

PARENTS & PLAYERS

A GUIDE FOR ENJOYING
HOCKEY IN ALBERTA



#HOCKEYFORLIFE



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WELCOME TO HOCKEY ALBERTA

Welcome to the 2018-19 hockey season in Alberta. As parents, it is important that you know that the central focus for Hockey Alberta is our players – your children - and ensuring that we provide positive opportunities and experiences for those players, regardless of location, age, gender, experience or ability.

Hockey Alberta is celebrating its 111th anniversary this year as the body that oversees amateur hockey in the province. Hockey Alberta is one of 13 Member branches of Hockey Canada and is comprised of more than 90,000 participants. This number includes you, as parents, and your children, 187 Minor Hockey Associations, 200 club teams, coaches, officials, and trainers.

We are proud of the structure that has been established to provide hockey opportunities at all levels, for players and parents, as well as the numerous stakeholders who make our great game possible. Our stakeholders range from coaches and other volunteers who work directly with the players, to our sponsors and Hockey Canada.

It is the responsibility of Hockey Alberta to ensure that we provide the direction and supports to these stakeholders, so that they help us to ensure that successful and positive experience for our players, as we strive to achieve our Vision of Hockey for Life.



TERRY ENGEN

Chair, Board of Directors

We do that by creating a safe and positive environment for our players to experience the sport; developing age-appropriate programming, such as our new Intro to Hockey program, that has modified rules, surface and equipment; incorporating physical literacy, fair play, cooperation and FUN into the sport; and teaching basic hockey skills so players can enjoy the sport.

This year we have developed this guide for Parents and Players, to help ensure you have a positive experience this season and each season you are involved in our great game. If you have suggestions for content in this guide, don't hesitate to contact the Hockey Alberta office.

Yours in hockey,
Terry Engen
Chair, Board of Directors

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A PATHWAY TO HOCKEY IN ALBERTA

At Hockey Alberta, our Vision is "Hockey for Life." As the parent of a player within the minor hockey system in Alberta, there is a lifetime of opportunity for you and your child(ren) to stay involved in with our great sport for many years. Regardless of the age of your child, there is a level of hockey where s/he can play, and enjoy the benefits of being a hockey participant. The following section, Pathway to Hockey in Alberta, provides an overview of the amateur hockey structure, starting with our youngest players at the Intro to Hockey level, and progressing to student/athlete opportunities and senior hockey outlining how your child can continue playing hockey right into adulthood.

YOUNGSTERS

Young players typically enter the game between the ages of 5-8 years through learn-to-skate and learn-to-play programs, or in the INTRO TO HOCKEY (Initiation and Novice divisions) stream. Regardless of what type of program where a player starts hockey, the emphasis should be on constant activity, fun and skill development.

PRE-TEENS

As players move beyond the beginner stages, they enter Atom (9-10 years) hockey and then progress to Peewee (11-12 years). These stages are when sport-specific skill development ramps up, along with the transfer of skills and concepts from practices to games. Players have the option to continue to play locally or, at the 'Mainstream' Peewee division, they have the option to tryout for a regional team in the AA Hockey Model.

TEENAGERS

At this age, players begin placing a heightened focus on hockey. While the emphasis on individual skill development should remain high, increased attention is also given to group tactics. More games are scheduled, and more options are available for players depending on their level of interest and skill. For both male and female players, the 'Mainstream' model remains and uses 'Tiering' to offer programs for all levels of players. Additionally, the AA, Sports School and Male and Female Alberta Development Models (AAA) offer a higher level of development and competition for players. All programs within the Female Hockey Model, as well as Recreational hockey programs, offer non-body checking options.

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YOUNG ADULTS

Beginning, typically, at 18 years of age, players have many options to continue their hockey experience. Junior hockey (for players 20 years and younger) provides multiple levels of hockey. Junior A, B, C and Female hockey are all options and are offered in most areas of the Province. Junior hockey provides a valuable development opportunity, offering intense competition for players who make every game a best-on-best challenge. Leagues like the WHL and AJHL are heavily scouted by post-secondary coaches and NHL scouts, allowing players to improve their game and their next-level hockey outlook.

If a player wishes to combine hockey experience while earning a post-secondary credential, several hockey programs are available within college and university programs in Alberta. At the college level (ACAC) there are eight institutions and at the university level (USport) there are four institutions that provide opportunity for young men and women to compete. With a development-minded practice to game ratio, players are better positioned to reach their full potential in college or university hockey while enjoying a competitive environment.

ADULTS

You don't have to be a professional to keep playing after Junior, college or university. As part of our vision of 'Hockey for Life', Hockey Alberta offers Senior hockey programs at the A, AA and AAA levels for adult players who wish to remain competitive. If you want something with a lower level of impact and a little more casual, operators across Alberta offer non-body checking options for adults such as lunch leagues and drop-in programs, as well as formally scheduled programs for teams in competitive leagues.



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REGIONS

Hockey Alberta has divided the Province into geographical areas for amateur hockey administration. Each area is organized with volunteer personnel who provide service to local minor hockey associations, junior and senior club teams, coaches and officials relative to registration, discipline, player movement, risk management, and education and training programs.

LOCAL PROGRAMMING

Local minor hockey associations, which are the heartbeat of hockey in each community, build on the foundation established by Hockey Alberta. More than 180 minor hockey associations (MHAs) across the province are members of Hockey Alberta and,

as the governing body, Hockey Alberta supports those associations by providing service, tools and resources to help them excel.

