

NICA Discovery

Biking program for 7-11 year olds



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INTRODUCTION

Elementary aged riders are special and FUN to work with. Elementary-aged riders will be used to lots of adult control over their environments. Their social, emotional, and physical skill range will vary widely. You can support them in their NICA journey by being responsive to their needs and adjusting your leadership as needed. The key thing for you to remember when working with Discovery kiddos is to lead with patience, compassion, and empathy.

Part ONE - NICA Philosophy and Culture

Competency- Describe the history, structure, and philosophy of NICA

Learning Outcomes: (Come up short phrase for Key Concept of this)

1. Recall the history of NICA
2. Identify the basic organizational structure of NICA
3. Identify the basic organizational structure of NICA Discovery
4. Define NICA programs
5. Recall mission and vision of NICA
6. List the NICA core values
7. Describe your role in representing NICA and upholding NICA Core Values
8. Identify the key points in the NICA Discovery Participant Code of conduct
9. Describe your role in upholding NICA Culture through the code of conduct

Introduction

Since 2009, NICA has welcomed and supported thousands of youth to the sport and community of Mountain Biking. The Mission, Vision, Core Values and philosophy of NICA remains relatively unchanged. As a group leader or volunteer with NICA, you are on the front lines every day, face to face, with kids who want to be involved and engaged in this amazing community of riders hopefully for long after their NICA time ends. They may have different motivations to be in your group, but in the end, they want a great experience through riding bikes with friends.

In this module, we will learn about the history, culture, organizational structure and mission and vision of NICA and NICA Discovery. We'll also explore the core values and how you can model them in the NICA community. We'll look at some of the programs NICA offers and we'll discuss the NICA Discovery code of conduct. Finally, we'll end with a reminder that your number one priority is the safety of the children you'll be working with. By understanding the history and culture of NICA, you will be better equipped to inspire the next generation of riders.

History of NICA (LO1)

- 1998- Matt Fritzinger starts the Berkeley High School Bicycle Club
- 2004 “NorCal MTB Racing League” nonprofit is formed
- 2009- National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) is created as the National governing body for HS mountain biking.
- 2011- First NICA National Conference Held in Berkeley, California with 5 leagues
- 2015- NICA is honored with Interbike’s “Next Generation Award”.
- 2016-Trek pledges \$1M to support NICA Programs.
- 2018- NICA launches GRiT (Girls Riding Together) initiative to recruit and retain more female student-athletes and coaches.
- 2019- Adventure program launches to provide non-competitive mountain biking activities for NICA student-athletes.
- 2021 - Ridership surpasses 25,000 yearly
- 2023- NICA produces the first Regional Event (Eastern Regional) in Elkton, Maryland
- 2024-'25 NICA announces the addition of its 33rd league
- 2025-NICA makes its first international expansion with the launch of NICA-AUS in the ACT/Northern Victoria region.
- 2025- NICA hosts the Central Regional in Fayetteville, AR and Eastern Regional in Elkton, Maryland
- 2025- NICA Discovery is created and enters pilot phase in select areas
- 2025-NICA reaches 100,000 student athletes served since inception
- 2026- NICA hosts Eastern, Central, and Western Championships

Vision and Mission of NICA (LO2)

Mission: We build strong minds, bodies, character, and communities through cycling.

Vision: Every youth is empowered to be part of a thriving and engaged cycling community.

Supporting the Mission:

How does the NICA leader build strong minds?: They build competence and confidence by teaching kids skills to be successful in both sports and in life. For example, learning to fix a flat tire or how to ride over tricky roots or rocks builds confidence and trust in one’s own judgement and abilities. Remember, young riders need a sense of self-worth and of mastery to trust in their abilities and to take on new challenges. As a leader, you create the environment in which it’s okay and safe to fail, regroup, learn new skills, and improve.

How does the NICA Leader build strong bodies? - They help children build strong bodies through creating a safe, supportive environment to participate in biking. Whether a child wants to push performance limits or simply create a healthy, life-long habit through a love of outdoor activity, participating in NICA programming gives leaders, volunteers, and children the opportunity to develop physical strength and improved health.

How does the NICA Leader build strong Character? Strong character is the pillar of NICA’s core values and of the NICA Leader philosophy. Character refers to respect, responsibility, and engaging in prosocial behaviors. Teaching your participants to take personal responsibility for their actions, thoughts and how they treat others is the foundation of character development. Your leadership will teach fundamental life lessons and self-awareness. Instilling strong character in your participants is the most important thing you will do as a NICA leader.

How does the NICA Leader build strong Communities? NICA leaders create and maintain a culture of inclusivity that unites all members of a NICA team and their families. That goes beyond the individual program impact. NICA participants and leaders are integral members of their communities. They advocate for better/safer places to ride, they volunteer, they support other organizations striving to make their communities a better place. When programs focus on building a strong community, those programs thrive along with the participants and the areas they serve.

NICA Core Values (LO3)

Fun: NICA inspires friendship, joy, and adventure.

Inclusivity: NICA believes everyone should be able to participate in our programs and feel welcomed, respected and supported.

Equity: NICA is committed to fair treatment, equal access, opportunity, advancement and elimination of barriers to encourage participation for all.

Respect: NICA expects consideration for all others, oneself, and the outdoors.
Community: NICA unites diverse people, families, and communities through cycling by creating fun and welcoming experiences

NICA Organizational Structure (LO4)

NICA, as an organization, is firmly committed to achieving the mission and vision of NICA and providing a positive experience to kids on bikes. The organizational structure provides the support and resources to the NICA community for sustainable growth and maintaining the culture and philosophy laid out in the mission and vision

Board of Directors

As a nationally operating non-profit organization, NICA is overseen by a Board of Directors composed of industry professionals, NICA League Directors and people passionate about outdoor recreation. The Board is responsible for long term strategic direction, governance and oversight of NICA policies and procedures.

Management and National Office

The NICA National Office is led by the NICA President and supported by a leadership staff who are responsible for developing and updating NICA programs, sponsorship and marketing, as well as the day to day business operations that support the NICA leagues.

NICA Leagues

The National Interscholastic Cycling Association includes a branch of NICA that supports kids in 5th through 12th grade and is made up of leagues that each represent a specific state or region. Each league is led by a League Director that organizes and coordinates the operations, events, programs and teams in their leagues.

Each League Director oversees two main operational areas:

Event Staff- Trained through the NICA Guilds program, League event staff are responsible for the safe and professional execution of League Race events.

