



Welcome to

CR Knights

Initiation

Program

A parents' guide to your child's first year of hockey

Welcome to the CR Knights Initiation program.

The Initiation program was developed to make children's first contact with hockey a safe and positive experience. **In this guide you will find the following information;**

- 1) What is initiation hockey?
- 2) Skills developed and focused on in Initiation
- 3) Expectations of parents
- 4) Hockey Equipment You'll Need For Your First Season
- 5) Parent Expectations
- 6) Respect in Sport Program

What is Initiation Hockey?

It's a structured, learn-to-play hockey program designed to introduce beginners to the game's basic skills. It enables participants to become contributing members of a team, develop self-confidence, and experience a sense of personal achievement. These goals are achieved in an atmosphere of fun and fair play.

Ages of players may range from 4 to 7 years of age, and so naturally in this group there may be a wide variety of skill sets among the players. This may be a challenge at times if your child is in the younger group, so please encourage your child to try their best and try not to focus on other players.

Each week there is a practice slot time and a game slot time. Be aware that game slot times may change but practices most likely will be a consistent day and time. In the first few weeks of the hockey season there may be an additional practice time offered. Sometimes this is a time for a power skating workshop however with the initiation age group it may not be possible. If a game has not been scheduled a practice will be held in that slot time.

Skills developed and focused on in Initiation

The focus is on the development of physical literacy. Fundamental movement skills should be mastered, motor development emphasized, and participation in many sports/activities is encouraged.

For optimal skill acquisition, the basic hockey skills of skating and puck control are introduced through the Initiation Program. FUN competitions are also introduced in a team environment. Learn all fundamental movement skills and build overall motor skills. Skill development in the FUNdamentals stage should be well-structured, positive, and FUN!

The skill of skating speed can be developed quickly with players this age. The ABC's of agility, balance and coordination should be emphasized through the teaching of skills and small games to emphasize the ABC's. Ensure that the skills the player acquires during the FUNdamentals stage will 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.

Once you see how much your child will learn and improve in their first year, you'll understand why it's all worth it. From experience, ice hockey has the fastest noticeable progression of skills involved with a sport. This is what makes people fall in love with it. Even the practices are fun to watch. Your child is going to learn a huge set of skills over the next few months. They are going to learn how to:

- Skate forward
- Skate backward
- Move from side to side
- Fall and get back up quickly
- Skate forward with the puck
- Skate backward with the puck
- Stick handle
- Skate making large turns (crossovers)
- Skate making tight turns
- Shoot – forehand and backhand
- Pass – forehand and backhand
- Stop
- Play defense
- Play goalie

We challenge you to not notice an improvement in at least one of those skills each week. That's what makes it awesome and great for kids' confidence. As their skills and comfort level on the ice increases every week, so does their confidence. **Keep in mind that they are introduced to these skills however they may not master them.**

Hockey Equipment You'll Need For Your First Season

One of the most intimidating things about learning the ropes as a new hockey parent is all the gear your son/daughter will need. Here's a list of the ice hockey equipment your child will need (Listed in order of how we recommend putting it on them):

- Hockey Jock with a Cup (*NOTE: Hockey jocks have Velcro areas that help hold up hockey socks.*)
- Regular jock can also be purchased, however a garter belt will also be needed to hold up hockey socks.
- Skate Socks (*Not a necessity, but they provide a bit more comfort than cotton athletic socks.*)
- Shin Guards (*Different than soccer shin guards.*)
- Hockey Socks (*These are the big knitted things that look like 1980's leg warmers :-> They go on over the shin guards and attach to the Velcro squares on the hockey jock.*)
- Ice Hockey Pants
- Shoulder Pads

- Elbow Pads
- Neck Guard *(This important piece of safety gear is 2nd only to the helmet.)*
- Practice Jersey
- Skates *(To make sure you have a proper fit a good way to checking is getting your child to push their feet all the way to the front of the skate, if you can fit one finger between the skate and their heel it's a good fit, more than one finger and the skates are too big)*
- CSA Approved Helmet with a Cage
- Hockey Gloves
- Stick *(Make sure you get a "youth" stick vs. cutting down a regular, full-size stick to fit him. Youth sticks have skinnier shafts, smaller blades and are better balanced to help your son/daughter have more control of it.)*