MHAs pour heart, soul, time and resources into creating a great hockey experience for youth players and their parents. Volunteers are the backbone of these associations, administering day-to-day functions of registration, fundraising, scheduling and overall program management. They are at your service, donating time, energy and talent for the love of the game and community. They are your first point of contact for any questions or concerns.



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HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

Your local MHA manages ice time by scheduling practices, exhibition games, tournaments and other development related programming. They also work with leagues to provide an opportunity for each team to play within a structured and scheduled environment throughout the season. The structure and philosophy vary from association to association, but Hockey Alberta provides age and developmentally appropriate guidelines, based on Hockey Canada's Long Term Player Development plan, at every step on the development ladder.

At the Intro to Hockey levels (5-8 years), those guidelines include 30-40 skill development sessions per season, as well as participation in one or two game-day festivals. The emphasis is on fun, fundamental skill development and practice - not winning or losing. Playing multiple sports at this age is also highly encouraged. The Intro to Hockey experience, recommended by Hockey Alberta, includes no full-time goalies, 12 or fewer players per team, station-based practices and half or cross-ice games to maximize fun, puck touches and skill development for every player. Multiple teams should be on the ice for each session, making the most efficient use of ice time and maximizing skill development opportunities.

At the Atom division (9-10 years) Hockey Alberta recommends a maximum of one goalie per team and still encourages the rotation of the goaltender position amongst numerous players to provide an opportunity for players to continue to develop all their skills. This level also recommends 10-12 skaters per team and 35-45 quality skill development practice sessions, combined with 15-20 games and 1-2 tournaments.

The Peeewe division (11-12 years) provides a similar experience as the Atom division, but with more options between recreational and competitive hockey. The optimal goal for Peeewe is 12 skaters per team with two goalies and the guidelines include 30-50 quality skill development practices, 15-25 league games and 1-2 tournaments, depending on the level. Smaller team rosters ensure more playing time and more skill development for all players.

Hockey Alberta's recommended Bantam (13-14 years of age) and Midget (15-17 years of age) experiences include options for recreational, competitive and elite hockey and recommends 30-60 practice sessions, 15-30 league games and 1-2 tournaments, depending on the level. Ideal practice sessions would be 60-80 minutes in duration and each team would be comprised of 16-18 skaters and two goalies. At the higher levels of this stage, players should shift to a nine-month training calendar that also includes age-appropriate off-ice training.



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MAKING HOCKEY GREAT FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Our goal for your child is that s/he has a fun and positive experience, develops hockey skills and skills as a good person, and hopefully stays in our great sport in some capacity for many years.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- We instruct and follow the best practices in coaching and established sport science for creating the best hockey experience possible.
- We recognize that children are not miniature adults and we adjust competition formats and training to best serve the capacities and developmental needs of children.

- We understand that player development, like child development, is a long-term process and it takes time. If we try to rush the process, we will miss important steps and stages, and that's not good for anyone. Child and player development is a marathon, not a sprint.
- We make our hockey experience player centred, not coach or parent centred. In everything we do to deliver hockey for your child, we focus on building the child first, the overall athlete second, and the hockey player third. Every step of the way, the child comes first.
- We focus on fun and skill development in the early years, not winning. In the early years of your child's hockey experience - prior to adolescence - fun is far more important than winning.
- We don't just offer games, leagues and tournaments. We offer skill development camps for athletes of all ages and abilities throughout the year. These camps are promoted on the Hockey Alberta website hockeyalberta.ca and through its social media channels (Twitter and Facebook).

Development opportunities include:

- Goaltender Skills Camps
- Super Skills Camps
- Small Area Games Camps
- Longterm Player Development (LTPD) Camps

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WHAT'S NEW IN 2018-19

STANDARDIZED TIERING

Over the past year, Hockey Alberta's Minor Leagues Committee has worked extensively on a Standardized Tiering Model. This tiering model is a key component of the Alberta One initiative, where Hockey Alberta and our Minor Leagues are working together to build a unified structure and strategic model that enables Leagues to adopt the same tiering, seasonal structure and other operational processes across the entire province.

Having identified standardized tiering as the first step in this initiative, the following leagues/ organizations will implement the Alberta One Standardized Tiering Model for the 2018-19 hockey season:

- Hockey Calgary
- Hockey Edmonton
- Central Alberta Hockey League
- Northern Alberta Interlock
- All Peace Hockey League
- North Eastern Alberta Hockey League

Under the Alberta One Standardized Tiering Model, leagues/organizations have agreed to operate six tiers within the divisions of Atom, Peewee, Bantam and Midget.

INTRO TO HOCKEY

Hockey Canada has approved national policies that mandate all Initiation-aged players receive age-appropriate programming on cross-ice or half-ice surfaces (effective for the 2016-17 season) and Novice-aged players for the 2019-20 season. In response to these national policies, Hockey Alberta

has developed a provincial model that incorporates the required elements for both age groups, and best meets the needs of its participants.

Hockey Alberta has adopted a new Intro to Hockey Model that incorporates all players aged 5-8. For the 2019-20 season, all Minor Hockey Associations (MHA) will be required to adopt the Intro to Hockey Model. In the 2018-19 season, MHAs are encouraged to undertake a transition process, or adopt the model fully. It is possible some MHAs will continue with their traditional structure for this season, before adopting the new model next season.



