



What is Long Term Player Development?

LTPD is an acronym that stands for **Long Term Player Development**

SO WHAT IS LTPD? - LTPD is a framework used to describe the evolution of development of a player. In more layman's terms, LTPD is a model that clubs must adopt to implement development program that is age specific and must be implemented in the most appropriate time of a child's life in terms of chronological age, physical attributes and technical development.

WHAT IS LTPD NOT? - There has been plenty of misstated facts about LTPD, usually by those not really understanding LTPD. First and foremost, LTPD is NOT about taking competition or the desire to win away from players. The game has goals on either end of the field, these are there for a specific reason, to defend and score. LTPD is NOT about turning our youngsters into a "play nice" generation and LTPD is NOT about lumping all players together into one big happy family.

WHAT DOES LTPD DO? - LTPD is about treating each player as an individual and giving each individual an opportunity to develop at their own pace, in an environment that fosters development. It is also about how the individual adapts to specific technical demands and challenges the game of soccer exerts upon an individual.

LTPD is about putting the developmental building steps in place for a player to be able to reach their individual pinnacle in the game as soccer. We have to take a horse before the cart approach such that players may grow and develop at their own natural pace. We would never consider teaching a child algebra prior to them learning to add single digits together. Soccer is no different, players must first learn to run, jump, balance and coordinate before we expect them to kick a soccer ball and once they are ready to learn to play with a soccer ball they need to be given an opportunity to learn the technical aspects of the game.

WHY THE CHANGE to LTPD? Soccer nations around the world have long practiced LTPD principles (for example, in Brazil and Spain, players do not compete for standings until Under15). LTPD is nothing new; it's just about doing the right thing at the right time.



HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CLUB IS MEETING THE NEEDS OF LTPD? The answer is simple, ask the questions, make self-assessments, analyze your clubs development program and check their website. It's very simple for a club to add a comment to the website "We meet LTPD!"

Some questions that you need to ask:

What game format do you follow for the various stages of development, in terms of field sizes, team and roster sizes? Example - do you play 3v3 at Under 6? Etc.

How do you monitor and determine success at the various stages of development?

Does your club meet the training to game ratios as set out in the LTPD document? Are you training at least 3 times to every game?

Does your club meet the minimum training lengths? Example - does your training session last as long as your regular games? If you are Under 13 your game should be 2 x 35min, this means the training time must be 70 minutes, plus. You can't run a marathon and train for 100 meter sprint race.

Does your club allocate the team a suitable training venue that should replicate the size players will encounter during games?

Does your club offer coach certification and coach education opportunities?