
THE SUN PARLOUR FEMALE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION LONG-TERM PLAYER and COACH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Version 1 (Novice)

Prepared and Submitted by:
The Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association
Development Committee

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Windsor, Ontario
Canada

Our Mission

Through strong leadership, the Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association will be one of the leading girls' hockey organizations in Southwestern Ontario; recognized across the region for providing high quality development programs, achieving performance and leadership excellence, and helping foster, support and shape confident, strong, healthy girls.

Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association

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“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

Aristotle

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INTRODUCTION

Despite some notable achievements and advances in the development and performance of hockey players produced by the Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association (SPFHA) over the years, room for improvement remains. Especially when we compare the performance of our organization to similar sized organizations in Ontario (e.g., Nepean Girls' Hockey Association). The SPFHA is seeking to address this achievement gap to work toward fulfilling the potential of girls' hockey in Windsor through the creation and implementation of a new long-term player and coach development model, an organization wide rethinking of how hockey is taught at all levels. Based on long-term athlete development principles (see, for example, Hockey Canada, 2013; USA Hockey), the SPFHA's long-term player and coach development model represents a new way of approaching girls' hockey in Windsor.

The Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association Long Term Player and Coach Development Model will be developed, implemented and integrated over the course of five years. The five-year plan opens in the 2015-16 season with a focus on the Novice program. Beginning in 2016-17 season, the model will be adopted for the Atom program; the 2017-18 season will see it expanded to the Pee-Wee program; the 2018-19 season, to the Bantam Division; and in the 2019-2020 season it will be implemented into the Midget and Intermediate programs. The five-year plan is designed to introduce hockey skills in a comprehensive, systematic and timely way, through an incremental process. Research has demonstrated time and again, that it takes time and patience to develop high quality hockey players.

SO, WHY DID WE DO IT and WHAT DID WE DO?

The Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association Long Term Player and Coach Development Model was initiated out of deep desire to create a standard system for the progression and development of young female hockey players within the Wildcat organization. Over the course of the past few years the executive board of the Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association engaged in numerous discussions about the need to rethink how we develop hockey players and coaches. Simple put, the executive board knew we could do better for our players when it came to player development. Certainly, the general feeling among the executive and other key stakeholders in the organization was that we were '*punching below our weight*'. So, it was primarily with this reason in mind that the process of researching and identifying and developing a productive model of long-term player and coach development started. The seed was planted. Of course, it must be noted that the

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executive board in trying to implement change did not take this process lightly, nor was there a sense that we should put aside quality for expediency. To put a little differently, our first goal as a committee was to try our best to get it 'right', regardless of how long it would take. So, what did we do?

First, we explored what successful National governing hockey bodies such as Hockey Canada and USA Hockey had to say about player development. Fortunately, both Hockey Canada and USA hockey have made available to the hockey community a variety of research-based resources that provide organizations such as the SPFHA clear guidance on how to best proceed. We took time to carefully read through and analyze the available materials, and adopted the ideas, principles and practices that we thought would be important to include in any SPFHA hockey development model. Much of our model is grounded in Hockey Canada and USA hockey thinking and practices as they relate to developing high quality hockey players.

Second, we also explored what successful International governing hockey bodies had to tell us about player development. Sweden and Finland¹, for example, have both been successful in producing high-quality hockey players, and have made available online some resources that provide a glimpse behind their thinking when it comes to player development. Not surprisingly, we found significant overlap and similarities between all of the governing hockey bodies when it came to the principles and practices in relation to player development. There seems to be a general consensus among those in the hockey community about how best to proceed in developing novice, atom and other young hockey players (e.g., *more practice, less games*).

Third, we explored what models other successful associations and organizations in Ontario have adopted. We read and examined the Ontario Minor Hockey Association's (OMHA) and the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA) long-term player development models. We were also interested in knowing about the player development models adopted by successful organizations such as the Nepean Girls' Hockey Association and The Oakville Hornets. A key person in charge of the Oakville Hornet high performance player development program, Darryl Giancola, was particularly helpful in bringing to our attention some of the strategies that have proven successful in the Oakville context. We did this by contacting organizations and individuals by phone and or e-mail.

Fourth, some time and effort was also put forward to explore what some of the relevant scholarly research had to say when it came to developing youth athletes in general, and young hockey players in particular. Academic journals such as the

¹ Finland has a long history of successfully developing women hockey players. In the 1990s, for example, Finland was the most consistent and dominant performer of all European

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International Sport Coaching Journal, and *Canadian Public Policy* were explored. This was in part conducted as organizational policies and ideas should rarely be taken at face value. As any good organization knows, existing policies promoted by other institutions or organizations need to be questioned and scrutinized carefully before being adopted. The 10 Year/10,000 Hour Rule is an example of an idea that required more thought, before being considered an appropriate approach to developing SPFHA players.