STATS

PUCK TOUCHES

2X CROSS-ICE
FULL-ICE

SHOT ATTEMPTS

6X CROSS-ICE
FULL-ICE

The Intro to Hockey Model includes specific requirements with regard to Seasonal Structure, Grouping of Players, Practice Environment, and Game Format requirements for Initiation and Novice hockey. In general, the requirements include:

- 2:1 practice to game ratio.
- Seasonal structure divided into Developmental and Regular.
- Participants divided into single birth years.
- Game format is 4 on 4, plus goalies; no score
- Games played on a surface size no larger than 100' x 85'.

Full details on the Intro to Hockey Model can be found on the Hockey Alberta website under the Players Tab. www.hockeyalberta.ca/players/intro-hockey/

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Hockey Alberta regularly provides news, information and updates that are important to parents, players and all members of the hockey community in Alberta.

HOCKEY ALBERTA WEBSITE

The main source of information is the Hockey Alberta website www.hockeyalberta.ca

NEWSLETTER: The Hockey Alberta website includes links to many important resources and provides you with the opportunity to sign up for our bi-weekly newsletter. The newsletter is full of information that could be beneficial to your child, including opportunities to enter contests and win prizes for your team. Sign up to receive the newsletter by entering your email in the signup box at the bottom of the home page: www.hockeyalberta.ca

OTHER WEBSITES: Hockey Alberta also operates several other websites that are home to leagues, Team Alberta events, and the Hockey Alberta Provincial Championships. These websites include:

- Hockey Alberta Provincial Championships www.haprovincials.ca
- Alberta Female Hockey League www.afhl.ca

WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA



- Alberta Cup: www.abcup.ca
- Alberta Challenge: www.abchallenge.ca
- Alberta Hockey Hall of Fame: www.ahhf.ca

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

In addition to these valuable website resources, Hockey Alberta employs several social media channels to share news and updates. You are encouraged to check us out on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

FACEBOOK: [HockeyAlberta](https://www.facebook.com/HockeyAlberta)

TWITTER: [@HockeyAlberta](https://twitter.com/HockeyAlberta) [@HockeyABFdn](https://twitter.com/HockeyABFdn)
[@TeamABHockey](https://twitter.com/TeamABHockey) [@AFHL_HA](https://twitter.com/AFHL_HA)

YOUTUBE: [HockeyAlberta](https://www.youtube.com/HockeyAlberta)

LINKEDIN: [hockey-alberta](https://www.linkedin.com/company/hockey-alberta)

SNAPCHAT: [@hockeyalberta](https://www.snapchat.com/add/hockeyalberta)

INSTAGRAM: [@hockey.alberta](https://www.instagram.com/hockey.alberta)



FAIR PLAY MEANS SAFETY FOR ALL

ABUSE, HARASSMENT, BULLYING

Hockey Alberta stands against bullying, harassment, and abuse on and off the ice, and we ask parents to do the same. We are committed to providing a safe environment for everyone in our sport. Any form of bullying, harassment, or abuse is unacceptable, whether physical, emotional, or sexual.

WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE.

Hockey Alberta expects each association, team, parent, volunteer, and staff member to take all reasonable steps to safeguard participants against bullying, harassment, and abuse – especially young participants – and protect them from any form of violence. There is a shared responsibility with parents and guardians to nurture the physical and emotional well-being of our players.

HOCKEY ALBERTA WEBSITE

For more information, on Game and Conduct Management go to hockeyalberta.ca (Members Tab, Game and Conduct Management.)

UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Hockey Alberta does not tolerate Unacceptable Conduct on any Hockey Alberta, personal, or other social media channel or account. This includes conduct by staff, volunteers, players,



referees, Member organizations, stakeholders or any member of the hockey community. The following examples of unacceptable conduct are considered contrary to Hockey Alberta's social media guidelines and subject to disciplinary action:

- Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or threats of any type.
- Making negative or derogatory comments about, or statements deemed detrimental to the welfare of any individual or group.
- Divulging confidential information or any other matter of a sensitive nature.
- Posting photographs, video or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behaviour, including but not limited to drug use, alcohol abuse, public intoxication, hazing, and sexual harassment.
- Undertaking activity that contradicts the current policies of Hockey Alberta or any of its Member organizations.
- Undertaking activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.

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SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED, WHO DO I CONTACT?

AT THE TEAM LEVEL

The first step is to address at the team level and in a timely and courteous manner. Respectful means showing respect when approaching a person regarding a concern and respecting the processes outlined to bring forth concerns, such as using a team liaison and/or a 24-hour rule. Timely means it is brought forth in a timeframe that allows the proper management of the concern.

AT THE MHA LEVEL

If you do not believe the concern was managed appropriately at the Team Level, the next step is to bring the concern to your organization's attention through its processes for hearing concerns. These processes can vary depending on the organization. Please familiarize yourself with the steps your organization requires.

Hockey Alberta expects that all concerns brought forward to an association be managed in an appropriate manner as outlined by Hockey Alberta's conduct management process.

