

CRICKET UNITES INDIA

PILOT PROJECT
COACHES PLAYBOOK

JANUARY - APRIL 2026

Designed by:

This playbook was prepared in advance of the Cricket Unites India pilot project, bringing together materials from Cricket Without Boundaries, The Right Pitch, and the OSCAR Foundation.

The pilot project was funded by Barclays Bank, as part of their partnership with MCC and MCC Foundation.

Thank you to all organisations for their contribution and efforts in developing this pilot.

December 2025



Introduction: Cricket Unites India Pilot Project

Learning Objectives: Cricket Unites India

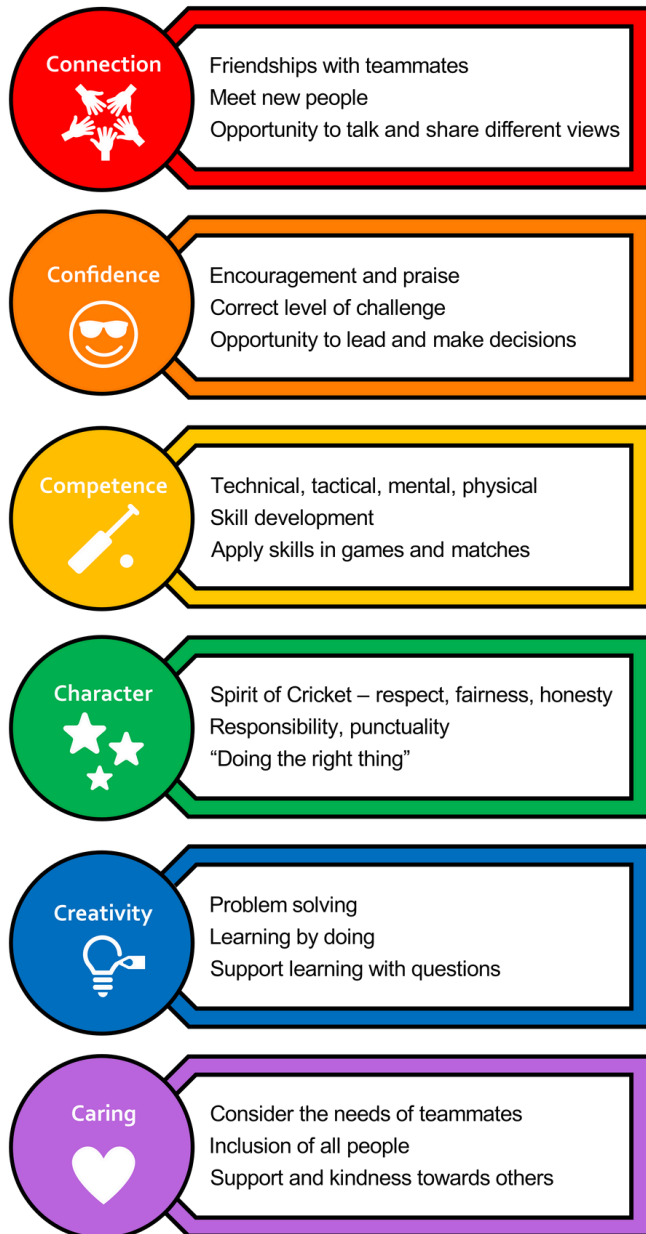
Cricket Unites: India brings together the shared vision, experience, and expertise of The MCC Foundation, Cricket Without Boundaries, The Right Pitch (TRP) and the OSCAR Foundation to deliver a pilot programme that uses cricket as a powerful vehicle for positive youth development.

Grounded in the Cricket Unites theory of change and the 6Cs framework of Positive Youth Development, this playbook recognises that cricket can do more than build technical ability: it can help young people develop the social, emotional, and cognitive skills they need to thrive on and off the field.

Across the TRP and OSCAR curricula, there is strong alignment around key “life skill” areas, including teamwork, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and creative and critical thinking. This pilot playbook weaves these shared focuses into a coherent 12-week programme structured around three core domains: connection, confidence, and creativity.

Each domain is explored through engaging, play-based cricket activities and guided reflection, helping young people build positive relationships, belief in themselves, and the ability to think flexibly and solve problems.

Running across all sessions is a cross-cutting emphasis on developing cricket competence. Coaches are encouraged to intentionally link life skills learning with batting, bowling, fielding, and game play, ensuring that cricket skills and personal development grow together.