Finally, it is important to note that many of the areas found in this document remain incomplete and as such we conceptualize this document as a ‘living’ document. And, by this we mean the document is not yet fully developed (*only Novice appears here; Version 2 will be published next summer and will take into consideration Atom*). In this sense, the document is open to ‘permanent critique’ with the organizational aim of always trying to do better, and be better for our players.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A LONG-TERM PLAYER and COACH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Long Term Player and Coach Development lies at the heart of this document. Player and Coach development is a communal and community project and the teaching of hockey skills is embedded, developed and integrated across this model. Specifically, The Long Term Player and Coach Development Model adopted by the Sun Parlour Female Hockey Association aims to lead, develop, and promote rich, meaningful and positive hockey experiences for *all* players. The player development model outlined in this document is based on the principle, “hockey for life and hockey for excellence” (Hockey Canada, 2013).

Player development is key to players’ growth in hockey, and must be seen as primary in increasing their knowledge, enthusiasm and enjoyment of the game. When players learn basic hockey skills, they do more than simply attempt to master these skills. They begin to learn the value of persistence and perseverance, and as they move through the divisions (Novice, Atom, Pee-Wee, Bantam, Midget, Junior etc.,)² they learn the joy of working as a team toward particular goals. They develop

² Similar to boys’ hockey, in girls’ hockey- when a system is designed around the Calendar Year-there is a relative age effect, or, form of discrimination that surfaces. For example, research has shown that there is a strong relationship between birth month and the chance that Canadian minor hockey player will play at an elite level. Girls born in the early months of the year have a distinct advantage. This is generally attributed to the way in which minor hockey organizes players into age divisions. If the SPFHA is strongly committed to the development of all players, we need to take into careful consideration this effect. See, Hurley, W., Lior, D., & Tracze, S. (2001). Proposal to Reduce the Age Discrimination in Canadian Minor Hockey. *Canadian Public Policy*, XXVII, (1), pp. 65-75; see, also Smith, K.

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an awareness of the benefits of playing competitive female hockey that includes developing healthy female friendships (Hockey Canada).

Coaches hold the “key to success of minor hockey associations” (OMHA, ND, p. 7). They are the “public face” of the organization to the players, parents and in the case of the travel teams, to other “regions and communities.” Moreover, too often in the past coaches were given teams in the spring (sometimes the fall), and little contact between the coach and the organization was developed. This is no longer acceptable, as coaches need to be supported over time. Knowing this, it is clear that every hockey association not only select the best possible coaches, but that they support, nurture and develop on an ongoing basis, throughout the season, both prospective coaches and productive, existing coaches. In order for this to happen, the SPFHA is developing and putting into practice effective selection procedures, and implement those procedures fairly and transparently each spring, with an aim to properly support those individuals selected through ongoing development programs and performance assessment and evaluations (modified from OMHA, N.D.).

The SPFHA long-term player and coach development model as outlined in this document functions as a **framework** to help develop and maximize the players’ potential and long-term engagement in hockey over the course of their life. The philosophical underpinnings embedded in this development model provides a way forward for hockey in Windsor and the surrounding area that takes advantage of a committed organization, enthusiastic and knowledgeable coaches, engaged parents and caregivers, with the aim of increasing girls’ participation and to build the foundations of local, regional and provincial hockey success into the future.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE LONG-TERM PLAYER and COACH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Players

Players’ responsibilities in developing their own skills, builds gradually and increases overtime as the player progresses through the Age-Divisions. With the appropriate instruction and coaching, alongside the accumulation of hockey related experience, players come to see that making an effort can substantially enhance their hockey skill level and their “hockey sense.” As players mature and develop their ability to persist at difficult tasks, to take responsibility for their own learning when it comes to the development of hockey skills, they become more deeply

(2011). An Examination of the Relative Age Effect in Developmental Girls’ Hockey in Ontario. Unpublished Thesis, University of Windsor.

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engaged, and more likely to experience the “joy” of the game. *One positive outcome* of these types of rich experiences is the likelihood that they will return to the organization to play hockey the following year. Learning to take responsibility for her own progress and achievement in the context of hockey is an important piece of every player’s hockey education.

Coaches

Coaches are the key to player success and achievement. Coaches are responsible for identifying and developing appropriate teaching and learning strategies to help players achieve the age-appropriate skill-standards for their age-division. Coaches are also responsible for developing age-appropriate methods (and tools), for assessing and evaluating player learning. Coaches bring *enthusiasm, passion, knowledge* and varied teaching and assessment approaches to the ice rink, addressing individual player needs and ensuring rich and productive learning opportunities for each and every player. This approach nicely aligns and supports an athlete centered understanding of player development.

