

Hockey Edmonton Initiation Program Implementation Design

Recommendation:

Hockey Edmonton adopt design principles to refocus Initiation to a development program from a division of play, which are listed in the report in the following categories:

- **Age Categories**
- **Ice Session Delineations**
- **Curriculum Content**
- **Progress Assessment**
- **Instructor Organization and Support**
- **Registration and Team Design**
- **Season Schedule**
- **Program Fees**
- **Resources**

As well as adopt an execution schedule and tactics focused on implementing the design principles to prepare for 2016/2017 hockey season. Charged to new Development Coordinator in collaboration with the IP design committee and district stakeholders. The implementation is to be led by HE's Executive Director and sponsored by the VP, Hockey Development.

Background

Hockey Edmonton's Board carried the motion to use the Hockey Alberta Initiation Program Guidelines per <http://www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/2015-16%20Initiation%20Hockey.pdf> to design the IP implementation for Hockey Edmonton. A committee was struck consisting of district/OA representatives familiar with Initiation division of play in their respective jurisdictions. Four design planning meetings were held over the course of Spring 2016 to develop the design principles for refocusing Initiation from a

division of play to a program for development based on these Hockey Alberta guidelines. These design principles were approved on April 23rd, 2016 with requested committee review of: New category names; fee equity; ice allocation geography and ice session length. This report captures recommendations for each of these as per Executive request.

Report Summary

The design principles set forth in this report will enable Hockey Edmonton to address the need to refocus this player age group's culture and values, back to the FUNdamentals. These principles enable more frequent puck touches per player while working on skating capability that is more conducive to shorter time to react and make plays and smaller spaces available that the game of hockey is really based upon. They also strive to use a variety of gaming sessions to provide players with competitive settings to apply their practiced skating and puck handling skills. No game winning centric tactics or the like are emphasized in the design principles. Tactics are reduced to those associated with skating and puck handling needed to be effective in dealing with shorter time and reduced space created in game sessions.

IP Implementation Design Principles

The design principles are broken up into program categories of: Age Categories; Ice Session Delineations; Curriculum Content; Progression Assessment; Instructor Organization and Support, Registration, Team Design, Season Schedule, Program Fees and Resources.

Age Categories

1. Junior Timbits (Jr.T) – 5 year olds as of December 31 (Labeled as 1A in attachment)

2. Senior Timbits (Sr.T) – 6 year olds as of December 31 (Labeled as 2A in attachment)

Discovery, is a program for 4 year olds as of December 31, which separate and distinct from the Initiation Program described in this report.

Ice Session Delineations

1. Jr.T will have 1 60-minute ice session per week scheduled into two 10 week sessions, 1 before and 1 after Christmas, each culminating in a skill application game session event (E.g. Jamboree; Festival etc)
2. Jr.T ice sessions will follow the HC progressive skating and puck control development curriculum available in ProSmart
3. Sr.T will have 2 60-minute ice sessions per week scheduled into two 10 week sessions, 1 before and 1 after Christmas, each culminating in a skill application game session event (E.g. Jamboree; Festival etc)
4. Whereas Sr.T ice sessions will be split each week where one Sr.T ice session will follow the HC progressive skating and puck control development curriculum available in ProSmart for the first session. The second session will be rink end situated, cross ice round robin game sessions, with active rest sessions in the center focused on free form alternating skill challenge based activities while waiting for game session shift changes. Skill challenge designs will be as per HC Initiation skill challenge drills.
5. Jr.T and Sr.T ice sessions will strive to have 40-45 skaters per ice session. Districts/OAs with Jr.T and Sr.T enrollments that prevent this skater density to be achieved consistently should consider combining enrollments with other OAs in the same Districts or

with other OAs in other districts if possible. If not possible in the first year of the refocus of Initiation, ice session densities should not exceed 48 or fall below 35 skaters per ice session. Ice allocations will be made based on this ice session skater density.

It is recommended that OAs combine their registrations to enable District ice allocations to create numbers to satisfy the recommended per Ice session player densities of 40 per session. The goal would be to eventually achieve city quadrant ice allocations, however, for the 2016/2017 season, District ice allocations was agreed by the committee as a recommendation.

