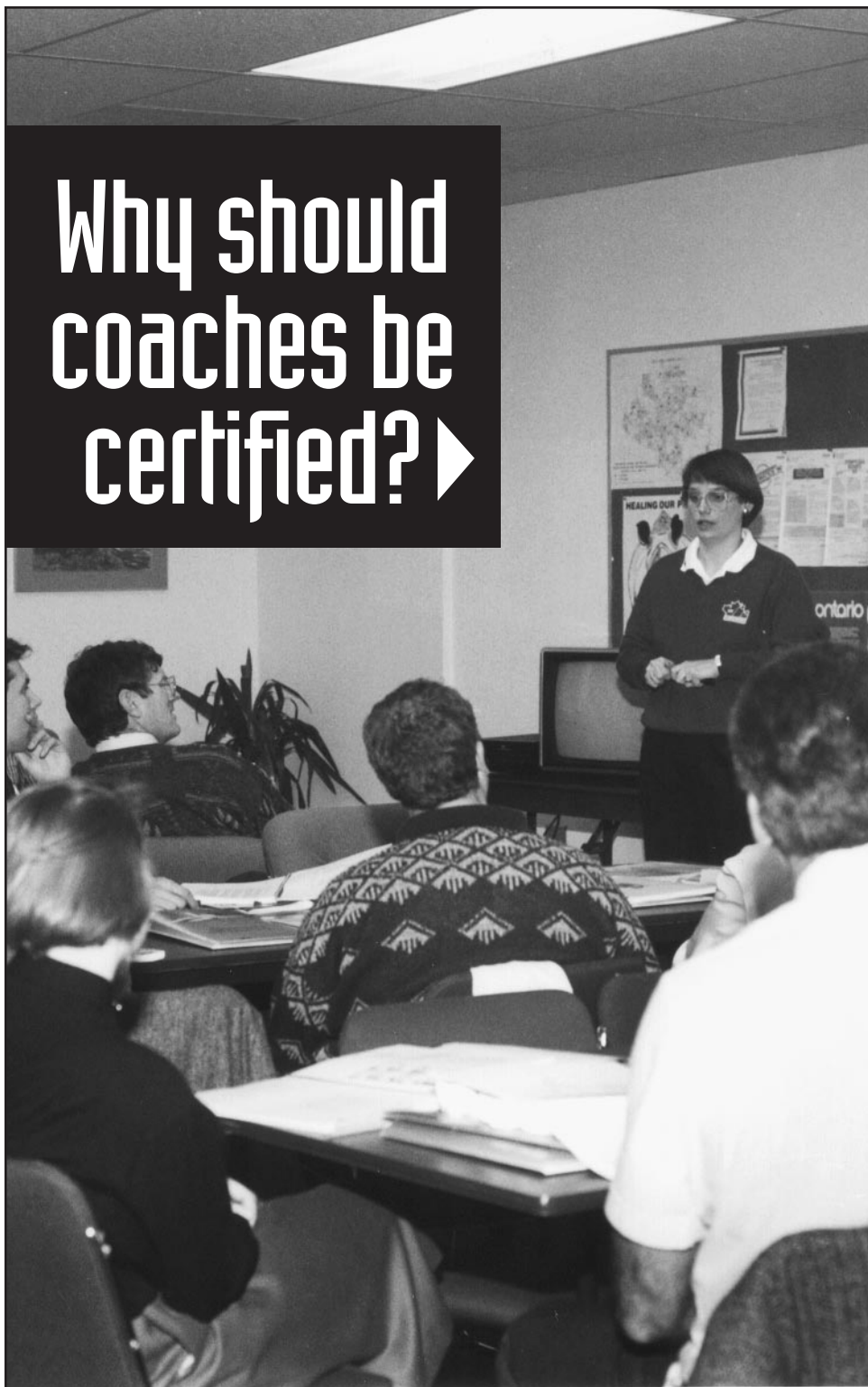


Why should
coaches be
certified? ▶



Historically, coaches were selected for their athletic accomplishments and the all-too-common belief that, “I played the sport for 20 years so I can surely coach it.” Even though the attitude that ‘coaching requires no special skills and anyone can do it’ still exists, experts agree that today’s coaches need training in order to be effective.

Sport administrators now recognize that understanding sport techniques is only one component of being a good coach. In order to do the job effectively, coaches need to know a great deal about children. How do children grow and develop? What can coaches do to build self-esteem? What is the best method to teach new skills?

Coaches are the most important link in providing a healthy sport experience. Good coaches balance a sound philosophy of coaching with high ethical standards and a solid understanding of skill learning, growth and development, and the needs of athletes. Parents should feel a moral responsibility to determine whether their children are in the hands of competent and ethical role models.

In sport, there is one recognized formal educational track — the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). This five-level program trains coaches from novice to master in more than 60 different sports. Over 600,000 coaches have participated in the program since its inception in 1974.

For coaches working at the community, school, or club level, the NCCP teaches the general principles of coaching such as how to plan a practice, how to motivate young children, and how to teach skills, as well as the sport-specific information on skills and drills, rules of play, strategy, and tactics. The Coaching Association of Canada (CAC), the national body which oversees the development of the program, works in collaboration with the federal and provincial/territorial governments, and national, provincial/territorial sport organizations to offer courses in local community centres, colleges, universities, and other host sites across Canada. Home study programs are also available.

Today, minimum levels of coaching certification are required by many sport organizations before coaches are certified to practice. The CAC recommends that all coaches, whether novice or master, be certified in the NCCP. If you are interested in becoming a coach, contact the CAC at the address listed at the beginning of this book.