Parents and Caregivers

Parents and caregiver support is important to a player’s ongoing hockey development. Effective ways in which parents and caregivers can support players include: not forcing a child to participate in hockey; remembering that the child plays hockey for her enjoyment; parents should encourage the child to play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence; make the child feel like a winner every time by offering constructive and positive praise for competing fairly and trying hard; a parent should refrain from ridicule or yelling at the child for making a mistake or losing a game; parents should remember that children learn best by example; a parent is encouraged to applaud good plays and performances by both the child’s team and their opponents; parents are encouraged to not question the referees judgment or honesty in public; a parent should support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children’s hockey activities; parents should show respect and appreciation for the volunteer coaches who give their time and provide rich hockey experiences for the child.

In addition to those reasons mentioned above, parents and caregivers are also encouraged to: become involved with your daughter’s team in a positive way; to let your daughter know you enjoy having them involved in the game; don’t lose perspective– emphasize the positive values associated with the game; be supportive on an ongoing basis; model on a consistent basis respectful behavior for your daughter on and off the rink; make safety, respect, fair-play and meaningful fun a priority; support your child emotionally; communicate with your daughter’s coach in a professional effective manner (the above section has been modified from the Hockey Canada document, *Shared Respect: Players-Coaches-Officials-Parents*).

The Organization

The organization plays a key role in organizing and overseeing player and coach development. Players and coaches have the support of clear and solid administrative frameworks to deliver programs that maximize player participation, development and success. The organization also works to guarantee that structures and policies are built on athlete-centered principles. The organization builds infrastructure to support and sustain the growth of female hockey in Windsor, Ontario including identifying and developing role models and leaders within the female hockey community. The organization demonstrates strong leadership by striving to put into place best practices at all levels with the aim of setting a high standard of excellence.

PART 1: PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT?³

Long-term player development is based on the physical, mental, emotional and cognitive development of children and youth over time. The seven stages in the development model reflect different points in athlete development. Drawing directly from Hockey Canada resources, each stage of the development model is described below:

First Stage “Active Start” (Pre-Novice): In the stage, girls from birth until the age of six focus their energy and time on daily activities which includes engaging in basic movements and skill such as running, jumping, taking, catching and throwing. In this stage of the model, girls should also be interacting with other children and building on interpersonal skills which can be carried into adulthood.

Second Stage (Novice Program): ‘FUNdamentals’: In this stage girls between the ages of 6 to 8, focus on fun and participation with a concentration on more extensive development skills such as agility, balance, coordination and speed as well as running, jumping, catching and throwing. It is also at this stage that ethics (e.g., sportspersonship) may be introduced to the sport or activity.

Third Stage: ‘Learning to Train’ the third stage engages girls between the ages of eight and 11. At this stage they begin to develop their sport skills and competencies often referred to as athleticism. This stage is important for establishing

³ The seven stages of long-term player development model outlined here, is taken from Sport Canada and Hockey Canada resources. See, www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada; See, also, Hockey Canada Skills Development Program: Initiation Program Practice Plan. Available at hockeycanada.ca

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development in a variety of sports before moving onto specialization this stage also integrates mental, cognitive, emotional development of the athlete.

Fourth Stage: ‘Training to Train’: This stage focuses on girls 11 to 15. The focus of this stage is on physical development and on strengthening sport specific skills. Serious athletes start to train 6-9 times a week if they wish to be prepared for the next stage of the model that focuses on highly competitive athletics.

Fifth Stage: ‘Training to Compete’: this stage focuses on girls between the ages of 15 to 21. These athletes are now more engaged in physical and technical conditioning along with a more advanced mental capacity and sense of concentration. Tactical, technical and fitness training for these athletes will increase from 9 to 12 times a week.

Sixth Stage: ‘Training to Win’: in the stage, the focus is on performance development. Physical technical, tactical, mental, and personal and lifestyle capacities are fully established. At this stage, players are now competing at higher levels and often performing on the international stage. They are now training 9 to 15 times per week in order to achieve their specific goals at athletes.

Seventh Stage (Adults): ‘Active for Life’: In the last stage, Sport serves as an important activity that promotes good mental, emotional and physical health. Women may choose a routine that consists of 30 to 60 minutes of high to low impact fitness activities in their daily routine adult hood in order to sustain an active and healthy lifestyle.

SOME KEY PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE SPFHA LONG-TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Athlete-Centered

The SPFHA player development model is athlete-centered. Not every player begins the season at the same level, nor do all players develop in exactly the same way (Hockey Canada, 2013, p. 19). An *athlete-centered* approach to player development, then, understands that each player comes to the team with different sets of skills, different levels of understanding and different degrees of *hockey sense*. Through ongoing assessment and evaluation by members of the coaching staff, individual player needs and abilities will be taken into careful consideration when planning for practices, games or other learning opportunities. A productive coach understands that she or he will need to perform an assessment at the beginning of the year (September), in the middle of the year (December/January), and at the end of the year (April); at the same time get to know each individual player in order to develop

an appropriate development plan for them. Although caregivers, parents and coaches all have an important role to play in supporting and developing players, an athlete-centered approach places the player and her needs at the center of the game.