AT THE HOCKEY ALBERTA LEVEL

Should a person feel their concern was not managed appropriately by the association the final step would be for Hockey Alberta to review the matter. Hockey Alberta only reviews the processes used to manage the situation not the outcome of the process as outlined in Hockey Alberta's conduct management process.

A review of the process is not an appeal to Hockey Alberta and the onus is on the person bringing forth the concern to identify where they felt the process was not managed appropriately.

RESPECT IN SPORT HELPS PROTECT EVERYONE

The Respect in Sport (RIS) Parent Program is a one-hour online certification program that reinforces the role of parents in their children's hockey experience. The program empowers parents to ensure the safety of their children, encourage positive and effective communication, and enhance their children's enjoyment of the sport.

Before a child steps onto the ice, Hockey Alberta requires one parent complete the RIS program. After completing the program, the parent will receive an RIS number. The parent must provide this RIS number to the team coach or manager before the first practice date. If a parent registers more than one child for hockey, all children must be registered with that RIS number.

In 2018, Hockey Alberta announced recertification in Respect in Sport is mandatory every four seasons.

HOCKEY ALBERTA WEBSITE

www.hockeyalberta.ca/members/respect-sport/

RESPECT IN SPORT WEBSITE

<https://hockeyalbertaparent.respectgroupinc.com/secure/>

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FAIR PLAY CODES

Hockey is an emotional sport. Whether it is the behaviour of our kids on the ice, our parenting comments in the car, or the remarks and actions of spectators in the arena, we all share a responsibility to conduct ourselves in a way that creates a positive culture around the sport we love. Hockey Alberta encourages all players, parents, and spectators to abide by the following Fair Play Codes from Hockey Canada.

PLAYERS

- 1) I will play hockey because I want to, not just because others or coaches want me to.
- 2) I will play by the rules of hockey and in the spirit of the game.
- 3) I will control my temper - fighting and "mouthing off" can spoil the activity for everybody.
- 4) I will respect my opponents.
- 5) I will do my best to be a true team player.
- 6) I will remember that winning isn't everything – that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
- 7) I will acknowledge all good plays and performances - those of my team and of my opponents.
- 8) I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.

PARENTS

- 1) I will not force my child to participate in hockey.
- 2) I will remember that my child plays hockey for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
- 3) I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- 4) I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game.
- 5) I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
- 6) I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
- 7) I will remember that children learn best by example.



- 9) I will never question the officials' judgement or honesty in public.
- 10) I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's hockey games.
- 11) I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteer coaches who give their time to coach hockey for my child.

SPECTATORS

- 1) I will remember that participants play hockey for their enjoyment. They are not playing to entertain me.
- 2) I will not have unrealistic expectations. I will remember that players are not professionals and cannot be judged by professional standards.
- 3) I will respect the officials' decisions and I will encourage participants to do the same.
- 4) I will never ridicule a player for making a mistake during a game.
- 5) I will give positive comments that motivate and encourage continued effort.
- 6) I will condemn the use of violence in any form and will express my disapproval in an appropriate manner to coaches and league officials.
- 7) I will show respect for my team's opponents, because without them there would be no game.
- 8) I will not use bad language, nor will I harass players, coaches, officials or other spectators.

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GOOD HOCKEY PARENTS IN ALBERTA

- Support the coaches
- Applaud hard work, effort and success
- Encourage their child positively
- Let their child have fun
- Are a role model for their children by supporting them
- Respect officials and the rules
- Praise their child and cheer for everyone
- Do not force their child to participate
- Are not rude towards players, parents, coaches or officials



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THE HOCKEY PATH

HOCKEY ALBERTA FOLLOWS THE LONG-TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT (LTPD) MODEL CREATED BY HOCKEY CANADA.

Section	Stage	Age Group	Focus
PHYSICAL LITERACY	DISCOVERY	4 - 6	COMMUNITY
	FUNDAMENTALS 1	6 - 6	COMMUNITY/LOCAL
ACTIVE FOR LIFE	FUNDAMENTALS 2	7 - 8	LOCAL
	LEARN TO PLAY	9 - 10 and 9 - 9	LOCAL
	LEARN TO TRAIN	11 - 12 and 10 - 11	LOCAL / PROVINCIAL
	TRAIN TO TRAIN	13 - 16 and 11 - 15	PROVINCIAL
INCREASING HOCKEY SPECIFIC	TRAIN TO COMPLETE	16 - 17 and 16 - 18	NATIONAL
	TRAIN TO WIN	18 - 20 and 18 - 22	INTERNATIONAL
	EXCEL	21 + and 22 +	INTERNATIONAL

PHYSICAL LITERACY

DISCOVERY
MALE and FEMALE 4 - 6 COMMUNITY
 This is an important period for acquiring fundamental movement skills (running, jumping, throwing, catching...) that lay the foundation for more complex movements. Having a positive children for a physically active lifestyle. Hockey Canada encourages children to begin skating at an early age through Discovery Hockey programs.

FUNDAMENTALS 1
MALE and FEMALE 6 - 6 COMMUNITY/LOCAL
 The focus is on the development of physical literacy. Fundamental movement skills should be mastered and motor development emphasized, and participation in open sports/activities is encouraged. For optimal skill acquisition, the basic hockey skills of skating and stick control are introduced through the Invention Program. Fun components are also introduced in a team environment.