The “6Cs” of Positive Youth Development

January 2026



Key Information: Foundations of Coaching

COACHING FOUNDATIONS

Fun, Safe, Inclusive
Players learn by playing

IMPLICIT COACHING STYLE

- Less talking more playing
- The game is the teacher
- Players solve problems



EXPLICIT COACHING STYLE

- More talking less playing
- The coach is the teacher
- Coaches solve problems



MAKE IT FUN

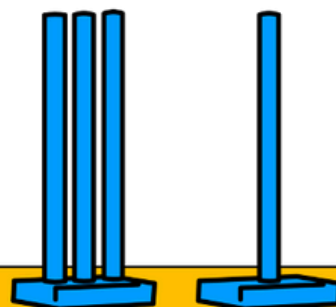
Lots of goes, lots of praise, lots of energy!

- Competition and games
- Players getting better
- Friendship and teamwork



MAKE IT SAFE

- Playing area - hazards, other people
- Equipment - soft ball / hard ball, condition
- Weather - hot, cold, rain
- Welfare - workload, rest, water / food
- Injuries - ask players, first aid
- Safeguarding - where to report concerns



MAKE IT INCLUSIVE

Everyone is involved
Everyone respects each other

Make it easier or harder

- So everyone has success
- So everyone develops

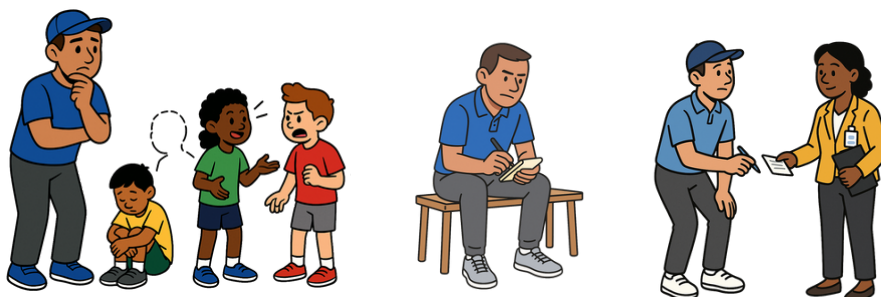
CRICKET IS FOR EVERYONE!





Key Information: Safeguarding

SPOT CONCERNS AND KNOW REPORTING PROCEDURES RECOGNISE - RECORD - REPORT



Look out for changes in your players such as becoming withdrawn, more aggressive, or a drop in their attendance - these could be a sign something is wrong.

If you see, hear, or are told something that concerns you, write down what happened and contact the designated safeguarding person from the school you are in or the organisation you work or volunteer for.

Make a note of your organisations lead safeguarding contact and reporting procedure here:



Key Information: Further Resources

Additional Games and Activities

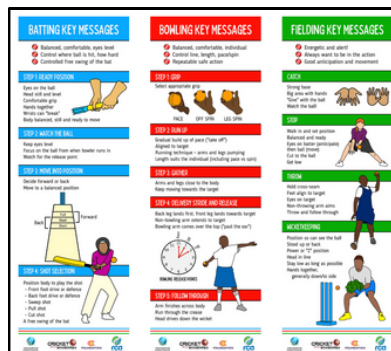
6Cs of Positive
Youth
Development
through Cricket

A Coaching Handbook



Additional batting, bowling and fielding games and activities applying the 6Cs.

ICC Foundational Technical Posters



Basic technical information for coaching.



Cricket Unites India

Weekly Structure

Coaches are encouraged to plan each session in response to their players' needs, experiences, and energy levels. You know your group best, and adapting activities to suit age, ability, confidence, and context is an important part of effective coaching.

However, to ensure consistency across the Cricket Unites programme, the core activity for each week must be included in your session plan. Where this works well as a warmup this is indicated in the playbook. This activity anchors the life skills focus for that week.

Coaches are welcome to add or substitute other games and practices as needed, and are encouraged to use the 6Cs of Positive Youth Development through Cricket Playbook for ideas of additional activities that reinforce connection, confidence, creativity, and competence.

Videos for all activities are available on the Cricket Unites YouTube channel
www.youtube.com/@cricket_unites

Week by Week overview

Week	Activity	Page	Theme	Done?
1	<u>Baseline Survey: Tennis Ball Survey.</u>	7-8	Evaluation	
2	<u>Teamwork and Goal Setting: Team Targets</u>	9	Connection	
3	<u>Teamwork and Communication: Caterpillar Catching</u>	10	Connection	
4	<u>Cooperation and Body Language: Silent Strategy Circle</u>	11	Connection	
5	<u>Leadership and Voice: Head Shoulders Knees Ball!</u>	12	Confidence	
6	<u>Discovering Our Strengths: Rapid Fire Cricket</u>	13	Confidence	
7	<u>Collective Power Building: Challenge Busters</u>	14	Confidence	
8	<u>Solving Problems: Bowling Carousel</u>	15	Creativity	
9	<u>Risk vs Reward: Batting Relay.</u>	16	Creativity	
10	<u>Decisions Under Pressure: Xs and Os</u>	17	Creativity	
11	Free play or activity mop up	-	All 3Cs	
12	<u>Endline Survey: Tennis Ball Survey.</u>	18-20	Evaluation	



Session Plan

Photocopy this page or use it as a template to plan your session, thinking about where you will include the designated activity for that week in your session.