Emphasize the FUNdamentals

Learning and building on the fundamentals is the foundation of hockey success.

Coaches are encouraged to “build a foundation that will never crack,” by properly teaching the basics, learning the fundamentals and perfecting the same basics at every level of play (Hockey Canada). If one player does not execute the fundamentals of her position correctly, we know the most sophisticated drill or play in the world will not work. It is unfair to focus on running plays that will fail nine of the 10 times children’s practices that focus on team play over executing the fundamentals are cheating every participant out at the chance to learn the game properly (OMHA, ND. p. 19).

Incorporate a progression of skill development for every participant

Regardless of the player’s skill level, it is your responsibility as a coach to teach every child on your team. As those secret that children experience improvement in their skills, no matter what their athletic ability maybe, it will continue to participate in return to learn more teach the basic skills in the proper order so you can continue to improve and build on each training session (OMHA, ND. p. 19).

Proper player development takes time and patience: The 10 Year Rule/10 000 Hour Rule

Whether the domain is the arts and sciences or sports, some research on the development of expertise has shifted toward a focus on the influence of specific variables within an individual’s immediate environment that may foster skill development. Early research suggested that individuals who played at high levels in chess, for example, had acquired their skills through approximately 10 years of intense preparation. The so-called 10 Year/10 000 Hour Rule has further been supported to some degree by early research from domains such as music and sports (Bloom, 1995; Ericsson, 1990; Starkes, Deakin, Allard, Hodges, & Hayes, 1996).

Some governing hockey bodies (e.g., OMHA) have adopted the 10 Year/10 000 Rule. Hockey Canada, for example, suggests that before the 10 Year or 10 000 Hour Rule comes into play, a player must have developed a fundamental skills; and be physically literate. According to Hockey Canada, for player and coach this translates into slightly more than three hours of training for competition daily for 10 years (Hockey Canada, 2012. p. 5).

The 10 Year/10 000-Hour-Rule is contested among academics. The central point of the argument that some academics put forward is that 10 Year/10,000 Rule is

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certainly not a guarantee of expertise. Other factors play a role in the acquisition of expertise including the frequency and quality of feedback up player receives over the long-term. To put differently, then, a productive development model would not take the 10 Year/10 000 Hour Rule at face value. Rather, it is the spirit of beauty 10 Year/10,000 Hour Rule that matters; regardless of the subject area (science, medicine, music or sports), acquiring expertise is best understood as a longitudinal process requiring the accumulation of skills and knowledge over an extended period of time.

More Practice, Less Games

Based upon the most current research, “youth athletes” in general “under train” and “over compete” (Martel, 2015, p. 40). Set against the backdrop of an adult-centric understanding of hockey-player development, training in early years has typically focused on outcomes (winning), rather than the process (optimal training through practice). According to the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA, ND, p. 20), one of the central concerns surrounding player development is the number of practices compared to the number of games. A productive and also realistic ratio is 2 practices for every 1 game played, for ages 7-13. The practice/game ratio changes for younger ages. For ages of 5-6, 5-7, the practice-to-game ratio should be even higher, close to 6:1.

Let’s take a look at some other research that demonstrates the principle of *‘more practice, less games*

A Game By the Numbers:

The following statistics relate to a 60-minute practice session (OMHA, nd, p. 20):

- Players will have the puck on their stick for an average of eight seconds per game;
- Players will take an average of 1 to 2 shots per game;
- Players will take an average of 18 shifts per game;
- 99% of the feedback coaches give players is when they have the puck. Ironically players only have the puck on the stick for 0.2% of the game;

A Practice By The Numbers

The following statistics were recorded during 60 minute Peewee level hockey game (OMHA, ND, p. 20):

- One efficient practice will give a player more skill development than 11 games collectively;
- Each player should have a puck on her stick for 8 to 12 minutes;
- Each player should have been a minimum of 30 shots on goal;

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- If you have 10 players on the ice, strive to keep 4-5 players moving at all times;
- If you have 15 players on the ice, strived to keep 9-10 players moving at all times;
- Players will miss the net over 30% of the time in the minor hockey practice.

Based on the statistics highlighted above, players develop more quickly and with more sophistication when they have much more time to practice (OMHA, p. 20).

