

MHMHA Coaches Handbook

Timbit/Initiation



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This coaching manual takes precedence over the MHMHA pocket manual on any area that would be considered varying in direction or application. Please refer to the coaching manual for direction.

1. General Guidelines for Timbit/Initiation program (3-6 hockey)

- Do what is best for kids based on what valid and leading research says – specifically the **Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD)** (see attachment 1) and USA Hockey (see attachment 2)
 - Research used must be founded on child development principles that encompass both emotional and physical needs of the child, not just the wants of the child and parent.
- Must make economical sense with an intention of reducing the current expense level of hockey and better utilizing current facilities.
- Addresses basic FUNdamentals of hockey.
- Focuses on well-balanced physical literacy of developing children.
- Promotes an active lifestyle – not just hockey centered.

It is the goal of the coach to create an environment based on the following:

1. Love the Game
2. Learn Skills & and Competencies
3. Learn to Laugh & Have Fun
4. Become Life Champions – live by MHMHA Core Values

MHMHA cores values are:

Integrity
Accountability
Discipline
Attitude
Passion
Team Work
Work Ethic
Honor/Respect
Humility
Coachability
Fearless

2. Structures of play

This section is intended to provide guidance for coaches based on the LTAD and MHMHA core values.

Section Checklist

Team Selection	Recommended Ratio
Scheduling of Ice	Ice Utilization
Number of Ice Times	Framework for Rotating
Player Positions	Tournaments
Player Acceleration	Extra Costs
Game to Practice Ratio	Coach Support
Equipment	Practice Planning

Team Selection

- Recommended roster size: 10-12
- Finalize number of teams in multiples of 3 (e.g. 3, 6, 9....)

Recommended Ratio (player : coach)

- 4:1 on the ice at all times

Scheduling of Ice

- 1 hour ice sessions
- FLC is the primary facility (other facilities may be used)
- Ice will be flooded after 2 consecutive sessions.
 - ***reduction of ice requirements and improved ice time utilization***

Ice Utilization

- 3 teams on the ice at one time (in most cases)
- Bumper Boards to be setup along blue and redlines
- 20mins – game play done in all three zones at end of ice session

Number of Ice Times

- Start 2nd week of October / end last weekend of February
- 35-40 total scheduled ice times
- Hiatus between Dec 15th (week before Christmas break at school) and return 1st weekend after New Years

Framework for Rotating

- **Goaltending position** is excluded at this age category

Player Positions

- **Goaltending position:**
 - no goalie allowed, no goalie equipment, no coach as goalie

- **Non-goaltending position:**
 - no positioning taught
 - no off-sides taught
 - no face-offs after goals – puck is dumped back into continue play. Face-offs only after changing of players.

Tournaments

- No out of town tournaments for this age group is permitted
- Jamboree format to be introduced for the local tournament
- No scoreboard used
- No announcing
- No referee (coaches keep play moving)
- No Digger Awards **or** Digger Award given for every player on the team and presented to all players in the dressing room during a post game meeting.

Player Acceleration

- Player Acceleration: applies to: Parents who feel their child is highly skilled enough to play at the Novice level while being of Initiation age (age 6 only). The child will be allowed to skate in the Novice Pre-Season Skate weekend where he/she will be evaluated on physical, emotional, and social aspects. If deemed to be within the upper 20% of the 20/60/20 Model for Competition via Parody Team Selection, the player will be granted a one-time acceleration to the higher age league (Initiation to Novice). This application will be used for the early movement of high skilled player from Initiation to Novice only. League Directors will be the evaluators only and have been given consent of MHMHA General Manager.