FUNDAMENTALS 2
MALE and FEMALE 7 - 8 LOCAL
 During this period players continue to develop motor skills and coordination. Recreational practices should be held twice a week during the season. Ongoing participation in compatible sports is strongly encouraged. The Invention Skills Program is designed to promote the continued development of physical literacy, fitness, and the basic skills required to play hockey.

ACTIVE FOR LIFE

LEARN TO PLAY
MALE 9 - 10 and FEMALE 9 - 9 LOCAL
 This stage is the beginning of the most important window to develop the fine motor skills on an individual technical skill basis that leads to utilizing these skills into individual and team tactics later on. During this phase, prior to the beginning of the games season, players have the best opportunity to learn and begin to master fine motor skills that can be used in combination with other skills. In most cases what is learned or not learned in this stage will have a very significant effect on the level of play that is achieved later on. Players should be able to begin to transfer skills and concepts from practices to games.

LEARN TO TRAIN
MALE 11 - 12 and FEMALE 10 - 11 LOCAL / PROVINCIAL
 This is the most significant period for development. This is the window of accelerated adaptation to motor coordination. Group interaction, team building and social activities should be emphasized. A near-equal balance of practices and games will foster the ongoing development and mastery of essential skills in hockey.

TRAIN TO TRAIN
MALE 13 - 16 and FEMALE 11 - 15 PROVINCIAL
 The focus during this stage is on building an aerobic base, developing speed and strength and further developing and consolidating sport specific technical skills with an increased emphasis on hockey and a reduction in the number of other sports played. This phase will also include the introduction and development of individual and group tactics. Social and emotional considerations are addressed by placing an emphasis on team-building, group interaction and social activities.

TRAIN TO COMPLETE
MALE 16 - 17 and FEMALE 16 - 18 NATIONAL
 During this stage players will participate in training with a focus on position specific technical and tactical preparation. There is an emphasis on fitness, preparation and the development of game specific technical and tactical skills under competitive conditions. Important objectives are the development of aerobic capacity, power, skill awareness and independence. The player may be introduced to international competition at the end of this stage.

TRAIN TO WIN
MALE 18 - 20 and FEMALE 18 - 22 INTERNATIONAL
 During this stage the player's physical, technical, tactical (including decision making skills), mental, personal and lifestyle capacities are fully established and the emphasis is training has shifted to the maximization of performance. High performance sport specialist support is utilized, as is fitness and medical monitoring. Monitoring all possible aspects of training and performance.

EXCEL
MALE 21 + and FEMALE 22 + INTERNATIONAL
 It is at this stage that all talents, including physical preparation, testing, monitoring and others which are supportive in nature, are fully maximized and refined to ensure maximum in the highest competitive arena (i.e. the Olympic Games and World Championships). Player continues to enjoy competition and training at the highest level with a focus on maintaining or improving technical, tactical, physical, and lifestyle capacities.

Hockey Canada

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THE LTPD MODEL

LTPD is a multi-stage pathway of progressive development based on the physical, mental, emotional, and cognitive development of children and adolescents. Each stage emphasizes different elements in training and competition according to the developmental needs of the player at that point in time.

The first three stages of LTPD emphasize the development of physical literacy in early childhood through exposure to a broad range of physical activities and sport experiences.

At the first stage, the skills the player acquires during the FUNdamentals stage are intended to 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.

The next two stages are the most important periods of motor development for children (9-12 years). This is a window of accelerated adaptation

to motor co-ordination. Early specialization in late specialization sports, such as hockey, can be detrimental to later stages of skill development and to refinement of the fundamental sport skills. At this stage, children are developmentally ready to acquire the general sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development.

The next five stages focus specifically on competition and development within hockey. Hockey Canada recommends that players in the Learning to Train stage continue to focus on the development and refinement of individual skills and individual tactics. Upwards of 80% of training should be dedicated to individual skills and tactics in this stage.

Finally, the Active for Life stage encourages participants to stay involved in hockey as recreational players, coaches, officials, and organizers while maintaining healthy lifestyle choices and staying physically active.

Throughout the LTPD pathway, Hockey Alberta recognizes four pillars of player development: physical, mental, technical, and life skills.



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THE FOUR PILLARS OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT:



LEVEL	ACTIVITIES	SKILLS	PARENT EXPECTATIONS
INITIATION Male & Female 5-6 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Discovery Fundamentals 1	<p>ABC's of agility, balance and coordination emphasized through skills and small games.</p> <p>Develop fundamental movement skills (skating, jumping, twisting, turning), manipulation skills (shooting, puck control) and overall motor skills (balance, coordination, agility) in a fun and safe sport environment that promotes self-confidence.</p> <p>Positive first impression of hockey for the players and parents. Play/games exist in modified forms, with limited number of formalized games.</p>	Skating Puck control Small area games	<p>Encourage your child to participate in a wide variety of physical activities and sports programs</p> <p>Strength training should be done solely with the player's own body weight</p>
NOVICE Male & Female 7-8 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Fundamentals 1 Fundamentals 2	<p>Continue general development of fundamental movement skills (skating, jumping, twisting, turning), manipulation skills (shooting, puck control) and overall motor skills (balance, coordination, agility) in a fun and safe sport environment that promotes self-confidence.</p> <p>Some streaming of the players - goal is to have players working with players of like skills to develop confidence and self-esteem to ensure continued positive experiences for the players and parents. Modified play/games with limited formalized games.</p>	Skating Puck control Small area games Creative thinking	<p>Encourage your child to participate in a wide variety of physical activities</p> <p>Strength training should be done solely with the player's own body weight</p> <p>Other sports that build on fundamental movement skills applicable to hockey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnastics • Run, Jump, Throw programs • Soccer • Skating programs
ATOM Male 9-10 years Female 8-9 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Fundamentals 2 Learn to Play	<p>Learn overall sport skills.</p>	Skating Puck control Small area games Shooting/Scoring Goaltending	<p>Encourage your child to participate in a wide variety of physical activities and sports</p> <p>Strength training should be done solely with the players own body weight</p>

