



JUNIOR COACH MANUAL

A resource guide for Junior Coaches
and their Head Coach mentors

Version: September 2023



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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This Junior Coach manual was written by an SCRA Junior Coach as a special volunteer project¹ with input from other SCRA players and coaches who have either been Junior Coaches themselves or have had a Junior Coach under their wing. We hope that this manual answers some of the questions you may have regarding the role of a Junior Coach - as either a participant in the role, or as a parent or coach.

Real tips and insight was gathered from previous Junior Coaches and Head Coaches, and their comments are featured throughout the manual in highlight boxes like this one:

Why did you become a Junior Coach?

- I thought it would be fun!
- I love the sport and wanted to give some of my knowledge of the game to the girls, and to be a good role model for the girls.
- When I was younger I really enjoyed having a junior coach. They were always so much fun and really great role models for me and my teammates. I wanted to be a junior coach so I could make Ringette fun for the girls and give them the same experience that I had when I was a younger player.
- Experience, community involvement, additional volunteering for resume
- I wanted to give back to the sport that has given me so many opportunities to travel and compete and meet new people

What are some things you really liked about being a Junior Coach?

- I really enjoyed being a role model for the girls I coached. They were really great to teach and were always happy to see me at practice. I think it is really important for them to have a Ringette player coach them because we can relate to them and use our personal experience to coach.
- Once girls were comfortable with me they actively asked me questions or bounce ideas off me which was really cool to be a part of.
- Just getting to hangout with the younger girls and teach them new things, watch them grow and succeed.
- I really liked getting to know the players and watching them improve, the satisfaction of working on a certain skill with them in practice and seeing the payoff in a game.
- I really liked having an impact on the girls' sport. It was very important to me when I was younger that I have an older female role model so I enjoyed being that person for others.

Questions? Please email coachingadmin@southcalgaryringette.com for more information on the Junior Coaching program.

¹ **This Junior Coaching document was written by SCRA Jr Coach Sadie Ferguson with the help of other previous SCRA Junior Coaches and Head Coaches. Thank you Sadie!** *"Thanks to (VP Admin) Becky Scheer for overseeing the project and her help with editing this document, to the other junior coaches for your input, and to the current SCRA coaches for reviewing to provide feedback. This volunteer activity was performed as part of my Duke of Edinburgh Gold award. I encourage all Junior Coaches to research this award at www.dukeofed.org because the act of being a junior coach for SCRA will complete 25% of the award requirement and your participation as an SCRA player will complete another 25% of the award."*



HOW DO I BECOME A JUNIOR COACH?

Eligibility Requirements

No experience is needed to be a Junior Coach however there are some requirements as outlined below. These requirements are subject to changes by Ringette Alberta (RAB) policy each year.

To be eligible to be a Junior Coach, you must meet the following criteria:

- **Must be a minimum of 14 years of age**
 - A Junior Coach may join mid-season (until the RAB deadline of **December 15th**) once they turn 14 and provide they meet the other criteria.
- **Must be a maximum of 17 years of age at the start of the season.** (ie. can turn 18 during the season)
- **Must be a registered Ringette player in the current season or played on a team last year** (ie. taking the year off due to injury, school, etc.)
- **Must complete a Junior Coach application with SCRA before you can join your assigned team staff.**
 - The online application link is posted on the Jr Coaches page of the SCRA website. The application is typically open in July/August through September/October.
- **Must be registered by SCRA on the assigned Team Staff roster in the Junior Coach role** in any division younger than the Junior Coach.
 - SCRA will assign Junior Coaches to Team Staff rosters to meet the coaching needs for specific teams. The information provided in your application will be considered when making Junior Coach team assignments. (ie. a younger sibling's team or a preferred head coach)
 - SCRA must register all Coaches, Junior Coaches and On-Ice Helpers on team rosters in RAMP and with RAB to ensure certifications and insurance coverage is in effect. NO ONE is permitted to simply "help out" on the ice without being registered with SCRA as team staff.
- **Complete the "Coach Initiation in Sport eModule" and "Safe Sport" module** through the Coaching Association of Canada by the RAB deadline of **Dec 15th**.
 - Enroll yourself with the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) and set up your "Locker" account at: <https://thelocker.coach.ca/account/login?ReturnUrl=%2f>
 - You will need to create a Locker account for yourself if you don't already have one.
 - The course is often offered for free during "National Coaches Week" in late September.
 - See www.coach.ca for more info.
 - See <https://safesport.coach.ca/>



Commitment Expectation

Junior Coaches should aim to attend as many team activities as possible, but there are no hard rules or common experience regarding attendance for Junior Coaches. Every coach and team will have their own unique expectations and realities.