Week:	Purpose:
Players:	Venue:
Time:	Equipment:
Warm Up	Time:
Activity 1	Time:
Activity 2	Time:
Activity 3	Time:
Cool Down / Reflection	Time:



Session Plan (example)

This is an example of a partially completed session plan for week 1.

Week: 1	Purpose: Baseline Survey
Players: 22	Venue: Example School
Time: 90 min	Equipment: balls, cones, stumps, survey cards, bat
Warm Up Collaborative Catching (6Cs playbook) • 2 stump sets, 8 cones, 2 balls • Key points of stance, big hands, watch the ball	Time: 15 min
Activity 1 Catching Tennis (6Cs playbook)	Time: 10 min
Activity 2 Hurricane Cricket (6Cs Playbook)	Time: 35 min
Activity 3 Tennis Ball Survey • 5 cards, 11 tennis balls - survey / extra ball for other players • 10 players take the survey - other group work on catching → then rotate groups → record results in playbook!!	Time: 20 min
Cool Down / Reflection Slow walk and catching in pairs	Time: 10 min



Week 1: Baseline Survey

Tennis Ball Group Survey

Learning Objectives

Understand the self-assessed levels of connection, confidence, creativity and competence amongst girl participants at the start of the programme.

Equipment

- 12 balls
- Answer cards
- Record sheet

Time

20 minutes

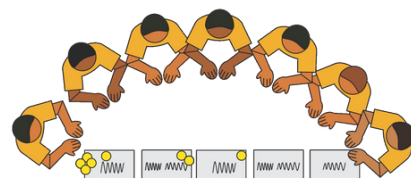
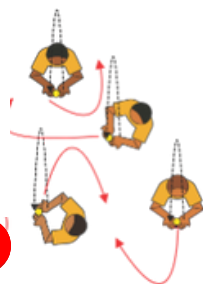
Explanation

Organise the participants into groups of 8-10. Take turns to be the "survey group" while the other groups practice different types of catches - use any spare balls to maximise the number of catches.

Survey group instructions

- Each player has one tennis ball. The players move randomly around the space, doing different catching challenges, eg:
 - Clap as many times as possible before catching the ball
 - Spin on the spot before catching the ball
 - Throw with one hand and catch with the other
- On the shout of "question" the players come together to answer a question.
- Read the question out loud (listed below), give players time to think about their answer and then on the count of 3 ask them to put a ball on their answer.
- Record the number of balls on each answer, and then set the next challenge.

Activity: Tennis Ball Survey



Survey Questions

All questions should be answered: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never
Draw faces to represent the answers, you can also add the answers in text.



1. I feel comfortable talking with others during sessions.
2. I feel confident in myself.
3. When something is difficult, I try new ideas.
4. I can do most activities in the sessions well.



Week 1: Baseline Survey Data Collection Record

Group name	Info	Question 1 Comfortable	Question 2 Confident	Question 3 Difficult	Question 4 Do well
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____



Week 2: Connection Teamwork and Goal Setting

Learning Objectives

Strengthen connections between teammates by identifying targets which they will work towards over the next block of work.

Equipment

- 2 balls
- 16 cones
- 4 stump sets
- 4 pieces of paper and marker pens

Time

20 minutes

Warm up!