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LEVEL	ACTIVITIES	SKILLS	PARENT EXPECTATIONS
PEEWEE Male 11-12 years Female 10-11 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Learn to Train Train to Train	<p>Begin to consolidate the basic technical skills of the game.</p> <p>Increased focus on hockey with a reduction in the number of other sports played to one or two. Inventory your strengths and weaknesses, what hockey skills do you need to work on to improve your game</p> <p>Introduce and develop Advanced Team Tactics, Team Play and Strategy.</p> <p>Can introduce other activities into physical preparation to develop a solid base for general physical preparation.</p>	Skating Puck control Small area games Shooting/Scoring Goaltending	<p>Learn to go to the limit of your performance capabilities if you wish to improve</p> <p>Physical preparation and training becomes important</p> <p>Parents educate themselves on what types of training should be done at this age or the development age of their kids for educated enrolment in supplementary programs.</p>
BANTAM Male 12-16 years Female 11-15 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Train to Train Train to Compete	<p>Develop basic psychological attributes: concentration, activation, visualization, relaxation, positive internal dialogue</p> <p>Develop training routines to complement the main part of the ice session: warm-up, hydration, cool down, nutrition, etc.</p> <p>Introduction and development of Advanced Group Tactics and Team Tactics.</p> <p>Depending on player introduce other activities into physical preparation and being able to develop a solid base for general physical preparation.</p>	Skating Puck control Small area games Shooting/Scoring Goaltending	<p>Learn to go to the limit of your performance capabilities if you wish to improve</p> <p>Continue to focus on 2-3 sports but continue to be active</p> <p>Physical preparation becomes important and a focus on training is key - develop good habits</p> <p>Inventory your strengths and weaknesses; what hockey skills do you need to work on to take you game to the next level?</p>
MIDGET Male 12-16 years Female 11-15 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Train to Train Train to Compete	<p>Continue consolidating the basic technical skills of the game.</p> <p>Continued development of Advanced Group Tactics and Team Tactics.</p> <p>Continue to develop a solid base for general physical preparation.</p> <p>Develop basic psychological attributes: concentration, activation, visualization, relaxation, positive internal dialogue.</p> <p>Develop training routines to complement the main part of the ice session: warm-up, hydration, cool down, nutrition, etc.</p>	Skating Puck Control Small area games Shooting/Scoring Goaltending	<p>Learn to go to the limit of your performance capabilities if you wish to improve</p> <p>Continue to focus on 2-3 sports but continue to be active</p> <p>Physical preparation becomes important and a focus on training is key - develop good habits</p> <p>Inventory your strengths and weaknesses; what hockey skills do you need to work on to take you game to the next level?</p>
JUNIOR Male 16-17 years Female 16-18 years Hockey Canada LTPD: Train to Compete			

WHAT'S THE CALL ?

RESPECTING OUR OFFICIALS

Referees and linesmen ensure the game of hockey is played safely, fairly, according to the rules, and that no one knowingly gains an unfair advantage by violating the rules or employing unsafe tactics. Hockey Alberta, through its Officials' Committee, provides support, education, training and resources to all officials in the province through Hockey Canada's Officiating Program.

Each year, hundreds of new officials attend clinics and step onto the ice for the first time. Just like new players who are trying hockey for the first time, our new officials are learning the rules, developing skills, and improving every time they step on the ice. There will be calls that are missed. We urge parents to treat our officials the same as you would want your child to be treated if s/he made a mistake – with dignity and understanding.

Hockey Alberta employs a Mentorship, or Shadow, program as one of the most effective and direct training tools available for first and second year officials. It allows for instantaneous feedback for the officials during the game. It also serves to provide a visible support for new officials who are nervous and inexperienced, calming the players, coaches, and fans who can see that the new officials are receiving much needed training.

The program focuses on officials in their first or second year of officiating the two-official system at the Novice and Atom levels. The Mentor works with each official providing tips and suggestions on the proper positioning and procedures.



The roles and responsibilities of the mentor are:

- Give encouragement and immediate feedback to the officials on the ice officiating the games.
- Help the younger inexperienced officials out with fundamentals such as positioning and when to blow the whistle.
- Act as a calming influence for “very green” officials who may find themselves intimidated on the ice.
- Encourage and communicate with the coaches on the proper way to deal with younger officials.
- Bestow confidence to those officials being shadowed.
- Convey to the players, coaches, and parents that these young officials are in a learning environment and that efforts are being made to provide them with quality officiating at all levels.
- Provide an avenue for senior officials to pass on their experience to younger officials.

