elements of coach education that could be transformed into digestible digital resources for coaches at the various stages of development	
C. National Championships	<p>Output: Clear minor National Championships with their LTAD emphasis in training</p> <p>Impact: National championships offered are aligned with LTD guiding principles.</p>	Complete and communicate key competition guiding principles for each stage of development and compare/analyze principles against nationals currently being offered. Define meaningful competition for lacrosse.	Using data, propose a series of recommendations to better rationalize and position national championships across the various stages of development with an emphasis on the 12U and 14U age groups.	Implement recommendations with solid pilot projects to evaluate impact on changes at the various stages of development.	



D. Develop an Introduction to Lacrosse aligned with LTAD including programs and delivery standards

Output: Develop metrics for coaches to align with the stages of LTAD. Provide tools for coaches to reach these development objectives.

Impact: Athletes will be properly assessed at each stage of their development



Appendix E Resources

Aspen Institute, *Project Play* (2019). <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/national-youth-sport-survey/kids-quit-most-sports-by-age-11>

Canadian Lacrosse Association, *Lacrosse for Life: Overview* (2010).
http://cla.pointstreaksites.com/files/uploaded_documents/2253/Overview-EN.pdf

Canadian Lacrosse Association, *Lacrosse for Life: Stages* (2010).
http://cla.pointstreaksites.com/files/uploaded_documents/2253/Stages-EN.pdf

Canadian Lacrosse Association, *Lacrosse for Life: Competition Review 3.0* (2015).

Canada Sport for Life, *Athlete Development Matrix*. Version 1.1 (2016).

Canada Sport for Life, *Physical Literacy Assessment for Youth* (2016).
http://physicalliteracy.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/PLAYself_Workbook.pdf

Canada Sport for Life, *Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity 3.0* (2019) <https://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Long-Term-Development-in-Sport-and-Physical-Activity-3.0.pdf>

Istvan Balyi and Richard Way, *The Role of Monitoring Growth in Long-Term Athlete Development* (2016). <https://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/the-role-of-monitoring-growth-in-dlta.pdf>



Appendix F List of Meetings

Date	Description	Participants
2020		
August 17	Preliminary CLA LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James
August 26	Preliminary CLA LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James
September 10	Preliminary CLA LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James
September 21	First Full LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James, Ron Yeung, Andre Lachance, Dorothy Paul,
October 5	Second Full LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James, Ron Yeung, Andre Lachance, Dorothy Paul,
October 19	Third Full LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James, Ron Yeung, Andre Lachance, Dorothy Paul,
November 2	4th Full LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James, Ron Yeung, Andre Lachance, Dorothy Paul,
November 24	CLA LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James
November 25	Consultation with Box Sector Chair	Duane, Bryan, James
December 7	CLA LTAD Committee Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
2021		
January 11	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 18	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 20	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 22	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 25	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 27	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
January 29	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 1	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 3	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 5	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 8	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 10	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 12	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 17	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 19	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 22	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 24	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
February 26	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 1	Town Hall #1 – Minor Lacrosse	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 2	Town Hall #2 – Junior Lacrosse	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 4	Town Hall #3 – Senior Lacrosse	Duane, Bryan, James
March 12	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 15	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 17	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 19	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 22	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 24	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
March 26	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau and Roxanne Curtis (Women's Field)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie, Roxanne Curtis
April 12	CLA LTAD Meeting	Duane, Bryan, James
April 14	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie
April 16	Consultation with Sylvie Beliveau (Sport 4 Life)	Duane, Bryan, James, Sylvie



