

TM

# ORANGE BALL

COMMUNITY PRACTICE AND PLAY PLANS

COMMUNITY 1 / COMMUNITY 2



NetGeneration.com

# DEAR COACH,

## WELCOME TO NET GENERATION!

On behalf of the USTA, we thank you for supporting Net Generation. Together, we will shape the future of tennis. Net Generation isn't just a new brand—it's a comprehensive platform and development program for kids ages five through 18. By creating a singular platform for tennis that we all can rally behind, and through the support the USTA will offer along the way, we believe we can grow participation, instill the love of the game in future generations, and ensure that tennis remains a vibrant sport in our communities for years to come.

As a former #1 world tennis player, former President of the Women's Tennis Association, ESPN analyst, business owner, entrepreneur, and mother, I'm a Net Generation ambassador because I believe this new approach will benefit the growth of youth tennis. Sports today don't meet the needs of parents, players, coaches, and community organizations quite like we will with Net Generation.

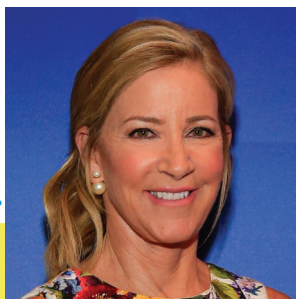
By registering and becoming an active part of Net Generation, you will get access to the very best curricula that will help you facilitate play and deliver programs, digital tools and resources that make teaching, coaching, planning and playing easier, and marketing resources and support to enhance your programs' visibility.

This manual is just one item under the Net Generation brand and we hope it becomes a valuable resource for you. It's comprehensive, competency-based, collaborative, and also packaged conveniently online with additional resources to help you customize your approach to creating programs for the sport you love.

Again, thank you for being a part of Net Generation! Together, we will shape the future of tennis!



**Chris Evert**  
Former World #1 Tennis Player



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# INTRODUCTION

Net Generation Community is a “Learn to Play” program designed to engage more players in the game of tennis. The program uses modified equipment to promote early success, with a focus on serve, rally, and play. The Net Generation Community curriculum was created for coaches who may have little to no experience in teaching tennis.

Community Orange curricula encompasses two levels of Practice and Play Plans.

## COMMUNITY 1

Program covers the beginning stages of serve, rally and play in a team environment.

### Recommended Age/Level:

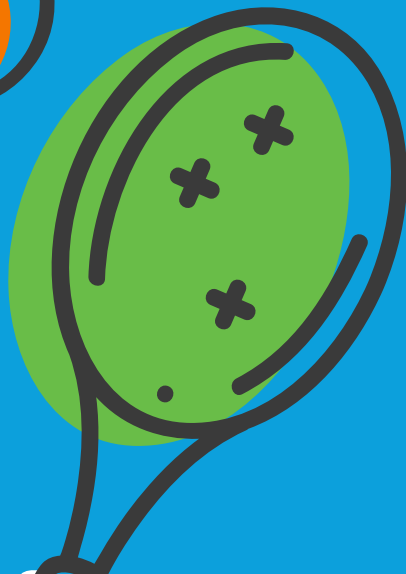
Players who have completed Red Community 3, or 11 to 14-year-old beginner players.

## COMMUNITY 2

Designed to further develop serve, rally, and play in a team environment.

### Recommended Age/Level:

Players who complete Orange Community 1 or have some prior tennis experience. Target age is 11 to 14.



The program has been designed to allow for local flexibility regarding the length of the sessions.

# RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

## RED BALLS

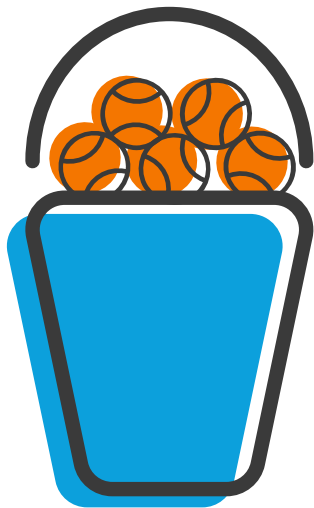
Red tennis balls. Two balls per player.

## BALL BUCKETS

One 40- to 60-quart plastic container and one small plastic paint bucket per coach. The large containers can hold red and orange balls, and the small buckets are ideal when children work in small groups and need a limited supply of balls.

## PLAYING CARDS

Use for challenges in different activities—two packs per class.