Teams and Coaches- Teams in each league are formed to provide the daily training needs, programming and event support for their student-athletes. Led by a Head Coach and/or Team Director, NICA coaches are trained through NICA's Coach Licensing program.

NICA Discovery Organizational Structure (LO5)

NICA Discovery, as a program within NICA, operates under the organizational structure of NICA National and is supported by the NICA board of directors, management team and National office staff.

NICA Discovery serves kids ages 7-11 in grades 2-5 and aims to help them discover the joy and benefits of riding bikes. By capturing the hearts of children and families in early elementary and better preparing them for later NICA participation, the impact of NICA programming becomes even greater. In the following module you will learn more about the roles and responsibilities in NICA Discovery.

NICA Discovery operations outline:

Site Directors

Site Directors are the spark for NICA Discovery in a community. Each Site Director oversees two main operational areas:

- *Group leaders and Volunteers* - Site Directors recruit and manage a team of folks trained through the NICA Discovery leadership licensing program. Program staff are responsible for the safe and professional execution and facilitation of NICA Discovery sessions.
- *Administration and communication-* Site Directors oversee NICA Discovery groups in each program area and are responsible for the administrative responsibilities of site management including scheduling and permitting, and communication with leaders and families.

Group Leaders

Group Leaders are the teachers of the NICA Discovery curriculum. Group Leaders are responsible for:

- Familiarity with the curriculum material, objectives, and goals for the overall program and the individual sessions.
- Risk and behavior management of the groups.

- Maintaining the fun and energy for the group.
- Reporting to the site director.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the helpers that keep things moving quickly. Volunteers are responsible for:

- Assisting the group leaders with session set up, group behavior, and risk management.

NICA Programs (LO6)



Racing- NICA was originally founded as a High School Race program. Racing continues to be the main program that each League uses as a tool to support the mission and vision of NICA. Races are an opportunity for NICA Student-Athletes to test their fitness and skills in a supportive and encouraging competition environment. Through participation in racing, student-athletes develop strong minds, body and character.

NICA also offers other programs for student athletes in addition to racing and some NICA student-athletes that prefer not to race use these programs to take part in the NICA community.



GIRLS RIDING TOGETHER GRiT - Girls Riding Together - is NICA's focused effort to bring more girls and women into the cycling community to close the opportunity gap for current and future generations. NICA aims to increase female student-athlete and coach participation rates in our programs to 35% by 2033.



NICA Adventure enables youth to experience the benefits of mountain biking, camaraderie, community, and the outdoors. It is designed to provide experiential learning opportunities where NICA student-athletes learn by doing with reflection. Our goal is to provide youth a progression of activities and experiences to prepare them for their own life-long adventures.



Teen Trail Corps is a program that provides NICA student-athletes the opportunity to serve and give their time towards bike related advocacy activities. It is designed to provide exposure and be a gateway for NICA student-athletes into the world of advocacy.



NICA Discovery is aimed at creating engaging outdoor experiences and preparing elementary-aged kids for NICA participation.

Representing NICA and upholding NICA Core Values (LO7)

As a NICA Leader, you represent the organization, the NICA community, your group and yourself on a daily basis. You should use the NICA Core Values of Fun, Inclusivity, Equity, Respect and Community to guide your behaviors and your interactions with NICA Discovery participants. Here are some ways that you can highlight each of the core values in your daily practice.

Fun: NICA programs inspire friendship, joy, and adventure. The #1 reason kids and your student-athletes participate in sports is because it is fun. Kids define fun differently and it's important you ask them what they consider fun - however, most will tell you fun involves some version of learning, mastery, positive leadership, and being with their friends. Focus on creating fun in your NICA Discovery environment and you will have a thriving program.

Focus on Fun: Focus on the enjoyment of the experience and not on outcomes or results.. Think kid-appropriate before sport-specific. Celebrate effort and reaching goals instead of placing or performance. Drop your own barriers and don't be afraid to be goofy, silly and get lost in the moment with your kids!

Inclusivity: NICA believes everyone should be able to participate in our programs and feel welcomed, respected and supported. Children are welcome to join a NICA team or NICA Discovery group no matter their ability, gender, background or socio-economic status. On NICA teams, there are no cuts and everyone rides. The NICA leader welcomes and includes all types of children and encourages and facilitates participation for all. Student-athletes are not required to race to be on a NICA team, and all NICA Discovery activities are centered around inclusion and choice.

Welcome Everyone: Recognize that each NICA participant is there with their own motivations, background, physical capacity and expectations about what they want to get out of their NICA experience. Create a positive environment that is welcoming to everyone and is attentive to everyone's individual needs. Put your own expectations and motivations aside and meet the participants where they are.

Equity: Equity is giving everyone the tools they need to have an equal opportunity to succeed. For example take a close look at this illustration - some people may need a different bike to meet their needs. As a NICA leader, think of it as meeting your participants where they are. Some may need additional support, encouragement, or access to resources to join a program, to progress their skills or take on new challenges. NICA is committed to fair treatment, equal access, opportunity, advancement, and elimination of barriers.

Eliminate Barriers: The ultimate goal of equity is to reduce or eliminate barriers to participation and ensure that everyone has what they need to enjoy their experience in NICA. Something as simple as helping to ensure the proper type and size of bike for their individual needs is working towards equity. Part of your role as a leader is meeting your participants where they are. For example, knowing about any behavioral or learning challenges amongst your group will help you adapt your session plans to ensure those individual needs are addressed. A differentiated approach helps create and promote equity for everyone in your group. Strategies that are necessary for some will benefit all.



Respect: NICA's leadership philosophy and Code Of Conduct requires everyone to exercise respect for oneself, others, and for the environment. We expect all participants to consider others' thoughts and feelings when participating in NICA programs.

Modeling Respect: As a leader, you set the tone, example, and culture of respect in how you lead and model behavior to your participants. Treat everyone with respect, avoid arguing with others, use positive and encouraging language, avoid sarcasm or mockery-- even in jest. Express empathy for others. Kids will follow your lead. They are always watching you for respectful behavior.

Community: NICA unites diverse people, families, and communities through cycling by creating fun and welcoming experiences. You've chosen to be a part of NICA for a reason. The community of mountain bikers is a unique and welcoming culture. NICA strives to cultivate and develop this sense of community.

Building Community: In your role with NICA, you will impart foundational life lessons, self-awareness, and camaraderie to those you lead and to the broader community. Through their participation in NICA, kids are introduced to a vibrant community of people passionate about the outdoors and mountain biking. The connections developed through mountain biking last a lifetime and form positive bonds throughout one's life.