As players themselves, Junior Coaches have a commitment to their own team that comes first before their

What roadblocks or problems did you encounter during your junior coaching experience?

- Time conflicts with my own schedule (ie. team, school, work)
- Not being able to drive myself
- It would be great if there could be two Junior Coaches assigned to a team in case we have conflicts (if the coach is able to accommodate two jr coaches on their team staff and if there are enough jr coaches to go around!)

► **Advice for Head Coaches:** Ask your Junior Coach about any roadblocks they have with attending practices or games. You may need to assist with helping the Junior Coach to establish carpooling within the team.

► **Advice for Junior Coaches:** Make sure that you keep your availability up to date on Teamsnap (or whatever attendance system the team uses), and reach out to your Head Coach or team group if you need assistance getting to practice. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

volunteering role. They may also have other challenges that they may need assistance to work around:

Important Deadlines

The following outlines an approximate timeline of important activities for Junior Coaches during the season:

July / August:

- o Junior Coach completes SCRA online application. The application link will be posted online on the SCRA website.

September / October:

- o SCRA assigns Junior Coach to a Team Staff roster,
- o JR Coach to register in the Team Staff in RAMP, and register them with Ringette Calgary and RAB.
- o Junior Coach meets with Head Coach / Team Staff to discuss role, expectations, season plan for the team, and the Junior Coach's learning goals
- o Once assigned and registered by SCRA, Junior Coach can begin to assist with team practices, team games, and team building activities

December:

- o December 15th - deadline to complete certification requirements
- o Mid-Season review with Head coach (optional)

March:

- o Attend team party to close season (optional)
- o Season-end review with Head coach (optional)
- o JR Coach Feedback Survey from VPOperations Children's Ringette



SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Code of Conduct

As a Junior Coach on a team, your conduct must fall under the same code as is expected for all coaches, volunteers, parents and players in our association. Please review the SCRA Code of Conduct policy on the website.

Player Bullying & Harassing Behaviour

The SCRA Code of Conduct is in place to ensure a caring, friendly and safe sport environment for all our members. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our association.

- Players are expected to adhere to the SCRA Code of Conduct and live up to the True Sport Principles.
- Players must always show respect for others – players, coaches, officials, fans and opponents. We are all representatives of SCRA.
- There is zero tolerance for harassment or bullying. Players, parents and coaches have a duty to report incidents to the head coach.
- Minor incidents should be corrected promptly and informally, taking a constructive approach and with the goal of bringing about a change in negative attitudes and behaviour.
- Serious incidents should be dealt with more formally. The Head Coach should document the incidents and contact the SCRA President for guidance.

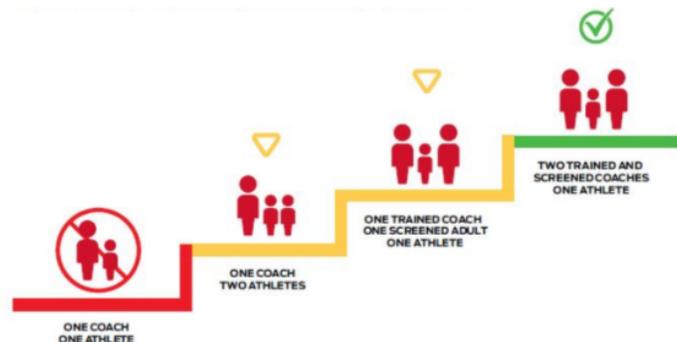
If you observe any bullying or harassing behaviour by any team member, please report it to the Head Coach.

The “Rule of Two”

A coach should NEVER be alone with one player -- there should always be another person present, such as another screened coach or a parent.

The goal of the **Rule of Two** is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches who are in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations. Learn more at:

www.coach.ca/responsiblecoaching



Good Rule of Two Implementation Practices:

- The coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent volunteer) present.
- Allow the training environment to be open to observation.
- Ensure participants who are riding in a coach's vehicle have another adult present.
- Consider the gender of participant(s) when selecting screened coaches and volunteers who are present.
- No one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure all communications are to the group and/or include parents.

Online Chats / Texting

- The “Rule of Two” also applies to electronic and online messaging.
- Use discretion when joining a team text / online chat. Ensure all messages include a parent or coach.
- Do not have one-to-one messaging, emails, texts, online chats, etc with an individual player.