OTHER NOTEWORTHY PRINCIPLES

Current research on hockey player development has come to some consensus on other age-appropriate principles. Below are a few key principles, borrowed from USA (ND) Hockey:

- Equipment that is correctly sized to fit the child;
- A playing surface that is sized age appropriately to fit the child;
- A Practice environment that is meaningful and engaging;
- Programming that provides better sequencing for long-term development;
- Small Area Games as a significant portion of the practice environment;
- Activity-based games
- Skill-based games
- Games situational role-based games
- Practicing competition environments within the physical and mental reach of the players, yet challenging;
- Training, competition and recovery programming that are proper dosage for the duration for the age of the players;
- Peer teaching opportunities

PART 2: COACH DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION: A Coaching Philosophy Framework

The research consensus suggests that successful Coach Development Models are grounded in a few key principles. One key principle of any good coaching philosophy is the need for a coach to be **fair and consistent** (OMHA, ND, p. 9). Players respond best to a coach who treats them fairly. At young ages (Novice, Atom and Pee Wee), benching players should only be reserved for disciplinary reasons or health and injury reasons, *not ability*. In the early years of development, (Novice, Atom and Pee Wee), short shifting the less skilled players during power plays, shorthanded situations or with the hope of winning the game is now considered to be

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counterproductive to growing successful hockey players. The key reasons include the following (OMHA, ND, p. 9):

- *It reduces player's self-esteem, sometimes to the point of giving up;*
- *It does not build a sense of team cohesion or unity among players.*

In these age divisions in particular, by short shifting less-skilled players, they are robbed of learning opportunities to experience high-pressure situations, which are typically difficult to replicate in a practice (OMHA, ND, p. 9). An outcome of short shifting less-skilled players is they do not develop individual or team skills in the same way the other players do: “The Weak Get Weaker while the Strong Get Stronger” (OMHA, ND, p. 9).⁴ Moreover, according to the OMHA, players will come to resent being benched without good reason and eventually turn that resentment toward their coach. The coach will likely also lose parental support. At the younger ages, winning a game should be secondary to trying to instill a love and deep enthusiasm for the game.

Players properly develop as hockey players when they have **high, but realistic expectations placed on them** (Hockey Canada, 2004). As a competitive team playing in a competitive league, it is important to have as one of our expectations, ‘winning,’ but coaches also need to recognize they have a responsibility to set realistic expectations that remain committed to focusing on skill development and meaningful engagement as a way to properly develop all players. More specifically, players learn best when expectations are explained, demonstrated, and practiced in a respectful atmosphere, especially when there is a ‘logical progression of skills’ suited to their individual skill level and needs (Hockey Canada, 2004; Hockey Canada, 2007).

Along with developing a player’s knowledge of technical skills, individual tactics, team tactics and other strategies, mastery of the fundamental skills is key to the development of a lifelong interest in hockey. Coaches will help develop key skills important to hockey, such as skating, puck control, passing and receiving, shooting and goalkeeping. In order for players to master basic hockey skills, they require ongoing communication and concrete, explicit verbal and written feedback as forms of assessment (Hockey Canada, 2004). It is now widely agreed upon in hockey circles, that through ongoing assessment and evaluation, players develop more effectively as hockey players over time.

A good coach knows that players learn how to develop as hockey players when they are situated in **respectful, positive and “healthy environments”** (Hockey Canada,

⁴ For a successful, first hand account of this philosophy-put-into-practice at the competitive minor hockey league level, see, Ed Arnold (2002). *Whose Puck Is It, Anyway? A Season With A Minor Novice Hockey Team*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.

2004, 2007). By establishing an encouraging and enthusiastic learning environment that models and promotes respect for self, each other, our team, our opponents, the rules and officials, and emphasizes and puts into practice positive reinforcement, players improve and develop as individuals and as a team. More concretely, on an ongoing and consistent basis all players need to hear what they are doing well on and off the ice, along with areas they need to work on. Along with understanding the importance of hard work, effort and discipline, players learn how to play the game more effectively when they feel supported, acknowledged, respected and valued as individuals and as players by coaches.

Recruiting Coaches⁵

External recruitment: external recruiting deals with attracting potential coaches who are new to your association your there are some methods available to attract new coaches (Hockey Canada, 2003). The following our recommendations for the SPFHA to follow in order to recruit coaches:

- Word-of-mouth, parents, friends, and at the annual general meeting;
- Arena bulletin boards;
- School brochure;
- Attach a volunteer form to each child registration form;
- Placed an ad on the SPFHA's website;
- Place a public service message on local radio;
- Selectively contact people you know to be qualified and available;
- Coach recruitment booth at player registration sites.

Internal recruitment: Coaches within the SPFHA: Coaches within the organization should be contacted before the end of the season. Coaches who wish to return should be encouraged to submit a written application. By contacting coaches before the end of the season you make them feel better about what they are doing and keep them from being secured by other commitments.