Extra Costs (outside of minor hockey fees)

- Charging of extra team fees is not recommended
- Individual team fund raising is discouraged
- Avoidance of any team purchases for team apparel (a donation to a specific team by a company or individual for the purposes of purchasing team apparel is permitted but not encouraged)

Game to Practice Ratio

- 2:1 ratio
- 40-45 min practice: 15-20min game time = 1 hour ice session

Coach Support

- “Hockey Alberta/Notre Dame Academy/MHMHA/Hockey Hounds Coaching Symposium” – mid September
- Provide initial practice planning – see Coach’s Manual
- Hockey Hounds Coaches Club – Ernie Wouters

Equipment

- Blue pucks only (light weight) (FLC)
 - 6 Road Hockey nets (FLC)
 - Attack triangles (FLC)
 - Mini timbit pylons (FLC)
- equipment proportionate to the physical development of players

Practice Planning

- 85% skill development / 15% game play
- See Practice Plan attachments
- Mandatory attendance at the Hockey Alberta/Notre Dame Academy/MHMHA/Hockey Hounds Coaching Symposium

3. Year Start Up – Getting Started

To Do List

1. Contact ALL members of your coaching group and provide them with all Medicine Hat Minor Hockey information that has been provided to the coaches – having a short “coaches” meeting with your coaching group is a strongly recommended.
2. Contact ALL members of your team by phone and discuss the following with the parents
 - a. Your excitement with being their child’s coach for the year
 - b. What other individuals will be helping you this year
 - c. The location and time of your first team ice session
 - i. This is also a good time to have your first parent meeting – see parent meeting agenda
 - d. Email contact and other contact info not given to you in your MHMHA information
3. Make sure you have the following equipment from the Minor Hockey office
 - a. Enough jerseys for each player
 - b. Team pucks (light blue)
 - c. Copies of this manual for your coaching group
4. Create an agenda for your first parent/player meeting and photocopy enough for each family (see example below)
5. Create practice plans for your first 2 practices – review these with your coaching group before the start of the first practice. (see practice construction tips below)

This section is to give the coach a general blueprint of your first parent meeting.

Sample Agenda

Introduction of All Coaches, Parents, and Players

1. Minor Hockey Information
 - a. Parent Pledge Form, Player Pledge Form, Coach Pledge Form
 - b. Player Medical Sheet
 - c. Coach/Manager Handbook
 - d. Coach/Player Safety,
 - i. Mouthguards (recommended), neckguards, coaches with helmets
 - ii. Parents on ice, behind the bench, in dressing room. (Limit the number of people in these areas to avoid accidents and overcrowding. Also recognize that there are single parents, young families, grandparents, and this may be hard to manage. Awareness is most important here.)
 - iii. Siblings – on ice, on bench (not allowed)
2. Game Times and Schedules
3. Attendance (flexibility of attendance due to introductory level or sport)
4. Playing Time (see MHMHA Guidelines)
5. Goalies (see MHMHA Guidelines)
6. Coaches Goals for the year (your personal goals for the year)
7. Tournaments (see MHMHA Guidelines)
8. Parent Contact Sheet (phone numbers, email addresses)
9. Team Clothing, team socks (see MHMHA Guidelines)



Parent Meeting

- Call the meeting during the first or second practice.
- Inform parents/guardians of the importance of attending.
- Plan for a volunteer or assistant coach to lead the practice while you meet with parents/guardians.

Sample Parent Meeting Agenda

Introduction *5 minutes*

- Introduce yourself.
- Parent/Guardian Introduction: name, child's name, main purpose of involvement.
- Explain your coaching philosophy:
 - Fair Play
 - Respect
 - Teamwork
 - Goals you have in mind for the team

Hand Outs / Information Gathering *5 minutes*

- Medical Information.
 - Hand out forms if the club or association has not already provided the information
(SEE COACHES' TOOLBOX - SAFETY).
- Fair Play
 - Hand out information (SEE COACHES' TOOLBOX FAIR PLAY CODES).
 - Speak about the importance of parents discussing the codes with their children
 - Encourage parents to approach you with questions or concerns, instead of communicating through their children.
- Hand out Team Contact sheet (SEE COACHES' TOOL BOX) with phone numbers and e-mails, check for accuracy and ask about the best communication strategy (e-mail, phone or both).