Privacy / Confidentiality Concerns

All coaches, volunteers and members of SCRA must adhere to the privacy policy, confidentiality policy and all other policies of the association. Any personal information that is acquired during a Junior Coach’s period of involvement must not be disclosed to any person or organization unless express permission is given. This includes all personal info of the team staff, players, volunteers, parents, etc.

Social Media

Use discretion if sharing team / player photos or personal information on your personal social media. Obtain prior permission from coaches, parents, players BEFORE taking any photos or sharing any team posts on your social media. Please also obtain permission before sharing any team photos with SCRA for online use by the association.

Cell Phones

Due to the potential for cellular phones to be used as photographic devices, cell phones should not be used in any restroom or locker room areas. SCRA teams are encouraged to develop their own policy for their specific team that reflects the privacy concerns, code of conduct, and the need to protect children from online bullying and abuse.

As a Junior Coach you may want to be in charge of music being played in the dressing room prior to practices or games. Most often, music is synced to cell phones. It is important to talk with your Head Coach to discuss this issue at the start of the season and address any concerns.

Concussions

Tell the Head Coach immediately if you witness a collision or fall, or if an individual is complaining of an injury of any kind. In particular, it is important to know a few of the concussion recognition tools.

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or somewhere else on the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion. Head impacts can be associated with serious and potentially fatal brain injuries.

<u>RED FLAGS</u>	<u>Observable Signs</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>
Medical attention is needed immediately if the individual is experiencing any of these symptoms:	If no red flags are present, visual clues can suggest a possible concussion:	Complaints of symptoms can also suggest a possible concussion:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Double vision ● Weakness or tingling/ burning in arms or legs ● Neck pain or tenderness ● Severe or increasing headache ● Seizure or convulsion ● Loss of consciousness ● Deteriorating conscious state ● Vomiting ● Increasingly restless, agitated or combative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lying motionless on the ice ● Slow to get up ● Disorientation or confusion, or inability to respond appropriately to questions ● Blank or vacant stare ● Balance incoordination, stumbling, slow laboured movements ● Facial injury after a head trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Headache or neck pain ● “Pressure in head” ● Nausea or dizziness ● Drowsiness or fatigue ● Difficulty to remember or concentrate ● Emotional, irritable, sad, or nervous ● Sensitivity to light or noise ● Blurred vision ● “Don’t feel right” ● “Feel slowed down” ● “Feel like in a fog”

If any athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion during sports they should be immediately removed from play. Any athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion during sports must not be allowed to return to the same game or practice.

Please review the Ringette Canada website for more info on signs and symptoms of concussions, tip sheets, and Return to Play recommendations: <https://www.ringette.ca/concussion/>



TEAM PRACTICES AND GAMES

What is your role?

It can be hard for Junior Coaches to figure out where they fit into the team. Do they hang out with the players or do they hang out with the coaches? Ideally, the Head Coach should welcome the Junior Coach as part of the coaching team staff.

Each team dynamic and coaching staff will be different and have a different culture and different needs. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to help the Junior Coach to bridge this gap by introducing them to the team and working with them to establish their roles and responsibilities.

Part of your role as a Junior Coach is to learn and develop your coaching skills. When working with your Head Coach, plan to phase in different levels of responsibility. A timeline for what to expect might be:

Would it have been helpful to have an outline of your roles and responsibilities when you first became a Junior Coach?

- Yes I think this would have given me a more clear idea of what is expected from me as a Junior Coach. This would also help communicate the responsibility of a Junior Coach to the other coaches and parents.
- Absolutely!! I had no clue what my job on the team really was and what the other coaches expected of me.

► **Advice for Head Coaches:** Have a meeting with your Junior Coach to introduce yourself and work with them to create a plan for how to involve and mentor your Junior Coach.

► **Advice for Junior Coaches:** If the Head Coach doesn't set up an introduction meeting with you, take the initiative and ask for one. Fill out the "Junior Coach Introduction Sheet" in the Resources section of this manual, and give it to them along with a copy of the "Coach Tip Sheet" which is also in the Resources section of this manual. This info will help guide them on how to best utilize you as their Junior Coach.