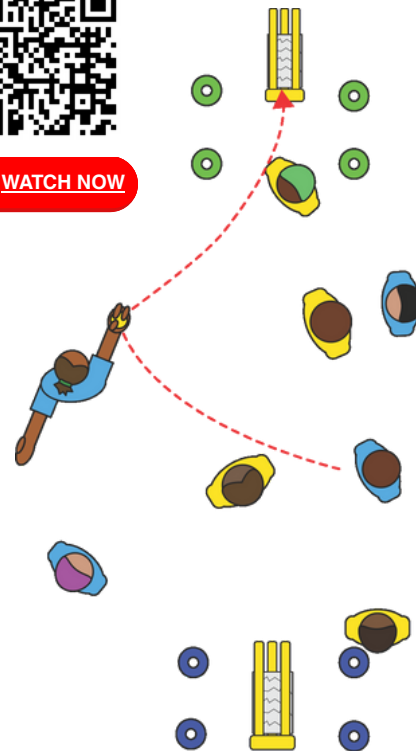
Explanation

- Split each group into two teams. In larger groups, split the group into 4 teams and run two games side by side.
- The aim is to hit the stumps, which is the target.
- Players cannot move with the ball in their hand, and cannot go into the square of cones.
- They must throw the ball with an underarm throw, passing amongst themselves to try to score. The team who hits their target the most times wins.
- After 5 minutes, take a break and ask players to propose Team Targets which they write on the sheets of paper (5 minutes)
- **Team Targets: What do you want to learn and develop over the next 10 weeks?**
 - **Cricket Skills**
 - **Life Skills**
- As teams to present these to the rest of the group (5 minutes)
- Loop these over the stumps (see diagram) - now teams will aim to hit the targets (2 points) or the stumps (1 point).

Activity: Team Targets



WATCH NOW



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: Why is setting goals important for us to develop and grow?

A: (example) So we know why we are doing the different skills and practices in our sessions, so we can plan how we will get to our goals.

Q: What will we do over the next 10 weeks to help us achieve these goals?

A: (example) Turn up on time to each session, support each other, check our progress against our goals.



Week 3: Connection Teamwork and Communication

Learning Objectives

Strengthen connections between teammates through fielding tasks that require collaboration and teamwork.

Equipment

- 4 balls
- 16 cones
- 4 stump sets

Time

10 - 15 min

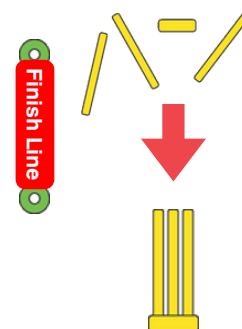
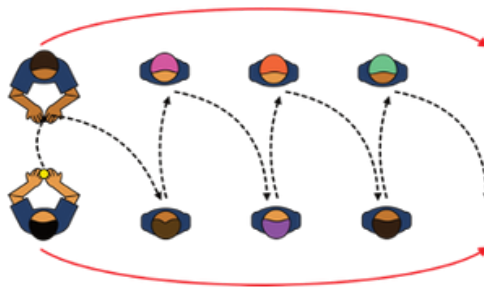
Warm up!

Explanation

- Split into teams of 6-10 players. Each team forms a caterpillar with a tennis ball at the start.
- The ball is thrown zig-zag down the line. Once a player has thrown the ball they run to the end of the line, their feet touching the foot of the end player.
- Once a player has caught a ball while their foot is touching a cone on the finish line, the team race to build their stumps set. The first stump set completed wins.

Change the challenge by increasing or decreasing the distance of the catch, introducing one handed catches (with both left and right hands), requiring teams to start again if they drop the ball, using a hard ball.

Activity: Caterpillar Catching



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: How can communication help us do well in this game?

A: (example) Create and share successful strategies - for example how wide our legs should be, where we should throw the ball for an easy catch, how we will put out stump set together.

Q: How can supporting our teammates help us do well in this game?

A: (example) It builds our teammates self belief and makes them feel valued and part of the team.



Week 4: Connection Cooperation and Body Language

Learning Objectives

Strengthen connections and cooperation between players by developing non-verbal communication skills including body language, eye contact and signals.

Equipment

- 4+ balls

Time

15 minutes

Warm up!

Explanation

Form groups of 5–8 students, each group stands in a circle, adjust the size of the group based on the age of the players. Give each group a soft ball.

Round 1 – Simple Silent Pass:

- The ball must be passed around the circle without speaking.
- They can pass underarm, roll, or toss—however they choose.
- Goal: Complete 1 full round without dropping the ball or talking.

Round 2 – Create a Pattern:

- Without talking, students must silently agree on a passing order (e.g., to the 3rd person to the right).
- They try to complete 3 full cycles of this pattern.
- If someone makes a mistake, restart silently!

