

BASIC MOVES

Developing a Foundation for Lifelong Physical Activity

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INTRODUCTION

While the long-term future of PE continues to remain uncertain (Kay, 2003), there is widespread agreement that change of some kind is needed if PE is to make a major impact on the lives of young people in the 21st Century (Penney and Chandler, 2000). Increasingly, this change agenda is being driven by the belief that the childhood years are crucial in developing a foundation for lifelong physical activity (LLPA) participation (Green, 2002; Scottish Executive, 2003). In fact, given the present data on childhood inactivity and obesity, many argue that this change is long overdue. From this perspective, the challenge for the PE profession is clear. If PE wants to take the lead in helping children develop a foundation for LLPA it must work to design, implement and evaluate programmes that not only offer enjoyable, safe and worthwhile childhood experiences, but also help to develop a solid foundation for the future. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of programmes emerging that concentrate on the development of this foundation in a detailed and sustainable manner. Subsequently, this paper will focus on Basic Moves, a programme, presently being developed at the University of Edinburgh, in partnership with sportscotland, which specifically seeks to address this issue.

BASIC MOVES: A BRIEF HISTORY

Since its inception in 2001, the Basic Moves Programme has been developing through a number of projects which

revolve around one or more of its four closely interrelated strands: programme development, staff training, resource development and research.

The most detailed work to date has been the East Lothian longitudinal project which has been tracking the impact of Basic Moves on over 250 children from the first year of their primary schooling. This project not only sees the children being offered Basic Moves in curricular PE, as an extra-curricular club and as a community activity but has also seen input from senior local authority managers, headteachers, active primary school coordinators, sport development staff, primary PE specialists, class teachers, support staff and university staff and researchers (Jess, 2003). Other projects have been carried out in the University of Edinburgh and also by active primary school coordinators throughout Scotland, primary PE specialists in Edinburgh, sports development officers in Dundee and at Biddick School Sports College in Tyne and Wear. The project at Biddick School Sports College has seen Basic Moves introduced, with considerable success, to the Key Stage I PE curriculum of the feeder primary schools. This work has been published as a Best Practice Case Study for the Youth Sport Trust (Youth Sport Trust, 2004), has received a very positive evaluation from HMI and has also received the following feedback in a recent OFSTED report.

"The innovative approach to teaching physical education is paying dividends and standards are above those expected and rising rapidly....Children in the

Foundation Stage are already showing skills and control beyond those expected for their age. Pupils in Years 1 & 2 achieve well and standards are beyond those expected. It is a similar picture in Year 6, but there is real potential for standards to rise even further as pupils move through the school."

(OFSTED, pp. 6, 9; 2003)

In addition to these projects, and following pilot courses and a successful National Conference in 2003, the Basic Moves Level 1 National Training Programme was introduced to over 100 delegates in March and June 2004, and will be followed up with Level 2 Training and a Trainers course by the summer of 2005. Training manuals (Jess, 2004) and resource materials, due to be published in the summer of 2005, will support the on-going development of these training programmes.

Therefore, within a relatively short space of time, Basic Moves has made a significant impact on PE developments, particularly in Scotland, and, with the continued dissemination of the programme, the extension of national training and the introduction of resource materials, it is likely to continue to develop for some time to come.

WHAT IS BASIC MOVES?

The Basic Moves Programme sets out to help all children develop the basic movement competence that lays the foundation for lifelong physical activity. The importance of basic movement competence cannot be overemphasised

as it means children are able to pass through the **proficiency barrier** between the simple activities of early childhood and the more complex activities of late childhood with confidence. As Seefeldt, Haubenstricker and Reuchlien (1979, cited in Graham, Holt, Hale and Parker, 2001, p. 32) have said,

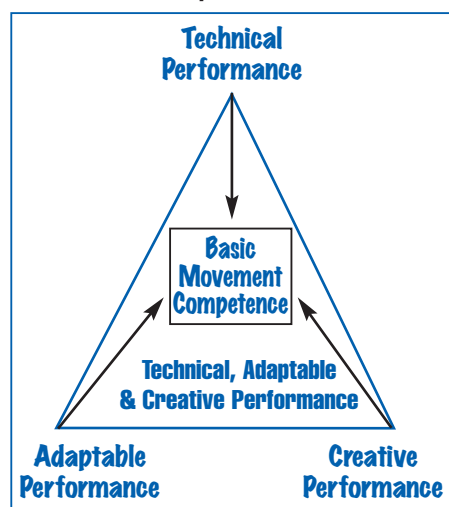
Children who possess inadequate motor skills are often relegated to a life of exclusion from organised and free play experiences of their peers, and subsequently, to a lifetime of inactivity because of their frustrations in early movement behaviour.

Simply, developing children's basic movement competence as the foundation for a lifetime of physical activity cannot be left to chance and must become the focus of children's programmes in the future (Jess and Collins, 2003).

WHAT IS BASIC MOVEMENT COMPETENCE?

