



## Appendix B:

# Basic Skills Checklist

The checklist and following pages provide you with a starting point for assessing the skill level of the child you are working with. It is borrowed with permission from "Active Living Through Physical Education: Maximizing Opportunities for Students Who are Visually Impaired", Canadian Council of the Blind.

Among the elements of teaching games and sports are the development of **footwork and bodywork** such as walking, running, and jumping, and the development of **skill with equipment** as used in throwing, catching, striking, kicking, and bouncing. These elements are as important for the child who is blind or partially sighted as it is for the sighted child.

The Basic Skills Checklist on the following page provides a tool to assist you in determining the child's skill level and to review the student's progress over the course of the year. Areas requiring more support can be identified and appropriate activities can be designed to correct or improve the movement or skill.

When observing the child:

- Become familiar with the criteria. Eventually, you will not need the criteria in front of you while you are observing the child.
- Observe the child in various structured and unstructured settings.
- Observe the child performing the movement several times.
- Make every effort to have the child perform their best- e.g. throw hard, run fast, jump far, kick hard. Make the activity fun!
- Observe each movement from various directions - e.g. front, side, back.
- Concentrate on the movement of individual body parts. Look for major components in a body action to provide constructive feedback.
- Once you have evaluated a movement you can begin to identify areas of need and plan instructional strategies that will increase the child's success.



### Basic Skills Checklist

Skill	Component	Date:		Date:	
		Results	Comments	Results	Comments
RUNNING	Arm Action				
	Trunk/Hip Action				
	Leg Action				
HORIZONTAL JUMP	Arm Action				
	Trunk/Hip / Leg				
THROWING	Arm/Hand Action				
	Trunk Action				
	Leg Action				
KICKING	Head/Trunk Action				
	Arm Action				
	Leg Action				
CATCHING	Head Action				
	Arm/Hand Action				
	Trunk/Leg Action				
BOUNCING	Arm/Hand Action				
	Trunk/Leg Action				

Key: C- completed, NC- not completed, NA- not applicable

**RUNNING\***

**Arm Action**

With the elbows flexed at right angles, the arms swing forward and backward from the shoulder in opposition to the legs.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The arm swing is limited.
2. The arms cross the midline of the body.
3. Arm swing is centred at the elbow rather than the shoulder.
4. The arms do not swing in opposition to the legs
5. Arm swing is uncoordinated and "jerky".
6. Arms are not flexed.



**Trunk/Hip Action**

At the initiation of the run, the trunk leans forward as the legs take short quick strides to gain speed. As speed is obtained, the body lean decreases, the stride length increases and the rear leg extends completely at the hip.

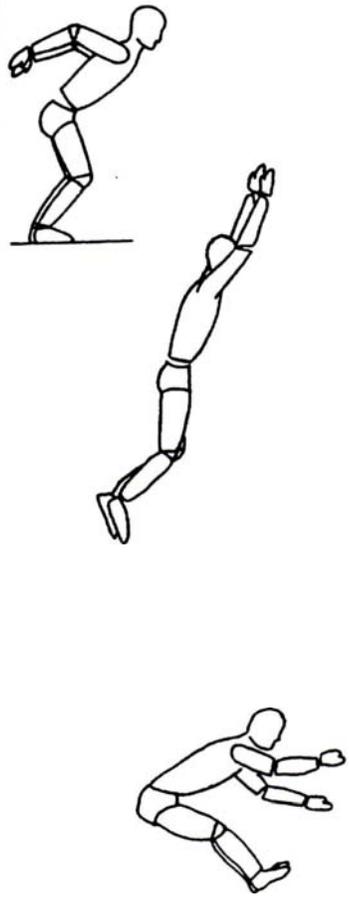
**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. There is excessive body lean forward or backward.
2. There is a side to side "rocking" motion of the body or head.
3. Stride length is limited as the motion at the hips is restricted.
4. The body bobs in a vertical direction during the run.





