



The 2009/2010 Initiation Hockey Program Parent's Handbook

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Initiation Conveners

Welcome to the Initiation program for SMHA for the 2009/2010 season. We are looking forward to a very positive and exciting year this season. Again, the IP program has increased in size from last year. This season we will be hosting over 150 children in our IP program. We provide you with this handbook to help answer some of the questions you may have about the IP program and SMHA. This document was first authored by Steve Horvath in the 2005/06 season as then convener of the Initiation program. We have updated it for this season.

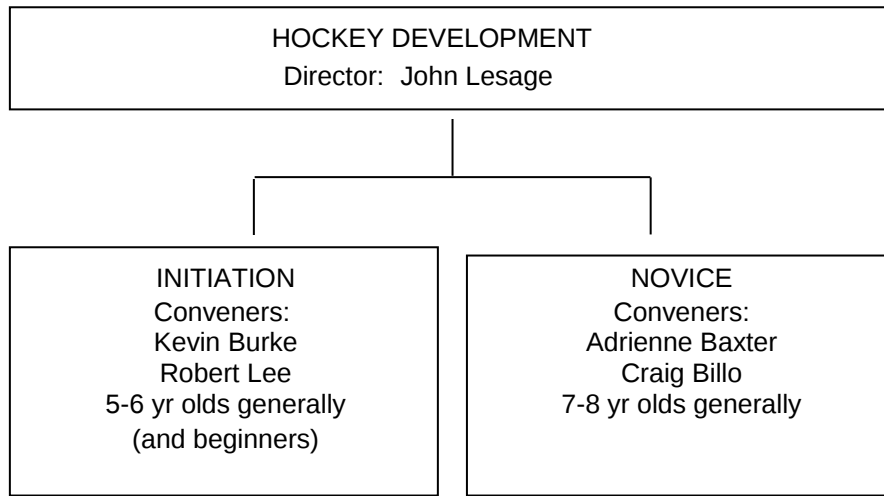
The Initiation program is made up of 5 and 6 year old skaters. A skater entering the program at age five would therefore spend two years in Initiation. From here, they would graduate to Novice, generally for skaters aged seven to eight. In both Initiation and Novice, skaters will be categorized according to ability. However, regardless of age, all first year skaters will start in Initiation. Here are some examples of how the system will work:

- A five year old, who perhaps has already been skating for a year and is accomplished, may find herself on the ice with a six year old of similar skills (within the Initiation program).
- A six year old, who is a first time skater, may find himself on a team with a five year old who is also a first time skater (within the Initiation program).
- A Novice aged seven year old, who is a first time skater (just learning), may find himself on a team with a six year old (in the Initiation program). This is unlikely, but under ODMHA guidelines, could happen.
- Effort will be made to avoid a situation where an eight year old first time skater is on the ice with predominantly five year old first time skaters. Sensitivity will be shown to age differentiation and effort will be made to group both ability and age where possible. In such cases the respective Conveners of Initiation and Novice, along with the Director of Hockey Development, will assess and decide a course of action. If special circumstances arise, they will be handled on a case by case basis.
- As a policy per the ODMHA, an Initiation aged skater will not be moved to Novice. In most cases where a player's ability excels, and if possible, skaters with like-ability will be grouped and practice tempo and challenge will be increased appropriately.

The primary purpose of the program is to provide each child with an optimal opportunity to develop hockey skills in a cohesive and progressive manner, all done in an environment characterized by fun, camaraderie and personal and team reward. The focus remains on the player and on the on-ice experience. The system also streamlines the management and administrative processes.



The Convener for Initiation and the Convener for Novice both report to the Director, Hockey Development.



SKILL EVALUATION AND GROUPING

In the Initiation program, skaters will very likely be divided into three groups according to ability. If skills sets do not vary as much as expected, then there may be only two groups. At the initiation level, the drills in each practice will largely be the same regardless of the grouping. This is being done in order to ensure proper skill development across all skaters. However, tempo will be adjusted according to skill levels and some drills may receive tweaks to make them more or less challenging.