NICA Discovery Code of Conduct (LO8)

The NICA Discovery code of conduct provides guidelines and structure for our expectations about how participants and leaders should uphold the core values of NICA. As members of the NICA community, we expect our participants to be safe, be responsible, and be respectful. The code of conduct outlines the specifics of those expectations.

[NICA Discovery Code of Conduct](#)

Modeling and Supporting the NICA Code of Conduct (LO9)

As a NICA Leader, you'll need to model those behaviors yourself as well as make sure the kids you work with are aware of these expectations. When registering with NICA Discovery, the parent or guardian reviews the code of conduct with their child and signs the code to acknowledge they're aware of these standards. Please take a moment to review the code of conduct document in your additional resources folder of this module.

Module Conclusion:

NICA was founded with the simple idea to inspire kids to ride mountain bikes. Over the years, that foundation has affected the lives of thousands of kids and families and has led to explosive growth. Like many organizations, growth brings challenges, but the core values and culture of NICA has enabled sustained growth and helped build the vibrant community that you are now a part of. As a NICA leader it's important that you know the history and culture of the organization so that you can help continue and build on the core values of NICA. Just like in mountain biking, you have to know where the trail starts to get on the trail in the first place. Hopefully, what you learned in this unit gives you some context and understanding of your role in the NICA Community and inspires you to get more kids on bikes.

PART TWO - What is NICA Discovery

Competency-Describe the NICA Discovery Program

Learning Outcomes:

1. Recall the Description of the NICA Discovery Program
2. Identify the NICA Discovery Target Audience
3. Describe the different roles adults have as NICA Discovery leaders
4. Recall the Curriculum structure and objectives
5. Recognize the opportunities for impact to NICA
6. List the NICA Discovery Program Outcomes
7. Identify the Key Competencies for program participants

Introduction

"Youth biking adventures"

NICA Discovery was created to serve kids by giving them a pathway to the outdoors and help grow the larger NICA Community. The program prepares participants for playing and exploring on bikes and eventually being included in NICA team programming.

Description of NICA Discovery (LO1)

The NICA Discovery Program is a great way for kids in 2nd through 5th grade (ages 7-11) to build confidence on two wheels. The program blends the excitement of biking with a focus on safety, community, skill development, outdoor stewardship, and teamwork. Riders will learn essential biking techniques, etiquette, and how to stay safe while exploring the outdoors. Along the way, they'll build physical strength, coordination, and endurance—while also developing character, perseverance, and a strong sense of community. Through games, challenges, and plenty of bike riding, kids will learn to support one another, solve problems together, and build lasting friendships. Our trained leaders create a positive, encouraging environment where every rider feels valued and included. The program is all about growing confidence, having fun, and creating great memories on bikes! **Discover fun. Discover friendships. Discover bikes. Discover NICA!**

Audience (L02)

Kids from 7-11 years old (2nd-5th grade) with any level of experience riding and mountain biking may participate in NICA Discovery. Children should be able to balance and pedal a bike without assistance. Children are divided into 3 levels based on experience. Each level includes groups of no more than 10 children per group. 3 adults work together to lead a group of 10 NICA Discovery participants.

The roles in NICA Discovery (L03)

There are 3 roles one can serve in NICA Discovery. Everyone who volunteers must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Background check
2. NICA Discovery Risk Management
3. Athlete Abuse Awareness Training
4. Concussion training
5. NICA Discovery Module

Site Directors and Group Leaders must also hold current First Aid certification

Curriculum Structure (L04)

The NICA Discovery program consists of 3 levels of Curriculum. Each level contains 6 sessions; each session runs for 90 minutes.

3 levels of programming take kids from first touch to NICA readiness. **The focus is on connection and community while learning about biking.** Riders will learn everything from riding skills, biking etiquette, trail stewardship, and equipment care. Kids will participate in group games, appreciate nature, build confidence, and enjoy being outside on two wheels with friends. Each level includes a full prescriptive yet flexible series of lessons broken into activities and games designed specifically to meet objectives and maximize fun.

- **New Friends** is for kids new to biking but have some experience with neighborhood or urban riding; children who can already balance and pedal a bike, but may have never ventured “off road.” Games and activities work on learning to better ride and operate a bike preparation for later buildable skills, and increasing stamina.
- **FUNDamentals** is for kids who have completed New Friends or who have had some level of experience mountain biking. This level focuses on developmental fluency of fundamental skills needed for safe and fun trail riding. Kids work and ride together as a group and build stamina and muscle memory for spending more time on the bike.
- **Trail Trekkers** is designed for those kids who have either completed New Friends and FUNDamentals or come with equivalent experience and skills. This level is aimed at incorporating the fundamental skills into trail riding and works on developing good riding habits as well as self reliance and increased stamina. It introduces the concept of “challenge by choice,” focuses on trail stewardship, and getting kids ready for graduating into a NICA team!

Opportunities for impact to NICA (L05)

NICA Discovery aims to:

- Serve kids ages 7-11 who are excited to be a part of amazing mountain bike programming!
- Bring new and better prepared riders from NICA Discovery to NICA
- Increase participation by girls prior to middle school where we begin to see a drop off in sport and recreation participation
- Capture new families at a level that has a lower barrier to entry
- Spark mountain biking culture in communities with little to no current trail infrastructure

NICA Discovery Program Outcomes (L06)

- Increased responsibility, efficacy, and accountability
- Greater situational awareness
- Increased communication and cooperation
- Increased balance, coordination, and stamina
- Increased confidence, physically, mentally, and socially
- Increased social-emotional well being
- Increased interest in caring for the natural environment
- Increased interest in physical activity in the outdoors

NICA Discovery Program Key Competencies for Participants (L07)

Key Competencies are divided into 3 buckets

1. Skills
2. Stewardship
3. Safety and Equipment Care

1. Skills: Participants will develop a progression of bike skills that will prepare them for greater challenges both in NICA and as they continue on their own riding journeys.

The skills they will develop are:

- Starting and Stopping: Properly mounting, dismounting.
- Balance: standing on the pedals, moving body out of the saddle
- Braking: Using both front and rear brakes effectively to slow down and stop.
- Looking Ahead: Developing the habit of scanning the trail ahead and anticipating changes in terrain.
- Shifting: Understanding how to shift gears to match the terrain and effort.
- Body Positioning: Maintaining balance on the bike, learning to shift weight, and maintain stability on inclines/declines, and over small obstacles.
- Turning: Learning to navigate turns and berms smoothly.
- Ascending and Descending: Climbing hills and descending trails safely.
- Stamina: Developing the ability to play and ride longer distances over varied terrain.

