

MIND ON BOARD

Pushing Mental & Physical Well-being



A Skater's Guide to skateboarding with Care

Inspired by "Coach In Your Corner" Toolkit
Helps coaches **support young people** beyond sport focusing
on **mental health, confidence, and a positive community.**

It's not about being a **therapist**, it's about being there for others **in ways that matter.**

EXPLORE AND UNDERSTAND MENTAL HEALTH

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is about **how we think, feel, and act**.
It helps us **handle stress**, build relationships, and make choices.
Just like physical health, we all have mental health and it can change **day to day**.

Good mental health means

Feeling mostly **okay** with who you are.
Being able to **enjoy things in life**.
Coping with ups and downs in a **healthy way**.
Connecting with others and **asking for help** when needed.

Mental health is not about always being happy.
It's about **having the tools** to get through difficult times and still keep going.

Why does mental health matter in skateboarding?

Skating is more than physical, it **affects our minds and emotions** too.
Some skaters struggle with confidence, anxiety, or fitting in.
As a coach or friend, just **listening and noticing** makes a big difference.

PRACTICE: How to Talk to & Support Skaters

What do I say when a skater is struggling?
DO: Keep it simple → "I hear you, that sounds tough."
DON'T: Try to "fix" everything → Just be a **supportive presence**.
Use open-ended questions like "What's been on your mind?" to start a conversation.

SUPPORT: Helping Skaters Feel Safe & Welcome

How do I create a skate space where everyone feels good?
Respect all skaters → Different styles, backgrounds, and levels.
Look out for signs of struggles (withdrawal, frustration, lack of motivation).
Encourage **positive interactions** between skaters.



EXPLORE AND UNDERSTAND CRISIS WHAT TO DO?

CRISIS: What to Do in Tough Situations

What if a skater is in crisis?
Stay calm & listen, don't panic.
Connect them to help.

A trusted adult, helpline, or emergency support.
Always follow up if you notice something concerning.

Simple steps towards a safer space

Normalise talking about mental health.
Notice if skaters are struggling & **offer support.**
Encourage a positive, inclusive atmosphere.
Be a listener, not a problem-solver.
Learn how to handle tough situations.



You don't need to have all the answers. Just being present, listening, and creating a positive skate space is enough to change lives.

Watch for signs

Changes in mood, behaviour or appearance.
Withdrawal, unusual sadness or anxiety.
Unusual emotional outbursts.
Hopelessness or talk of suicide.

Be ready

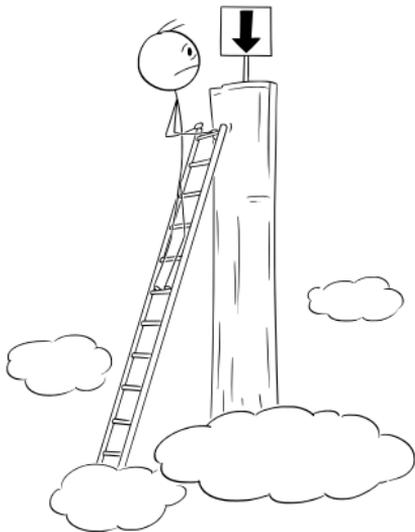
Local resources card template Have emergency contacts ready for quick access. Include a lifeline with contacts for national crisis organisations.

Where to Find More Help

"What if a skater needs more support than I can give?"

On the next page you'll find UK Mental Health resources and crisis support. You can also add other organisations that you might know of. If you are not from the UK, do some research and write the details in.

Know when to **pass the conversation to someone trained** to help (parents, counsellors, helplines).



LOCAL RESSOURCES

U.K. RESOURCES GO TO LIFELINES FOR CRISIS HOTLINES IN THE U.K.

Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Phone: 116 123 (24/7)

Mind

www.mind.org.uk

Phone: 0300 123 3393

(Mon-Fri, 9 am-6 pm)

Refuge

For Women and Children
against domestic violence

<https://www.refuge.org.uk/>

Phone: 0808 2000 247 (24/7)

Stonewall

Leading UK-based LGBTQ+ charity

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

Phone: 0800 0502020

(Mon-Fri, 9:30-4:30 pm)

Papyrus Papyrus

The national charity dedicated to
the prevention of young suicide.

<https://papyrus-uk.org/>

Phone: Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860039967

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

(9 am – 10 pm weekdays, 2 pm – 10 pm
weekends, 2 pm – 10 pm bank holidays)

Ben Raemers Foundation

Mental Health specific to skateboarders

<https://thebenraemersfoundation.com/>

Their website is a support hub, providing
easy access to links and contacts for
those in need and those helping others.

Find links to helplines, counsellors,
training, and downloadable resources,

<https://findahelpline.com/>

- International -

Write your point of contact for emergency or resources in your area

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

WHAT TO DO WITH PUSHY PARENTS?

As a skate coach, your job is to **create a safe, supportive space for young people**. Sometimes, well-meaning parents or carers may become impatient, overly involved, or pushy. Here's how to stay respectful, kind, and confident in those moments.

Remember

Most parents just want the **best for their child**, but may not realise that progress in skateboarding takes time. It's your role to hold boundaries so all skaters **feel safe**, relaxed, and free to learn **at their own pace**.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

Invite the parents to go for a short walk, grab a coffee, or **watch from a distance**. Close enough to stay nearby, but far enough to **reduce pressure**. This space helps young skaters stay focused, try new things, and build confidence **without fear** of judgement.

What You Can Say

*"We focus on **building confidence** and consistency first."
"They're **making great progress**, just showing up and **trying is a big step**."
"Skateboarding takes time to learn safely. We want to avoid injuries and keep it fun."
"We let skaters **lead their own learning**, it builds real motivation."*

Overconfident Parents?

If a parent says "that trick's easy" or pushes too hard, **invite them** to try it! Most will struggle, a great reminder that **skating is hard**, and their child is doing **something amazing**.

Red Flags to Watch

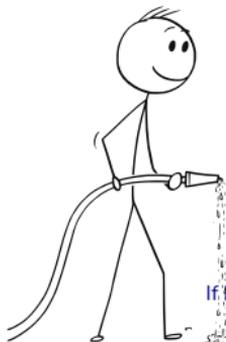
Forcing a skater to try something they're scared of.
Ignoring stress, fear, or injury.
Criticising or comparing

What to Do

Step in **calmly** with
"We always follow **the skater's pace**, it helps them **feel safe and enjoy skating**."
If behaviour continues, follow your **safeguarding** process and **report** to your lead coach or project manager.

Coaching Tip

Catch parents **before or after** sessions. Share quick, positive feedback and explain what their child is working on. This **builds trust** and **helps parents** understand your coaching approach.



WEATHER REPORT

HOW TO CHECK IN/OUT

A fun, non-judgmental way to get skaters to check in with how they're **feeling mentally** before and after a skate session. Helps build emotional vocabulary, normalise **talking about feelings**, and connect **mental state to movement**.

How to use It (at the start and end of any session)

"If your mood was the weather right now, what would it be?"
(they can write, point, draw, or say it out loud)

Mental Weather Guide



Sunny

Happy, excited, ready to roll
"What's making you feel bright today?"



Partly Cloudy

Happy but a bit tired
"Anything on your mind today?"



Rainy

Sad, low energy, worried
"Want to skate it out or chat it out today?"



Stormy

Angry, overwhelmed, stressed
"Can movement help shift that storm a bit?"



Foggy

Confused, unsure, numb
"Is there a small win you're proud of lately?"



Rainbow

Mix of all emotions
"What's one thing you want to focus on today?"

Coach Tips

Normalise all answers. There's **no "bad" weather**, just different conditions to skate in. If someone chooses Rainy or Stormy, **check out after** the session or invite them to **express themselves** through skating.

Re-check at the end

"What's your weather now? Did it change after skating?"