Review Schedule *7 minutes*

Volunteers *5 minutes*

- Explain how the team needs volunteers for a successful season.
 - Jobs can be done in partners and there are places for everyone to help.
- Outline positions that need to be filled
(SEE COACHES' TOOLBOX - VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES).
- Allow volunteers time to consider options and to get back to you.

Conclusion *5 minutes*

- Question and answer period.
- Emphasize your preference to keep an open dialogue and parents/guardians may approach you at any time.
Asking questions displays your approachability.
- Allow for time to socialize.

4. Practice Plans (see the end of the attachment section for example practice plans to get you started)

The intent of this section is to give coaches ideas on how to plan and structure a practice that can be used as a template for the season. Regardless of how you design your practice plan you/your coaching staff needs to be prepared to instruct with a practice plan in hand. Organization is a powerful tool if used properly. A practice plan is your tool of organizational power. So it is a MUST!

Practice Structure

<p>1. Organized Free Time (game) (2-5 minutes)</p>	<p>Have a routine of simple independent activities that players can do before the official practice begins. (eg. Partner keep away, shoot puck on goal at coach) Be sure this time is monitored and it is a safe environment.</p>
<p>2. Warm Up (individual skill) (8 – 10 minutes)</p>	<p>Everyone should be involved right away. Minimal explanation and low level difficulty. (Eg. Tag games, follow the leader, shuttle games, Red Light Green Light)</p>
<p>3. Skills Theme (15 minutes) ** a Water Break can be included in the middle of these activities</p>	<p>Introduce 1 or 2 new skills in this section. Use 3 or 4 simple drills that have repetition, manageable groups, little wait time for players – keep them moving. Use a simple demonstration to introduce each drill – use your assistant coaches to demo as you explain!) Using stations here works well.</p>
<p>4. Skill Review Activity (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Do a drill that you have done before to indicate how players have progressed since the last time you have done the drill.</p>
<p>5. Concluding Activity/ Fun Activity “SAG” Small area game (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Mini-games, relay games, modified hockey games.</p>
<p>6. Get ready for Game</p>	<p>Organize your team into a maximum of 2 equal groups for the game. If the other team is short of players, get into the habit of sharing players to ensure BALANCE participation is happening.</p>

5. Year End

Things to consider during this timeframe are:

- Collection of jerseys (a jersey hand in date will be determined). Upon handing in the team jerseys MHMHA will release funds for a team year end celebration.
- As well, when team jerseys are handed in you will receive medals, trophies or plaques that are to be handed out to each player.
- Celebrate the season with an end of the year team party.
** Try to avoid having parents paying extra for this activity.

At the completion of the hockey season the coaching staff will be required to complete a player evaluation form for their team. By doing this it will communicate information to the evaluation committee for next years team selections. The goal of the committee is to create balanced teams, thus promoting "**Competition by Parity**" for the following season.

** Medicine Hat Minor Hockey Evaluation Procedures and Forms to be inserted here.

Developmental Evaluation Initiation 2nd Year: Year-end

These are the skills to observe and evaluate:

- **Skating** (forward, backward, stops, pivots, crossovers)
- **Puck Possession** (passing, puck handling, shooting)
- **Hockey Sense** (do they pass the puck, get to open ice, try to get possession of the puck)

Performance Rating:

1 – Developmental 2 – Average 3 – Above Average 4 – Developed

1 – Developmental: Player that needs more practice with skating, crossovers, & stopping. Player is progressing towards moderate puck handling skills. Player engages in play and control the puck < 25% of time. Player is sometime successful and tries to follow some rules of the game.

2 – Average: A player with adequate balance; can stop, attempts (may have trouble with) crossover(s). Player can handle the puck but needs improvement on puck possession. Player can shoot the puck; may not use backhand. Player engages in play and controls the puck 50% of time.

3 – Above Average: A player with good balance; can crossover and stop routinely. Player handles the puck with ease; does not lose it very often, is a digger for the puck. Player may shoot forehand and backhand. Passes the puck or makes attempts to pass. Player engages in play and controls the puck >50% of time.