2. Stewardship: Participants will learn to recognize the values and qualities of a thriving member of the mountain biking community.

Participants will learn about:

- Trail Etiquette: Demonstrating the rules of the trail, such as yielding to uphill riders and being aware of their surroundings.
- Trail Stewardship: Demonstrating the importance of keeping trails in good condition and minimizing rider impact on the environment.
- Conservation and care of natural spaces: Learning and practicing ways to minimize our impact on our environment and keep our natural spaces natural.

3. Safety and Equipment: Develop the ability to care for equipment and begin to manage their personal risk

Participants will practice:

- Trail Selection: Choosing appropriate trails based on skill and terrain.
 - Acknowledging that challenge by choice exists as an option (line selection)
- Demonstrating basic bike care
 - Bike Fit: Ensuring the bike is properly sized and the saddle height is correct.
 - Safety Gear: Proper helmet and optional knee/elbow pads.
 - Bike Parts: Knowing the names and functions of key components like brakes, gears, and suspension.
 - Bike Maintenance: Basic cleaning, tire pressure checks, and simple fixes and recognizing the need for bigger fixes.
- Identifying safe riding practices on trails and in communities.

PART THREE NICA Discovery Risk Management

Competency - Describe how risk is managed for NICA Discovery

Introduction

Your primary role as a NICA Discovery Leader is to keep yourself, your group, and your community safe. Safety and proper progression are paramount to providing an enjoyable experience for all. Nothing is more important than safety.

NICA Discovery's online training modules are all available to help you learn to lead according to NICA best practices. Please seek out those trainings from the NICA website, our learning management system, and within the NICA Discovery resources. Learning

Outcomes:

1. Compare and contrast the required and recommended equipment for participants
2. Recall the requirements for leadership roles in NICA Discovery
3. Identify the site requirements for organizational risk management
4. Describe the support provided by NICA for each NICA Discovery program
5. Explain the NICA Discovery program risk management and safety protocols
6. Identify the specific needs of elementary kids in regards to first aid care
7. Describe the appropriate response for other safety situations

Required versus recommended equipment(L 01)

Required Equipment

- **Helmet** - Less than 5 years old with no visible cracks or defects that fits your child's head well without moving around while they ride.
- **Footwear** - Closed-toe (non-Croc like) shoes that fastened by laces, straps or buckles
- **Bike** - Bike with knobby tires, gears, and two hand brakes. Bike tires should be no smaller than 20 inches.
- **Bike repair items** - A replacement tube that fits your child's tire. (dropped off at day one check in and returned at close of program if they are un-used.
- **Snug fitting small backpack** - Kids need to be able to carry water and snacks with them at all times.
- **Snacks/Hydration** - Kids should **always bring a snack and hydration with them to Discovery**.
 - Examples could include a granola bar, fruit snacks, or something that can easily be stored in a pocket or pack.
 - Hydration should consist of water or non caffeinated sports drinks.

Recommended Equipment

- **Gloves** - full-finger gloves to protect hands from abrasions in the case of a fall
- **Eye protection** - generic sports glasses to protect from dust and debris (and bugs) kicked up while riding
- **Windbreaker / light rain jacket** - weather conditions change throughout the season, your child should be prepared to ride in the conditions that are present on the day. Sessions will be altered or canceled if the weather conditions are unsafe.
- **Athletic /Cycling shorts** - Comfortable athletic shorts or pants. Cycling specific shorts are not required but some kids may be more comfortable in padded shorts.

NICA Discovery Requirements for leadership (L02)

NOTE: These trainings for the pilot period are delivered virtually through a training meeting with NICA Discovery program manager.

Site Director	Group Leader	Group Volunteer
Directing all site operations	Leading group sessions	Supporting group sessions
One time only: • Introduction to NICA Discovery Module Yearly: • Background check • NICA Discovery Risk Management Module • Athlete Abuse and Awareness	One time only: • Introduction to NICA Discovery Module Yearly: • Background check • NICA Discovery Risk Management Module • Athlete Abuse and Awareness	One time only: • Introduction to NICA Discovery Module Yearly: • Background check • NICA Discovery Risk Management Module • Athlete Abuse and Awareness

• Concussion • NICA First Aid/CPR Biannual: • Site director training • Group leader training	• Concussion • NICA First Aid/CPR Biannual: • Group leader training	• Concussion
Manages the site, registration, organizational risk management, community communication, issues any consequences and oversees the group leaders and volunteers. Can serve as a group leader OR volunteer.	An on-the-bike leader in charge of a single group of kids, manages and leads activities and games, responsible for safety and risk on site, and reports to the Site Director. Can serve as a volunteer.	An on-the-bike volunteer; assists and reports to the group leader. Supports activities and games.

1. The **Site Director** is the administrator of the program. Site Directors:
 - a. Serve as point of contact
 - b. Secure the program site, including any permitting or permissions needed.
 - c. Set the session schedule date and time for each NICA Discovery session at that program site.
 - d. Markets the program in the community,
 - e. Communicate with families,
 - f. Secure supplies and materials for the program
 - g. Manage group leaders and volunteers
 - h. Manage Risk and safety for the program site, leaders, volunteers, and participants
 - i. Are familiar with the curriculum sessions, games, and activities

A Site Director may run multiple sessions, levels, and/or sites based on community support and their own personal capacity. A Site Director may also serve as a Group Leader or volunteer assistant.

2. **Group Leaders** are the facilitators of the program. Group leaders:
 - a. Assist in and supports program operations
 - b. Report to the site director
 - c. Know the curriculum, activities, and games
 - d. Gather and prepares supplies and materials for each session
 - e. Facilitate learning and presents the information, lessons, and activities to the children
 - f. Are familiar with activity diagrams
 - g. Set up the biking classroom, for lessons and activities
 - h. Maintain leader to participant ratios
 - i. Manage behaviors and expectations
 - j. Manage risk and safety for the participants
 - k. Bring the stoke
 - l. Communicate with parents on participant performance

On-the-bike group leaders should always carry a pack with the following:

- Emergency contact list/Emergency Action Plan
- First aid kit
- Multi tool, tire levers, tube
- Extra snacks/hydration
- Cell Phone/radio

3. A NICA Discovery **Volunteer**:
 - a. Assists with facilitating sessions, games, and activities.
 - b. Is familiar with the curriculum and is prepared to facilitate in the event that a group leader needs to attend to a participant.
 - c. Supports the group leader in all aspects of their role

Site Requirements (LO3)

NICA Discovery programs are unlike NICA teams in that the program location remains the same throughout the program session. This is to ensure that safety remains the highest priority when working with young children in the outdoors. A NICA Discovery program requires certain infrastructure to insure a safe, fun, and engaging program. The best sites offer these requirements and other amenities that allow for outdoor exploration in a variety of ways.