If a coach **suspects that something serious** or harmful has happened to a young person (e.g. abuse, neglect, self-harm, or any safeguarding concern)

Follow your safeguarding rules and toolkit for more information and people to talk to.

COACHING REMINDER

WHY WARM UP?

Dynamic warm-ups: **movement-based stretches** that prepare the **body and mind** for activity.
Think: arm swings, leg kicks, walking lunges, shoulder rolls, hip circles.

Top Benefits

- Boosts **blood flow** to muscles → more oxygen, less stiffness.
- Warms up joints to **improve mobility** for tricks and balance.
- Prepares the **nervous system** → better **reaction time and coordination**.
- Reduces injury risk** by gently increasing **range of motion**.
- Mentally gets skaters **"in the zone"** with movement-focused mindset.

Why Not Static Stretching Before Skating?

- Static stretching:** holding a stretch for 20+ seconds without movement (like toe touches...)
Not ideal before skating because it can relax the muscles too much before dynamic activity, **reducing strength and balance**.
It **doesn't warm up** the body properly, no heart rate increase or blood flow boost.
It may **increase injury risk** if done cold or without movement.



How Warming Up Reduces Anxiety

- Shifting attention to the body, **focusing on physical movement** helps quiet racing thoughts.
Releasing nervous energy, gentle movement can ease restlessness or tension.
Creating familiarity, doing a repeated warm-up builds a **sense of routine**, which makes things **feel safer** and more predictable.
Building confidence, early success in **warm-up movements** gives skaters a boost before trying harder tricks.
A good warm-up sets the tone: relaxed, ready, and focused, not rushed or pressured.

What Does "Being in the Zone" Mean?

Being in the zone means you're fully focused, present, and **connected to what you're doing**, in this case skateboarding. **Distractions fade**, and your body and mind work together smoothly.

COACHING REMINDER

WARM UP

1. Jump on the Spot – “Shake It Out” (1 min)

Start light with small bounces on the spot.
Keep your knees soft and land gently.
Let your arms hang loose and shake them out.
Loosen up the body and release tension
while gently increasing heart rate.

2. Arm Rolls – “Swimming” (30 sec each direction)

Stretch out the shoulders with big circular motions.
Roll arms forward in wide circles 10 times.
Then roll them backward 10 times.
Keep it playful, imagine you're swimming or flying!

3. Back Twists – “Look Behind You” (1 min)

Loosen the back and improve mobility.
Stand with feet firmly planted, hip-width apart.
Keep your hips still and twist your upper body side to side.
Try to look over your shoulder each time.

4. Leg Swings – “Pendulum Legs” (1 min)

Activate hips and hamstrings.
Stand tall and swing one leg forward and back like a pendulum.
Do 10 swings per leg.
Option: Hold onto a wall, board, or buddy for balance.

5. Hip Circles – “Hula Hips” (1 min)

Open up the hip joints and core area.
Place hands on hips.
Rotate hips in a big circular motion, 5 times each direction.
Make it fun, imagine drawing circles with your waist!

6. Squat & Jump – “Bounce Power” (1 min)

Wake up the lower body with light power moves.
Feet shoulder-width apart, toes slightly out.
Squat down keeping heels on the floor and back straight.
Jump up gently and land back into the squat.
Repeat 5 controlled jumps.



COACHING REMINDER

HAVING FUN

Final Warm-up Game: "Follow the Flow" Skatepark Lap

Get familiar with the skatepark, wake up focus and body awareness, and introduce **skatepark flow and etiquette**.

How to Run It

Skaters follow the coach around the park in a big loop, **on foot, no boards yet!** Walk, skip, or jog through the edges, ramps, banks, and transitions.

As you move, the coach points out features:

"Watch out for the ramps!"
"Duck under the rail!"
"Hop over the hip!"

Finish by gathering in a **group circle** and ending with a big clap or a loud **'WHOOSH'** to **bring energy and focus**.



Why Add This?