4 – Developed: A player that possesses excellent in skating skills (pivots, skate backwards, crossover fluidly). Consistently controls the play and maintains puck possession under pressure. Player can pass accurately. Player has a variety of shots selections. Player engages in play and controls the puck the large majority of the time.

6. Manager Support

Hockey teams need volunteers for a successful season. One of these volunteer positions that can support a coach and their coaching staff is the role of team manager.

Parent Volunteer Positions

For Timbit and Initiation, there are very few jobs that a manager is needed for. Here are the most important roles that need to be filled.

- Parent Rep for end of year Jamboree Committee
- Parent volunteers for end of year jamboree as needed by Minor Hockey or Parent Rep
- On Bench Supervision/Help with players (2 per game)
- Parent Communication (as needed to assist coach)

For specific information on the roles and duties of a team manager in future years (novice and above) please go to:
http://www.hockeycanada.ca/index.php/ci_id/25369/la_id/1.htm

Medicine Hat Minor Hockey Important Contact Numbers

Main Office – Deb Wickham 403-527-5773

General Manager – Brad Cobb 403-527-5773

President – Tammy Murschell 403 – 527-5773

Director – David Ridgedale 403-526-0923

Attachments

1. Parent, Player, Coach Pledge Sheets
2. Pyramid of Interventions
3. What Hockey Canada is saying
 - a. Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD)
 - b. FUNdamentals of Hockey
4. Hockey Stats on Skill/Player Development
5. What USA Hockey is saying
6. Skills Checklist
7. Drills and Practice Plans to Get You Started

Medicine Hat Minor Hockey

Player Pledge

(Timbit and Initiation)

(adapted from the BC Player/Coach Handbook)

Please read this pledge with your child. Have them sign their name as best as they can in the space provided. (An initial will work fine!) Please return to the coach or appropriate official.

**As a member of the _____
(team name)**

I will:

- **Be good to my teammates**
- **Listen to my coaches**
- **Play hockey because I like it, not because someone else wants me to play**
- **Control my temper**
- **Work hard for myself and for my team**
- **Cheer for all good plays by my team and the other team**
- **Cooperate with my coaches, my teammates, and the other team**

Name: _____ **Sign:** _____
(Print) (Player Signature or Printed First Name)

Medicine Hat Minor Hockey

Parent Pledge

(adapted from the Positive Coaching Alliance – PCA)

Please read, initial each item, sign and return to the coach or appropriate official.

1) I pledge to use positive encouragement to fill my child's Emotional Tank because athletes do their best when their “Emotional Tank” is full. I understand that fewer than 1% of youth sports participants will reach a high level of hockey and that the top three reasons kids play sports are: a) to have fun b) to make new friends c) to learn new skills.

2) I pledge to reinforce the ELM Tree of Mastery with my child (E for Effort, L for Learning and M for bouncing back from Mistakes).

3) I pledge to maintain a proper perspective and that the game is for the players. I understand that children are born with different abilities and that the true measure is not how my child compares to others but how he/she is doing in comparison to his/her best self.

4) I pledge to "Honor the Game of Hockey." I understand the importance of setting a good example for my child. No matter what others may do, I will show respect for all involved in the game including coaches, players, other parents, opponents, and opposing fans.

5) I pledge to refrain from yelling out instructions to my child. I understand that on ice instruction is the coach's job. I understand that games are chaotic times for children trying to deal with fast-paced action and respond to opponents, teammates and coaches. I will limit my comments during the game to encouraging my child and other players for both teams.

6) I pledge to refrain from making negative comments about my child's coach in my child's presence. I understand that this plants a negative seed in my child's head that can negatively influence my child's motivation and overall experience. This can have both short and long term negative effects for my child and for the game.

I agree to abide by the principles of this Pledge as set and supported by the Medicine Hat Minor Hockey Association. I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations, and decisions as set for the Medicine Hat Minor Hockey Association.