Let me share a personal word about our views regarding skills sets at this age group. Our own observations are that skill at this young age is more a matter of ice time than anything else. There do seem to be children who are naturally gifted athletically but it takes ice time for that to show up at the rink. Skating does not appear to be a natural ability to any child we have encountered. They master the skill over time and over many, many repeated exposures to learning. Many of the young accomplished skaters generally have been enrolled in learn to skate or power skating programs prior to coming into the hockey system. Whether or not your child is in one group or another should not be perceived either positively or negatively in terms of rank. There is no rank. No child is more or less important than any other. We simply wish to align every child with a program that most appropriately meets their development needs. If a child has previously been enrolled in skating programs and comes into Initiation as an accomplished skater, then we believe the program owes that child the opportunity to continue to grow developmentally while being challenged in a positive manner. Just as importantly, the child who is a beginner at skating deserves the same opportunity to be appropriately developed and challenged. And so do the kids in the middle. At the Initiation level we will have skaters who are putting on skates for the first time, some who have good skating skills and some who are very good (for their age). Everyone will have paid the same fees for the program and every child is as equally important as the next – that is our commitment to you. Our goal is to provide every child with a positive experience and to have every parent feel they received great value. Balancing the needs of the various ability levels will be difficult and we expect a few speed bumps along the way. Realistic expectations and a bit of patience are greatly appreciated.



CONDITIONING SESSIONS

In order to help prepare skaters for evaluations, and frankly, just to get the rust off the blades, Initiation skaters will be provided with opportunity to attend a total of two conditioning sessions of approximately 50 minutes each. Conditioning sessions will be scheduled from mid-September with the times and dates to be announced on the SMHA web site as well as via email (where possible). In order to prepare the skater for evaluations, and to ensure skaters are comfortable and familiar with the format, conditioning and evaluation drills will be the same:

1. Warm Up
2. Full ice frontward skating.
3. Skate around face-off circle clockwise, then to blue line, then weave through pilons to next blue line, then around face-off circle counter-clockwise.
4. Stops and Starts: Goal line to blue line – stop – to center red line – stop – to blue line – stop – to goal line – stop.
5. Backwards skating – across width of ice, from boards to boards.

The above drills are intended to provide a sound basis upon which to evaluate general skating ability.

Conditioning sessions are optional. Sessions will be run by coaches, assistant coaches and on-ice helpers. No evaluation whatsoever will be done during conditioning sessions. At this young age, the range of abilities can be quite large. In order to avoid bottlenecks in the drills, skaters may be grouped by ability. This grouping is NOT an evaluation. No scoring of ability occurs. On-ice staff doing the grouping are not evaluators. They will simply be ensuring that flow exists within the drills.

EVALUATION SESSIONS

Evaluation sessions will be scheduled soon after the conditioning sessions. Dates and times will be announced on the SMHA website and where possible, via email.



Each Initiation skater will have opportunity to participate in two evaluation sessions. Drills will be the same in both sessions and therefore one bad day on the ice does not inappropriately group a skater. Additionally, the evaluation drills are the same as those that were done in conditioning sessions so skaters should have familiarity:

1. Warm Up.
2. Full ice frontward skating.
3. Skate around face-off circle clockwise, then to blue line, then weave through pilons to next blue line, then around face-off circle counter-clockwise.
4. Stops and Starts: Goal line to blue line – stop – to center red line – stop – to blue line – stop – to goal line – stop.
5. Backwards skating – across width of ice, from boards to boards.

The following scoring system is used for evaluations:

BEGINNER			GOOD			ADVANCED		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Emphasis has been placed on ensuring integrity and accuracy in the evaluation process:

- Each skater is evaluated by TWO separate evaluators. Both scores are tallied to achieve a score for the day and then scores from day one and day two are totaled to achieve the final score. On the second day of evaluations the skater may very well be evaluated by two different evaluators (will depend on availability of evaluators).
- Subject to availability, evaluators for Initiation will be coaches from other levels. Alternatively, other qualified and unbiased evaluators may be used. Parents and relatives of skaters will not be used as evaluators. Every effort will be made to ensure evaluators are unbiased.
- Evaluators are instructed to stick to the numerical grading system, from one to nine, and not add scores such as 3+ or 7-. This avoids the creation of bubble scenarios, scenarios where a skater is possibly just above the top of one grouping but not quite at the bottom of the next higher level.
- With skaters that are not clearly and distinctly in one group, a one month window exists. During this one month, those skaters can be moved up or down depending on how they perform during this time. We avoid using this one month window as an open door for moving skaters whose skill sets have already clearly placed them into a grouping. Large scale movement of players during the one month window will not occur.
- As a final step, one that is taken after the evaluation process but before the one month window expires, the Hockey Director, Coach and Convener may evaluate the skater, sharing comments and results with the parents.



