

YOUTH LEAGUE

Development Guide



**International
Bowling Campus**

Youth Development



Development Guide

Developing a successful youth league requires a systematic approach, a can-do attitude and the acknowledgment that trial and error is a natural part of the journey.

The systematic approach outlined in this guide will provide you with programming tactics and strategy to develop a successful youth league program in your center.

No matter the combination you wish to use, the approach remains the same:

Get Them In, Get Them Excited and Get Them Committed.

Step 1: Get them in!

- **BOWLING BLAST OFF**
- **8 FOR 8**
- **BOY SCOUTS & GIRL SCOUTS**
- **HOME-SCHOOL BOWLING**
- **AFTER-SCHOOL BOWLING**

Step 2: Get them excited!

- **USA BOWLING 101: LEARN TO BOWL**
- **USA BOWLING: A MAINSTREAM SPORTS MODEL**
- **STANDARD YOUTH PROGRAM: SATURDAY MORNING**

Step 3: Get them committed!

- **USA BOWLING: A MAINSTREAM SPORTS MODEL**
- **USA BOWLING DRAFT LEAGUE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE IBC YOUTH TEAM AT 817-385-8420 OR CONTACTUS@IBCYOUTH.COM
OR VISIT THE YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER AT BPAA.COM/YOUTHRRESOURCECENTER**



Bowling Blast Off

A **Bowling Blast Off** is a one-day extravaganza designed to get the community, especially kids, excited about bowling and get them to return to your center.

Why It Works

Welcome the community into your center! This event has a place for everyone in your community to be involved. Kids, families, community leaders, local businesses, etc. More than bowling, the Blast Off is an activity-filled event meant to generate smiles and excitement for all, while providing an opportunity for centers to promote league sign-ups, birthday parties, coaching programs and more!

Steps to Success

- Start preparing four to six weeks in advance
- Determine your budget and what activities you want to offer
- Advertise the event and invite participants
- Solicit volunteers to help with the event and train your staff
- Invest in decorations and prizes
- Have literature available to explain leagues, birthday parties and other center events
- Have a plan to sign up kids for coaching clinics, learn-to-bowl programs and youth leagues
- Invite community leaders to attend
- Utilize cross-promotional opportunities with other local businesses



8 for 8

The **8 for 8** program is an easy to understand and affordable introductory league program that introduces bowling to kids. Participants pay \$8 for 8 weeks and get their very own bowling ball.

Why it Works

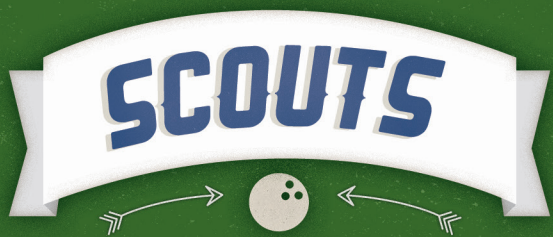
Not only are new participants getting introduced to the sport, they are experiencing a personalization by receiving their own ball. Having their own equipment encourages them to commit to a future program, or just visit your center more often.

Best of all, the program can be adapted to fit your needs. Maybe 8 for 8 is not enough, try 10 for 10. What about getting an entry level reactive ball? 12 for 12. Centers can increase opportunity by making the league an Adult/Youth league.

The 8 for 8 method provides centers an adaptable program that is marketable, easy to promote, and can generate increased activation opportunities.

Steps to Success

- Market your program inside and outside your center to new bowlers
- Order the bowling balls at the start of the program
- Encourage your bowlers to transition into a learn-to-bowl class
- Partner with your pro shop to secure pricing
- Have pro shop staff assist with weight selection and measurement
- Host a fun tournament/party event where participants can use new ball



Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts

Scouts are always looking for places to host their events. Get Scouts into your center by partnering with your local Scouting groups as a host for meetings or celebrations. These events provide a great opportunity to reach a new audience and increase youth participation by introducing them to your youth programming. The sky is the limit on programs to create connectivity, however there must be frequency and purpose to build this community.

Why it Works

With 2.9 million Boy Scouts and 3.1 million Girl Scouts, every bowling center globally has Scouting at its doorstep, and building a program using existing scouting requirements will broaden the reach for each center and improve the financial position of the industry.