Player Name: _____

Print Name(s): _____

Signature of Parents: _____

Team: _____

Medicine Hat Minor Hockey

Coaches Pledge

(adapted from Hockey Canada)

As a member of MHMHA it is the intention of this pledge to promote fair play and respect for all participants within MHMHA. All coaches must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of fair play.

FAIR PLAY CODE FOR COACHES

1. I will remember that young athletes have other interests and obligations.
2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials and teammates.
3. I will ensure all athletes receive equal instruction, support and fair playing time.
4. I will not ridicule or yell at my athletes for making mistakes. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
5. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
6. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.
7. I will support other coaches in the pursuit of doing what is best for all kids and making MHMHA a strong, unified association.
8. I will agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set by MHMHA.

PRINT NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

TEAM NAME _____

Pyramid of Interventions

Pyramid of interventions is a “step by step” process to support coaches and parents in avoiding and resolving conflict.

This “step by step” process is to be explained to your parent group at the first meeting of the year.

If there is concern or conflict the following process needs to be followed:

****** 24 HOUR RULE******

Step Number	Contact	Contact Information
1	Talk with Coach or Parent Directly	Parent Contact Sheet from your team
2	Contact Timbit or Initiation Director	Name: David Ridgedale Ph. # 403-526-0923
3	Contact General Manager of MHMHA	Name: Brad Cobb Ph. # 403-527-5773
4	Contact the President of MHMHA	Name: Tammy Murschell Ph. # 403-527-5773
5	Contact Board of Directors (MHMHA)	Name: Ph. #
6	Contact Hockey Alberta	Name: Ph. #
7	Contact Hockey Canada	Name: Ph. #

What is Long Term Player Development?

Simply put a Long Term Player Development model (LTPDM) is a framework to maximize a player's potential and long term involvement in sport over the course of their life. This document sets out a vision for hockey in Canada that takes advantage of the history and culture of the game to increase participation and to lay the foundations of international success long into the future.

This model for hockey has been developed based on the following principles:

- Doing the right thing for the player at the right stage in their development
- Adopting a player-centred approach and not treating the development of all players the same way.
- The broader the foundation of players the more successful the game of hockey will be in Canada
- Viewing player development as a long term process
- Aligning player development resources (skills manuals, DVD's) with Coach development and education resources so that coaches are doing the right things at the right time.
- A need to better educate parents on the hockey development of their child. It is okay for parents to want their kids to get to the highest levels but they need to know the best way to go about it.

Hockey Canada's mandate is to create a model that improves the quality of our sport in Canada and gives our athletes a high probability of achieving success in domestic and international competitions.

There is much that is good about hockey in Canada already. We have a history of success - but we need to continue to work to maintain success into the future.

The challenge is to build on this to develop a consistent approach to player development.

What we need to do to improve as a sport

- Focus on supporting the complete athlete not just the athlete training and competition. Recommend other sports, cross training methods to get away from hockey and avoid burn out
- Remove the focus of winning at all levels and age



COACHING
Entertainment

- Remove geographic differences and develop a common directional, leadership and athlete development framework – consistent in the philosophy of player development
- Introduce athletic skills in a systematic and timely way

Currently, what are our biggest hurdles?

- Young players over compete – how can education and regulation improve this?
- Young players follow adult schedules and training practices – how do we modify the game to suit the needs of the athlete
- Young females follow programs designed for males
- The best coaches work at elite levels – how do we encourage the best teachers to work with the youth?
- The public does not understand the need for an integrated development model and the principles of long term development



Hockey is a late specialization Sport

It Takes Players A lot of Years to be Great

Sports can be classified as either early or late specialization. Early specialization sports include artistic and acrobatic sports such as gymnastics, diving, and figure skating. These differ from late specialization sports in that very complex skills are learned before maturation since they cannot be fully mastered if taught after maturation.

Most other sports are late specialization sports. Hockey is a late specialization sport. If physical literacy is acquired before maturation, players can select a late specialization sport when they are between the ages of 12 and 15 and have the potential to rise to international stardom in that sport.