Curriculum Content

1. Jr.T ice sessions and Sr.T first ice session per week will follow the Hockey Canada Initiation Program skating and puck control skills development curriculum. The details for which are available for digital retrieval in the ProSmart system.
2. Sr.T second ice session per week will follow the HE round robin game session format. The middle ice active rest section will be guided by the HC four skill challenge drills, rotated equitably for the first 8 sessions and then at the instructors' discretion for the last 2 ice sessions based on the observed need for development progression enhancement. Equipment required for the four skill challenge drills shall be set up in the middle zone and players should be encouraged to practice those drills on a free-form basis and should be encouraged to play unstructured small area games in the middle area as well. 3 to 4 instructors should be in the middle zone to encourage players to have fun and to assist them in any skills the players are choosing to work on. Instructors in the middle zone should refrain from implementing structured drills, the intent of the middle zone is to

permit players to rest and have unstructured ice time for personal skill development of choice.

3. The first Sr.T game event at the end of the first 10-week schedule will follow the HE game festival design. The festival's intent is to take the 1/3 cross ice round robin game session to involve all teams in a District.
4. The second Sr.T game event at the end of the second 10-week schedule will follow the HE game jamboree design. The Jamboree's intent is to take the 1/3 cross ice round robin game sessions to involve all teams in the city.

Progression Assessment

1. The HC skill challenge drills are to be included in a practice session at the beginning, middle and end of the hockey season for both IS and Sr.T.
2. The drill results for each player participants for each of the 3 progress assessment practice sessions are to be recorded and sent to HE administration for collection and use for year over year comparison.

Instructor Organization and Support

1. Jr.T and Sr.T first week ice sessions will require 1 lead drill instructor and multiple player instructors ideally at the 1:5 ratios.
2. Lead instructor is responsible for the planning and implementation of the Initiation drill stations. As well as ensuring the player instructors are prepared to transfer the skating and puck control techniques that the drills are designed to enable the players to practice.
3. Player instructors are responsible for viewing the skating and puck control skills on ProSmart and transferring this knowledge to their assigned player group

during the Jr.T or Sr.T first week sessions.

4. HE will secure the ProSmart licenses to enable the Initiation instructors to gain access. HE will also arrange for drill, skating and puck control instructor mentorship. Including the leverage of the Edmonton Oiler's Alumni assigned to work with HE in the mentorship of instructors.

Registration and Team Design

1. Jr.T age players will not register into teams but rather on masse as a program in their OA.
2. Sr.T age players will not register into teams but rather on masse as a program in their OA. After the first three first week ice sessions, groupings based on all skill levels will be created and different sweaters sets assigned. The grouping size should be ideally 10 per group and be balanced so low, medium and high levels of skills are represented in each grouping.

Season Schedule

1. The first half season schedule will commence in time to ensure a 3 full week break during the Christmas break. This will include play through the stat holiday weekends, given that most hockey families have players in higher age categories that already play during these weekends.
2. The second half season schedule will commence as soon after the Christmas break as possible.
3. The schedule for the 2016/2017 season is attached for reference.

Program Fees

As this is an Edmonton wide hockey program that is to be implemented in all districts, it stands to reason that fee equity is achieved. Based on cost coverage as the

key rationale for determining fee equity and recognizing that all costs (Fixed and variable) will be the same in all districts given that the program is to be the same in all districts, the following fees are recommended: Jr.T - \$165 and Sr.T - \$250 per registered player respectively.

Resources

Will rely on existing resources for implementation, however, HE will have a coordination role to marshal the City to provide smaller nets, bumper boards etc.

Also, HE will arrange for free ProSmart licenses for all participants to utilize and act as the administrator.

Communication Plan

1. As this is a change to the past way that Initiation has been administered, communication to stakeholders as to the reason of the change and the details of the change is very important.
2. Therefore, it is recommended to use both written and face to face communications. In advance of the season, at the start of the season and into the season's commencement.
3. The key communicators will be HE VP Development and Executive Director and the Initiation Program design committee.
4. The theme of all communications are to emphasize the FUNdamental goals for the initiation program. Be fact based and include Video evidence where ever possible. E.g. Hockey USA video that demonstrates the improved puck touch frequency of cross ice game sessions.

Execution Next Steps

1. An implementation guide book will be created that includes all of the pertinent details that each HE district will utilize in the implementation of the new Initiation Program design.

2. Committee members will be responsible for collaborating in working out the details of their respective OA implementations of the implementation plan. In some cases, due to enrolment numbers and the Ice session delineation parameters, OAs within districts and across districts in similar city quadrants should plan together to achieve the ice session delineation parameters.
3. Communications plan will be developed to ensure the noted communication methods are used and implemented.

Attachments

1. Committee Member List
2. HE Proposed IP Program Description Book
3. IP Skill Challenge Drill Diagrams
4. Draft First Communication Bulletin to Parents
5. 2016/2017 IP Schedule