

## **INITIATION PROGRAM**

Hockey Canada developed the Initiation program to make children's first contact with hockey a safe and positive experience. 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 effort, develop self-confidence, and experience a sense of personal achievement. These goals are achieved in an atmosphere of fun and fair play.

### **The goals of the program are the following:**

- to have fun while playing hockey and engaging in physical activity
- to learn the basic skills required to play the game of hockey
- to develop an understanding of basic teamwork through participation in a variety of activities and adapted game situations
- to create and refine basic motor patterns
- to be introduced to the concepts of cooperation and fair play

### **Program focus:**

- developing basic hockey skills: skating/puck handling/stopping/passing/turning/shooting

### **UNDER 7 YEARS OF AGE AS OF DECEMBER 31ST OF THE CURRENT SEASON**

The age and skill level of the players defines the seasonal plan. The Hockey Canada skills development programs are based on progressive steps and follow the appropriate allocation of time illustrated in the skill development pyramid.

### **Goals for the Initiation age category are:**

- fun
- introduction of basic skills
- reviewing of basic skills
- refining of basic skills

The Initiation program recommends the following practice time allotment.

- 85% technical skills/15% individual tactics/ **0% team tactics/team play/strategy**

Hockey Canada's Initiation Program has four levels of instruction designed for beginning hockey players. Each level represents a different set of skill progression. At the beginning of the program, players are evaluated according to ability and placed in the appropriate program level.

The program emphasizes the basic hockey skills: skating, puck handling, passing and shooting.

Each skill is introduced and refined in a progressive one step at a time manner.

Children learn and develop through participating in practice drills and informal and modified games (such as shinny, freeze-tag and obstacle courses).

Although the emphasis is on fun and progressive skill development, the Initiation Program also allows youngsters to experience:

- Fitness
- Fair Play
- Cooperation