

Needham Youth Hockey /Inhouse Development Program

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to describe the programs available to younger hockey players starting with introduction to skating and hockey through the eventual goal of joining a travel team. Mission and goals for inhouse/developmental level are consistent with NYHA's overall mission and goals stated on the Needham Hockey website with a focus on:

1. Affordability
2. Consistency with American Development Model (ADM) and NYH goals
 - a. Concentrating on skating skills
 - b. Small area games
 - c. Goal oriented by age group
 - d. Overall Skills progression (from inhouse beginner to travel midget)
3. Convenient
4. Fun

General Overview

The in-house program is geared towards beginner hockey players, younger hockey players and families with children who are either too young for travel hockey or not interested in the travel program.

All in-house programs aim to have ADM skills practices approaching a 3:1 ratio of practice time to game time. Games are cross-ice (except majors) and teams ideally have 8-10 players each. Each age level/group has approximately 6 teams; each team has a head coach and one or more assistant coaches. Volunteers from Needham High School help run practices.

All practices and games are on Saturdays and Sundays at set times (except Mite/SQ Development which has one touch during week). Most games are at St. Sebs with a handful at Dexter or Fessenden during the season.

Before the first practice, there will be a parents' orientation session for parents for whom hockey is totally new and frightening. This session will review the equipment required and how to dress your kids for hockey. During this session, we will also review the progression (levels and options by age) and what to expect each year as your child progresses through the NYHA program.

New in 2012/13

Professional Coaches

NYH will be hiring a professional coach to oversee each in-house program level. The professional coach will run the overall practices and develop overall practice plans. The professional coach will help the volunteer coaches run individual stations, teach skills, and help them learn to organize and run a practice (coach the coach approach). Additionally, three times over the course of the season, these professional coaches will run “evaluation sessions” where kids will earn helmet stickers for achieving various skating and hockey skills according to their age level.

Each age level/group will have a volunteer “level coordinator” to form teams, communicate with families (e.g. about a change in schedule), distribute jerseys and plan the end-of year party/medal distribution. Each age level will also have an on-ice level coordinator who will work with the professional coach to make sure the practices/skills session are running smoothly and achieving the desired results of player development. On-ice coordinator will work with the less experienced coaches in running stations, teaching them how to teach a skill, and oversee the games.

Mite/SQ Development level

USA Hockey (the governing body of American youth hockey and the US National teams) has conducted significant research on how best to develop players. As a result of this research, in 2010 USA Hockey began instituting the “American Development Model” (ADM), which includes recommendations and mandated changes to Mite level programs that wish to remain sanctioned by USA Hockey. NYH has reviewed the research and like many other local programs, is making changes to conform to USA Hockey’s and Mass Hockey requirements for Mites.

The biggest change that ADM requires is the elimination of full-ice games for Mite aged players by the 2013/14 season. To conform to this requirement, in 2011, NYH began a three year process to institute the ADM for our Mite Program, by introducing cross ice games to the Mite schedule and eliminating our Mite C team. USA Hockey’s research shows that “full sheet” games are an inefficient use of an hour of ice time and an ineffective way to develop skills: At the mite level, a 36 minute game (3 x 12 minute period) will take 60 minutes of ice. In that hour, a player averages approximately 12 minutes of active game time. During their 12 minutes, they will have a puck on their stick for less than 30 seconds. Teams are typically 15 players – so only 30 mite age players are involved in the game. In the ADM model, where cross-ice is the focus. You have upwards of 50 kids involved in 3 cross-ice games during the hour playing 3v3 or 4v4. The results are more kids (50+ vs. 30) are getting more skating time (20+ minutes vs. 12 minutes) and more time with the puck (3+ minutes vs. 30 seconds). This results in players with stronger skating skills, stronger puck skills, and a more comfort playing in tight spaces which is what all players experience as they get older and the players get bigger, faster, and checking becomes part of the game. Other sports such as soccer, lacrosse, and baseball have adjusted the size of their playing fields and / or number of players at a young age to add in player development.

To continue our adoption of ADM principles, NYH will offer the following options for Mites in 2012/13:

Players born in 2004 will be eligible to register in the spring and tryout in the fall for the Mite A team (completed). In 2012/13, these players will have an average of 3 to 3.5 ice “touches” per week which will include skills sessions, coach-led practices, and games. Approximately 20 cross ice games against other towns, with the balance of their game schedule on full ice as part of the Greater Boston Hockey League. Players born in 2004 not on the Mite A team and players born in 2005 will be eligible to play in the Mite Development Program, which will feature an average of 3 “touches” per week which includes 2 practices/skills focused sessions each week and cross-ice games against other towns and within the program itself. *Note: Given the very large number of squirt age players in town, we will have some players of squirt age in this program.*

Summary of Program Levels

Beginners

- Age Range 4 to 6
- First time players
- Player should have some minimal skating experience (stand on skates, walk, or take small strides)
- Primary focus is on skating skills during first part of season with an introduction basic hockey skills later in year
 - Skating focus will be on standing, balance, stride, stopping, hockey turn
 - Hockey skills will be hockey ready position, skating with stick on ice, skating with the puck
- Players will earn stickers for mastering a skill
- Game/practice jersey with numbers
- 3:1 practice time to game time ratio
- Season runs from mid-October to mid-march
- Primary focus is on skating skills
- Mid-October to mid-December – Saturday practice
- Mid-December to mid-March – Saturday practice and Sunday practice/game
- Saturday at 11:20am (St Sebs)
- Sunday at 4:35pm (St Sebs)
- Note: times and practice locations may change based on rink availability