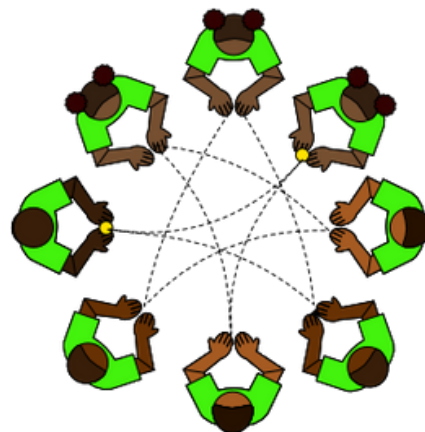
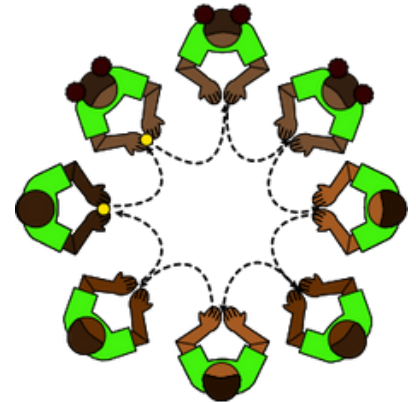
Round 3 – New Constraints:

- Coach introduces new rules like: One person closes their eyes. One hand only. You must signal before passing.

Activity: Silent Strategy Circle



WATCH NOW



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: How did your team communicate without words?

A: (example) We used eye contact before passing. People pointed or nodded. We slowed down when someone looked confused.

Q: Who led the team, and how could you tell?

A: (example) One person started showing where to pass. Someone helped others stay calm.



Week 5: Confidence Leadership and Voice

Learning Objectives

Give all players an opportunity to lead a simple warm-up activity, giving instructions and organising the group.

Equipment

- 2 balls or cones per player

Time

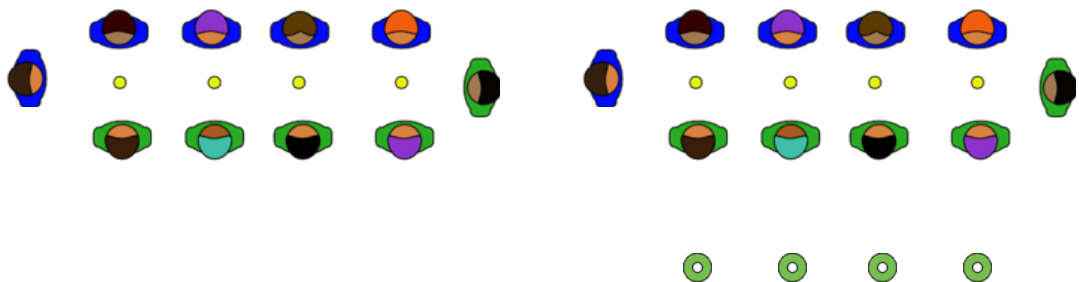
10 - 15 min

Warm up!

Explanation

- Divide the larger group into smaller teams of 8-10 players
- Start with 2 players as leaders for each group. The rest of the group is organised into pairs, who stand with a ball (or cone) between them.
- The leaders call out different body parts, which players touch, or actions, which players do.
- When the leaders call out "ball" each player in the pair tries to be the first to grab the ball (or cone). Score a point if you are the first to grab the ball. Change the leaders after around 3 minutes.
- Encourage leaders to be creative with the movements they shout out, for example pretending to be an animal, dancing, cricket umpiring signals, etc. You can make this into more of a physical challenge by adding cones players run to when they shout "run" / "skip" / "jump" etc (right-hand diagram).

Activity: Head Shoulders Knees Ball!



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: How can active listening help us do well in this game?

A: (example) Focusing on what the coach or our team mate is saying and listening closely.

Q: What were your favourite movements your teammates shouted out? Why?

A: (example) When they shouted out cricket umpiring signals, because it tested my cricket knowledge.



Week 6: Confidence

Discovering Our Strengths

Learning Objectives

Players begin exploring self-identity, recognise personal likes, strengths, and interests and introduce themselves in a group. Players discuss how their different strengths make them a stronger team.

Equipment

- 2 stump sets
- 3 balls
- 2 bats
- 12 cones
- Bat drawing & pens

Time

30 mins

Explanation

Divide group into three teams - batting, fielding, and super strengths.

- The batter hits the three balls off the cones through the cones, then starts to run around the stumps.
- The fielders cannot cross the safety line until the last ball has been hit. The fielders work together to return the balls to the cones.
- The batter stops running when the balls are returned. The number of times they have run around the stumps is added to the team score.