- Site/venue requirements for safety and mitigating risk:
 - Restroom facilities
 - Potable water
 - Soft space/open space/green space for program activities and game play
 - Parking and safe drop off area
 - Lines of site for group leaders and parents/guardians to observe participants
 - Safe spaces for play and exploration
 - Limited exposure from the elements; sun, rain, wind, etc...
- Permitting for sites: Many sites may require a permit or fee to reserve for program use. Site Directors are responsible for contacting property management entities for permission to operate on the grounds for the duration of the program. NICA provides certificates of insurance and program fees are set for the site to include any fees incurred through permitting.
- Activities covered by NICA insurance are limited to NICA Discovery activities as described in the curriculum. Free play is awesome and a joy to behold however freeplay on environmental equipment and features outside of specific NICA Discovery activities and games is not covered by NICA insurance.
- Some sites may include access to playground equipment, outdoor features like creeks, ponds, or woodland/forested areas. It is important to manage the risk of participants in relation to the use of these areas. Allowing participants to play and or explore these areas should be done so carefully. "Challenge courses," ropes courses, ziplines, swing bridges, climbing trees, etc... are not permitted for NICA Discovery use.
 - Pay particular attention to:
 - The height of riding equipment or trail features. Elevated features (those that are 8 or more inches off the ground) are not appropriate for NICA Discovery riding.
 - Exposure, to heat, sun, rain, wind, ravines, sharp rocks, or other hazards in natural areas

Services and support provided by NICA (LO4)

NICA is proud to provide support for NICA Discovery sites throughout the planning, preparation, and implementation process. NICA services include but are not limited to:

- Program Toolkit and resources:
 - Curriculum
 - Field Guides
 - Parent Communication Guide
 - Code of Conduct
 - Marketing assets
 - Brand guidelines
- Program Registration platform (Pitzone) and ongoing technical support
- Program insurance for participants and leaders
- Leadership certification and ongoing training through online learning management system
- NICA Team connections and collaboration opportunities
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for ongoing professional development

NICA Discovery Risk Management protocols (LO4)

Programmatic protocols for managing risk with young riders include:

- Ratios: Always maintain 3 certified adult leaders to a group of maximum 10 kids (8 kids for Trail Trekkers)
 - Never communicate one-on-one (in-person or digitally) with a minor
 - Never transport participants that are not under your specific legal guardianship
- Communication in the field:

- Leadership should be on radio coms if groups are out of reasonable hearing range of one another, or when groups begin venturing on to trails
- Leadership should have a fully charged cell phone on them at all times and always have access to the emergency contact list of names and numbers for each participant
- Leadership should hold a meeting before each lesson to discuss the plan and pacing and highlight any areas that may need extra attention or support
 - For example: “Today we are going to work on rolling over obstacles, so let’s make sure we have those materials ready and watch for any kids who may be struggling and be prepared to offer them an alternative activity to help them work up their skills.”
- Leadership must maintain an Emergency Action Plan for the program site and share the plan with all group leaders and volunteers

First Aid care for kids (LO6)

All NICA Discovery Group Leaders and Site Directors are required to hold current NICA first aid/CPR certification. A higher level of certification is also acceptable but must be logged in Pitzone and current.

Kids at this age will likely need more attention when it comes to minor injuries. In many cases the kids in your group may not have had an injury of any kind resulting from a tumble from a bike. It is important to understand that physical pain is often coupled with emotional discomfort, embarrassment, and frustration. Minor injuries often feel major to a child. A band-aid can heal an emotional wound just as well as a physical one. Be warm and encouraging. Bumps, bruises, and even cuts and scrapes are a part of outside play and of course riding bikes. Consider celebrating an injured child with some kudos for “bravery while biking” in the wrap up section of the lesson. **Never give care that is beyond your training. Always defer to the person with the highest level of training.**

The Site Director is responsible for reporting any injury that meets the reportable injury criteria defined below within 48 hours of the injury occurring.

Reportable injuries

Report any injury that occurs during a NICA sanctioned activity and results in physical harm to participants significant enough to:

- Warrant referral to a medical provider beyond on site first aid *and/or*
- Cause the person to lose time from participating in the program beyond day of injury *and/or*
- Cause the person to miss school or work

Reporting an injury

Please use [this form](#) to report an injury. Reports cannot be edited after submitting. Reach out to elsie@nationalmtb.org if you need to update any information provided after submitting.

Insurance claims

For any injury that warranted referral to a medical provider beyond on site first aid, the injury report will serve as the first step in filing an insurance claim. When a report is submitted that indicates “warrant referral to a medical provider beyond on site first aid ” NICA’s insurance administrator will reach out to the injured party’s parent/guardian or the injured party themselves with more information and next steps on how to file an insurance claim.

Other Safety protocols (LO7)

- Restroom breaks and or emergencies:
 - Accidents happen. Make sure and treat these incidents with discretion and kindness. One leader and another child or two leaders may escort the child to the nearest restroom facility and, if necessary, contact the parent for a rescue or change of clothes.
 - Be proactive and add in a restroom break during your snack break and remind everyone to “go.”
- Behavioral and/or physical accommodations for participants:
 - Participants may require accommodations based on their specific needs. Use the “[NICA Accommodations Assessment form](#)” to allow the parent or guardian to communicate the accommodations needed to participate. Reach out to nicadiscovery@nationalmtb.org with questions about accommodations.

PART FOUR - Facilitating NICA Discovery

Competency-Recognize the social, emotion, physical, and cognitive needs of participants

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify the two leadership priorities when it comes to NICA Discovery participants
2. Recognize how to utilize the code of conduct to help manage behaviors and expectations
3. Understand the social and emotional development level of elementary aged kids
4. Describe how choice is developed in NICA Discovery regarding physical challenges
5. Understanding the psychological development of 7-11 year olds and managing behaviors
6. List the principles of good communication with participants and families
7. Identify the different types of empowering language used for giving feedback to participants

Leader priorities - safety and fun (LO1)

When we keep participants safe, ensure they have fun, and provide the right experience for them to grow, our programs will thrive. Safety is always our number one priority. The lines between physical, emotional, and social safety are fuzzy in this age group. For example elementary children have difficulty distinguishing between exertion and exhaustion and often become overwhelmed emotionally well before reaching true physical exhaustion.