Rookies

- Age Range 5 to 7
- Participated in Beginners or already taking learn to skate classes outside of NYH
- Primary focus is on continuing progression of skating skills and introduction of hockey skills such as stick handling, passing, shooting
 - Skating focus will be on re-enforcing balance, stride, stopping, hockey turn, introduce edges, pivots, basic cross-over and backwards skating

- Hockey skills will be hockey ready position, skating with the puck, stick handling, passing, and shooting
- Players will earn stickers for mastering a skill
- Game/practice jersey with numbers
- 3:1 practice time to game time ratio
- Season runs Mid-October to mid-March – Saturday practice and Sunday practice/game
- Saturday at 10:15am (St Sebs)
- Sunday at 5:45pm (St Sebs)
- Note: times and practice locations may change based on rink availability

Inhouse Mites

- Age Range 6 to 8
- Participated in Rookies or already taking learn to skate classes outside of NYH
 - Primary focus is on continuing progression of skating skills and hockey
 - Skating focus will be on re-enforcing balance, stride (first 3 steps/acceleration), stopping, hockey turn, pivots/change of directions, edges, cross-overs (forward and backwards), backwards skating
 - Hockey skills will be continuing to improve skating with the puck, stick handling, passing, and shooting
- Players will earn stickers for mastering a skill
- Game/practice jersey with numbers
- 3:1 practice time to game time ratio
- Season runs from mid-October to mid-march with Saturday practice and Sunday practice/game
- Saturday practices at 9:10am (St Sebs)
- Sunday practices at 6:55pm (St Sebs)
- Note: times and practice locations may change based on rink availability

ADM Mite/SQ Development level

- Age Range 7 to 10
- Participated in Rookies/inhouse Mite or already taken learn to skate classes outside of NYH
- Program is similar to inhouse mites, but weekly practice time is greater and players will be assigned to teams that will play both other needham teams and teams from neighboring programs.
 - Primary focus is on continuing progression of skating skills hockey skills
 - Skating focus will be on re-enforcing balance, stride (first 3 steps/acceleration), stopping, hockey turn, pivots/change of directions, edges, cross-overs (forward and backwards), backwards skating
 - Hockey skills will be continuing to improve skating with the puck, stick handling, passing, and shooting
- Players will earn stickers for mastering a skill
- Game/practice jersey with numbers

- 3:1 practice time to game time ratio
- 2 skills based practices (Saturday and Sunday – times TBD)
- 1 cross-ice game at Fessenden school during week (likely Friday night)
- Season runs from early October to mid-march with
- Note: times and practice locations may change based on rink availability

Majors (Only be offered if there is enough interest / registration)

Note: Final plans for the major program will be based on registration numbers. This level has been declining for past several years and we may not have enough kids for a full program. NYH will work with families to have some level of program for those interested in this program

- Age Range 9 to 12
- Participated in inhouse mite or NYH travel
- Primary focus is on kids not interested in travel hockey and wants to play more recreational hockey. Practices focus on
 - Skating focus will be on re-enforcing balance, stride, stopping, hockey turn, pivots/change of directions, edges, cross-overs (forward and backwards), backwards skating
 - Hockey skills will be continuing to improve skating with the puck, stick handling, passing, shooting, and basic positional play
- Game/practice jersey with numbers
- 1:1 practice time to game time ratio
- Season runs from mid-October to mid-march with Saturday practice and Sunday practice/game
- Saturday practices at 8:05am (St Sebs)
- Sunday Games at 9am (Dexter)
- Note: times and practice locations may change based on rink availability

Coaching

NYHA is primarily coached at all levels by parent volunteers. We have been blessed over the years to have many talented players living in Needham and with kids in our program. This works very well for the travel teams, but we feel that what has been lacking is a coach to coach the coaches. By USA hockey rules, all coaches must be certified, but certification doesn't really teach you how to run an ADM style (stations) practice effectively. We hope to remedy this in the in-house program by starting the season with professional coaches. We will still solicit parent volunteers, but we understand that coaching certification is a substantial commitment, so we will supplement these coaches with volunteers from the local high schools.

High School Volunteers

Each age level has a level coordinator and a head coach. In order to best utilize the high-school volunteers, the head coach will also be a “coaching coordinator”. This person will supervise and instruct the volunteers and parent-coaches before each practice to review the practice plan for the week and assign coaches to stations.

Costs

Final costs will be posted during the registration, but the cost for the programs in 2012/13 will be approximately:

- Beginner - \$350 to \$400
- Rookie - \$450 to \$500
- Inhouse mite - \$500 to \$550
- Majors - \$550 to \$600
- Mite/SQ Development - \$850 to \$1000

Cross Ice League for Mite/SQ Development

Games will be on Friday nights or Sunday at Fessenden School. Other programs participating in this new league will be Wellesley, Newton, and Watertown. Games will run from early November thru February.

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES, AND NEEDHAM HOCKEY MAY HAVE TO AMEND OR ALTER OUR PROGRAMS BASED ON ACTUAL REGISTRATION NUMBERS, CONTRACTS WITH RINKS OR LEAGUES, OR OTHER FACTORS BEYOND OUR DIRECT CONTROL.