Unfortunately, and in spite of our very best efforts, evaluations are not an exact science and mistakes are possible. If you feel a legitimate mistake has been made, please bring it to the attention of either a coach or the Convener. In all cases, decisions will be made in the best interest of the skater's development.

At this young age, the range of abilities can be quite large. As was done in the conditioning sessions, in order to avoid bottlenecks in the drills, skaters may be grouped by ability. This grouping is NOT an evaluation. No scoring of ability occurs. On-ice staff doing the grouping are not evaluators. They will

simply be ensuring that flow exists within the drills.

During evaluations skaters may receive different colored pinnies. The color does not reflect ability or rank. Different colors are used simply to ensure that one evaluator is not required to score skater A and skater B where A and B are coming down the ice one after the other. We want evaluators to have ample time to score each child. If we have three colours, say red, green and blue, then skaters will be lined up in that order and an evaluator will score only reds (or perhaps red and blue) but not red and green or green and blue.

If a child does not participate in evaluations, then the child shall be placed in the lowest grouping to start with.

COACHING STAFF

All Initiation teams will have one Head Coach. Our goal is to have at least two Assistant Coaches. Additionally, each team will have a group of On-Ice helpers. The goal is to maximize the attention provided to each skater. Although we cannot avoid “coaching the group,” whenever possible we want to provide individual instruction as well. We do want skaters to be pulled aside so they receive proper instruction and have opportunity to learn it right the first time. Having said this, if your child is pulled aside please view it positively. If he or she is pulled aside a lot, please view it as getting extra value from the program. (Individual instruction is a good thing!). Coaches are also asked to recruit an Off-Ice Helper, a person who sits near the bench area and is on the ready to assist with equipment adjustments, water bottles, loose skates and the like. This will allow on-ice personnel to maintain the flow of the practice.

TRAINERS

Trainers are not mandated at the Initiation level for each team. Therefore, monitoring and addressing medical issues is a role shared by parents, coaches and helpers. The trainer role is, however, a “nice to have.” For each team, all coaches are encouraged to identify any individual who already has trainer certification and request that the individual fulfill the role. On a limited and case by case basis, the SMHA will consider reimbursing the cost of receiving trainer certification for coaches, helpers or parents. Contact the Convener if you wish to pursue this avenue. (Trainers may be required for some tournaments so fill-ins may need to be recruited.)

MEDICAL FORMS

All players will be required to fill out a confidential medical form. As in the school system, it would be appreciated if snacks containing peanuts or nut products not be brought to the rink or dressing room. If your child has a food allergy or allergy of any kind, please inform the Head Coach directly, in addition to including the information on the medical form. If your child requires an EpiPen, please inform the Head Coach directly and ensure that a responsible member of the coaching staff is aware of what your EpiPen practice entails.

ICE TIMES

After the conditioning and evaluation sessions, Initiation ice times will start about the first week of October. Coaches will notify parents of exact times. Both the Stittsville and GRC rinks will be used, as well as the Bell Sensplex and possibly Beckwith Arena. Over the course of the season each Initiation team will have approximately 50 hours of ice time. This figure should only be used as a guideline as actual ice time may vary depending on availability. Our goal is to have skaters on the ice about twice per week but at times ice availability may only permit one outing per week, and sometimes 3 ice times per week.

MOUTH GUARDS

Mouth guards are mandatory for Initiation. In addition to the protection of teeth, mouth guards play a role

in the prevention of concussions. There appears to be debate, or at least backroom discussion, about whether or not mouth guards assist in prevention of concussions for Initiation level skaters, however, they are mandated and playing on the safe side with the health and well being of our kids is a good strategy. Additionally, getting used to a mouth guard now prepares young skaters for future years. Children without mouth guards, or ones which do not fit properly, will not be allowed on the ice.

Some children will have no problems with mouth guards while others will not want to wear them. Putting a bit of toothpaste on the mouth guard, in a flavor the child really likes, goes a long way. (Do not expect your child to communicate coherently.)

HELMETS, CAGES AND NECK GUARDS Helmets, cages and neck guards must be appropriately sized. All three are mandated. If helmets, cages and neck guards do not fit properly (or are not present) then skaters

will not be allowed onto the ice.



SKATES

Other than the helmet (cage and mouth guard), the most important pieces of equipment are the skates. At the Initiation level there should be two primary considerations for skates: fit and support.

Skate Fit: Skates that are too large may certainly be around next year but risk hampering skating development and increase the probability of picking up bad habits. Skates that are too small may result in sore and cold feet. (Laces that are too tight will result in the same.)

