

POSITION STATEMENT

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA COMPETITION

PREAMBLE

According to the definition in this policy, COMPETITION exists in the daily life of all children, in sport and most aspects of life.

It is part of the child's daily life and it needs to be clearly defined and implemented in such a manner so that each child benefits. In School Sport Australia competitions the emphasis in sport is on fun, enjoyment, participation, competition and social interaction.

The concerns that people have about competition are usually about the manner in which the competition has been conducted which has had detrimental effects on the child.

Competition is a fact of life, and School Sport Australia can establish a good "environment" and guideline practices so that children benefit from their experiences.

School Sport Australia strongly supports "competition" as a major part of its program.

- * Competition's main aim is to develop the collective spirit of unity, cooperation and friendship, in a fun filled positively structured environment.

COMPETITION PROGRAM

Competition exists in many forms within the School Sport Australia program.

COMPETITION IS:

- * the striving of two or more for the same object OR
- * the action of endeavouring to gain what another endeavours at the same time OR
- * the competing against oneself (striving to make personal improvement).

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA BELIEVES:

- * Competition is neither inherently good nor bad. It is one of the conditions of sport at all levels of participation.
- * Organised sport can have a special significance in the lives of children and youth as it offers new experiences, challenges, improved skills and fitness, a sense of achievement and a lot of fun.
- * A positive competitive environment, if it is structured correctly, will result in most desirable outcomes.

- * The environment in which the child competes, the social context, determines whether the effect of the competition process is positive or negative.
- * If the focus of competition is placed on personal improvement and enjoyment, competition can motivate children to strive for improvement.
- * The focus in competition should be on the individual/team participation rather than the end result.
- * Competition should emphasise the feelings of security and self confidence to ensure positive personal development.
- * Children learn to compete in sports if they have continued support and encouragement of their family, coach and peer group, regardless of the outcome of the game.
- * Competition should be used as a motivator to encourage children to strive for improvements in their personal performance.
- * Children will be attracted to sport situations if they expect to be successful and to enjoy themselves. Sport is a desirable feature of a child's experience. Participation in sport is the basic right of every child.
- * Sport is an important vehicle for influencing children's present and future participation and enjoyment in physical activity.
- * While different sport forms exist, each has the potential to help children and youth in their physical, social, mental and emotional development. The stimulation of the healthy-stress of sport involvement and competition will also assist in the process of self improvement and maturation.
- * Competition is a valuable experience for children as it can stimulate them to seek personal improvement as well as learn discipline, persistence and team work.
- * Competition can help children to appreciate and value effort and excellence in themselves, their team mates, and their opponents.
- * Competition assists children with a knowledge of how to cooperate and compete with opponents within the rules of sport.
- * Competition should be a positive, fun activity devoid of undesirable emotional and physical stress and negative experiences.
- * We believe that children develop at different rates, but between the ages of 10 and 13 most children will develop physically, socially and psychologically to the point where they are ready, eager and willing to participate in sport and competition.
- * Competition and sport should be used to develop the child rather than using the child to develop the sport.
- * Competition should be for children rather than for the needs of coaches, teachers, parents and spectators.

- * The intensity of competition should be lower at school level and increase as skill levels, physical and psychological maturity increases, through to interstate level.
- * The solution to any undesirable factors in competition is NOT TO ABOLISH COMPETITION but to change the environment.
- * Losing in competition should not be equated with FAILURE. The TEAM may have lost the game but individuals will have won if they play of their best.
- * Competition should be healthy, winning should be important, losing may be rewarding, but only if they are kept in their proper perspective.
- * All participants in competition should aim to achieve satisfaction, personal success and character development.
- * Competition has a tremendous positive potential in a well structured environment.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

- * Competition should be structured to assist in the emergence of a healthy self-image that is not jeopardised by continual failure, nor by situations in which children sense that they are less able than others.
- * Particularly at school, interschool and district level, competition structures should allow for the maximum number of children to participate and equally share the time involved in the game.
- * Competition should be structured to develop competent, cooperative and independent people who each experience success in their own way and have a sense of self respect.
- * Competition is a highly valuable and desirable experience in the lives of children and should be regulated and spread out over enough activities so that every child can achieve some degree of success in some area.
- * Activities in which competition takes place should be planned and administered so as to maximise opportunity for success, in a wide variety of sporting activities.
- * Competition should only be provided where a healthy sporting environment exists.

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

- * All competitions should be conducted within School Sport Australia guidelines.
- * The code of ethics for players, coaches, teachers and spectators is most relevant in competition.

MONITORING

The competition program should be continually monitored by School Sport Australia.