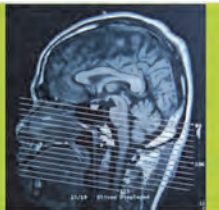
PARENTS & PLAYERS

A GUIDE FOR ENJOYING HOCKEY IN ALBERTA

SAFETY FIRST

Concussion Guidelines for

PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine x-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way a child may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF CONCUSSION?

A CHILD DOES NOT NEED TO BE KNOCKED OUT (LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS) TO HAVE HAD A CONCUSSION.

THINKING PROBLEMS	CHILD'S COMPLAINTS	OTHER PROBLEMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not know time, date, place, period of game, opposing team, score of game • General confusion • Cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury • Knocked out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Dizziness • Feels dazed • Feels "dinged" or stunned; "having my bell rung" • Sees stars, flashing lights • Ringing in the ears • Sleepiness • Loss of vision • Sees double or blurry • Stomachache, stomach pain, nausea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor coordination or balance • Blank stare/glassy eyed • Vomiting • Slurred speech • Slow to answer questions or follow directions • Easily distracted • Poor concentration • Strange or inappropriate emotions (ie. laughing, crying, getting mad easily) • Not playing as well

Graphic courtesy of Parachute Canada.

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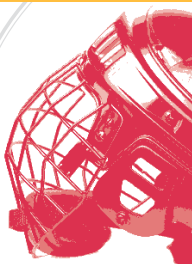
HARD-HITTING FACTS

CONCUSSION IS A SERIOUS INJURY

SPEED AND CONTACT are parts of hockey, and the brain is vulnerable to injury. Trauma can occur through direct contact to the head or face or indirectly through a whiplash effect. Since concussions can't be detected on X-rays or CT scans, they are difficult to fully investigate and understand. All concussions have the potential for serious and

long-lasting symptoms. All must be treated carefully and in consultation with a physician.

Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada are determined to reduce the incidence of concussion in hockey. This is more than providing rules for a player's return after an injury, it is also about providing concussion-prevention information.



HEAD INJURIES

Hockey Alberta is committed to a safe and fun environment for all participants to enjoy the game. Because of the nature of the game of hockey – the skills, the pace, and the playing area – head injuries can occur from time to time. The impact of these unfortunate occurrences can be minimized by taking the proper steps to prevent, recognize, and manage injuries effectively.

CONCUSSIONS

An important aspect of injury prevention is addressing concussions in sport and providing the information required in:

PREVENTION

Ultimately, we want to prevent concussions from occurring. That starts with respecting the safety and well-being of everyone sharing the ice with us, and includes wearing proper equipment, and eliminating dangerous hits.

RECOGNITION

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion? Knowledge is key so we can observe and recognize a possible concussion, and get the person to medical attention.



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RESPONSIBLE RETURN TO PLAY

Everyone wants to get back on the ice as soon as possible. With a concussion, there is a gradual, six-step process that must be followed, which includes observing and recognizing if symptoms return. It is expected that the completion of each of these steps are to be documented and presented to the local association prior to your child returning to active participation.

Hockey Canada has worked with various organizations, including Parachute Canada, to develop standardized information regarding the prevention, identification, and management of concussions and suspected concussions. Understanding what a concussion is, its causes and symptoms, what must be done when a concussion is suspected, and how to properly recover from a concussion will allow our participants to enjoy hockey for life even if a concussion has occurred.

Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada recognize the increased awareness of concussions and their potential long-term effects. As a result, Hockey Canada has updated its Concussion Policy, and developed new tools and resources to help everyone **BE CONCUSSION SMART!**

For more information on concussion symptoms and what to do if a concussion is suspected, please refer to Hockey Alberta's concussion site. <https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/members/game-conduct-management/concussions/>

INJURIES

PREVENTION

Prevention starts with the right attitude, preparation (warmup and cool down), and protection (proper equipment).

One of the most important things in preventing injuries is respect, and that respect starts with the example you as a parent set:

- Encourage your child to never check to the head, hit someone from behind, or attempt to injure a fellow player
- Be a positive influence by encouraging and celebrating positive behaviors like teamwork and skill development rather than negative behaviors like intimidation.
- Understand and respect the rules and reasons they are in place.
- Communicate to your child why certain rules are emphasized.

**HOCKEY
ALBERTA
CONCUSSION
POSITION**

CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED = CONCUSSION HAS OCCURRED

⚠️ **IF A MINOR HOCKEY PLAYER IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE SUFFERED A CONCUSSION:** Player is removed from hockey activity IMMEDIATELY. Team officials recommend parent or guardian take player to medical doctor IMMEDIATELY.

⚠️ **IF A MEDICAL DOCTOR DIAGNOSES A CONCUSSION:** Player may not return to any hockey activity without written permission from medical doctor. Player/parent/guardian must submit written permission to the team's Safety Person or Trainer.



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WARMUP AND COOL DOWN

While the player may be in top form in terms of their physical conditioning, participation in vigorous sports like hockey requires a proper warm-up to help prepare the body for the increased demands and to help prevent injuries. Proper warm up includes a stretching component one the participant is “warmed up”.

The cool-down is the opposite of the warm-up. If the warm-up prepares the body for exercise, then the cool-down recovers the body following exercise. The cool-down is one of the most important features of the recovery process following exercise. In addition, proper stretching should also occur during the cool down.