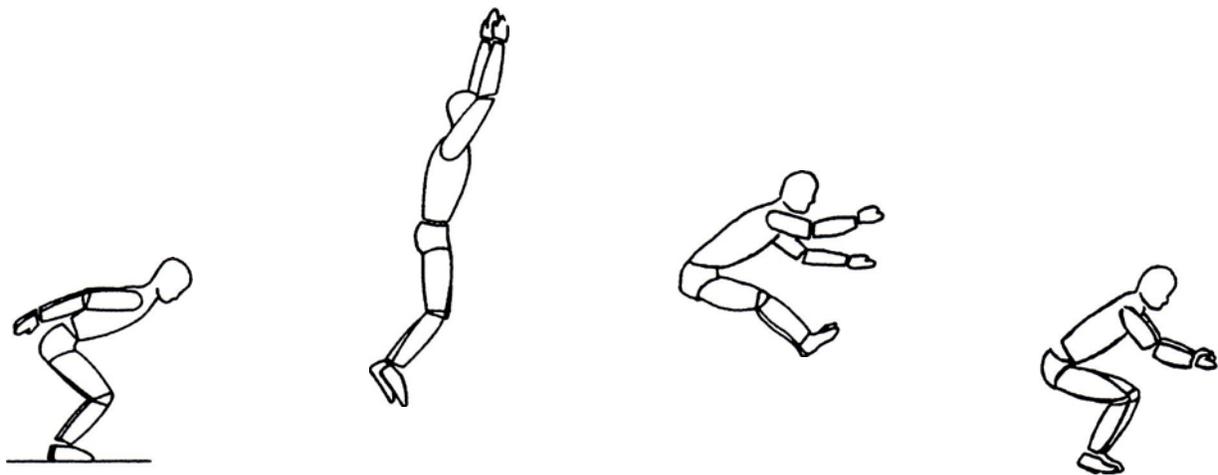
<b>RUNNING</b>	
<p><b>Leg Action</b></p> <p>As the leg swings forward the heel strikes the ground with the weight rolling forward to the toes. The rear leg recovers high as the heel is raised toward the buttocks. Foot placement should be on or near a straight line. There is a period during the stride when both feet are off the ground.</p> <p><b>Common Areas to Improve Upon</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The legs are stiff with limited knee bend.</li> <li>2. The legs do not extend completely during push off.</li> <li>3. The feet strike the ground flat or on the toes.</li> <li>4. The support foot runs outward or inward as contact is made.</li> <li>5. The legs swing out and around to a position of support rather than straight through.</li> <li>6. The recovery leg is not brought high to the rear.</li> <li>7. There is little or no flight phase.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Observation Tips</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize that a confident walking pattern will facilitate a good running pattern. Time may be well spent upgrading the child's basic walking skills and posture.</li> <li>• Make sure child is familiar with the running area by walking the course.</li> <li>• Provide a sighted guide for a child who is totally blind.</li> <li>• For the child who is partially sighted, provide an audible cue to run towards, placed past the end of the running course.</li> <li>• Provide a wide enough lane to accommodate veering to the left or right.</li> <li>• Provide enough stopping space at the end of the run (e.g. 8 metres).</li> <li>• Signal to child when the end of the desired run has been reached (e.g. blow a whistle, yell, another person taps shoulder).</li> </ul>	

<b>HORIZONTAL JUMP (STANDING)</b>	
<p><b>Arm Action</b></p> <p>The arms swing back then forward to full extension during the jump. The arms remain forward until balance is regained.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Common Areas to Improve Upon</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The arm swing is limited and not sufficiently toward the rear.</li> <li>2. Arm swing is not coordinated with total body action.</li> <li>3. The forward swing of the arms are not in time with the takeoff; thereby not contributing to the jump.</li> <li>4. The arms are outstretched to the sides for stability during flight or reach backward at landing.</li> </ol>	 <p>The illustrations show a person in three stages of a horizontal jump. The first drawing shows the person in a crouched starting position with arms bent and ready to swing back. The second drawing shows the person in mid-air with arms fully extended forward. The third drawing shows the person landing with arms bent and forward, maintaining balance.</p>
<p><b>Observation Tips</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the mat edge as a tactile cue for lining up the feet.</li> <li>• Give the child a visual image of the distance to be jumped by walking forward along the mat</li> <li>• For purposes of safety ask children who are totally blind or low partially sighted to point in the direction to be jumped.</li> <li>• For young children, hold one hand.</li> </ul>	