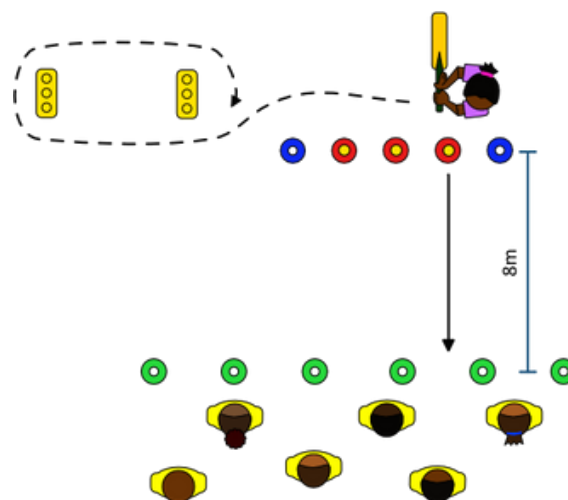
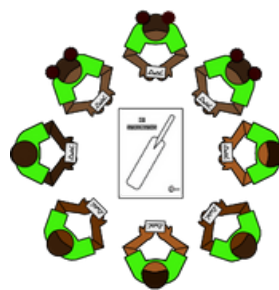
While the game goes on, the super strengths team completes a strengths bat

- Ask each player to write on the "strengths bat" by drawing or writing one thing they are proud of or something they feel they do well.

Every batter in the team bats, then the teams rotate. Batting → Fielding → Super Strengths

- Once finished, all teams can work together to decorate the drawing of cricket bat (or a cricket bat!) with all the team strengths - discussing and comparing similarities and differences.

Activity: Rapid Fire Cricket



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: Did you learn anything new about yourself? Did you learn anything new about your teammates?

A: (example) I realised I'm better at throwing than I thought when I had to return the ball quickly.

Q: How many different strengths did we have as a team? What is the advantage of lots of different strengths?

A: (example) Not everyone was good at the same thing, but together we covered everything.



Week 7: Confidence

Collective Power Building

Learning Objectives

Discuss shared challenges and how we can collectively “throw them out”. Build collective power (“we power”).

Equipment

- 4 stump sets
- 10+ cones
- 6+ balls
- 4 pieces of paper and marker pens

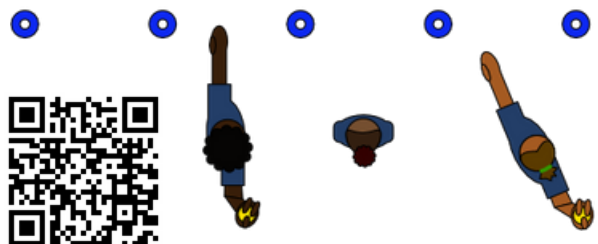
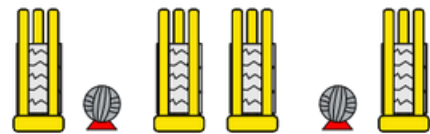
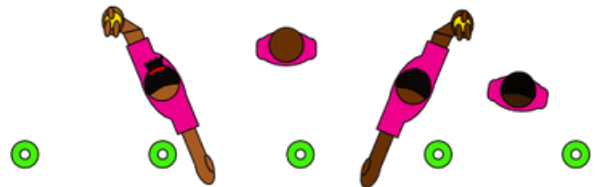
Time

15 - 20 mins

Explanation

- Divide the group into 2 equal teams
- Place the stump sets and balls on cones side-by-side 10m from each group, with a line for each group to stand behind.
- Each team starts with 3+ tennis balls.
- On the shout of go, the players start throwing at the targets.
- The teams aim and throw overarm at the targets, the coach removes stumps and balls that are hit and puts them next to the team that hit them.
- Fielders cannot cross the line of cones, coaches should return any “stuck” balls.
- The winner is the team that knocks the most stumps over/balls off their cones.
- After 5 minutes, divide the group into 4 and give each group a marker pen and paper.
- Ask groups to write their answers to: **What are the problems or challenges that stop us playing cricket?** (5 mins)
- Play the game again as a group - this time with the challenges added. See how quickly we can knock down all the challenges.

Activity: Challenge Busters



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: Are there any challenges we can change just amongst ourselves?

A: (example) We can practise more and not give up when something feels hard. We can make sure everyone gets a turn.

Q: For other challenges, who can we get help from to change those challenges?

A: (example) Parents or family members, to help us come to sessions or practise at home.



Week 8: Creativity Problem Solving

Learning Objectives

Players learn to think critically about their own learning and problem solving. They reflect on how they gather the information they need to solve a problem and the importance of perseverance in developing new skills and solving problems.