For detailed information regarding proper conditioning, pre-activity warm ups, post activity cool down, and stretching, please refer to Hockey Canada’s Stretching Information Guide.

https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Safety-Program/Downloads/stretching_e.pdf

EQUIPMENT

Ensure that all equipment fits properly, is in good working condition, free of damage, well maintained, and is only used to protect. For a detailed description of equipment, fitting, and maintenance, please refer to Hockey Canada’s Safety Requires Teamwork Manual.

https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Insurance/Downloads/safety_teamwork_e.pdf

RECOGNITION:

Most injury symptoms are obvious: tenderness/soreness/pain, bleeding, swelling, redness/bruising, stiffness/loss of range of motion, seizure/convulsion/loss of consciousness and will vary in terms of the body part injured, the severity of the injury, the treatment needed, and the time to



recover. Outside the physical appearance of an injury changes in the way a person moves, such as favoring one side versus the other, could be a sign that there may be an injury.

If there is a suspected injury it is important that it is diagnosed and treated appropriately in a timely manner. Children may feel pressure to avoid the disappointment of missing the big game or because they are needed to help the team win. However, no opportunity lost is worth the potential long-term impact of not allowing an injury to heal.

MANAGEMENT

If an injury occurs, proper recovery is the most important factor to prevent lengthening the recovery time, aggravating the injury, or causing long-term harm. There are two aspects to ensuring a successful return from an injury: Return to Play and Fit to Play.

RETURN TO PLAY

The return to play strategy is a gradual progression to a return to game action. It begins after a doctor has given your child clearance to return to activity and ends when your child has returned to full game competition without any symptoms.

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The following is the generally accepted six-step return to play protocol and its usage recommended for all types of injuries:

1. Light activities of daily living which do not aggravate symptoms or make symptoms worse. Once tolerating step 1 without symptoms and signs, proceed to step 2 as directed by your physician.
2. Light aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting.
3. Sport specific activities and training (e.g. skating).
4. Drills without body contact. May add light resistance training and progress to heavier weights. The time needed to progress from non-contact to contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and the player. Go to step 5 after medical clearance (reassessment and written note).
5. Begin drills with body contact.
6. Game play.

FIT TO PLAY

Just as important to ensuring your injured child gradually returns to the game is ensuring s/he is fit to play again which means that your child is in the physical condition to return to game play. It is understandable that players may feel excited to return to game play as soon as possible. To help reduce the likelihood of an injury occurring in these first few games, ensure that your child dedicates time in the return to play process to proper conditioning and stretching. If your child is not yet in proper condition, do not return right away.

PLAYER HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Nutrition for Young Players

Healthy nutrition is a critical part of your child's development — both as a young person and as a young hockey player. Follow these tips to ensure your child is ready for practices and games.

- Drink water, not sugar drinks. It's important for your child to stay hydrated for practices and games, and water is generally the best choice.



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Avoid soda beverages and sport drinks that are full of sugar.

- Eat balanced meals. During the day, make sure your child eats from all the essential food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, lean meats, meat substitutes, dairy, healthy fats). It's not necessary to incorporate everything into each meal, but your child should eat some of these items each day.
- Avoid fried foods and sugary sauces. Fried foods are difficult to digest in general, and they often feature unhealthy trans fats if you are eating at a restaurant or a concession. Similarly, many sauces and dressings from restaurants and stores are full of unhealthy sugars, hydrogenated oils, and chemical additives. Either reduce the serving portions of these sauces and dressings or create healthy alternatives at home using olive oil and natural ingredients.
- Eat carefully on the road. When possible, stop at a grocery store and eat fresh from the deli department, or create your own healthy meals with whole grain breads, meats, nuts, cheeses, vegetables, and fruit. If you know you will be eating at a restaurant, do some research ahead of time to find places that serve balanced meals and healthy food.
- Quality ingredients provide quality nutrition. Given the choice between processed flour or whole grains, choose whole grains. Rather than processed fruit snacks, eat whole fruits. In general, stick with unprocessed whole foods and avoid processed packaged items as much as possible.

HEALTHY SLEEP FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

Any parent who has picked up their child the morning after a sleepover knows that nothing can ruin their day (and yours) like lack of sleep. Sleep hygiene is part of a healthy lifestyle and sets your child up to be at their best at home, at school, and



at the hockey rink. Here are a few tips to help your child get into a sleep routine.

1. Set your child's internal clock. Aim to wake up and go to sleep at the same times every day, even on weekends.
2. Cue bedtime with a consistent routine. Create a nightly routine with lots of downtime to help kids switch to sleep mode.
3. Check your child's environment for sleep disruptors. Make sure children's rooms are not too hot, loud, or too light. Excessive heat, noise, and brightness make it difficult to sleep.
4. Physical activity during the day means more sleep at night. Keep your child active during the day (but not right before bed). Physical activity helps kids fall asleep faster, stay asleep, and sleep better.
5. Keep kids' night time food intake nutritious and appropriately filling. Make sure kids aren't too hungry or too full right before bed. Avoid eating after 7 PM whenever possible.
6. Skip the nap. Avoid napping during the day for kids older than 5 years old.

Follow these tips to increase and improve the sleep of everyone in your house. If your child still has difficulty sleeping after following these guidelines, please consult your family doctor.

PARENTS & PLAYERS

HOCKEY IS OUR SPORT
AND YOURS.
HAVE FUN AND ENJOY
THE SEASON.