- Physical safety - Each kid manages themselves on the bike to the best of their ability. Children this age need lots of guidance and support when it comes to physical safety and self management. They will not have the experience to help inform their decision making or have the self management skills to keep themselves physically safe on the bike. They will rely on you for more direct guidance. You are the one who ultimately makes the decisions regarding their safety, but talking through objectives and reflecting on skills learned helps them develop self-management
- Emotional safety - Each participant has the right to be themselves and be accepted for who they are and treated with dignity - this includes feeling safe to ask questions, voice their needs, and participate without fear of being put down. Your communication must be more clear, concise and very consistent..
- Social safety - Each participant will be somewhere on a continuum of understanding the perspectives of others. Empathy is in development at this age and requires acknowledgement and encouragement to grow. Conscientiously empathizing with folks from different perspectives including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts is something that leaders should call out and refer to in reflection.

Fun is central to the NICA Discovery experience. Fun is contagious and is the reason kids want to be a part of your group. Your objective is to create a culture that emphasizes fun WHILE developing stamina, skill, and character. Aspire to make all the experiences at practice as fun and educational as possible. Take advantage of every opportunity to utilize teachable moments.

Utilizing the code of conduct to manage behavioral expectations and procedures (LO2)

The approach toward these kids includes plenty of patience, clear boundaries, and expectations.

- Set the tone for the acceptable behaviors, attitudes, and actions of your group.
- At the start of each session establish behavioral expectations to ensure an environment of safety, fun, and learning.
- Set explicit boundaries so they know what to expect. Be prepared to redirect without taking it personally.
- Review [the code of conduct](#) with your group at the beginning of each lesson:

Be safe

- Always wear a helmet and closed-toe shoes
- Check your bike before each ride
- Use hand and auditory signals
- Call out stopping, slowing, and turning
- Leave a space between yourself and the rider in front of you

- Avoid running into others

Be responsible

- Come to Discovery prepared
- Carry water and snacks with you always

Be respectful

- Roll away only after getting the all clear
- Be a good listener
- Wait for directions
- Be attentive

You will build positive group culture and trust if you hold to this code of conduct and use those expectations to redirect when their behavior doesn't follow the code. There will be times when they don't meet the expectations and that is normal. You will need to redirect those behaviors with kindness and consistency to ensure a positive culture.

Provide consistent reminders of behavior expectations

Create a ritual that you perform at the start of every session that acts as a reminder to follow the expectations (team cheer, power clap, etc). This should be quick and easily repeatable and will help to create a group identity and connection.

Remember to be a warm and assertive demander and use expectations to redirect. Let the kids know you care about them and that you will not accept behaviors and actions that are unsafe and unproductive

Social and Emotional Development (LO3)

Elementary aged kids are more malleable to adult influences

The relationship between leaders and participants is special. Elementary age kids tend to be more adult directed and seeking to please. These younger riders will be more easily influenced by adults. This is something to be mindful of as they can be more sensitive and impressionable. These kids still see the adult as an extension of a parental figure.

Offer authentic encouragement and build connections

Authentic encouragement means that the feedback you give is relatable to the individual rather than generic, "good job". Some of these kids may have no experience riding in a group or receiving group instruction, so good rapport and trust is crucial for helping to build their confidence. Consider saying things like, "I see you working on standing and coasting, keep it up!"

Initiate frequent check-ins

Frequent check-ins are necessary and important, and that they will almost always need to be leader-initiated. Also, in elementary school independence and self-reliance aren't as prevalent yet. Check in often to remind them to drink water, make sure they are having fun, or see if they need a break.

Choice Development in regards to physical Challenges(LO4)

As a leader you manage the risk for your participants by providing the right activity based on their emotional needs and physical abilities. Children at this age are not yet ready for full autonomy in regards to "challenge by choice." The Challenge By Choice Continuum is a system by which the concept and the tools kids this age begin to consider if the challenge is appropriate for them. This allows the kids the opportunity to consider and weigh the potential risk in an atmosphere of support. This is a process that is broken down in trail side sessions and is an adult led exercise. This philosophy gives kids decision-making power by considering what tools they have and recognizing that they do not have to take on a challenge when they are not physically or emotionally ready.

The **Choice Continuum** identifies different choice philosophies and the degree of individual choice in participation. Choice level appropriateness is dependent on cognitive and social-emotional development. As children grow and develop they can move through the continuum from low choice to high choice based on their skill and emotional preparedness. However, depending on the specific

challenge the level of choice may change. For example, a low risk challenge may be appropriate for high participant choice for even beginner riders.



- 1. Force Challenge** The leader provides no choice in participation. Participants are required to participate, and no other options are given.
Example:
 - The leader assigns the group a 10 minute follow the leader ride.
- 2. Forced Choice** The leader provides two choices and the riders must choose one. Riders are given a choice but no other options are available, they are forced to participate.
Example:
 - The leader says you can ride 10 minutes or ride to the top of the hill.
- 3. Impel into Challenge** The leader urges the participant into activities with influence to help them outside of their comfort zone. Impelling implies a catalyst, but not "force." This is a subtle, yet important, distinction.
Examples:
 - The leader encourages a rider to take a rooty line based on their skills performance.
- 4. Challenge of Choice** Leaders emphasize that the choice is around the participant selecting their individual level of challenge, rather than simply whether to participate or not. Riders are provided with a range of options.
Example:
 - Session stations are created to allow for skills practice. Riders may choose the station based on skills they need to improve on.
- 5. Challenge by Choice** Leaders give the participants the choice on how they want to participate...encouraging each rider to set their own goals and definition of success. The kids are provided with a yes/no participation option, and the leader honors the rider's ability to decline or observe the activity until they are ready to engage.
Examples:
 - The leader asks who would like to do a lap on the short course.

Understanding the psychological development of 7-11 year olds when it comes to managing behaviors (L05)

NICA Discovery Participants
Bring your most patient self to each lesson. Be prepared for mistakes and always allow them (and yourself!) the opportunity to make it right
Keep instructions, activities, and games short and precise and focus on only 3 things at a time. They will want to play - so frequent repetition and time to play is critical
Talking and explaining might not register for the students; they might need more hands-on guidance and instruction. Be prepared to make changes and break down the movements even further if needed.