Equipment

- 4 balls
- 28 cones
- 3 batting tees/cones
- 4 stump sets
- 1 large ball

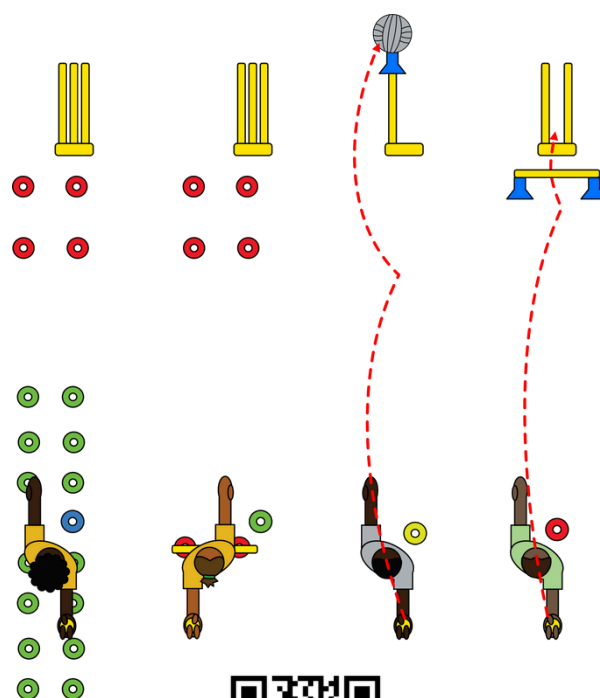
Time

25 mins

Explanation

- In this bowling game, the coach should give very few instructions. Instead, players explore the four bowling challenges independently for 10 minutes (2-3 minutes per challenge).
- Then, the coach should ask the players questions to draw out their understanding of the bowling challenges such as:
 - What kind of ball is this helping us to bowl?
 - What is the purpose of the cones in this challenge?
 - What is the purpose of the stumps in this challenge?
 - What can you do to hit the target more often in this challenge?
- After asking the questions, give players another opportunity to explore the challenges.
- You may want to finish with a quick competition - divide the group into 4 equal teams, give each team 1 minute on each challenge.
- Award points for hitting the target - award more points for the more challenging targets.

Activity: Bowling Carousel



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: What did you try first when you didn't know the answer? Did you copy someone or experiment?

A: (example) Creative players try ideas, notice what happens, and then adjust, that's how learning works.

Q: What helped you improve?

A: (example) Trying and practicing helped me remember and learn.



Week 9: Creativity

Risk vs Reward

Learning Objectives

Explore easy and difficult options when batting, and discuss how to balance risk and reward when making decisions in cricket and in life.

Equipment

- 4 balls
- 24 cones
- 4 batting tees/cones
- 4 stump sets
- 4 bats

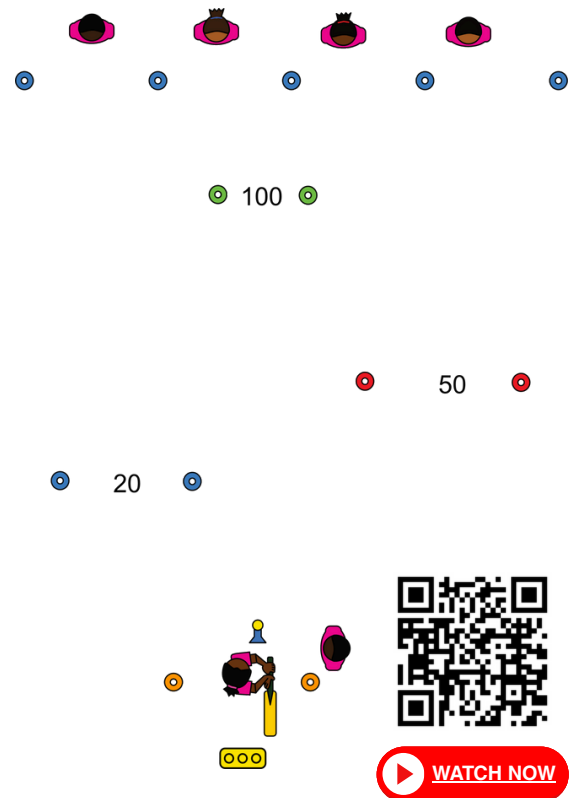
Time

25 mins

Explanation

- Split the group into 2-4 equally sized teams.
- Set different batting targets for players using cones - assign points based on the difficulty of hitting the ball towards the cones.
- Batters must be stood in the crease when they hit the ball. They may hit the ball off a cone/tee, a drop feed, or an underarm feed.
- Each batter must hit one ball at a time, and every batter must take their go before the first batter goes again. They score points for their team based on which target they hit the ball through.
- Non-batters must be stood behind the back line before the ball is hit, except for one who can stand near the batter to feed the ball.
- Give the teams 5 minutes to explore the different ways that they can hit the ball.
- Give the teams 5 minutes to score as many points as possible.
- After 5 minutes, give teams 2 minutes to discuss their strategy.
- Give the teams 5 more minutes to beat their score.
- The winners are the team with the most points and all the teams who beat their previous score.