## ORANGE BALLS

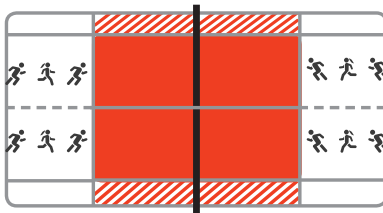
Orange tennis balls. Two balls per player.

## POLY-SPOTS AND THROW-DOWN-LINES (TDL)

For targets, recovery spots, court lines, group control, etc.

## COURT – RED 42-FOOT

The first two chapters of Orange 1 use a 42-foot court. The dimensions of a 42-foot court include the service line of a 78-foot court as the baseline and the singles sideline. If you have more than two players on the court, the doubles alley of the 78-foot court can be used to accommodate play.



## RACQUETS

25-inch racquets

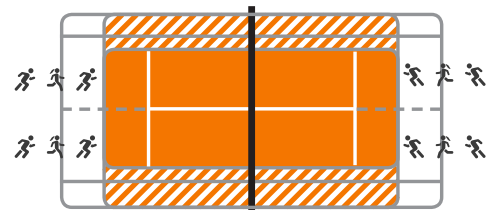
## CONES

One nine-inch or half-cone for every two players.

## COURT – ORANGE 60-FOOT

The remaining four chapters of Orange 1, and all six chapters of Orange 2, use the 60-foot Orange court. The dimensions for the Orange court for singles play are 60-feet-long (nine feet inside the 78-foot court baseline), and 21-feet-wide (three feet inside the 78-foot court singles sidelines). Orange court for doubles play are 60-feet-long and 27 feet wide (using singles line of 78-foot court). For more than two players, the doubles alley of the 78-ft court can be used to accommodate additional play.

If there are not 60-foot blended lines on the court, chalk, throw-down-lines, or painter's tape can be used to create temporary lines.



# STRUCTURE OF PRACTICE AND PLAY PLANS

## WARM UP

Each practice starts with a simple and fun activity that gives players a chance to become engaged and the coach time to make final adjustments for the session.

## PLEDGE/CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

All players will recite the pledge, and the coach will introduce the character development “word of the day.”

## TENNIS SKILLS

Each session has activities for players to build the foundation for serve, rally, and play. These include individual and partner activities.

## GAME

Players are divided into teams to work on the skills covered in each practice.

## FREE PLAY

All players will have an opportunity to play the game of tennis at the end of the session.

## PLAY AT HOME

Each practice and play plan, players have specific challenges to practice at home. They can practice independently or with a friend or family member.

# DESCRIPTIONS OF ACTIVITIES

## SETUP

Location of players, balls, and equipment.

## MISSION

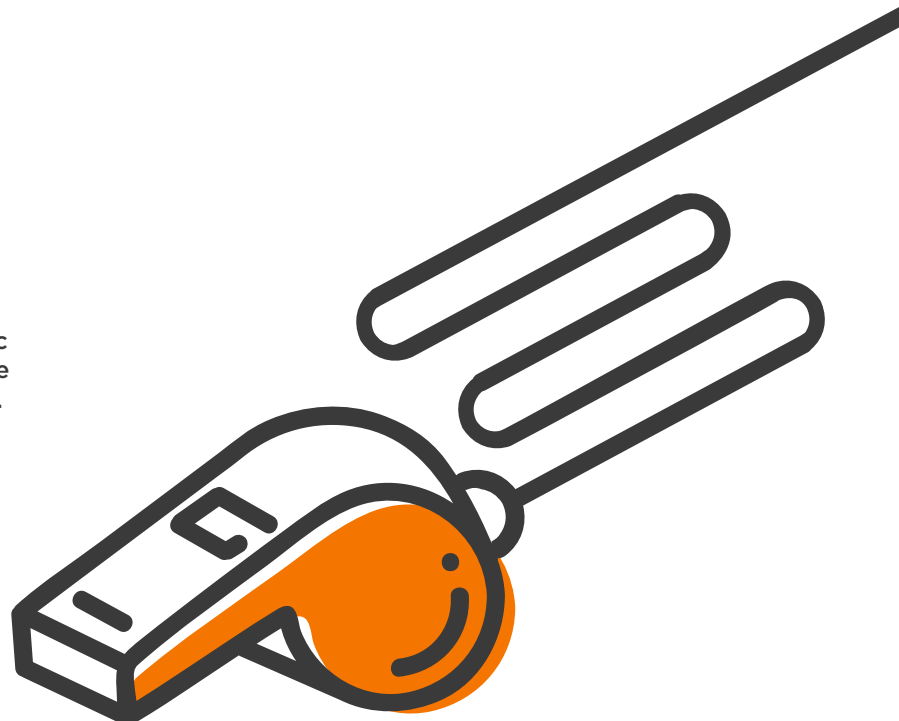
What we want players to do, followed by bullet points containing specific instructions.