Initiation aged skaters, and likely Novice as well, will have a difficult time telling you whether or not their toes are touching, slightly touching or not at all touching the toe cap of the skate. This information is essential for good fit. To make this easier, and to ensure proper fit, try following these steps:



1. Unlace the boot and pull the tongue completely forward.
2. While seated and while wearing the socks that will be worn in practices (or games) have the skater insert their foot. (It helps to put a towel or piece of carpet down to protect flooring from skate blades). (Socks should not be thick.)
3. Ask the skater to firmly move the foot forward until the big toe touches the toe cap of the skate (just touching is what you want). With very young skaters, you may need to nudge the foot forward gently yourself.
4. Now, while keeping the toe touching the toe cap of the skate, and while still seated, have the skater lean forward so the knees bend.
5. There should now be a space between the back of the heel and the back of the skate. That space should be big enough to comfortably slide in a standard sized pencil or pen (the size of a Bic.) (When foot size increases, swap the pencil method for an index finger. With my older son I did not use an index finger until a skate size of 3 (foot size 4).) The pencil should "just touch" both the heel and the skate but it needs to slide in an out comfortably. If it's too tight, the skate is too small. If too loose, the skate is too big.
6. Now, have the skater stand up, with toe still touching the toe cap of the skate, and confirm the heel gap is still OK. (The skater will need to lean forward a bit so you can access the gap.)
7. As one foot is likely bigger than the other, repeat the procedure for both feet.
8. Lace 'em up and see how they feel.
9. Now, ask the child if the logo and look are OK and if they are expensive enough.

Most manufacturers size skates one size smaller than the equivalent shoe size. A size 2 skate is a size 3 shoe.

Skate Support: Regarding support, and especially with young skaters, the goal is to get “just the right amount.” Too much support results in a stiff boot that a young player will have great difficulty breaking in and the fit will be uncomfortable. Many of the high end children’s skates may very well have too much support for the child. Too little support will not allow development of proper stride as the player will be fighting to balance rather than stride. The following guidelines may help:

Put one skate into one hand so you can squeeze the ankles with your thumb and index finger and squeeze:

1. If you get no or very little flex, it’s too stiff.
2. If you can easily flex the skate or it feels very loose, there’s not enough support.
3. If you can flex the skate comfortably or with just a bit of effort, it’s likely just right.

Used skates are just fine. You don’t need to buy new to get proper support.

Blade Sharpening: New skates do not come sharpened, so get them done before first ice. There does seem to be differing views on how sharp a young skater’s blades should be. Some sources say that because young skaters are lightweights, they need sharper skates. However, at a reputable coaching clinic, the word was that younger skaters should actually have skates that are not as sharp (but not dull). A less sharp blade allows it to slide along the ice better and this makes learning how to do hockey stops easier. Additionally, those snow plough stops are easier and as such, encounters with the boards or end over ends might be reduced. (With my children, I’ve chosen to lean toward the sharp side. You might want to experiment.)

Frequency of sharpening depends on frequency of use, how aggressive the skater skates, and whether or not any nicks have been picked up from rough handling or backyard rinks. At the Initiation level, my practice has been to sharpen skates every four to five outings. To gauge sharpness, I run my thumb nail (carefully) across the blade (not down the length). If a bit of the nail gets shaved off, the blades are OK. If not, I get them sharpened. You can also use a hand held ceramic stick to get a quick sharp edge. It does not hold as long as a sharpening but works great nonetheless (available at local shops).

Skates can be too sharp. If your child is able to do a hockey stop, or comes close to it, and you see that the slide is choppy and not smooth, the skates are likely too sharp. A gentle run of the blades on a piece of wood might do the trick.

The Rocker: For parents of Initiation skaters, this section is for interest only as the focus on young skaters should be proper skate size and learning the basics of skating. The rocker of the blade refers to the profile of the blade. If you take a skate and place it blade-down on a table, you will see that the blade is curved up at both ends. The degree and nature of this curve is referred to as the “rocker” – and some refer to it as the profile.

Forwards generally prefer a skate rocker that makes the skate slightly angle forward. A defenseman’s rocker causes the skate to slightly angle back (making backward skating more efficient). Many new skates come out of the box with a slightly defensive rocker, a bit of a middle-of-the road approach. Most skates for small children will not have been profiled so it’s likely not an issue when buying new or used skates.