Activity: Batting Relay



Life-Skills Discussion

Q: Which targets were easy? Which were difficult? Did everyone choose the same targets?

A: (example) We went for easy points first. We took risks when we were behind.

Q: When is it okay to take a risk? When is it better to play safe?

A: (example) In cricket and in life we're always choosing between safe options and risky ones. Good decisions depend on the situation.



Week 10: Creativity

Decisions Under Pressure

Learning Objectives

Solve problems and make decisions as a group under pressure.

Equipment

- Minimum 6 balls (3 per colour)
- Minimum 11 cones

Time

10 mins

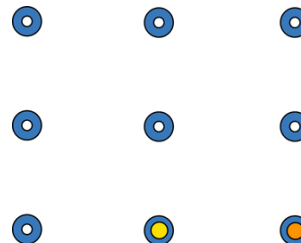
Warm up!

Explanation

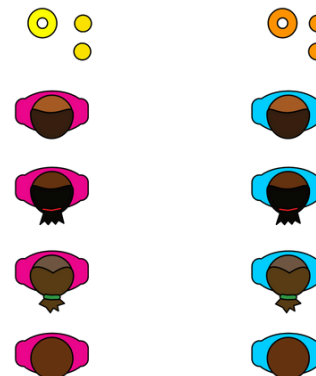
- Players play a relay-style X's and O's game.
- Each team has different coloured balls - use tape to mark one teams' ball if needed. Each team has 3 balls.
- Players take it in turns to run out to the cones and place their ball on a cone.
- The second player can go only after the first player returns to the starting point.
- Players can place a new ball or move an existing ball.
- The team that completes a line first win.
- Give teams time to discuss their strategy, and then play again.

In large groups, set up 2 or more games side by side.

Activity: Xs and Os



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Life-Skills Discussion

Q: How did pressure affect your decisions?

A: (example) We panicked and forgot our plan. We didn't think properly.

Q: What helped your team make better decisions the second time?

A: (example) We talked more. We waited instead of rushing.



Week 12: Endline Survey

Tennis Ball Group Survey

Learning Objectives

Understand the self-assessed levels of connection, confidence, creativity and competence amongst girl participants at the end of the programme.

Equipment

- 12 balls
- Answer cards
- Record sheet

Time

20 minutes

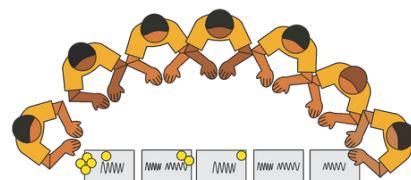
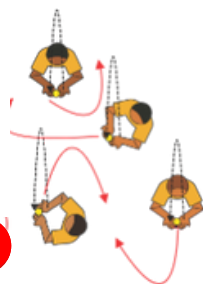
Explanation

Organise the participants into groups of 8-10. Take turns to be the "survey group" while the other groups practice different types of catches - use any spare balls to maximise the number of catches.

Survey group instructions

- Each player has one tennis ball. The players move randomly around the space, doing different catching challenges, eg:
 - Clap as many times as possible before catching the ball
 - Spin on the spot before catching the ball
 - Throw with one hand and catch with the other
- On the shout of "question" the players come together to answer a question.
- Read the question out loud (listed below), give players time to think about their answer and then on the count of 3 ask them to put a ball on their answer.
- Record the number of balls on each answer, and then set the next challenge.

Activity: Tennis Ball Survey



Survey Questions

All questions should be answered: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never
Draw faces to represent the answers, you can also add the answers in text.



1. I feel comfortable talking with others during sessions.
2. I feel confident in myself.
3. When something is difficult, I try new ideas.
4. I can do most activities in the sessions well.



Week 12: Endline Survey Data Collection Record

Group name	Info	Question 1 Comfortable	Question 2 Confident	Question 3 Difficult	Question 4 Do well
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Boys:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Girls:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
	Age:	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____
		😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____	😊 : ____



Week 12: Endline Survey

Coach Reflections

Reflection Questions for Coaches

Which activities or sessions were most effective in engaging players and developing life skills? Why? (Consider connection, confidence, creativity, and cricket skills.)

Which activities were less effective or harder to deliver? What challenges did you encounter?

What adaptations did you make to the sessions or activities, and what prompted those changes? (For example: age, group size, ability levels, time, space, or context.)

Based on your experience, what changes or improvements would you suggest for future versions of the Cricket Unites programme or playbook?

Cricket Unites India

Pilot Project Playbook

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CONTACT US!

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