- September - Team Introductions
 - Expect to learn the names of all the players on the team.
 - Expect to work with the coaches by helping to demonstrate the skills and drills at practices - let your team see how well you can skate and shoot.
 - Practice using your voice at every team practice in a cheerleading / encouraging capacity.
- September/October - Clarify Role at Practices
 - Start working with the Head Coach to identify drills where you can work one on one with some of the players on specific skill development while the rest are engaged in the regular drills. (ie. shooting practice, edge work)
 - Work with the Head Coach to identify opportunities for you to run drills. The girls can be your shadow on a drill..."Try this"....or you can actively be coaching at a station.
 - Communicate with the players! Use your voice for coaching feedback and reinforce your coaching role. Ask your coaching team if there are specific things they want to watch for and reinforce. For example, during backwards skating, remind the girls to keep their eyes up and on you. When they are skating around pylons, remind them to keep both blades on the ice - no toe drags! These are small coaching nuggets that will get the players used to hearing your voice in a coaching capacity.
- October/November - Clarify Role on the Bench at Games



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- Depending on the age group, league games typically commence in October. Work with the Head Coach to determine your role on the bench during game play for league games and tournaments.
- Every team staff will have a different approach to how they prefer to run their bench during games. They may only want 3 people or they may want more.
- RAB Team Staff Policy - Minimum & Maximums on the bench during games:
 - Minimum: one (1) female Head or Assistant Coach who is 18 years of age or older
 - Maximum: one (1) Head Coach, (1) Assistant Coach, Plus additional (3) team staff made up of any combination of assistant coaches and/or trainers
 - In addition, teams may have an unlimited number of Junior Coaches

Giving Player Feedback

It is important for Junior Coaches to implement the “Feedback Sandwich” concept in both practices and games.

Did your coach give you the opportunity to assist on the bench during games?

There are no set rules regarding the role of a Junior Coach on the team bench during games, however feedback from previous Junior Coaches suggest that they were most eager to open the gate for players. This provides an opportunity for the Junior Coach to have individual interactions with the players and cheer them on.

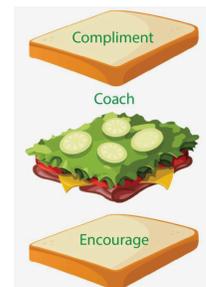
► **Advice for Head Coaches:** Involve your Junior Coaches on the bench! They have valuable experience to offer.

► **Advice for Junior Coaches:** Discuss this role with your Head Coach at the beginning of the season.

Think about how as a player you would have liked to receive coaching feedback.

As an example during game play: A defender leaves the neutral zone and skates right back to the triangle and sets up whilst play is still in the neutral zone. Your feedback at shift time might be:

1. Compliment - Wow, did you ever skate back hard to the triangle to protect your goalie.
2. Coach Feedback - Do you think that next shift you could try skating backwards the entire way and keeping your eye on the ring.
3. Encourage - I can't wait to see your transitions and backward skating next shift.



Practice Planning

- Work with your Head Coach to learn how to plan drills for an effective practice
- The Coaches page on the SCRA website has several sample practice plans and videos for various age groups
- Practice plan – A blank template page is provided in the Resources section of this manual, or you can find it online at: <https://ringettecalgary.ca/docs/RINK.pdf>



TEAM BUILDING

Generally speaking the team staff (ie. Coaches, Team Manager, Social Coordinator, etc) is responsible for scheduling and setting up opportunities for team building for players and coaches. If you have ideas, be sure to share them with the other coaching staff and team staff.

Outside of these team activities, Junior Coaches can also play a role in adding team building fun throughout the season. Always discuss your ideas with the Head Coach first -- but here are some suggestions for ways in which a Junior Coach can connect with the players by performing repeatable team experiences:

- Need an idea to encourage the players to meet everyone on their team? Try implementing a “Find Your Seat” assigned seating game in the dressing room at practices, especially with younger teams. This would require the Junior Coach to get to practice early and place the name tags / tape on the wall around the room. Every practice the seating arrangement changes. This will encourage players to get to know everyone on the team, instead of always sitting beside the same friend. The Junior Coach could also facilitate conversation topics / games to get the girls talking.
- The Junior Coach could provide special practice “events” to keep the girls excited about coming to practice (especially early morning practices!):
 - Wear your pjs to practice
 - Wear all green or all red or etc
 - Bring your favorite stuffy to practice
 - Crazy socks day
 - Backwards jersey day
- Leading a team warm-up before practices and games.
- For the AS/U10 teams, practice the team cheers for half time at games
- Add face paint to player cheeks before games

Any other tips or advice for Junior Coaches?