Certainly, our opinion is that focusing on basic skating ability is much, much more important than the type of rocker. The rocker may come into play in later years, especially if your child enters the competitive stream. When this occurs, and if skates are to be profiled, take them to an expert.

Stainless Steel vs Carbon Steel: Skate blades come in either stainless or carbon steel. Almost all stainless steel blades will be clearly marked “stainless steel.” If this marking is not present or if no marking is present, assume it is carbon steel. Carbon steel is sometimes called “Fast Steel”, “Pro Performance” or “Razor” depending on the skate brand. Carbon steel usually has a gloss finish that looks like chrome while the finish on stainless steel is duller. Stainless steel is more expensive but, because it

is a harder steel, it holds a sharp edge longer (less sharpening is required over the same usage period). The chrome-like gloss finish on carbon blades can sometimes flake. For Initiation aged skaters, it is my opinion that blade material really does not matter, however, you should know what you are paying for.

A Final Word on Skates: At the end of the day, it's the feet that are in 'em that count.

PUCKS AND STICKS

The focus of Initiation is primarily the development of skating skills. Skating with sticks and with pucks falls into the category of skating development. Most but not all drills will involve carrying the stick. Some drills will involve pucks while others will not.

STICK STUFF

Stick Length: A very common handicap for young skaters is a stick that is too long. With skates on, the top of the stick should be between the collar bone and chin, but not at the chin. In street shoes, the top of the stick should be between the chin and tip of the nose. Make any errors on the short side as stick length affects how a player skates. Bad habits in stride and skating posture created from a stick that is too long can become very difficult to break.

Youth, Junior, (Intermediate) and Senior Sticks: Sticks come in three general sizes; youth, junior and senior. Some manufacturers, especially with composite sticks, have an intermediate size. Initiation skaters should consider a youth stick as diameter of the shaft is smaller and the blade is shorter, making it easier for small hands to handle. Depending on the skaters size a junior stick may also be used. By Novice age, most skaters will be into a junior stick.

The Curve: Beginning players are generally better off with a straight blade, or a very slight curve. Through Novice, curves in sticks should still be on the moderate side.

Lefty or Righty? When most young players pick up a stick they will naturally be either a left handed or right handed shot. However, some young players will literally shoot right for one practice and left for the other. If this is the case, go with a straight stick until the child decides.

Kids and Composite Sticks: No doubt, some kids will be on the ice with composite sticks. Arguably, until a kid actually "has a shot" or demonstrates that they have they have proper shooting technique, they may not be able to sufficiently use the technology of composite materials. Pucks also have a tendency to "bounce" off of the blade more. Composite sticks are much more expensive than their wooden counterparts (can easily be more than five times as much – or much more). If a composite stick is purchased, the primary emphasis should still be on proper length and curve. Not sawing enough off of the shaft of the stick in order to ensure the player will still have use of the stick next year, would be a wrong move. Instead, be sure to purchase a wooden plug that can be inserted into the butt of the shaft to eventually lengthen the stick (available from most outlets selling composite sticks). Purchasing a composite stick with too great a curve, one that the child will eventually grow into, is also a mistake.

The "Butt End... (of the stick!) The butt end of the stick is that special, customized lump of tape at the top of the shaft. Most kids will show up very likely having what Dad liked most in his playing days. The knob should be such that little hands can still grasp the top of the shaft, as this will aid in stick handling and stick control. There is less of a concern at this young age for the knob to be big enough to prevent the stick from being lost in the heat of battle. In fact, some elite players shave the top section of the shaft to give better feel. Initiation kids should have enough tape on the butt end to just prevent the shaft from entering the largest hole on the face mask – keeping in mind that the child still needs to be able to hold the stick. Black tape on the knob will wear onto the palm of hockey gloves and will eventually contribute to premature wearing out of the palm. Our skaters will grow out of the gloves before this ever happens, but using white tape here is still a good idea.

Taping the Blade: Tape on the blade of the stick helps cushion the puck. Even at this young age, kids will likely be able to notice the difference in handling a puck with and without tape on the blade. The tape



provides a softer feel. There are as many ways to tape a blade as there are players. A good start might be simply to tape from just in front of the heel to just behind the toe (outer edge). White, black or any other color doesn't really matter. Some believe that black tape helps hide the puck from the goalie a bit better. However, this will be the least of concerns for any skater daring enough to get between the pipes to face down our young snipers.