## HORIZONTAL JUMP (STANDING)

### Trunk/Hip and Leg Action

The legs flex to a half squat position with the chest forward over the knees. The hips extend completely at take off and immediately the legs lift forward and in front of the body. The knees extend in preparation for landing and the forward movement of the body is absorbed by flexing at the knees and hips.



### Common Areas to Improve Upon

1. Emphasis of jump is in a vertical direction rather than horizontal.
2. There is a limited forward body lean at takeoff.
3. There is limited or no forward body lean throughout jump.
4. The hip flexion during the preparatory crouch is limited or excessive.
5. There is incomplete extension of the hips at takeoff.
6. The hip flexion during the flight and/or landing is restricted.
7. During the preparatory crouch, the knees are flexed greater than 90°.
8. Both feet are not used together during takeoff or landing.
9. The feet land too close together or spread apart causing the body to be off balance.
10. The legs are not extended in front of the body prior to landing.
11. Landing is made on the toes rather than the heels of the foot.
12. The knees do not flex upon landing.

## OVERHAND THROW

### Arm/Hand Action

In preparation for the throw, the arm moves back over the shoulder. The elbow leads the throwing motion as it moves horizontally forward. The forearm extends completely and the arm continues in its downward path across the front of the body to complete the follow-through.

#### Common Areas to Improve Upon

1. The throwing motion is centred at the elbow, not the shoulder.
2. The arm is held straight when brought to the rear.
3. "Windmill like" action of the arm, with little or no elbow bend.
4. Arm does not completely follow-through.
5. Follow-through is forward rather than across the body.
6. The wrist is stiff during the throw.
7. The ball is released too late or early causing throw to be inaccurate.

### Trunk Action

Initially, the non-dominant side of the body faces the direction of the throw. The hips lead the trunk rotation as the arm starts its forward motion. During the follow-through, the trunk rotates to a position where the throwing shoulder is facing the target.



#### Common Areas to Improve Upon

1. Little or no trunk rotation.
2. Shoulders rotate but hips remain stationary.
3. Trunk does not rotate completely during follow-through.
4. Excessive forward or backward lean of trunk during throwing action.



**OVERHAND THROW**

**Leg Action**

Initially, the non-dominant foot is slightly forward as the body weight is shifted to the rear leg. During the throw, body weight is shifted forward to the front foot. The front foot supports the weight and the back foot steps forward to complete the follow-through.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. Legs remain stationary and there is no forward shift in body weight.
2. A step is made to the rear prior to the throw.
3. Wrong foot is forward (i.e. same as throwing hand).
4. Forward step is not coordinated with throwing motion.



**Observation Tips**

- For the purposes of safety ask the child to point in the direction of the throw and/or throw into a throwing cage. The instructor or partner can then confirm that this is the correct direction and that it is safe to throw.
- Provide an audible target to indicate direction of throw.
- As soon as the child throws the ball, provide feedback (e.g. thrown into the floor, ball travelled to the right or left).

**KICKING**

**Head/Trunk Action**

There is a backward lean in the trunk when the foot contacts the ball. The head remains downward momentarily after contact and the trunk bends forward. There is a step forward onto the kicking foot to complete the movement.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The head does not tilt downward.
2. The head is lifted too soon.
3. The trunk remains erect or there is excessive trunk lean.
4. There is no forward shift of body weight during follow-through.
5. Excessive rotation of the trunk during the kicking action.
6. The body is off balance and a sideways step must be made to remain stable.



**Arm Action**

The arms swing in opposition with the forward step.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. There is little or no arm swing.
2. The arm swing is restricted or unpurposeful.
3. The arms do not swing in opposition to the leg swing.
4. The arms are held out to the side for stability.