***see the last page for pictures of the gear needed**

A Few Other Accessories

- Stick Tape *(Tape up the end of the shaft for grip with his hands and the blade for grip on the puck.)*
- Shin Pad Tape *(Some people like to put tape on the outside of their son's hockey socks to help keep the shin pads in place.)*
- Hockey Water Bottle
- Hockey Bag

As an option, instead of purchase this equipment separately; some places do sell "hockey in a bag" which comes with most of the gear needed. They can range from \$89.99 to \$149.99. A couple places that have these are Canadian Tire and Target.

******* Allow Time To Gear Up*******

As you can imagine, it takes a while to help your child put on all that hockey gear. Make sure you arrive at the rink early enough to gear up in the locker room before practices and games. Do a couple of practice runs at home before their first practice. Time how long it takes you. Then you'll have a good idea of how early you'll need to get to the rink. **It is always a good idea to allow for extra time on game days. Not being rushed helps your child to be able to focus, relax before a game and ultimately enjoy the "game day" experience.**

Parent Requirements

Be positive !

Parents serve as role models for their children, who often look to adults for advice, direction and approval. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a role model, and strive to be a positive one.

Parents need to avoid placing pressure or unreasonable expectations on their children, particularly at the Initiation Program Level. No matter what happens on the ice, children need your support, so always strive to remain positive.

Be a good sport!

As a parent, one of the most important things you can do is show good sportsmanship at all times to coaches, referees, opponents, and team members. Remember that your children are playing hockey. It is important to allow them to establish their own goals and play the game for themselves.

Be on the ice!

One of the first steps to building your child's positive self-esteem is to be on the ice with them if they cannot skate or stand on their own. The initiation program requires you to be on the ice until they can do so. This program also relies on parent volunteers in order for the team to run smoothly. This includes a parent or two to step up and manage the team, and several parents to coach the team. There is usually one main coach and a couple of assistant coaches. As parents you will provide volunteer help, within reason, to the program when it comes to raffles, work in the arena, bottle drives and other fundraising events. In the past an Initiation tournament has been hosted by our association in March. All families of Initiation players are required to volunteer for this tournament as well as collect donations and raffle items.

Be on time!

Again, you should allow for time to gear up before practices and games. There are always special circumstances that can be understood however please respect the coaches, managers, players and other volunteers by showing up on time for practices and games, and notifying someone if you are unable to make it.

Please pay your registration fees as well as complete your Respect in Sport online program in a timely manner. Your child will not be allowed to play in a game if you have not completed the online course.

Respect In Sport Program

All parents are required to take the **Respect in Sport** online program.

the FAQ's

What is the Respect in Sport Parent Program?

Respect in Sport for Parents provides information on a parent's natural influence over their child, and the role they play in their child's enjoyment of a sport or activity. The program also provides parents with tools to evaluate their own behaviour.

What is the cost to take the Respect in Sport Parent Program?

The cost is \$12.00 plus GST per family.

What equipment is required to complete the program?

All that is required to complete the Respect in Sport curriculum is a computer, an Internet connection, and speakers or a headset. Optional equipment includes a printer to print out your certificate of completion.

How long is the course?

It's a total of 1 hour.

Do I have to take the course every year?

No. Once you've completed the course you're done.

For more information click and to register for the program go to the **[Hockey Alberta Respect in Sport website](#)**.

Sit Back And Have Fun

Hopefully this will help you prepare for your child's first season of Initiation Hockey. It will probably feel a bit hectic at first, but once you get all the gear and get into the swing of things, you will have a blast watching your child out on the ice. Make sure you video and take photos of them from the beginning to the end of their first season. When their first season is over, it will be awesome to look back at how far they've come in a few months.

Ice Hockey Equipment List



Hockey bag



Helmet with cage



Neck guard



Elbow pads



Shoulder pads



Gloves



Shorts with jock (cup)



Hockey pants



Stick

Hockey socks



Shin pads



Skates

Hockeytutorial.com