## LEVEL 2, LEVEL 3, ETC.

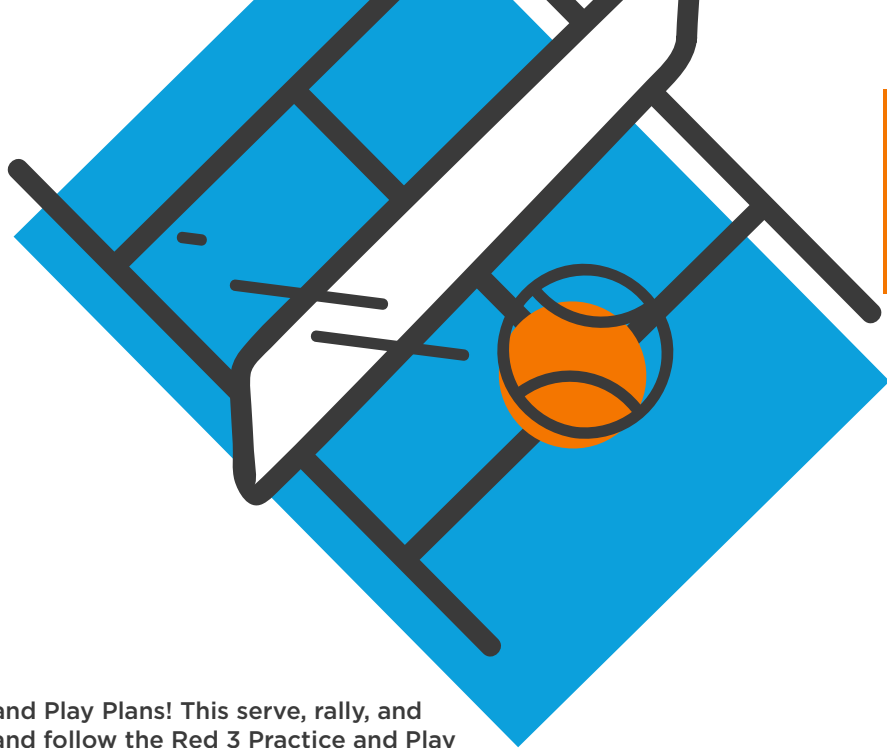
Progressions to make activities more difficult.

## COACHING CUES

Short tips to help players with the challenge, skills and play.







## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Community Orange 1 Practice and Play Plans! This serve, rally, and play program has been created to support and follow the Red 3 Practice and Play Plans or as an introduction to tennis for 11 to 14-year-old players. This program focuses on partner rallies and being on a team. Players will work on fundamental skills, including an introduction to the serve, which will help prepare them for play. Progressions are used to match the skill level of the individual. After completing Community Orange 1, players will be more comfortable with playing the game.

## GAME COMPONENTS

For each of the tennis activities in Community Orange 1 and 2, coaches can use different tools to motivate players.



### Numbers

These measure players' success and increase the challenge. Can use four or seven to work on tennis scoring.



### Time

Each activity has a specific start and end time.



### Cards

Use a deck of cards to determine how many points players must attain or how many repetitions to complete.



### Distance

By making the court smaller (half-court) or bigger (full-court) will assist in the amount of challenge for the player. A smaller court will make it easier and a bigger court will increase the challenge.

### Example of Game Components

These can be used singularly (try to get 10 in a row) or in combination (players have one minute to see how many points they can score in a game), cards can be used to determine the score the players need to reach.