Steps to Success

1. **Establish a meeting with the Scouting Executive** - Every major geographical area has a Boy and Girl Scout Council, and each Council has a developed database of all their members. Work with councils by using email newsletters, district monthly meetings and national scouting conventions to broaden awareness. Locate your local councils by visiting scouting.org and girlscouts.org.
2. **Develop a committee** at the bowling center and within Scouting. Two working committees strengthens clear communication and knowledge-sharing opportunities.
3. **Set the Target** (Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and Brownies), the date, event and cost for participation
4. **Speak at District Meetings** - Every month scouting has district meetings. Call a district leader today and get on their schedule.
5. **Scouting Awards** - Boy Scouts has defined awards for Cub Scouts, and bowling fulfills a requirement of the merit badges of Sporting and Athletics. Content provided for the Cub Scout offering can be used in Girl Scouts.
6. **Additional Opportunities** - Use elite youth to help with the program by coaching Cub Scouts and Brownies. At the end of the Scout event, have the elite youth bowlers show scouts what a competitive bowler looks like and build connectivity. Hold a tournament to benefit scouting at the end with competitive bowlers on Cub and Brownie teams. Invite the council board of directors to a bowl with the elite youth for a day.
7. **Invite a Friend Day** - Have a bowling offer to bowl with a friend. Use a point system that rewards the packs that bring the most friends to the bowling offering.
8. **Help Scouting** - During the fall recruiting, use Scouting PSAs on video monitors and have scouting applications ready. Become a charter organization and have a pack or a troop meeting on a regular basis at a bowling center; help with Eagle projects to build a joint community between Scouting and bowling.

HOME SCHOOL BOWLING

Home-School Bowling

Develop a program to help home-schooled students fulfill their physical education needs. Bring students into your center when you have open lanes during normal school hours.

Why it Works

There isn't a better time to get students on the lanes than when your business is in its slow time. Until now, home-schoolers are a relatively untapped market in the bowling community. Not only are they always looking for extracurricular activities, but often times they become longtime loyal customers and advocates.

Steps to Success

- Research your state's requirements and recommendations for physical education credit for home-schoolers.
- If credit is not available, bowling still offers a fun and affordable option for home-schoolers to participate in
- Determine your program's format and benefits, including cost
- Market your program
 - Work with home-school groups
 - Media placements in home-school magazines or other publications
 - Newsletters
 - Look out for kids and parents who come in during school hours when other youths are typically in school and provide them with program information
- Check in with your bowlers and parents throughout the program
- Follow up with your bowlers and parents about the next league kickoff
- Utilize the Bowler's Ed Curriculum

Offer parents the convenience of an After-School program at your bowling center. Pick up children from school and bring them to your center for an afternoon of homework help and fun.

Why it Works

Youth are in need of a place to go after school and centers have a lot to offer. The options are unlimited when it comes to delivering an after-school program. While there is a lot involved in an after-school program, it can pay big dividends if done well.

Steps to Success

- Research licensing and childcare standards for your state
- Research transportation options in your area and determine what works best for you
 - Purchase your own van/bus or rent transportation services
- Design your program
 - Determine the benefits, such as homework help or arcade games
 - Set up your program format
 - Determine costs
- Hire help
 - Counselors or employees are a key component
- Market your program
 - Get your flyers into local schools (research policies and procedures prior to delivering flyers)
 - Network with local churches and scout groups
 - Distribute information in the center
 - Place an ad in the local or family print communication
- Communicate other program opportunities with your after-school kids and their parents



USA Bowling 101

Learn to Bowl

USA Bowling 101 is a short-season introductory program that focuses on teaching the fundamentals of bowling to youth athletes before graduating into a competitive league. The first seven weeks focus on learning everything from bowling etiquette to a four-step approach, while score is not kept at any point during the exercises. It is important for beginners to not allow results to dictate their progress.

Why it Works

Attracting youth to try a new sport can be a difficult task. Uncertainty in skill and performance make the experience stressful for the youth participant, sometimes resulting in the participant leaving the program.