Specializing before the age of 10 in late specialization sports like hockey contributes to:

- ◆ One-sided, sport-specific preparation.
- ◆ Lack of ABC's, the basic movement and sports skills.
- ◆ Overuse injuries.
- ◆ Early burnout.
- ◆ Early retirement from training and competition.

Early involvement in the FUNdamentals stage is essential in late specialization sports.

A look at the National Hockey League scoring leaders over the last 25 years supports that hockey is a late specialization sport – with an athlete's "peak" typically occurring in the middle to late 20's.

FUNDamental Hockey Skills

Initiation Program (5-6 year olds)
Novice Program (7-8 year olds)

Objectives

Learn all fundamental movement skills and build overall motor skills

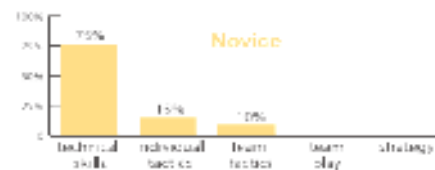
Skill development in the FUNdamentals stage should be well-structured, positive, and FUN!

The skill of skating speed can be developed quickly with players this age. Coaching should focus on developing skating speed in repetitions of less than 5 seconds

The ABC's of agility, balance and coordination should be emphasized through the teaching of skills and small games to emphasize the ABC's

Ensure that the skills the player acquires during the FUNdamentals stage will benefit them when they engage in recreational activities, enhancing their quality of life and health

Hockey Canada recommends in the early stages of FUNdamentals that players spend 85% of their time on the introduction and development of technical skills



Guidelines to Consider

	Initiation Program	Novice Program
Length of Season	20 - 25 weeks	20 – 25 weeks
Frequency per Week	1-2 times	2-3 times
Number of Games per season	10-15 modified	10-15 modified, 10 Full ice

The following criteria should be followed when designing modified games:

- Played on an area smaller than full ice – half ice, two thirds ice or one third ice are appropriate options
- Format modified to encourage fun and fair play. Examples of this would be not keeping score, rotating goalies, more than one puck, more than 6 players on per team
- Use of a light weight puck

Hockey Canada developed the Initiation Program to make children's first contact with hockey a safe and positive experience. It's a structured, learn to play hockey program designed to introduce beginners to the game's basic skills. It enables participants to become contributing members of a team effort, develop self-confidence, and experience a sense of personal achievement. These goals are achieved in an atmosphere of fun and fair play.

The program emphasizes the basic hockey skills: skating, puck handling, passing and shooting.

Each skill is introduced and refined in a progressive one step at a time manner.

Children learn and develop through participating in practice drills and informal and modified games (such as shinny, freeze-tag and obstacle courses).

Although the emphasis is on fun and progressive skill development, the Initiation Program also allows youngsters to experience:

- Fitness
- Fair Play
- Cooperation

Just as the future of Canadian society lies with our youth, so to does the future of hockey. Hockey Canada understands the important role it plays in helping beginning hockey players to develop playing attitudes and foster an enjoyment of hockey as a lifetime sport and hobby.

FUNDamentals To Do List for Players:

- Develop the basis athletic skills of the game through non-structured activities like skateboarding, biking, skipping, street hockey, in-line skating, catching and throwing games and other modified activities.
- It is not about being the best it is about doing "your" best



- Develop a positive self image through the game
- Learn the basic playing rules of the game.

FUNDamentals To Do List for Coaches:

- Teach appropriate and correct balance, agility, edge control, skating, turning and puck control skills using the ABC's of athletics.
- Introduce children to the simple rules and ethics of sports.
- Develop the skill of speed in players through short (5 seconds or less) repetitions
- Utilize the Hockey Canada Initiation or Novice manual to deliver appropriately structured practices.
- Limit technical and tactical information communicated to the players
- Use clear and precise terminology adapted to the children
- Have some knowledge about child growth and development
- Ensure players enjoy the game and want to continue to play in the future
- NCCP training in the Intro Coach Program or the Coach Stream program. These programs are focused on parent meetings, team communication, teaching skills, organizing practices and an introduction to appropriate games for young players
- Continuing education through Mentorship specialty clinics offered at MHA level with a focus on teaching the technical skills.