Coach Mentorship: *Coaches Helping Coaches*

Mentoring as a concept has been widely accepted across professions, including in Law, Medicine and Education. Simply put, within the context of hockey, a mentoring model brings together experienced coaches with those who are beginning, or, those coaches with less experience. A mentor coach provides encouragement and constructive feedback on an ongoing basis in supporting the development of these coaches. All this is done with the aim of improving player development.

⁵ This section is taken from OMHA (N.D). *Coach Development: Programs & Opportunities*.

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Mentorship is an ongoing, trusting, personal relationship between a mentor and coach (OMHA, ND, p. 32). Informed by truly directed learning activities and self-discovery, a coach, with the support of a mentor coach, can confidently deal with the many challenges of the coaching environment; the mentoring process will enable the coaches to become more successful in all aspects of their coaching.

Coaches: Assessment and Evaluation

The evaluation of a “coach’s performance can be valuable for future selection” (Hockey Canada, p. 15). Information on the coach’s performance can be gathered from the players, parents, coaches themselves, other coaches, or by a neutral observer. Assessments and evaluations of coaches, according to hockey Canada should always be written, and ongoing.

Coaches are encouraged to engage in reflective self-assessment. Self-assessment is valuable to the learning process by examining one’s practices and attitudes in a way that will help them grow in their own development. On the next few pages, examples of a coach’s self-assessment and evaluation tool for a practice and a game is provided, along with an example of a coach mentor assessment tool, also for both a game and a practice.

Coach Assessment and Evaluation⁶

Game: Self-Assessment

Category	Rating scale 3-high; 2-Average; 1-Low;
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⁶ The coach-assessment templates found in this document were borrowed and modified from a variety of sources including Hockey Canada, USA Hockey and the British Columbia Coach Development Program.

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	N/A-Not applicable
Pregame preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization: • Responsibilities for team, personnel, lineups; • Punctuality of coaches and players. 	
Warm Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off ice: stretching exercises; • On ice: movement, variety, special goalie drills; 	
Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive attitude, appropriate verbal and body language; • Rapport with players; • Dress code followed. 	
Psychological preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of pregame talk; • Individual player discussions. 	
Tactical preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific expectations for team; • Expectations for certain players or positions; • Use of whiteboard 	
GAME	GAME
Behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and respectful attitude, language; • Helpful responses to situations. 	
Bench Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of players, line changes; • Length of shifts; • Management special-teams; • Proper use of other coaches 	
Communication with players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback at appropriate times; • Positive reinforcement, Individual and group corrections; 	
Communication with officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to penalties, off-sides; • Positive relationship with officials. 	
Postgame analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments to players; • Self-analysis routine. 	

COACH ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

GAME: MENTOR Assessment

Category	Rating scale 3-high; 2-Average; 1-Low; N/A-Not applicable
Pregame preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization: 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities for team, personnel, lineups; • Punctuality of coaches and players 	
Warm Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off ice: stretching exercises; • On ice: movement, variety, special goalie drills; 	
Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive attitude, appropriate verbal and body language; • Rapport with players; • Dress code followed 	
Psychological preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of pregame talk; • Individual player discussions. 	
Tactical preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific expectations for team; • Expectations for certain players or positions; • Use of whiteboard 	
GAME	GAME
Behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and respectful attitude, language; • Helpful responses to situations. 	
Bench Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of players, line changes; • Length of shifts; • Management special-teams; • Proper use of other coaches 	
Communication with players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback at appropriate times; • Positive reinforcement, Individual and group corrections; 	
Communication with officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to penalties, off-sides; • Positive relationship with officials. 	
Postgame analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments to players; • Self-analysis routine. 	

PRACTICE: COACH SELF-ASSESSMENT

Category	Rating scale 3-high; 2-Average; 1-Low; N/A-Not applicable
Pre-Practice Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations, Identified specific technical tactical objectives 	
Organization	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-ice presentation, preparation of assistants. 	
Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, organized, diagrams, includes warm-up and cool down, related stated objectives 	
Reflection: After practice, list 3 things that went well. List 3 things to improve on. 1. 2. 3.	
PRACTICE	PRACTICE
Use of drills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full participation; • Teach skills/ tactics effectively; • Used drill progressions from single too complex. 	
Teaching techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed time for teaching and demo; • Demonstrations are effective; • Effective use of voice and body language. 	
Error correction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate and appropriate feedback to players; • Repetition of drills where necessary. 	
Rapport with players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive communicator; • Nonthreatening, relaxed atmosphere • Evidence of player enjoyment 	
Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of full ice when necessary and appropriate; • Attention to risk management; • Follow practice outline; • Good use of support personnel. 	
PRACTICE: MENTOR- COACH SELF-ASSESSMENT	
Category	Rating scale 3-high; 2-Average; 1-Low; N/A-Not applicable
Pre-Practice Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations, Identified specific technical tactical objectives 	
Organization	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-ice presentation, preparation of assistants. 	
Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, organized, diagrams, includes warm-up and cool down, related stated objectives 	
Reflection: After practice, list 3 things that went well. List 3 things to improve on. 1. 2. 3.	
PRACTICE	PRACTICE
Use of drills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full participation; • Teach skills/ tactics effectively; • Used drill progressions from single too complex. 	
Teaching techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed time for teaching and demo; • Demonstrations are effective; • Effective use of voice and body language. 	
Error correction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate and appropriate feedback to players; • Repetition of drills where necessary. 	
Rapport with players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive communicator; • Nonthreatening, relaxed atmosphere • Evidence of player enjoyment 	
Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of full ice when necessary and appropriate; • Attention to risk management; • Follow practice outline; • Good use of support personnel. 	