USA Bowling 101 serves as a prerequisite to a USA Bowling league, or other competitive youth league. Instead of youth learning the sport, while simultaneously competing, the 101 program focuses solely on the development aspect of bowling.

This allows new participants to learn, achieve success and have fun amongst a group of peers with a similar skill level. Incorporating a 101 program builds confidence in the youth as they move into the next competitive level offered by the center, increasing likelihood the bowler will continue their participation.

Steps to Success

- Assign your 101 Program's Lead Instructor
- Structure your program and decide on a program fee
- Recruit Team Leaders and distribute guides
- Market your program
 - Decorate your center
 - Create an online presence on your center's website
 - Get flyers into local schools, provide handouts to local day cares, church groups and scout groups in your community
- Graduate your bowlers into another program or league
- Develop a process to determine skill progression to best place bowlers on appropriate teams or leagues



USA Bowling

A Mainstream Sports Model

USA Bowling is a mainstream youth sports model that shares a similar team-based structure to other youth sports. Children of the same age and skill level interact with a coach through instruction and regular practice and then compete with other teams on a short eight-to-12-week time frame with no handicap. Kids benefit from instruction by qualified coaches, learn important life skills, including sportsmanship and competitive play, and, most importantly, have fun!

Why it Works

Because of how other mainstream sports work, kids and parents are more prone to understand and commit to short-season programs. With this program's emphasis on skill development, you take the first steps to developing lifelong bowlers.

Additionally, USA Bowling is a great format to begin bowlers on their journey to becoming high school and collegiate bowlers.

Steps to Success

- Assign your Program Commissioner
- Design your model and schedule options
- Decide on program benefits and the program fee
- Recruit volunteer coaches
- Market your program
 - Decorate your center
 - Create an online presence on your center's website
 - Get flyers into local schools, provide handouts to local day cares, church groups and scout groups in your community
- Invest in a USA Bowling Coaching Seminar to train volunteers
- Develop a process to determine skill progression to best place bowlers on appropriate teams or leagues.



Standard Youth Program

Saturday Morning

A standard youth program typically runs on Saturday morning and consists of divisions based on age. These bowlers have gone through the program levels and are your more committed group that might participate in tournaments or multiple leagues outside of the Saturday program.

Why It Works

You have worked through the previous programs to build a successful youth program and now must work to maintain it. Your youth programs have been built in order to help your center ensure success well into the future by creating lifetime bowlers.

Steps to Success

- Determine where your youth will come from and explore potential sources beyond your other programs (ex. booster clubs, PTAs, local schools, customer data base, community groups, church groups, other youth sports programs)
- Assemble a strong team of coaches
- Host an open house to answer questions and meet parents and kids
 - Use this opportunity to poll parents and kids to find out what they want out of their youth bowling program
- Provide a season schedule
- Add fun to the program
 - Have theme days such as Beat the Coach Day!
 - Halloween costume competition
 - Holiday potlucks
 - Holiday tournaments
- Don't be afraid to incorporate a tier system into your program to encourage development, skill progression and achievement



The Draft League

The Draft League is an eight-to-16-week program that shares a similar team-based structure to USA Bowling. Through a tryout/draft, children are placed on teams of two to four bowlers and interact with a coach through instruction and regular practice. Teams compete with one another on an eight-to-16-week time frame for awards and scholarship.

Why It Works

Combining the fundamentals of USA Bowling with scholarship brings together new and competitive bowlers. This program offers existing bowlers the opportunity to compete in a mainstream sports model while offering new bowlers the opportunity to become more competitive. The Draft League is a great bridge between your Standard Youth Program and USA Bowling Program.

Steps to Success

- Assign your Program Commissioner
- Design your model and schedule options
- Decide on program benefits and the program fee
- Recruit volunteer coaches
- Market your program
 - Decorate your center
 - Create an online presence on your center's website
 - Get flyers into local schools and in your community
 - Provide handouts to local day cares, church groups and scout groups
- Conduct the draft and host an orientation meeting
 - Choose a date where all coaches and bowlers can attend
 - After a set amount of time or number of games for a tryout, rank players into groups
 - Once groups have been decided, coaches will choose one player from each group until all players have been selected
- Launch your program
- Graduate your bowlers into a second season or another program

GENERAL

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