## PLANS AT A GLANCE





	Warm Up	Character	Tennis Skills	Game	Free Play	Play at Home
<b>01</b> Let's Rally	Quick Feet Ball Drops	Listen	Rally Me Half-Pound Lobster Trap Toss, Hit, Catch	Build Up	Free Play	Rally With Friend
<b>02</b> Control It	4 x 4 Tag Make 'Em Move	Respect	Half-Pound Lobster Trap Toss, Hit, Catch Budge	Gladiator	Free Play	Half-Pound Lobster Trap
<b>03</b> Party At The Net	Quick Feet Ball Drops	Effort	Build Up Toss, Hit, Catch-Volley Up And Back Volley	Capture The Cone	Free Play	Toss and Hit
<b>04</b> I Can Serve	Rock-Paper-Scissors Quarterback	Teamwork	Rally Pyramid Serve Return Pro Serve Pyramid	Pick Your Challenge	Free Play	Serve Pyramid
<b>05</b> I Love Doubles	Rock-Paper-Scissors Four Corner Toss	Responsibility	Card Shark All Position Doubles	Charge! Doubles	Free Play	Rally Against Wall
<b>06</b> Let's Play	Fence Throws Quarterback	Sportsmanship	What's It Worth? Serve Plus One	Team Challenge		Try Out New Skills

# LET'S RALLY

**Equipment:** Red 42-foot court, 25-inch racquets, red and orange balls, small buckets/containers, throw-down-lines (TDLs), poly-spots, chalk and cones, and decks of cards.

## I. WARM UP (5 – 10 MINUTES)

### QUICK FEET

#### Setup

- Players line up on one side of the baseline, facing the net.
- For larger numbers, place a group on the baseline and the service line.

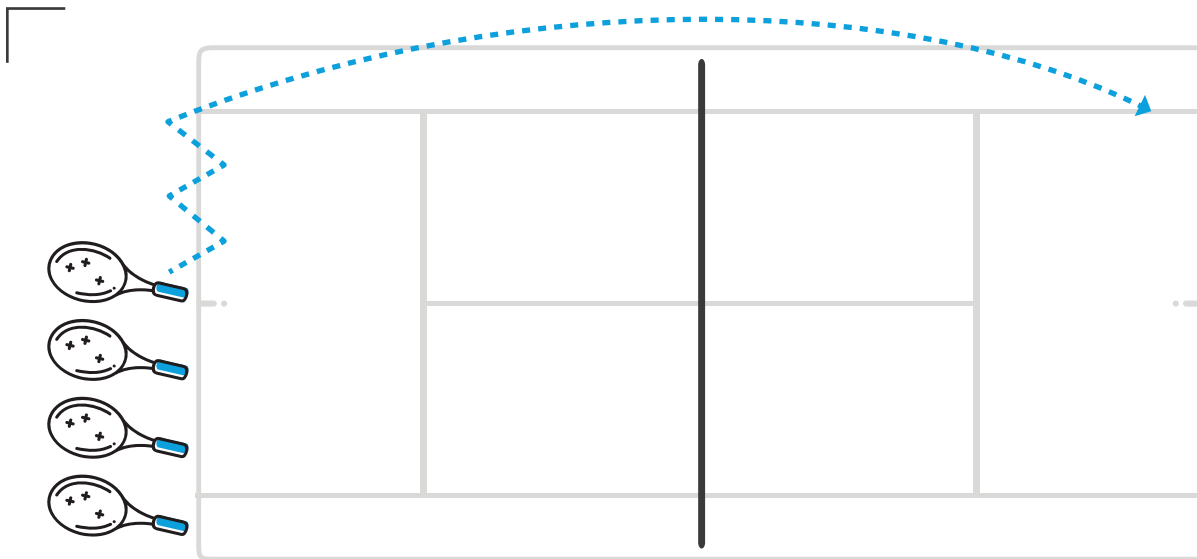
#### Mission

- First, player starts in an athletic stance facing the net, and will move sideways along the baseline by quickly stepping two feet over the baseline and then two feet behind the baseline (always facing the net).
- When the player reaches the end of the baseline, they sprint to the other side of the court and repeat moving across the opposite baseline in the other direction.
- Next player goes when person in front of them is half-way across the baseline.

**Level 2:** Jump on one leg, across the baseline.

**Level 3:** Use the other leg.

#### ILLUSTRATION: QUICK FEET



## BALL DROPS

### Setup

- Pair up players and spread them out around the court.
- One player has two red or two orange balls (orange balls are easier to catch one-handed); the other catches.
- Pairs start about four feet apart.

### Mission

- Hold both balls straight out at shoulder level in a “V” position with palms down.
- Drop a ball. Partner catches with one hand after the bounce.
- Catch with the right hand on the right side of the body, and left hand on the left side.
- After four successful catches on each side, switch roles.