PART 3: OVERVIEW OF DIVISIONS

As an organization we are committed to the belief that all players and coaches should work toward having successful and positive experiences in the SPFHA. A key to our players' positive experience with hockey is the development and mastery of basic hockey skills. Players should have personal goals to acquire each of these

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skills. The purpose in collecting and listing the specific-skill-progressions is to help players and coaches understand the broad scope of skills and abilities that are required to become a high quality player (modified from USA Hockey, 2004, p. 2).

The list for players has been divided by age-divisions: Novice (8 and Under); Atom (10 and Under), Pee Wee (12 and Under), Bantam (14 and Under), Midget (16 and Under), and Intermediate. Coaches are advised to use the skill progressions as a guide rather than an absolute standard for development. Sportsmanship, enjoyment, recreation and competition are the major focus of the school progressions for youth hockey. Coaches are encouraged to grow success through informal and formal player assessments. Coaches should be engaging in assessment and evaluation on an ongoing basis. Appropriate and constructive feedback is essential to the growth and development of high-quality hockey players.

OVERVIEW OF NOVICE DIVISION⁷

The Novice Program coincides with the second stage of the long-term player developmental model. This stage is called, ‘**FUNDamentals.**’ If you recall, in this stage, with girls between the ages of 6 to 8, the focus is on fun and participation with a concentration on more extensive development skills such as agility, balance, coordination and speed as well as running, jumping, catching and throwing. It is also at this stage that ethics (e.g., sportspersonship) may be introduced to hockey.

NOVICE PROGRAM⁸

Length of Season: 28-32 weeks; First 8 -20 weeks, practice and skill development; 20-24 weeks, practice and gameplay season; final 3-4 weeks, tournament season.

Frequency Per Week: 2-3 times

Number of Games per Season: 30 modified, and only a few full-ice.

The Novice Stage:

The Hockey Canada skills development program for Novice hockey recommends: **75% on Technical Skills, 15% on Individual Tactics, and 10% on Team Tactics.**

SPFHA’S NOVICE PROGRAM’S BASIC SEASONAL STRUCTURE ⁹

⁷ This section is taken directly from the 2013 (Version 2) Hockey Canada document, *Hockey Canada Long term Player Development Plan: Hockey For Life, Hockey For Excellence*. Hockey Canada.

⁸ This section is also taken directly from the 2013 (Version 2) Hockey Canada document, *Hockey Canada Long term Player Development Plan: Hockey For Life, Hockey For Excellence*. Hockey Canada.

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September	October & November	December	January	February	March
Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine	Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine	Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine	Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine	Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine	Technical skills Introduce Develop Refine
Individual Tactics Introduce	Individual Tactics Introduce Develop	Individual Tactics Introduce Develop Refine	Individual Tactics Introduce Develop Refine	Individual Tactics Introduce Develop Refine	Individual Tactics Introduce Develop Refine
		Team Tactics Introduce	Team Tactics Introduce	Team Tactics Introduce Develop	Team Tactics Introduce Develop

Novice Program: EXAMPLES OF CORE KNOWLEDGE and CORE SKILLS

Knowledge: *By the end of Novice, the player will know:*

- 1. Rules:**
 - Off-sides
 - Icing
 - **Attack Player:** The winger designated to break through to the shooter on a Defensive Zone face-off. This will be the LW when the face-off is to the left of our goalie, and the RW when the face-off is to the right of our goalie. (See diagrams for “Defensive Zone” Face-offs).
 - **Attack Triangle:** Any offensive formation that creates a triangular formation, thus providing the puck carrier with at least two passing options and enabling the offensive team to create width and depth in their attack.
 - **Bank Pass:** When player bounces the puck off the boards to the intended receiver as opposed to passing directly to him. This can be useful if there’s an opponent between the puck carrier and an intended receiver.
 - **Contain:** If the opposing player does have clean control of the puck, the penalty killer must play contained defense, and not overly commit to the puck carrier.

