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Book design and composition by Studio Montage, St. Louis, MO.

Original text illustrations by Chris Lynch; additional illustrations by Nancy Rudd.

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Originally published in Australia as *The Cross Sport Program*. This edition, published 2000 by Good Year Books. Adapted by permission of Addison Wesley Longman Australia.

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Printed in the United States of America.

978-1-59647-381-2

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Sport Readiness

Sport Readiness is a flexible approach to developing hand-eye coordination through basic locomotion and ball-sense activities. The emphasis is on fun, success, and learning by doing. The activities are presented sequentially and build on children's successes. The immediate goal of the program is to provide children with basic skills that will make later sports accessible and enjoyable. The ultimate goal is lifelong participation in a healthful lifestyle that includes sports, fitness, and active leisure activities.

Who Uses *Sport Readiness*?

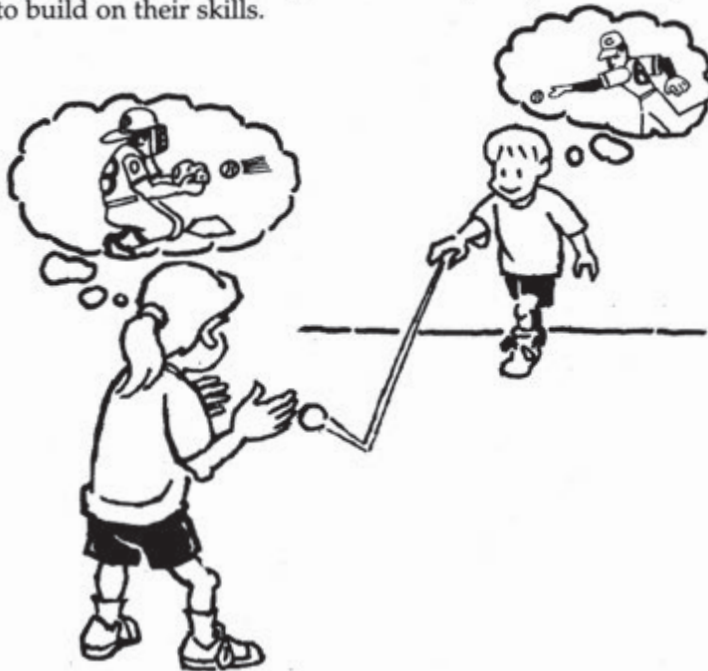
Sport Readiness is targeted primarily at children who are from five to nine years of age. Older children can also benefit from the support provided in this program as they enter modified and traditional sports in upper elementary grades.

Sport Readiness is intended to be used in a variety of teaching situations. For classroom teachers, the program is incorporated into daily activities. Even if a teacher is a novice in teaching physical skills, the extensive guidance throughout the program makes the program accessible.

The program has been implemented by camp counselors, special education teachers, and others in various instructional and fitness settings. Physical education teachers use the program typically in units of instruction that supplement the current curriculum.

When Do You Use *Sport Readiness*?

A series of lessons presented over a four- to six-week period has shown the greatest impact on improving children's skills. The remaining lessons may be used in blocks of four- to six-week instructional periods throughout the year. Children may revisit the program in subsequent years as they continue to build on their skills.



Goals

The goals of *Sport Readiness* include:

- improving hand-eye coordination;
- promoting safe and healthy play at school and home;
- introducing and building on skills for later participation in organized sports;
- systematically enhancing the skills of exceptional athletes;
- using non-threatening situations to develop willing participation in physical education activities;
- motivating children to include sports in their lives to improve their health, well-being, and self-esteem; and
- developing skills that give all students access to a lifelong pursuit of fitness through sports and other fitness activities.

How Does *Sport Readiness* Meet These Goals?

Sport Readiness success is based on a variety of factors, such as: 1) Sound Teaching of Basic Ball and Locomotion Skills, 2) Practiced Hand-Eye Coordination, 3) Flexible Models of Instruction, and 4) Simple Materials.

Basic Ball and Locomotion Skills

The simple, sequential skill development found in this program links gross motor development with particular skills. Many of these skills require ball sense, which is an important precursor to participation in many modified and traditional sports. The activities using balls range from rolling and kicking them to catching, throwing, and striking them. Children also focus on basic movements—forward, backward, and sideways—that build body and space awareness and contribute to the development of quick multidirectional movements.

Hand-Eye Coordination

Strategies for strengthening hand-eye coordination are inherent in all tasks. Teachers are provided with useful lists of coaching tips and a troubleshooting guide. These specific suggestions will help all teachers guide children in their hand-eye coordination development.

Flexible Models of Instruction

Sport Readiness provides a flexible model of instruction for meeting the needs of various groups because the choice of activities is left to the teacher's discretion. The teacher observes the children's physical skills and selects activities based on the needs of each group. The instructional model provides:

- opportunities to meet the needs of a variety of children and build on a variety of learning styles and individual attributes;
- a variety of activities for teachers to choose from that build distinct skills;
- guidance on teaching practices useful in the instruction of physical skills; and
- cross-curricular opportunities for practice and extension of the skills.

Simple Materials

The materials suggested are simple and appropriate for young children. The foam balls and other easy-to-use materials engage children actively in fun activities that promote successful experiences, whatever children's previous experiences. Suggestions for adapting materials for special learners are often incorporated in the "Meeting Individual Needs" section of each unit.