Create a community and a place where kids feel secure and able to fail is critical for long term success - focus is on effort, not accomplishment

Understand that they will need plenty of breaks from riding or structured activity and will just want to have fun and be silly

Effective communication (L06)

Communication with participants

You cannot make assumptions when it comes to information and directions. Your participant may not communicate their confusion or misunderstanding. They may not even realize they are misunderstanding you until you observe their behavior. Therefore, you will need to be more observant and check for understanding in a variety of ways. Using non-verbal cues and actions to glean if the message is understood can be effective forms of communication. As stated before, frequent check-ins are crucial to ensure understanding particularly after a message has been delivered.

Simplify language.

Talk even slower and less.

Break directions down into fewer steps and observe for understanding.

Be sure to use approachable terminology that your participants can understand. Avoid using too much “bike speak” as some phrases or terms familiar to you may be lost on them. When introducing terms often used in biking, be sure to define them. For example, “This is a berm, or a slanted and curved portion of trail, that helps riders turn corners tighter and go faster.”

Principles of good communication

No matter who you are talking to in your role as a leader you can follow these 4 principles

Principles of good communication
● Be Clear: State what you want to see
● Be Brief: Keep your instructions concise
● Be Neutral: Avoid sarcasm and “I” statements, you can still be stoked and neutral!
● Be Positive: Do a positive example, don’t provide a negative one

Types of Empowering Language (L07)

Beyond the principles of good communication, be sure to use empowering language to create an environment that allows learning and progress for every rider in your group.

Directing Language

Directing language is used to communicate clear understandable instructions

- Be Brief: Keep your instructions clear and concise
- Gain athlete attention before you give instructions, set your “classroom” up for success and minimize distractions
 - Speak only into a silent group. Have a signal that you need everyone’s attention
 - Examples:
 - Very direct signals “I need your attention in 5-4-3-2-1” while counting down on your fingers
 - Use your group’s auditory routine or ritual that indicates it’s time to pay attention to the leader
 - Do what works for you but keep it consistent and neutral
- Allow time for the children to process and check for understanding

- Ask “Who can explain the activity we are about to do?”
 - Allow 7 seconds of wait time
 - Have a non-verbal signal for understanding - Thumbs Up, Sideways, Down
- Use and auditory signal when directions are finished and the participants should take action
 - Power clap
 - “Let’s Roll!”
 - Your own unique group ritual

Reinforcing Language

Reinforcing language is used to support children in continuing successful performance and behaviors .

- Reinforcing language is designed to begin to develop independence by building intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation. It is designed to meet the child’s needs for both competence and autonomy.
- Use reinforcing language to encourage kids that are doing the right thing.
 - **Specific, descriptive, and actionable** feedback helps kids better understand what they did well and how to repeat it.
 - Avoid empty praise. At best the empty praise provides a moment of joy for the children and at worst empty praise fuels the craving for external approval.
 - NOTE: children this age are often motivated by “people pleasing.” Empty praise can quickly begin to spiral and feed gratuitous behavior.

Less Effective	More Effective	Most Effective
Good Job	Good job on hovering over your saddle on the rooty section.	You were able to make it over the roots today! What did you do differently today?

How to use effective reinforcing language (you don’t need to use all 4 every time you use reinforcing language)

- Describe what you notice: “You made it over the roots today.”
- State or Question the effect: “Riding over rocks and roots will prepare you for riding on so many different trails.”
- Extensions for Reflection: “What did you do differently today?”
- Extension to recognize a feeling: “How does it feel to be able to ride that section for the first time?”

Reminding Language

Reminding language is used to help kids plan ahead (proactive) or get them back on track (reactive)

- Your participants will need reminders of directions and expectations many times. This is completely normal for their age group and should be expected. Reminding language takes two forms: one helps kids to plan and the other helps them get back on track.
 - **Proactive Reminding Language:** Each time you ask the kids to perform an activity ask them for input on how it should be done. It is more effective for peers to remind each other than for you to always remind them. Hearing it from a peer puts it in their language and makes directions more relatable to the group.
 - Ask Questions: “Who can explain the steps to starting with your pedal in a power position?”
 - **Reactive Reminding Language:** to subtly nudge the kids back in the right direction. Avoid sarcasm, exasperation, and impatience when using reminding language. Reminding many times is completely normal at this age! Keep it neutral and upbeat!
 - Ask questions: “What is the best way for us to stop safely when riding together in a group?”

Redirecting Language

Redirecting language is used to deter an action that is contrary to the expectations of the group.

- Be a warm demander - Let them know you care about them and that you will not accept behaviors and actions that are unsafe and unproductive.
 - **Be Clear:** State what to do, rather than what not to do
 - **Be Brief:** The less you say, the happier your participants will be
 - **Be Removed:** Leave “you,” the leader out of it and use the code of conduct to be the authority but not authoritative.
 - **Be Neutral:** Use body language, tone, and words that don’t offend
- Avoid blaming, shaming, or guilt. Do not take mistakes, misbehaviors, or even defiance personally.

- Give kids a chance to make it right and acknowledge their efforts.

When using empowering language avoid the following:
Avoid Humiliation: Avoid phrases such as “You have to know how to tie your shoes by now!”
Avoid Empty Praise: Avoid “Good Job!” praise should be specific so kids know what to correct so they can do it again.
Avoid Sarcasm: Nothing betrays trust quicker than sarcasm. And kids this age often do not recognize it.
Avoid Blaming: Avoid language that blames. “This is exactly why you aren’t going on trail rides.”
Avoid Verbosity: Use fewer words and give more time for action and interaction. The more you talk, the less capacity they have for listening.
Avoid Manipulation: Avoid using rewards to manipulate your group. “If you’re all good, we’ll play extra games today.”
Avoid Guilt/Shaming: Avoid using guilt or shame in an attempt to motivate performance. “The other kids rode over this root, why can’t you do it?”
Avoid Threat: Avoid threats to change behavior or motivate. “Quiet now or we’ll skip games and just sit down for 10 minutes!”

PART FIVE - Cultivating an environment to maximize physical and social engagement

Competency- Identify a culture kids want to participate in

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the impact fun and social engagement has on children in your group
2. Identify how grouping effects dynamics and activities
3. Understand the importance of game play and emphasis on fun
4. Describe the method of instruction for NICA Discovery

Fun and authentic social engagement (LO1)

Be flexible, creative, charismatic, compassionate, and have loads of patience. This group can be the most rewarding but also the most trying if you're not genuinely enjoying them. Give yourself grace and tag in another group leader if you need a moment to reset.