⁹ This section is also taken directly from the 2013 (Version 2) Hockey Canada document, *Hockey Canada Long Term Player Development Plan: Hockey For Life, Hockey For Excellence*. Hockey Canada.

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- **Control Skating:** When skater varies their speed and route to the potential pass reception area (receiving zone) so that you arrive there with speed at the same moment as the pass.
- **Defensive Position:** (Defensive Side Of The Puck) Establishing a position between an opponent and your net.
- **Drag Skating:** When the defenseman with the puck pulls the puck toward the middle of the ice in preparation for a regroup. Drag Skating draws opposing forwards to the defenseman (and away from the potential receivers), and helps the defenseman to have a better passing angle to his forwards.
- **Driving The Net:** A combination of speed, puck protection, and **going to the net** – being a threat to score.
- **Flush:** To put pressure on the opposing puck carrier, usually to force him out from behind the net. The objective isn't to pin puck carrier, but to chase him up the ice and force him to pass the puck.
- **Force:** The penalty killer must force, or in other words attack aggressively, if the opposing player doesn't have clean control of the puck.
- **Gap:** Refers to the space between a defenseman and an attacking forward in a 1 on 1 situation. Wide gap means the defenseman is giving up space in front.
- **Tight Gap:** means the defenseman is giving up space behind him.
- **Head on a Swivel:** Look around and be aware of your surroundings and look for someone open to cover or be in a position to react quickly to puck movement. This term is generally used when your team does not have the puck and typically when the puck is in your defensive end of the ice.
- **Headman the puck:** To pass the puck to a teammate who is farther up the ice than puck-carrier.
- **Off The Puck:** Typically refers to the player away from the puck when on offense. Example: On a 2 on1, the attacking player without the puck would be considered Off the Puck.
- **Strong Side:** This is the side of the ice where the puck is.
- **Support:** Player in position to support a teammate. An example would be when there's a battle on the boards for the puck. The support player positions themselves on the Defensive side of the puck and ready to attack if the puck comes loose.
- **Weak Side:** This would be the side of the ice that the puck is not. Generally referred to when back checking and picking up an open man

EXAMPLES OF CORE SKILLS¹⁰: *By the end of Novice, the player will demonstrate the following skills:*

1. SKATING

- **Edge Control** (e.g., *Figure 8s- Forward- inside and outside edge; Figure 8s- Backward, inside and outside edge; One leg weaving-forward and backward*)
- **Balance and Agility** (e.g., *basic hockey stance; getting up from the ice; balance on one foot; gliding on one skate; gliding on two skates; lateral crossovers – step and plant*)
- **Forward Start** (e.g., *T-start; Front v-start; crossover start; backward c-cut start; Outside leg stop; 2 foot parallel stop; one leg backward stop; two leg backward stop*)
- **Forward Skating and Striding** (*C-cuts-left foot/right foot/alternating; Forward striding*)
- **Backward Skating** (*C-cuts-left foot/right foot; Gliding on two skates-backward; Gliding on one skate-backward; Backward sculling*)
- **Turning and Crossover** (e.g., *Glide turns; tight turns; C-cuts-around circle- outside foot – forward and backward; Crossovers-forward and backward; backward one foot stop and T-stop; Pivots-backward to forward and forward to backward; Pivots – open and reverse*)

2. PUCK CONTROL

- **Stationary Puck Control** (e.g., *stance, narrow, wide, side- front-side; toe drag-side; toe drag-front*)
- **Moving Puck Control** (e.g., *narrow, wide, open ice carry-forehand and backhand; weaving with the puck; toe drag- front and side; puck in the feet*);

3. PASSING AND RECEIVING

¹⁰ The core skills outlined in this document were taken from the document 'Hockey Canada Core Skills.'

- Stationary forehand pass; stationary backhand pass; stationary bank pass; pairs passing; moving bank pass, forehand; moving back pass, backhand; pass and follow.

4. SHOOTING

- Sweep shot, forehand and backhand; wrist shot, forehand and backhand and in motion; Flip-shot, forehand; stationary tips on ice, low.

5. Individual Offensive Tactics

- Body fakes, stick fakes; attack triangle, puck under stick;

6. Offensive Tactics: Neutral Zone

- Cross and drop; pass and follow; give & go; headman

7. Offense of Tactics: Offensive Zone

- Net drive; middle drive; high delay; wrap around

8. Individual Defensive Tactics

- Angling; forward skating; her backward skating; changing directions; active stick.

9. Defensive Tactics: Defensive Zone

- Role of F1, F2, F3, D1 and D2

10. Defensive Zone:

- DZ Coverage, basic; DZ Coverage, rotation.

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