Explains the flow of the park

Skaters learn how to use lines and transitions, where to start, and where others may be riding.

Teaches priority and etiquette

Discuss who goes first, waiting your turn, respecting space, and safe ways to enter/exit ramps.

Builds spatial awareness

Skaters mentally map the park, helping them feel confident and less overwhelmed when they grab their boards.

Reduces risk

Walking the park first allows them to feel the texture and size of features, and gauge ramps before rolling in.

Boosts energy and excitement

Moving together sets a positive, team-focused vibe before the main session begins.

COACHING REMINDER

WARM UP ON A SKATEBOARD

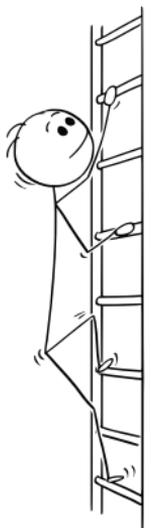
For first-timers and beginners, it's really helpful to **repeat the tricks** they already know in every session. This helps **build confidence, create a sense of progress,** and establishes a routine, something young people really appreciate.

To reduce anxiety among the students, take a moment to **run through the session plan** with them, **introduce the board,** the nose and tail, trucks and wheels... so they know what to expect. A little **preparation** goes a long way!

Falling isn't failing!

It means you're **learning,** pushing boundaries, and **being brave.** Every skater, no matter how skilled, falls. It's part of the process. Laugh it off, **talk about what you learned,** and get back up. This sets the tone, **progress, not perfection.**

"If you're falling, you're trying, and that's what skateboarding is all about!"



1. Step on and off the skateboard

Get comfortable with **balance and foot placement.**

2. Jump on and off the skateboard

Build trust in the board and feel safe with movements.

Jump **forward and backward** on the skateboard

Add directional **awareness and control.**

3. Hippy jumps (jump while the board stays on the ground)

Develop **coordination** and timing.

4. Squat down on the skateboard

Engage leg muscles and **practice stability.**

5. Squat down and simulate falling

Fall on the bum and on the knees (if kneepads).

Increase **floor awareness** and **reduce fear around falling.**

6. Squat jumps on the board

Build explosive **strength and balance.**

7. Tail drop from the floor

Step onto the board by placing the back foot first (on the tail), then front foot on the bolts, and press down.

Call this the **"Crocodile Jaw":** open and close it without feet touching the floor!

8. Tic Tac foot reminder

Explain that the "Crocodile" foot position is ideal for tic tacs.

If they forget where their feet should go, tell them to "go back to the crocodile jaw" for control and power.

9. Practice known beginner tricks (e.g. Pancake Flip, etc.)

Let them explore any simple tricks they've been working on with freedom and support.

COACHING REMINDER

FOOT POSITION FOR BEGINNERS

Foot placement can be **challenging for beginners**, especially for those who are neurodivergent, have coordination difficulties, dyslexia, or are still developing body awareness and motor skills. This simple three-step method **breaks the process down**, making it easier to learn, remember, and repeat.

3-Step Foot Placement Guide

1. Front Foot First

Place your front foot on the board, pointing straight forward towards the nose (on the "arrow", toes behind the line).

2. Back Foot on the Tail

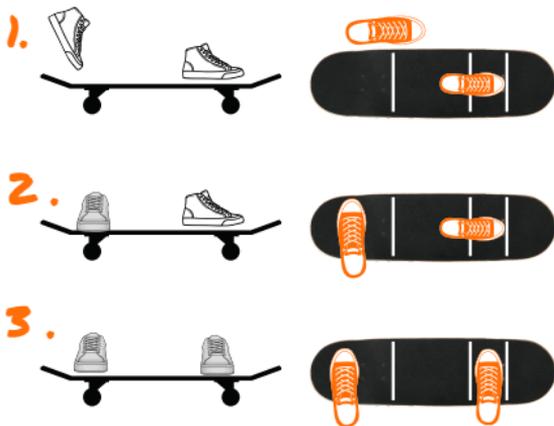
Place your back foot onto the tail zone of the board (Behind the back line).