- Be aware of how many extracurricular activities you have and if you have enough time to give.
- Not all Junior Coach experiences are the same. It depends on each Head Coach's and team's needs.
- Show up to as many events as you can including team building so the players know who you are.
- Talk to the players right from the start of the year, otherwise it gets hard to coach them later.
- Try your best to connect with the players, and make sure they are happy and having fun.
- Try to interact with them - that being said you are still a coach so don't be distracting to them.
- You don't have to address the team as a whole all the time. You can give targeted advice to individual players.
- Don't be afraid to give input on drills. Help the players if you see them struggling.
- Be very patient with the young players and try to keep feedback simple. Be supportive of anything a player does, whether it's a mistake or a victory and no matter how small.
- Off the ice, asking them about school or whatever, helped build relationships and respect.
- Make sure to have drills prepared and ideas ready to share with the coaches.
- Look like you're part of the coach team. Wear your SCRA hoodie or jacket at all team activities!

► **Advice for Head Coaches:** If your team gets special team wear, make sure your Junior Coach is included! Please do not leave them out. If your Junior Coach doesn't have any SCRA coaching apparel, consider giving it as a thank you gift.



HEAD COACH TIP SHEET

Thank you for welcoming a Junior Coach to your team staff!

Junior Coaches are a valuable resource for your team, and a critical strategy toward ensuring Ringette coaches for the future of the sport. It is important for all Junior Coaches to know that they are a recognized resource within the greater Ringette community and that their volunteering is greatly valued.

RAB strongly encourages teams, especially U14 and younger, to have a Junior Coach. These young athletes have a wealth of experience and knowledge relevant not only to the game of Ringette but also to team-building and working with female athletes. They are often able to relate much more easily to your athletes than you can.

This sheet has been created to provide you with some tips on how to utilize your Junior Coach.

Know your Junior Coach:

- Set up an introduction meeting to welcome your Junior Coach and learn about their Ringette experience.
- Work with your Junior Coach to identify what goals they have for their role this season.
- Clearly communicate how you plan to utilize them during practices and games.

Know the rules:

- Junior Coaches must be minimum 14 years of age. Junior Coaches who are 17 at the start of the season but turn 18 during the season are permitted.
- Age 16+ must have a valid PIC on file with SCRA.
- Must complete the Coach Initiation in Sport e-module.
- Must be a registered player in the current or previous season.
- Junior Coaches are not considered meeting the “female coach” requirement.
- Junior Coaches must always be under the supervision of a qualified/certified head coach or assistant coach. They are never permitted on the ice without a certified head or assistant coach.

Be a mentor:

- Junior Coaches are role models and future coaches. As Head Coach, part of your responsibility is to mentor them. Include them on decision-making and ask for their input and ideas both on and off the ice. Some will take more encouragement than others to speak up, but they are there because they love Ringette and want to share it.
- Please do NOT reduce them to pylon-pushers. They have so much more to offer. Involve them by having them demonstrate drills, assist with running a skill station, or eventually planning and running a drill in each practice. Ask them to assist on the bench during games and provide their insight. Ask them to take part in team-building events and encourage them to provide ideas -- they have been part of many team-building events over the years!

Be supportive:

- Though they are often busy and attendance can be impacted by their other commitments, they are young and learning to balance the demands on their time. They are also often still reliant on parents or other family/friends to drive them to team activities. Ensure they are included on your team attendance tracking system such as TeamSnap. Reach out to ensure they have a ride to attend the team activities.
- Take your team to watch your Junior Coach’s team play a game! Your players can wear their jerseys and make posters to cheer on their junior coach. It is a fun event, but it is also important learning for your young players to see the older players enjoying the sport and showcasing how the game is played at the older levels. And it is also important for those older players to feel encouraged!



JUNIOR COACH INTRODUCTION SHEET

Fill out this sheet to provide to your Head Coach at your first introduction meeting.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone (Cell): _____

Are you playing Ringette this season? YES NO

What is your current team name / division? (or most recent): _____

What position do you typically play? (or your favourite): _____

Ringette Experience (ie. how many years have you played and at what levels?):

Have you coached Ringette or any other sport before?

What are some of your learning goals for Junior Coaching this season?

What is your usual way of getting to practices and games? (ie. parents, drive yourself, car pool, etc)

Do you have any other pressures that might affect your availability? (ie. school, work, other sports, etc.)



PRACTICE PLAN TEMPLATE