Basic movement competence is the ability to consistently perform basic movements in a technically efficient, adaptable and creative manner and then apply these in different games, sports, dance and other contexts. Unfortunately, adaptability and, in particular, creativity are often exclusively linked to creative dance or 'educational' gymnastics and are ignored in other areas of PE and sport programmes. However, although efficient, technical performance is vital, without adaptability and creativity children's foundation is, at best, a series of fixed movement patterns which limit their ability to respond effectively to different situations (see Table 1).

Table 1: The components of Basic Movement Competence



HOW DO WE HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP BASIC MOVEMENT COMPETENCE?

Developing children's basic movement competence is a complex process and needs detailed planning and quality delivery over an extended period of time. The following are important considerations that teachers and coaches should reflect on if they wish to successfully support children's development of their basic moves.

1. THE BASIC MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK: THE KEY TO BASIC MOVES

The Basic Movement Framework is made up of the interrelated basic movements and movement concepts that support the technical, adaptable and creative development of basic movement competence. As such, understanding the framework is pivotal to the teaching of Basic Moves. Three main points are of importance.

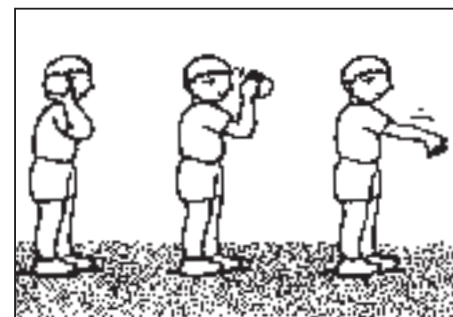
- i. Basic movements underpin the physical activities of an active life and fall into three interrelated categories (see Table 2). **Travelling Movements**, where the body, usually upright, moves from one point on the ground to another. **Object Control Movements** are those that underpin most games and involve small objects being sent, received, travelled with and received and sent. The final category is **Balance Movements** which focus on body posture and body coordination.

Table 2: The Basic Moves

Travelling Movements	Object Control Movements	Balance Movements
Basic Walk Run Rhythmical Gallop Side Slip Skip Jumps 1→1 (hop) 1→1 (leap) 1→2 2→1 2→2 (high) 2→2 (long) Apparatus Climb Swing	Send Throw Kick Punt Ball Roll Static Ball Strike Receive Catch Trap(feet) Stop (stick) Travel With Dribble (hands) Dribble (feet) Dribble (stick) Receive & Send Volley Strike (bat) Strike (stick)	Postural Upright posture Ready position Stopping Landing Coordination Cross laterality Stretch/Curl Twist/Turn Spin Sink/fall Body Roll Dodge

- ii. Most basic movements develop through 3 phases to reach technical efficiency or maturity, which is the goal of the Basic Moves programme. *The Immature Phase* occurs when the movement first appears and usually involves few body parts (see Figure 1).

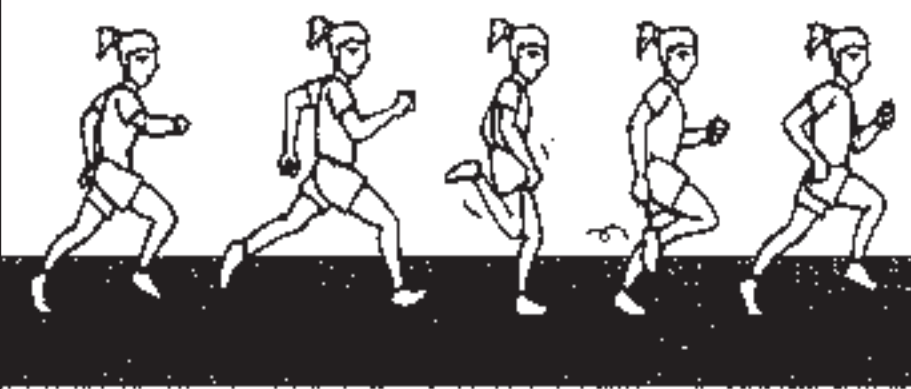
Figure 1. Overarm Throwing: The Immature Phase



Illustrated by David Faithful

The Transitional Phase is when the movement becomes more controlled, but is still not performed efficiently. Sadly, many children and adults do not pass beyond this phase, which has a significant impact on their ability to access many activities later. *The Mature Phase* involves mature criteria integrated into a well-coordinated, efficient movement (see Figure 2). Children have the potential to reach the mature phase in most basic skills by the age of 7, but this rarely, if ever, happens.

Figure 2: Running: The Mature Phase with criteria



Illustrated by David Faithful

Leg Action

- Complete extension of support leg
- Leads to high knee raise bringing heel to buttock
- Foot contacts ground with a rolling 'heel to toe' action accompanied by a slight knee and ankle bend (flexion)

Arm action

- In opposition to legs
- Close to body
- Bent at right angles
- Swing forward and backwards
- Hands slightly clasped

Upper Body

- Slight trunk rotation
- Trunk has a slight forward lean
- Head still with eyes forward

iii. Movement concepts are the means to adaptability and creativity. They are not movements, but cognitive factors that link to the basic movements to bring about adaptability and creativity.