3. Pivot the Front Foot

Pivot your front foot slightly so it ends up between the front lines, sideways and ready to ride!

To reinforce **balance and body awareness**, you can also ask skaters to do a **squat** in between pushes, just like they **practiced during the warm-up**. This helps them naturally find their cruising position, encourages **stability**, and builds **strength** and **confidence** on the board.

This method helps skaters build a repeatable routine in a clear, **step-by-step way**.



REPEAT...

SAMPLE SESSION

SESSION 1: CONFIDENCE ON BOARD

Build confidence by breaking down tricks and celebrating effort.

Warm-up (20 min):

Weather report, check in, followed by light dynamic stretches.
Group talk: "What's one thing you want to feel proud of today?"
Warm up on skateboards *

Unlocked tricks practice (15 min):

Review and repeat tricks that have been worked on before to build confidence.

New trick (15 min):

Pick a trick that feels challenging.
Break it into 3-5 micro steps (e.g., foot placement, body position, pop timing).
Practice each step slowly, celebrating progress.
Coaches offer encouragement and feedback **focused on effort, not perfection**.
If the trick hasn't been landed, refer to an unlocked trick to show that it was not easy to learn but you are not landing it. **Every trick takes time.**

Reflection (10 min):

"What helped you feel more confident today?"
"How can you use that same mindset in school, at home, or with friends?"
Weather report, check out.

SESSION 2: FALLING + GETTING BACK UP

Learn resilience by reframing failure and normalising falls.

Warm-up (20min):

Weather report, check in, followed by light dynamic stretches.
Controlled falling drills: Get them to squat down on the board then roll on bum softly.
Group talk while sitting on the floor: "Can you think of a time when falling helped you learn?"
Warm up on skateboards *

Unlocked tricks practice (15 min):

Review and repeat tricks that have been worked on before to build confidence.

New trick (15 min):

Choose a new or difficult trick, each skater attempts it multiple times.
After each try, skaters **share what they learned with a partner**.
Coaches model positive language "That fall means you're trying something new."

Reflection (10 min):

"What did you learn from falling today?"
"Why is failing a sign that you're growing?"
Weather report, check out.

SAMPLE SESSION

SESSION 3: FEAR CHECK-IN

Understand fear and learn how to manage it constructively.

Warm-up (20 min):

Weather report, check in, followed by light dynamic stretches.
Warm up on skateboards *

Unlocked tricks practice (15 min):

Review and repeat tricks that have been worked on before to build confidence.

New trick (15 min):

Quick self-assessment: "On a scale from 1-10, how nervous do you feel?"

Group breathing: Inhale 4, hold 4, exhale 4 (box breathing).

Pick a trick that makes you nervous.

Write down or share one strategy to ease fear (e.g. trying on grass, visualising, breathing).

Practice using your strategy, and check back in with a fear rating.

Reflection (10 min):

"What helped reduce your fear today?"

"How can you support a friend who's nervous about trying something new?"

Weather report, check out.

SESSION 4: SKATE BUDDIES + SUPPORT

Strengthen community, peer support, and communication.

Warm-up (20 min):

Weather report, check in, followed by light dynamic stretches.
Warm up on skateboards *

Play a quick buddy challenge: mirror each other's movements for 1 minute.

Group chat: "What does it mean to be a good skate buddy?"

Unlocked tricks practice (15 min):

Review and repeat tricks that have been worked on before to build confidence.

New trick (15 min):

Pair skaters: One skates while the other cheers, coaches, or records them.

Switch roles. Share clips or feedback.

Celebrate achievements and efforts, big or small.

Reflection (10 min):

"How did it feel to support someone today?"

"What's one way we can grow a positive skate community together?"

Weather report, check out.

SAMPLE SESSION

SESSION 5: MIND-BODY FLOW

Connect mental focus and physical control through mindful skating.