Hockey Statistics focused on player development.

This attachment is a comparison between game play and practice ice session. The emphasis of MHMHA is to build strong player skill through practice ice sessions.



Chevrolet Safe & Fun Hockey



SAFE AND FUN HOCKEY: BY THE NUMBERS

Statistics taken from a Pee wee level hockey game
Statistics provided by Calgary Hockey Development

- Players will have the puck on their stick for an average of 8 seconds per game.
- Players will take an average of 1 - 2 shots per game.
- Players will take an average of 18 shifts per game.
- 99% of the feedback coaches give players is when they have the puck. Ironically players only have the puck on their stick for 0.2% of the game.

When you consider these statistics, is your child really having fun? In addition, is your child really developing sufficient skills to be successful? Safe and Fun Hockey depends on both child development and fun.

When asked, the majority of kids will say the best part about hockey is scoring goals, handling the puck, passing and skating. We know that players are more active, have the puck on their stick more often, take more shots, and give more passes during practice than during a game. Therefore, with properly structured practices it all adds up to more fun for the ones that count - THE PLAYERS.

PRACTICE - BY THE NUMBERS

When watching a practice, parents should be aware of what constitutes effective skill development. To that end, look to see if the following guidelines are being followed for your child's practice time. Remember - it is your responsibility to also respect the coach, and his or her decisions regarding times, drills, and instruction.

- Players have a puck on their stick an average of 8-12 minutes each practice.
- Players usually have a minimum of 30 shots on goal.
- Coaches should try to run 4 - 5 different drills/games/activities each practice. More is not necessarily better; execution of what they do represents development.
- No more than 2-3 minutes should be spent in front of a teaching board each practice.
- If there are 10 players on the ice, 2 - 3 players should be moving at all times.
- If there are 15 players on the ice, 3 - 4 players should be moving at all times.
- If there are 20 players on the ice, 4 - 5 players should be moving at all times.

Remember:

...1 practice will provide a player with more skill time than the equivalent of 11 games!!!

*** The preceding facts and figures relate to a 1 hour practice session.**

Active Start

Ages 0-6



Starting at infancy, parents must provide opportunities for children to be physically active every day in a safe, fun environment. Physical activity through play is an essential part of a child's development. Activity should incorporate fundamental movement skills in the 4 environments of that lead to physical literacy:

- In the water: Swimming
- On the ground: Athletics
- In the air: Gymnastics
- On ice and snow: Sliding (skiing, skating)

Physical Development:

- Provide physical activity everyday regardless of weather conditions
- Starting at infancy, provide infants, toddlers and preschoolers with opportunities to participate in daily physical activity that promotes fitness and movement skills for a minimum of 60 minutes a day
- Encourage play, as it is an essential part of physical and mental development
- Develop basic gross motor skills and coordination with large muscle groups through unstructured activity
- Develop basic movement skills such as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing, catching, swimming, wheeling and skating that form the base of physical literacy. These motor skills are the building blocks of more complex movement and help lay the foundation for lifelong physical activity and athletic development

Psychological Development:

Activity is essential for development; among its benefits, physical activity enhances:

- Development of brain function
- Social skills
- Emotions, attitudes and imagination
- Confidence and positive self-esteem
- Stress reduction by quality of sleep

Design activities that help children to feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun challenging sports and activities.

The Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) window of opportunity for this stage is the initiation of movement skills, running, jumping, kicking, throwing, catching, swimming, sliding etc.

Programs:

USA Hockey member clubs offer 6 & Under (Mite) programs as well as a first-year participant Learn to Play program.