**Level 2:** Alternate catching one on the left side and one on the right.

**Level 3:** Hold your arms straight out to the side.

**Level 4:** Take a step back.

## II. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT (3 MINUTES)

### PLEDGE

I will listen to my coach, be nice to my teammates, try my best and HAVE FUN!

### WORD OF THE DAY: LISTEN

Introduce Character Theme

- What makes a good listener/communicator?
- How can we show our partner that we are listening to them?
- How can we best communicate to our partner?



## III. TENNIS SKILLS (20 – 25 MINUTES)

### RALLY ME 123

#### Setup

- Spread players out on both sides of the net, each with a racquet and a red ball.

#### Mission

- Toss the ball up and let it bounce, tap it up to about head level with the racquet (palm up).
- Players will try to continue to tap the ball up after each bounce, rallying on their own.
- Players can use a target on the ground (poly-spot, chalk, etc.) to encourage hitting ball up instead of out.



### COACHING CUE

Use quick feet to keep the ball to the side of the body.

**Level 2:** Hit backhands (knuckles up).

**Level 3:** Alternate forehand (palm up) and backhands (knuckles up).

**Level 4:** Rally over a line with a partner (use existing line or a throw-down-line).

## HALF-POUND LOBSTER TRAP 123



### Setup

- Pair up players, with racquets and one red ball.
- Partners stand eight to ten feet apart. One player (the feeder) has a red ball; the other (the “lobster”) has a racquet in one hand.
- This can be done over the net or without a net.

### Mission

- The feeder tosses the ball to the forehand side (palm forward), and the lobster traps it against the racquet with the free hand after the bounce.
- The lobster gently drop-hits the ball back to the feeder.

**Level 2:** Use a backhand. For a two-hand backhand, the player will hold the racquet with the non-dominant hand at the top of the grip, and trap with the dominant hand. For a one-hand backhand, the player will hold the racquet with the dominant hand at the bottom of the grip, and trap the ball against the strings with the non-dominant hand.

**Level 3:** Make the lobster move to the side, back, and forward.

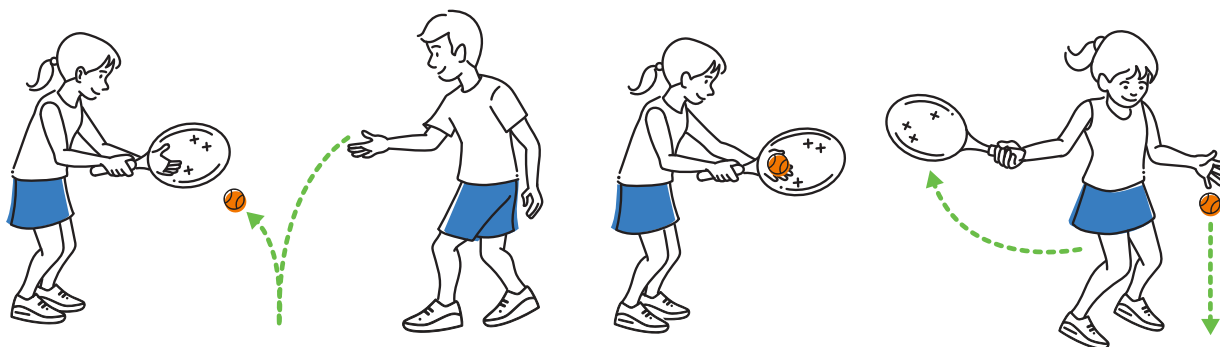
**Level 4:** Feeder moves back increasing the distance between feeder and lobster.



### COACHING CUE

Keep the trap to the side, and in front of the body.

## ILLUSTRATION: HALF-POUND LOBSTER TRAP



**TOSS, HIT, CATCH** 123    

**Setup**

- Two teams of three per court. Each team uses half-court.
- Feeder stands in the middle of the service box, on the same side of the net as the hitter, with a supply of red balls.
- Hitter is in the center of the service line; catcher is on opposite service line.
- Use a TDL or poly-spot to mark “home base” for the hitter.