Movement concepts are split into three categories and help children know **where (space)**, **how (effort)** and **who or what** their body moves with (**relationships**) (see Table 3).

Table 3: The Movement Concepts

SPACE (Where)	EFFORT (How)	RELATIONSHIPS (Who/What with)
<p>Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self Space General Space <p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Backward Sideways Diagonal <p>Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zigzag Curved Straight <p>Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High/medium/Low 	<p>Speed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast/slow Gradual/Sudden Erratic/Sustained <p>Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy/strong Light/soft <p>Flow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smooth/jerky Bound/free 	<p>Body Parts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Body Shape Wide/narrow Twisted Symmetrical Asymmetrical <p>Objects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over/under/through In/out Front/behind On/off <p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperative Mirror Shadow Unison Alternating Competitive Chase/flee Attack/defend

For teachers, coaches and children, understanding the Basic Movement Framework, and particularly the relationship between the basic movements and the movement concepts, is the key to successful development of basic movement competence (see Table 4).

Table 4: The Basic Movement Framework

Basic Moves

**Made
Adaptable and
Creative by
using**

**Movement
Concepts**

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS
Basic Moves is a Developmentally Appropriate Programme

PE and youth sport have traditionally focused on older children with the result that primary school programmes are often 'watered-down' or 'top-down' versions of 'adult' activities. Basic Moves is the reverse of this and is a 'bottom-up' programme that offers children movement, cognitive, social and emotional experiences appropriate to their 'age and stage'. In addition, a transition programme for the upper primary and early secondary years leading on from Basic Moves is presently being developed and piloted.

BASIC MOVES IS AN INCLUSIVE PROGRAMME

Basic Moves sets out to ensure all children benefit from the programme by focusing on children's learning. However, given the long-held misconception that children's basic movements develops naturally', traditional practices in schools and communities are often not geared up to an approach of this nature. Subsequently, to be both inclusive and effective Basic Moves has had to make changes to traditional practices to ensure all children get the chance to develop, consolidate, extend and apply their basic



There is an urgent need for innovative PE programmes.

movement competence. This has not only led to the introduction of a more generic, non-activity specific approach, but also to a novel system of task development, modifications to the structure of traditional sessions and, perhaps most significantly, a change from the traditional 'block' system to a long-term delivery model (see Table 5). This short paper does not permit consideration of these changes in any detail, but they do constitute a considerable part of the National Training Programme discussed earlier (Jess, 2004).

BASIC MOVES IS AN INTEGRATED PROGRAMME

For reasons of time, continuity and practice, Basic Moves experiences do not stop at the school gates but should be a collective community interest that involves many different agencies. Critically, this multi-agency approach needs to work in an integrated way, so that children's experiences are consistent across school

PE, extra-curricular clubs, community activities and at home/play (see Table 6). Without this integration, the influence of Basic Moves is likely to be limited in either the school or the community and the opportunity to make a significant difference to the children may be lost.

Table 6: The Integrated Nature of Basic Moves

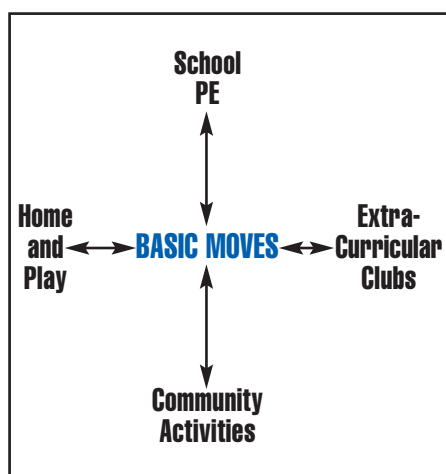


Table 5: Basic Moves compared to the Traditional PE Programme

<p>BASIC MOVES</p>	<p>GAMES (6 weeks)</p> <hr/> <p>DANCE (6 weeks)</p> <hr/> <p>GAMES (6 weeks)</p> <hr/> <p>GYMNASTICS (6 weeks)</p>	<p>Time</p>
Basic Moves Programme	Traditional PE Programme	

CONCLUSION

As children's PE, sport and physical activity experiences are increasingly seen as the basis for a lifetime of physical activity, there is an urgent need for innovative PE programmes that address this foundation development issue. Basic Moves is one such programme as it focuses on the children's basic movement competence as the key to future participation. The programme is based on the need for adults and children to have a shared understanding of the Basic Movement Framework and for adults to consistently offer children developmentally appropriate, inclusive and integrated experiences that lead them to develop this critical foundation. Children's basic movement competence has been left to chance for far too long and we must now take the opportunity to rectify this situation once and for all.

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