

## Newton Youth Hockey's Learn to Skate Program 2016

The goal of Newton Youth Hockey's Learn to Skate Program is to get your kids on the ice, get them skating, and most importantly, having fun. Following the guidelines below will help ensure a positive experience for your children. **Please read the entire document.**

### **USA Hockey Registration**

You are required to have a USA Hockey number before registering for the program. If you have not already registered with USA Hockey, please visit <https://usahockeyregistration.com>

### **The Program**

We will assess your child's ability on day 1, and repeatedly throughout the season. Please be patient with your child and the coaches during the first few weeks.

### **The First Day**

Please have your child ready to go 10 minutes before class begins. Check in with the person in charge on the first day. For the rest of the season, the kids can just get on the ice after the zamboni clears and the doors open.

### **Equipment**

#### **Skates:**

Any type of skate is acceptable. Hockey skates are not required. Tie the skates snugly and please make sure that all buckles (on ski boot style skates) are closed and secured. When left unbuckled, or loose, the children's ankles wobble and they will not be able to stand.

#### **Helmet with Face Mask: MANDATORY**

All skaters must wear a **HOCKEY HELMET WITH A FACE MASK. BIKE AND SKI HELMETS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** Children at this age crowd each other, fall often, and do a lot of drills getting up and down on the ice. Their eyes and faces are centimeters away from getting a kicked by a skate blade. A face mask is a CRUCIAL and MANDATORY piece of equipment. Your child will not be allowed on the ice without it.

#### **Name Your Child**

Please put a piece of tape with your child's name on both the FRONT and BACK of their helmet. This is the only way we can call them by name. It sounds trivial, but it's very, very important.

## **Pads**

We recommend hockey shin guards or general purpose knee pads and elbow pads. This will mitigate pain and discomfort and will make the experience more fun. Children are welcome to wear full hockey equipment, but it is not required.

## **Clothing**

Please have your children wear waterproof gloves or mittens. Knit mittens will get wet, and their hands will get cold.

If your child is not wearing full hockey equipment, dress them in snowpants.

Daly is not heated, and it is a very cold rink in winter. Dress appropriately and in layers. The lobby, where we put on skates, is heated.

## **First time skaters:**

For first time skaters, please purchase 2 milk crates to make a balance tool that your child will use in the beginning.

You can purchase milk crates on at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or the Container Store on Rte 9 in Newton. Flip them over, stack them 2 high, and zip-tie them together securely.



## **On-Ice Parent Volunteers**

NYH relies on parents to help teach the program. If you have registered as on-ice parent volunteer, you will be teaching all children, not just your own (no previous experience necessary). The LTS director will give parents lesson plans to follow. Cones, balls, and other teaching devices and props will be available for your use. Our primary job is to keep the kids engaged and to keep their feet moving by playing games and having fun. The skill level is very basic.

We understand that sometimes a parent cannot part from their child because the child is a first-timer, nervous, etc...The faster you can separate from your child, the

better your child will do. Trust us. Your child will cling to you in a way that they will not cling to another adult. Help your child learn by letting them go, and help the other children learn by lending your skating abilities to the overall program.

That said, every child is different, and each parent needs to make the choice that is right for their child. If you need to stay one-on-one with your child, you certainly may do so.

**All on-ice parents are required to wear skates and a helmet (bike, ski, hockey, or another sport is fine--FOR ADULTS ONLY).**

If you would like to help and have not already signed up, please contact me.

### **Off-Ice Parents**

Parents without skates or helmets are not allowed on the ice. **PLEASE DO NOT WALK ON THE ICE TO HELP YOUR CHILD.**

If your child is focused on you to the point of their distraction or detriment, consider standing elsewhere so that you're not so directly in their line of sight.

### **A general note:**

Skating is hard to learn. It's also a ton of fun. Your kids **WILL** get frustrated. It's tiring and frustrating to fall down, get up, and do it all over again. And some days, it's really cold. There may be tears. There may be the desire to get off the ice. There are no medals for staying on the ice the entire time. If your child is struggling, let them off the ice, give them a break, and encourage them to try again in a few minutes or the following week. If your child is a puddle of tears, they're not going to have the energy or muscle strength they need to focus their bodies on the task at hand. If they have fun, they'll come back for more. If they're miserable, they won't want to do it again.

Thank you for selecting Newton Youth Hockey to help teach your kids to skate.



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