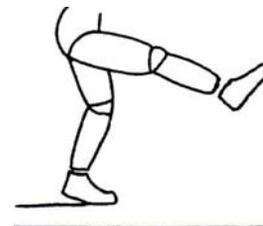
**KICKING**

**Leg Action**

The non-dominant foot steps forward as the weight is shifted. The kicking leg swings back from the hip with a bent knee. Movement is centred at the hip as the kicking leg swings forward. The kicking leg continues its upward swing after impact.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The non-dominant leg does not step forward to initiate kick.
2. All of the body's weight does not shift to the support leg.
3. There is limited backswing in the kicking leg.
4. The kicking action is initiated at the knee instead of the hip.
5. No follow-through after contact with ball.
6. Kicks ball off-centre or misses the ball.



**Observation Tips**

- Provide an audible ball for children who are totally blind or have low partial sight. For purposes of safety and equipment retrieval you may want to have the child kick into a throwing cage.
- Place ball on a ring to keep the ball from rolling.
- Have the child feel the ball with the feet and step back the appropriate distance.
- As soon as the child kicks the ball, provide feedback (e.g. ball travelled to the left or right, no backswing of the kicking leg).

**CATCHING**

**Head Action**

The head is upright and facing the direction of the thrower. Attention is on the object to be caught. The ball is tracked, that is, watched or listened for.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The head turns away as the ball is caught.
2. The eyes close as the ball is thrown.

**Arm/Hand Action**

The arms are in a position with the elbows bent and forearms held in front of the body. The ball is caught with hands only; the ball is not trapped against the body. At contact the arms "give", thus helping to absorb the force of the ball.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The arms raise to protect the face when the ball is thrown.
2. The arms and hands are held stiff and rigid as the ball is thrown.
3. The arms "trap" the ball against the body.
4. The arms and hands do not extend forward to meet the ball.
5. Timing is incorrect and the hands close too soon or too late around the ball.
6. The arms do not "give" with contact of the ball.



**Trunk/Leg Action**

The trunk maintains an upright position, with knees slightly flexed and feet shoulder-width apart. Trunk and legs align with direction of oncoming ball.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The trunk rotates away from the ball.
2. Feet are not shoulder-width apart in correct alignment.
3. Body lean is awkward, forcing an unbalanced position.
4. The trunk and legs do not align properly with oncoming ball.



**Observation Tips**

- Tell the child you are about to toss the ball and ask the child to point in the direction the ball is coming from.
- Ask child the preferred size and colour of ball (e.g. large, small, white, soft, audible).
- Make sure toss arrives between shoulder and waist height, so that the child is not fearful of being hit in the face.
- Signal the initiation of the toss (e.g. say "now" and toss ball).
- Use an auditory ball.



**STATIONARY BOUNCE**

**Arm/Hand Action**

The ball is held by both hands, with the elbows bent and the forearms in front of the body. The ball is shifted to the dominant hand and the ball is dropped so it lands forward and to the outside of the dominant foot. The hand contacts the top of the ball with the pads of the fingers (not slapped), using a flexible wrist action to impart sufficient force so the ball bounces back to hip height.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. Ball is bounced too close to the body.
2. Too much force is imparted on the ball.
3. Insufficient force is imparted on the ball.
4. Ball is slapped with the palm of the hand.
5. The hand does not contact the ball directly on the top, resulting in it bouncing away from the body.
6. child does not wait for ball to return to hip height before initiating the next bounce.



**Trunk/Leg Action**

The trunk maintains an upright position. The legs are shoulder-width apart and the non-dominant foot is slightly forward.

**Common Areas to Improve Upon**

1. The body leans forward to meet the ball.
2. The wrong foot is forward (i.e. same foot as bouncing hand).



**Observation Tips**

- Assess the child in a quiet area so that the ball can be heard contacting the floor.
- Ask the child what size and colour of ball is preferred (e.g. basketball, red playground ball, white volleyball, audible ball).