Appendix G

What We Heard

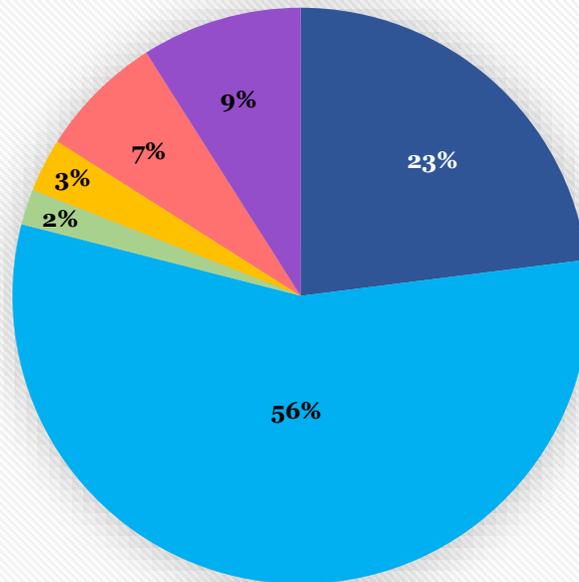
As part of its age categories for box lacrosse recommendations, the LTAD Committee designed a consultation process to gather input from the wider lacrosse community. A draft report was prepared in February 2021 and two instruments were used to acquire feedback. First, there were a series of virtual townhalls that occurred in early March 2021. Second, was a formal survey that closed on March 15, 2021. 608 surveys were received, although the responses for each question were not always completed. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the recommendation, plus open-ended questions asking for additional feedback, additional questions for the committee, and suggested changes based on evidence. The quantitative and qualitative data that was obtained during the consultation process guided the LTAD Committee in the revision process between the draft report and the final report.

Virtual Townhalls

- #1 Focus was on minor lacrosse. March 1, 2021. 43 participants
- #2 Focus was on junior lacrosse. March 2, 2021. 43 participants
- #3 Focus was on senior lacrosse. March 4, 2021. 30 participants



Lacrosse Survey Numbers by Organization



■ BC ■ AB ■ SK ■ Smaller Provinces ■ ON ■ Other

The survey results are not a representative sample, but the high number of responses still benefited the Committee in revising its recommendations.



Survey Results of Draft Report

#	Recommendation	Yes	No	Response
1	Keep two-year minor age categories (16U, 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U, 6U), but encourage member associations, zones, local governing bodies, and clubs with sufficient players to run single year age categories (i.e., 16U for 16-year-olds and 16U for 15-year-olds).	63.3% 304 Responses	36.6% 176 Responses	Answered: 480 Skipped: 128
2	Maintain the existing CLA policy that junior is 17-21.	65.8% 302 Responses	34.2% 157 Responses	Answered: 459 Skipped: 149
3	Remove the 17U category and revert back to 16U.	60% 164 Responses	40% 176 Responses	Answered: 440 Skipped: 168
4	Create/maintain two pathways for Junior aged players: Competition Stream and Active for Life Stream	82.4% 351 Responses	17.6% 75 Responses	Answered: 426 Skipped: 182
5	Create/maintain two pathways for Senior aged players: Competition Stream and Active for Life Stream	88.7% 375 Responses	11.3% 48 Responses	Answered: 423 Skipped: 185
6	The Committee has considered the issue of extending the junior age category to include 22-year-olds. It has determined that there is little development argument that can justify making this extension.	70.9% 300 Responses	29.1% 123 Responses	Answered: 423 Skipped: 185
7	Using the concept of development age, players should have the opportunity of playing in a higher age category.	87.1% 366 Responses	12.9% 54 Responses	Answered: 420 Skipped: 188
8	Using the concept of development age, players should have the opportunity of playing in a lower age category.	63% 260 Responses	37% 153 Responses	Answered: 413 Skipped: 195
9	There should be a no distinction between male and female age categories.	79.6% 327 Responses	20.4% 84 Responses	Answered: 411 Skipped: 197
10	Investigate the advantages and disadvantages of different types of male/female playing environments.	81% 332 Responses	19% 78 Responses	Answered: 410 Skipped: 198

Full survey results are available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/6vfssl8evmahlkw/LTD%20Survey%20Results%20%20March%202021.pdf?dl=0>