

Special Olympics North America Progression of Coaching Excellence

Each tier includes all of the desired behavior from the preceding tier plus the items in its own tier. This matrix can be utilized as a coaches' self-assessment of performance and what is needed to assist athletes in reaching their maximum potential.

Key Areas	Level 1 (Entry)	Level 2 (Fully Engaged)	Level 3 (Model of Excellence)
Coaching Education & Certification	<p>Coach completes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Class A volunteer requirements. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum requirements for certification (General Orientation; Protective Behaviors; Coaching SO Athletes and/or Skills Course; 10-hrs working under an experienced coach or demonstrating competency working w/ athletes) – being endorsed by Program 	<p>Coach completes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing education in at least one of the following: CPR/AED; sport first aid; advanced or tactics course. <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing education with at least one approved course every 3 years per SONA CE System. 	<p>Coach completes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Principles of Coaching Course or similar course(s) that meets the same standards and competencies within the SONA Coach Education System.
Planning - the Key Area for Training and Competition	<p>Coach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has written 8-week required/12-week recommended season plan including training & competition opportunities; site(s) & time(s); is provided 2 weeks before 1st practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Conducts at least 1 practice per week. <input type="checkbox"/> Conducts athlete assessments in skills & competition. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures 2 competitions during and 1 tournament by the end of the season. <input type="checkbox"/> Supervises athletes at competitions. <input type="checkbox"/> Appoints or has team members elect an athlete captain. 	<p>Coach includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/family/parent informational meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Averages more than 1 training opportunity per week in season. <input type="checkbox"/> Competition opportunities integrated within each practice. <input type="checkbox"/> 4 competitions in season (scrimmages; invitationals; tournaments; qualifiers). <input type="checkbox"/> Post-season evaluation to athletes and from athletes/parents. 	<p>Coach has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written practice plan for each practice. <input type="checkbox"/> At least 2 training opportunities with coach/mentor a week. <input type="checkbox"/> At least 6 competitions a season. <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete evaluation tool, plan, and scheduled feedback provided a minimum of 2 times a season (initial assessment and post-season progress report).
Training Environment & Risk Management	<p>Coach focuses on injury prevention and has a training environment that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is safe & has water; automatic external defibrillator (AED) is recommended. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes a complete first-aid kit. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes athlete medicals. <input type="checkbox"/> Has emergency action plan (including crisis communication), which is provided by Program office & customized to site. 	<p>Coach has a training environment with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One coach certified in CPR and first-aid. 	<p>Coach has a training environment with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A licensed medical person with team or accessible within 15 minutes.
Practice & Communication with Athletes	<p>Coach ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practices are fun; athletes are heard. <input type="checkbox"/> Positive, effective feedback occurs. <input type="checkbox"/> Clear concise explanations and positive reinforcement are provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Attention is provided to all athletes. 	<p>Coach ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Athletes are involved in communicating with athletes and coaches. <input type="checkbox"/> Athletes are provided opportunities to help each other. 	<p>Coach ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Athletes are provided opportunities to communicate 1-on-1 with coach.
Learning Experiences	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction of sport-specific skills and basic tactics instruction. <input type="checkbox"/> Competition situations in practice with explanations to athletes. 	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Effective demonstrations. <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for athletes to demonstrate & assume leadership roles (athletes as coaches). <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative training methods such as “games approach.” <input type="checkbox"/> Integration of athlete assessment & progress reporting at least twice a season. 	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity for athletes to evaluate the coach and the season. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachable moments in pre-, during, post-competition feedback.
Assistant Coaches & Mentors	<p>Coach recruits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant coach(es) from family members, athletes, schools and community. 	<p>Coach recruits, prepares and delegates responsibilities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sport-experienced volunteers. <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant coaches and training assistants. <input type="checkbox"/> Select family members or chaperones. 	<p>Coach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seeks mentors to assist in the development of his/her sport. <input type="checkbox"/> Serves as mentors, Sport Resource Team or Games Mgmt Team members or clinicians.
Equipment & Uniform	<p>Coach ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment & uniform fit properly. <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment & uniform are appropriate for the particular sport. <input type="checkbox"/> Uniform complies with NGB rules (size numbers, logo restrictions, etc.). 	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up uniforms for competitions and Opening Ceremonies. <input type="checkbox"/> Size of uniforms and equipment is appropriate to the athlete's physique, developmental level, and gender. 	<p>Coach ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Higher-level equipment and uniform to improve performance are provided.
Enhancing Athlete Development	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Information on proper nutrition & healthy lifestyle. <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Healthy Athletes® initiative, fitness and wellness programs. <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for potential athlete leaders on each team. 	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for sport-specific performance training through at-home training program. 	<p>Coach provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for social activities outside practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for sport-specific performance training during practice.