



PROGRESSION STEPS FOR ALL PLAYERS AGE 8 AND UNDER

Adopted October 13, 2009

Age of player is as of December 31 of the current hockey season

Purpose

Families registering with Hanover Hockey Association's Initiation Programs are often new to youth hockey and frequently have questions about appropriate placement of their children in HHA's programs, and for what team they should register in successive years. In order to provide clear guidance, continuity, and structure to all three Mite-aged programs for players ages 8 and under, the Hanover Hockey Association Board of Directors has endorsed the following:

The Initiation Programs (Learn To Play Wild and Wild Mites) are primarily designed to introduce children to the sport of hockey with a focus on developing skating and puck handling skills, and coordinating those skills into passing, receiving, and shooting the puck. There is also an emphasis on learning the game of hockey and having fun in team-oriented environment. Secondly, the Initiation Programs are designed to prepare children for travel hockey at the Mite level and above.

Learn To Play Wild (LTPW)

New players aged 4-8 (as of Dec. 31) with no previous organized hockey experience will register with Learn To Play Wild (LTPW). We expect that LTPW players have enough skating skill to balance on skates and move forward on the ice without assistance. A select few older players, and those who demonstrate sufficient skill, may be invited to join the Wild Mite program no later than early December, as the balance of numbers allow. The on-ice sessions will feature an active clinic-style approach to the practices with lots of hands-on coaching and instruction. There will be three separate 7-week sessions, beginning in late October, with several registration options over the winter. The LTPW program is designed so that the youngest players (for instance, those starting LTPW at age 4) can spend a second season in LTPW before moving up to the Wild Mite (WM) program; HHA recommends that younger players consider this option.

Wild Mites (WM)

Players aged 5-8 (as of Dec. 31) who have completed one year in the LTPW program (or an equal program with another Association) are eligible for Wild Mites. The WM program is important to player development, which is why players do not skip this program before moving to travel hockey at the Mite level. The program is designed so that players can spend multiple years in Wild Mites, and it is recommended that players strongly consider a second (or in some cases, a third year) in the Wild Mite program before trying out for travel hockey. The WM program will feature a clinic-style pre-season followed by a team season including team practices, games between the HHA Wild Mite teams, and some games between our teams and House Mite teams from other local associations. These games will be cross-ice initially, and then move to full ice games over the season. HHA plans to conclude the WM season with a Wild Mite hockey jamboree.

Travel Mites

Players age 7-8 (as of Dec. 31) who have played at least one season with the Wild Mites (or an equal program with another Association) are eligible to try out for Travel Mites. In order to provide continuity with other HHA travel teams, this team will be open to players in a two year age range (instead of simply 8 and under). Players who will not be seven by Dec. 31, and who have played Wild Mites, may petition the Board to try out for Travel Mites as would any player who wanted to play up with an older team. Approval would be based on HHA's existing process for player petitions that is guided by achieving the right balance of registration numbers. Should registrations exceed a reasonable number of players that the Mite Travel teams can accommodate (as guided by HHA's recommended team size and coaches input), then players not selected for Mite Travel during tryouts will have a place in the Wild Mite program.