**Mission**

- Feeder tosses a ball to the forehand side of the hitter. Ball should be tossed a safe distance away from the hitter, so the feeder is not hit with the ball.
- Hitter plays the ball over the net, and recovers to the spot.
- Hitter’s shot should land in the middle of the opposite service box. A target can be created with a cone, poly-spot, or ball pyramid.
- After six balls, players change positions. Feeder moves to hitter’s position, hitter moves to catcher’s position, catcher moves to feeder’s position.

**Level 2:** Toss to backhand side.

**Level 3:** Alternate forehands and backhands.

**Level 4:** Hitter moves to baseline.



**COACHING CUE**

Return to ready position after each shot, and follow through to the target/partner.

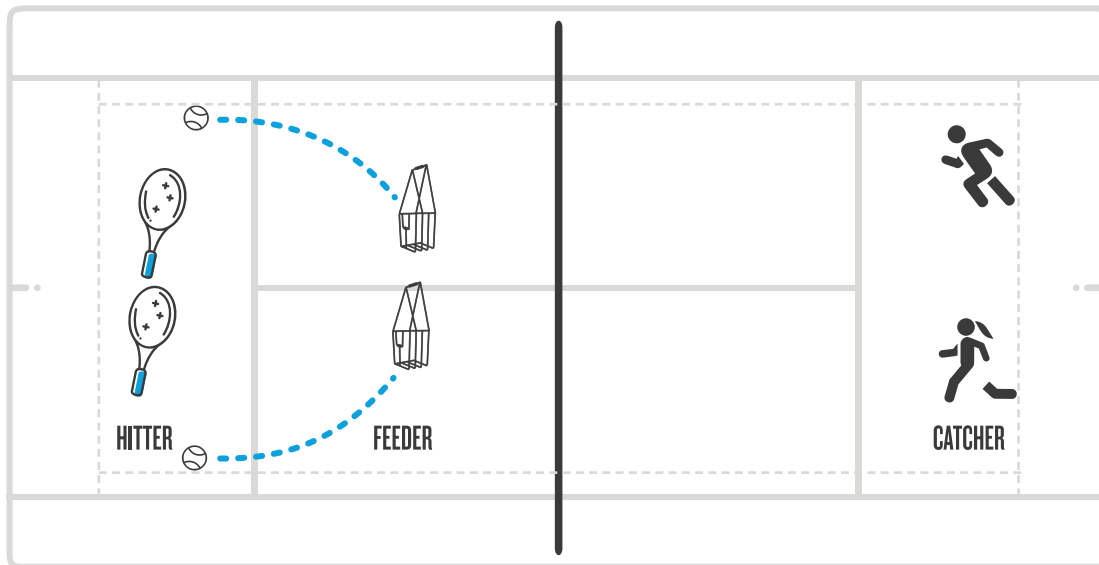


**CHARACTER CHECK UP**

How could you tell your partner was listening to you?

Why is it important to listen to your partner?

**ILLUSTRATION: TOSS, HIT, CATCH**



## IV. GAME (10 – 12 MINUTES)



### Setup

- Pair up players, two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Both players start in the middle of the service box, with a red ball.

### Mission

- Players will rally back and forth using forehands.
- The coach will determine the number of shots for each pair to rally back and forth (e.g. four).
- Once that number is achieved, players will increase the rally goal by increments of two shots.

**Level 2:** Use backhand.

**Level 3:** Move to the service line.

**Level 4:** Must hit crosscourt.

## V. FREE PLAY (5 MINUTES)

**Note:** This is an opportunity for the players to play the game of tennis, as all young players like to try and hit the ball over the net. Players may struggle, so focus on the effort.

### Setup:

- Pair up players according to skill level using half-court, playing inside the service boxes (42-foot court).
- Start in the middle of the service box, then have kids move backwards as they are more successful.
- Two red balls per pair.

### Mission:

- Rally over net – start with a drop-hit or hand toss as a serve. Players can trap and drop-hit back, or bump up and then hit back (can bump up multiple times).
- More advanced players can rally back and forth.
- Alternative: Have one-minute rotations; partner up with a different player each round, regardless of playing level.

## VI. WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

### TEAM TALK

- What was one new skill you enjoyed learning today?
- Who can you work on listening to better at home?
- How can listening help you at home and school?

### PLAY AT HOME: RALLY

- Rally with a friend, family member, or against a wall.

### TEAM HUDDLE

Huddle all players together to perform a team chant. Team chant can be asking all the players to put one hand on top of each other in a circle formation and on the count of 1-2-3 they shout "Net Generation!"