Warm-up (20 min):

Weather report, check in, followed by light dynamic stretches.
Warm up on skateboards *

Pick a focus word like "smooth," "steady", "stay on it"

One-foot balance challenge with eyes closed while using a focus word.

First **imagine landing a trick in your mind** (visualisation) with your eyes closed.

Then move your hands like if they were your feet on the board.

Unlocked tricks practice (15 min):

Review and repeat tricks that have been worked on before to build confidence.

New trick (15 min):

Choose a trick that can be challenging.

Try once without thinking, then again while **using a focus word**

Use visualisation of the trick before trying again.

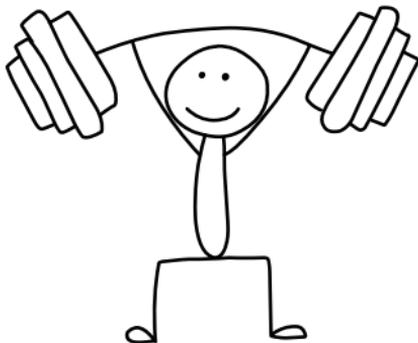
Notice how the body and mind respond differently.

Reflection (10 min):

"What changed when you focused your mind?"

"How does skating help you connect to your body and emotions?"

Weather report, check out.



WRAP UP

YOU'VE GOT THIS, COACH!

Quotes that makes the difference

"What do you need from me right now? space, support, or a boost?"
Puts the skater in control, shows you're there without pressure.

"What's something you're proud of, even if no one else noticed it?"
Affirms internal progress and quiet confidence.

"You know your body better than anyone, what's it telling you right now?"
Promotes body awareness and personal pacing.

"What trick or move makes you feel most like you?"
Invites self-expression and confidence.

"Is there something you've tried today that surprised you?"
Celebrates small wins and growth mindset.

"If your skateboard had a voice, what would it be saying to you today?"
Adds playful creativity to emotional exploration.

"What part of the park feels like your favourite zone right now?"
Encourages spatial awareness and ownership of the environment.

"What would you tell a friend who was nervous to try this trick?"
Builds empathy and peer support through role reversal.

"Let's take a moment, how's your balance between fun and focus today?"
Highlights emotional regulation and skate-life balance.

"Skating is about showing up, not showing off, how did you show up for yourself today?"
Reinforces inner motivation and self-worth over performance.



It's a wrap!



This booklet has guided you through simple **session plans**, mental health **check-ins**, **warm-up** ideas, and **practical tools adapted** from the Coach In Your Corner (CIYC) Toolkit, all adapted to the skatepark. Whether it's helping a skater **push through** fear, **celebrating small wins**, or just **being present** with good vibes, **your role as a coach is powerful**.

By blending **movement**, **mindset**, and **mentorship**, you're creating a space where young people **feel safe, seen, and supported**, on and off the board. Confidence, resilience, community, and fun... you're building all of it, one session at a time. **Trust yourself, stay curious, keep learning from your skaters**, and always **lead with heart**.

"You're not just a coach, you're the coach in their corner."

Let's keep rolling.

1. Explore and understand - Mental Health
2. Explore and understand - Crisis what to do?
3. Local resources
4. Potential challenges - What to do with pushy parents?
5. Weather report - How to check in/out
6. Coaching reminder - Why warming up?
7. Coaching reminder - Warm up
8. Coaching reminder - Having Fun
9. Coaching reminder - Warm up on a skateboard
10. Coaching reminder - Foot position for beginners
11. Sample session
12. Sample session
13. Sample session
14. Wrap up - You've got this, Coach!



Download the full toolkit pdf on: <https://ciyctoolkit.gurlstalk.com/>

Copyrights Keep Rolling Project ©
Written and edited by **Aurore Roussel**
Co-Director of **Keep Rolling Project** → @keeprolling_co
For any inquiry: Keeprollingproject@gmail.com
Funded by **Coach In Your Corner** program.

Skaters don't litter. Pass it, pin it, or bin it! ♻️