USA Hockey's key focus for this stage:

- Help ensure our participants gain physical literacy
- Develop a passion for hockey in all children
- Encourage daily physical activity
- Provide the opportunity to explore a new surface (ice) and mode of locomotion (skating)

- Develop on-ice balance, coordination and agility
- Introduce basic skating movement skills through a Learn to Skate program
 - Preferably without use of a hockey stick

Training and Competitive Environment:

- **Training/Competition Ratio:** No formal competition, activity games and small area games should be incorporated in every ice session
- **Training Volume:** 1 to 2 times hockey per week, with session lengths no longer than 50 minutes at Learn to Play and 6 & Under (Mite) levels.
- **Training Year:** 4 weeks/month, 4 month/year
- **Team Composition:** Teams should consist of a maximum of 9 to 13 skaters. The goaltender position is excluded during this stage of development.
- **Team Structure:** Players can be grouped into teams of like abilities, with the overall focus on evenly distributing the player ability pool across all teams.
- **Competition format:** No formal competition

USA Hockey recommends that parents guide their children to be physically active in building a base of physical literacy

- **Structured and unstructured free play**
- **Activities that include swimming, running, jumping, balance, agility, gliding**



HOCKEY CANADA CORE SKILLS INITIATION



Balance and Agility	Edge Control	Starting and Stopping	Forward Skating and Striding	Backward Skating	Turning and Crossovers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Basic stance <input type="checkbox"/> Getting up from the ice <input type="checkbox"/> Balance on one foot <input type="checkbox"/> Gliding on two skates <input type="checkbox"/> Gliding on one skate – forward and backward <input type="checkbox"/> Lateral Crossovers – step and plant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Figure 8's – forward – inside & outside edge <input type="checkbox"/> Figure 8's – backward – inside & outside edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> T-start <input type="checkbox"/> Front v-start <input type="checkbox"/> Crossover start <input type="checkbox"/> Backward c-cut start <input type="checkbox"/> Backward crossover start <input type="checkbox"/> One o'clock – eleven o'clock <input type="checkbox"/> Outside leg stop <input type="checkbox"/> Two-foot parallel stop <input type="checkbox"/> One-leg backward stop <input type="checkbox"/> Two-leg backward stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> C-cuts – left foot / right foot / alternating <input type="checkbox"/> Forward striding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> C-cuts – left foot / right foot <input type="checkbox"/> Gliding on two skates – backward <input type="checkbox"/> Gliding on one skate – backward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Glide turns <input type="checkbox"/> Tight turns <input type="checkbox"/> C-cuts – around circle – outside foot – forward & backward <input type="checkbox"/> Crossovers – forward & backward <input type="checkbox"/> Backward one-foot stop and t-start <input type="checkbox"/> Pivots – fwd to fwd & fwd to bwd <input type="checkbox"/> Pivots – open & reverse

Stationary Puck Control	Moving Puck Control	Stationary Passing and Receiving	Moving Passing and Receiving	Sweep Shot	Wrist Shot
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Stance <input type="checkbox"/> Narrow <input type="checkbox"/> Wide <input type="checkbox"/> Side – front – side <input type="checkbox"/> Toe drag – side <input type="checkbox"/> Toe drag – front 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Narrow <input type="checkbox"/> Wide <input type="checkbox"/> Open ice carry – forehand & backhand <input type="checkbox"/> Weaving with puck <input type="checkbox"/> Toe drag – front & side <input type="checkbox"/> Puck in feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Stationary forehand pass <input type="checkbox"/> Stationary backhand pass <input type="checkbox"/> Stationary bank pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Moving forehand pass <input type="checkbox"/> Moving backhand pass <input type="checkbox"/> Lead pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Forehand <input type="checkbox"/> Backhand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Forehand – low <input type="checkbox"/> Backhand – low

Flip Shot	Individual Offensive Tactics	Individual Defensive Tactics	Warm Ups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Forehand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Body takes <input type="checkbox"/> Stick takes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Angling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arm circles <input type="checkbox"/> Trunk rotations <input type="checkbox"/> Leg swing front to back <input type="checkbox"/> Leg swing side to side <input type="checkbox"/> High knee <input type="checkbox"/> Heel kicks

Drills and Practice Plans To Get You Started