

Maine Winter Sports Center Athlete Development Model

At the Maine Winter Sports Center, it is our aim to help young men and women from across the state realize their potential as lifelong athletes. Towards that goal, we strive to prescribe appropriate training and competitive opportunities to participants at each developmental stage of life. In training and racing, one size does not fit all. And a smaller version of a World Cup athlete's training plan does not look "cute" on an aspiring middle school Nordic skier.

Our coaches study and apply age appropriate sport development models to each tier of our programming. By adjusting training to each stage of physical, mental and emotional development, we hope to keep more young athletes in winter sport and to give these athletes the best chance for complete realization of their ultimate athletic potential.

While there are many excellent models for youth and adolescent sport development, we have chosen to align most closely with the U.S. Ski Team's Elite Development Pipeline. Our philosophy does not strictly mirror that of the U.S. Ski Team, but we have worked to parallel the USSA Elite Development Pipeline on many points. For a better understanding of the information that we are using as a basis for our program development in Maine, please refer to both the USSA brochure and the Canadian Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) papers found at:

<http://www.ussa.org/magnoliaPublic/ussa/en/sports/crosscountry/development.html>

It is our belief, at MWSC, that sport is critical to healthy physical and mental development at all ages. And, in order for sport to play an integral role in our lives, it must first be fun. For that reason, we discourage early (younger than completion of puberty) sport specialization. Instead, we strongly encourage athletes to participate in a wide variety of athletic pursuits, thereby developing coordination, speed, skill acquisition strategies and a zeal for outdoor, active life.