Objectives and activities are designed to adapt to different levels of skill and social development. This will be equally important for the kids in New Friends as it is for Trail Trekkers. Children often progress socially and physically at different rates. Keep that in mind as you recommend kids for subsequent levels of NICA Discovery.

Grouping kids for activities (LO2)

NICA Discovery groups are kept small (maximum of 10) in order to keep kids engaged. Programs may choose to hold sessions for specific age groups as they grow. For example, a NICA Discovery program in Wisconsin may opt to have sessions available for 2nd and 3rd grade one day and 4th and 5th graders another. This decision is up to the Site Director and is based on capacity and demand. But, you may also need to divide the group into smaller groups in order to manage behaviors or time. Carefully consider how and why you divide your group. Group size and composition will impact the success of your activities. Always keep in mind the objective of the activity and the most

*Take breaks; have snacks, water, stories, and silly activities
Keep things moving so they don't get bored*

appropriate grouping method to achieve the objective. Riding groups will be different from cooperation groups and skill building groups.

Group Size	Benefit	Drawback
Pairs	Easy opportunities to participate and build relationships	Some kids may experience high anxiety or stress due to pressure of being in such a small group
Groups of 3-5	Increases opportunities for engagement while allowing for choice development	For some games this may not be large enough of a group to keep the energy high
Groups of 5-10	Maintains choice development while promoting group cohesion	Some kids may feel left out or get lost in the group
Combining NICA Discovery groups	Can promote cohesion, creates a shared group experience, provides lots of energy, builds program culture, opportunity for kids to learn to work in a larger community	The larger the group becomes, the more likely it is that multiple kids feel lost or get left out, and group management may become challenging

Fun and playing games! (LO3)

The curriculum is intentionally planned to differentiate parts of the session to meet the needs of elementary aged kids. Activities, snack breaks, off-the-bike games, and riding are all incorporated and adjusted differently at every session. Don't worry about them being on the bike as much. Younger kids aren't as committed to being on their bike the whole time. Gamifying skills is going to be helpful for younger kids. Be familiar with on-the-bike games but also ways to improvise and use your surroundings to reinforce lessons.

Bring the Fun. Short attention spans require brief and clear instruction. Using games to reinforce learning is important to keep attention and to make it fun. **Fun is most important to this age group.** Kids learn best through play and fun activities vs drill and verbal explanations. Prepare on and off the bike games to help keep the kids engaged and change the pace which allows you to reset the group and their focus

Types of games

Team building games

These games are played off the bike and are used to intentionally build positive group culture, provide riding breaks, used to redirect attention, and keep things fun and moving.

Skill building games

The majority of these games will take place in an open space or short course and are played on the bike. They are used to gamify the skills, make riding fun, and keep the group moving.

Instruction for NICA Discovery (LO4)

NICA Discovery kids will need explicit skills instruction

Break down activities and skills into simple language. Complex and lengthy descriptions will confuse and disengage your riders. Use the curriculum to break down the skill into simple terms and basic steps for progression. Progression is key. These kids are often used to being engaged in several ways at once. If we just talk to them without using demos or visuals or physical engagement, they will be much less likely to gain anything from the talk than if those other modalities were used. Use the field guides provided to keep the activities moving and remind leaders of what games to prepare for. Move more and talk less!

Set up your "classroom" to maximize attention and focus and minimize confusion and wasted time.

- Set out one cone for each participant 3 feet apart in a line facing your teaching space and ask participants to put their front tire on a cone and face you for directions/game instructions/demonstrations. Any time you need them to reset, simply say "Tire on a cone!" and all participants can roll back to that space for further instruction.

NICA DISCOVERY METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

TELL
IT

Present the rules as simply and concisely as possible.

SHOW
IT

No matter how effective the explanation, a brief demonstration will clarify the activity. Check for understanding. "What questions do you have?"

DO
IT

Play the game or start the activity!

Review
It

Reiterate the skill, teaching points, or objective.

Adapt/
Reflect

Check to see if the kids are having fun. If so, let the activity unfold and continue to observe. If energy or enthusiasm is flagging, offer a change or modification. Prompt for observations from the kids. Ask questions like, "What happened when..." and "What was challenging?"

Be ready to change how you are delivering content and break things down even further if your riders are not catching on.

Be prepared to do more repetitions of skills. Many won't have much experience and won't mind repetition as much as some more experienced riders do. Be sure to use the games to reinforce skill development.

Focus on one skill or activity at a time and give feedback ONLY on that one skill. It will be easy for you to see many different things for them to work on and just end up overwhelming and confusing them if you try and address more than one correction at a time.

Braking, shifting, controlling of speed and spatial awareness will need to be emphasized continually. Their experience in controlling a bike will certainly be limited, so building skills through repetition and games is important.

PART SIX - Parent/guardian engagement for NICA Discovery

Competency- Describe effective methods of engaging parents/guardians and families

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the needs of NICA Discovery parents and guardians
2. Identify effective parent guardian communication strategies

What a parent wants from a NICA Discovery group leader (LO1)

Parents and Guardians want:

- To help their child prepare for participation
- To be in the information loop
- To hear good things about their children
- To see their child ride
- To be included & among friends

Parents/Guardians are sources of support that can improve your program and enhance the participant experience

Key concepts when communicating with parents/guardians	
● Be proactive - provide regular and frequent communication ○ Identify when/how to communicate with you ○ Provide updates ○ Consistent, transparent communication can alleviate issues and stop misinformation ● Give communication pathways- ○ Provide the times and ways they can ask questions/connect with you. Before and after sessions are a great time to connect. ○ Do not make yourself available 24/7. Be explicit on how you would like to be reached, and respond in a timely manner. ● Create a “collaborative” relationship ○ Provide them with a constructive way to give feedback, ask questions, and make suggestions on how their child can continue to progress ● Explain the code of conduct ○ Print it and hand it out and refer to it often ● Connect them to the local NICA team and bike community. Some families may face equipment access barriers. Keep gear conversations with parents warmly solution-focused, point to loaner programs if available. Avoid any language that signals a child's bike isn't good enough. ○ Offer suggestions for places to ride, or buy/rent gear ○ Let them know about events in your area ○ Connect any graduating families with the local NICA team if one is available	

Thank You

Finally, we'd like to offer a heartfelt thank you.