We will pass on a helpful hint that we think can benefit even Initiation players, especially if you want to do some extra basement or driveway practice. Use black tape to tape the length of the blade. Use another color (red) and put only one tape width around the blade, just about an inch from the heel. Leaving about an inch of the underlying black tape, add about four inches of red tape (enough to cover the middle section of the heel). The blade will now be striped as follows (from heel to toe): a bit of black, an inch of red, about an inch of black, red in the middle section, then black tape to the toe (with the wood exposed at the very tip). Then, put one final strip of red tape near the bottom of the shaft, but somewhere where your child is sure to see it. Now, explain the following to your child:

- The little strip of red tape at the heel is to remind you that that is where the puck starts off when you shoot (or pass). (It rolls forward toward the toe from there.) (Later on, this is where the puck starts off on a back hand shot, again rolling toward the toe before launching.)
- The middle section of red is where you want the puck to be when you are stick handling. (Or much later on, this is where the blade connects with the puck on a slap shot or one timer.)
- The final red strip on the shaft is to remind you to try hard (and listen to your coach).

HOCKEY GAMES AND OTHER GAMES

Traditional hockey games, with referees, off-sides and all of the other rules of hockey are not part of the Initiation program. Development is the focus, particularly the development of skating skills. This having been said, we know first hand that many young hockey players relish "the game." So, near the end of many practices, all Initiation players will have opportunity to play hockey games. We leave it to the coaches to be creative here. There likely won't be standard shifts. There may be more than one puck on the ice. There may be many skaters on at once or numbers may be limited to help ensure players get a chance to actually get and skate with the puck. Other fun games will be used as well; things like freeze tag, soccer on skates, subs and torpedoes, and sharks and fishes. At times coaches may use discretion and not have a game in favor of further skill development. Most practices, however, should end with few minutes "fun time."



FUN DAY

At least one Fun Day will be organized during the Christmas break time frame. This day will simulate a tournament with various teams playing each other, possibly with teams from outside Stittsville. The format is yet to be finalized but last's year's event with a referee and shifts provided great excitement for the kids. Effort will be made to cater Fun Day formats to ability level. Extra fees will be required for participation as program fees do not cover this additional ice time and related costs.

NAME BARS

Some skaters will come to the rink with name bars on their jerseys (almost always the last name only). To my knowledge, at the Initiation level in Stittsville, all of those name bars have been purchased privately by the parents. They are available from local sports shops. If you elect to put one on the jersey of your child, please do so in a manner that allows clean removal after the season is over as the jerseys must be returned.

VIDEOS, BOOKS AND OTHER STUFF

We have found the following to be some of the best for skating and shooting instruction. In both cases the material is very advanced but bits and pieces can be applied to young skaters. You can Google

both to find retailers.

Laura Stamm's Power Skating (book and DVD)

Shooting and Scoring (DVD), Bobby Hull Jr's Instructional Video Series

For other sources you might want to go to the ODMHA web site or Hockey Canada.

FUND RAISING

As fees have increased, no substantial fund raising activities are planned. HOWEVER, minor fund raising will be required for things like fun days, tournaments or end of season events.

FOOD DRIVE – CANADIAN TIRE

Canadian Tire (Kanata) provides each child with hockey related items (toques, floor mats, bum warmers for parents and the like). They do so generously and free of charge. In return they ask only that each child contributes 50 minutes of their time toward the Canadian Tire food drive. When the program is announced, please provide your support.

OUR 24 HOUR RULE

We have seen coaches make mistakes with kids. We have seen coaches do things very differently than we would have done them. We have been in the stands watching and wishing we were on the ice instructing. We have been frustrated at seeing kids standing in a line when they should be skating. We have come to the rink very early in the morning, our kids in tow, only to find that it was double-booked – and we didn't get the ice. We have seen kids being short-shifted.

We try to deal with these issues by remembering that coaches and most everyone else involved in minor hockey are volunteers. They are also human, as are the other players and other parents. In our experience, there are some bad apples but most hockey people are the best people we have encountered. If we feel a strong negative reaction to something, we try very hard to wait 24 hours before approaching the coach, or whoever it might be.



Parents may also be interested in participating in a Speak Out clinic, a Hockey Canada program designed to prevent harassment and abuse in hockey. See the SMHA website for details.

CONVENER'S MISSION STATEMENT

We see it this way:

As Convener of Initiation, we have six customers:

1. The beginning skater.
2. The good skater.
3. The accomplished skater.

(The above groups include skaters who are in it just for fun or those destined for competitive teams, and everyone in between.)

4. The parent.
5. The coach.
6. The SMHA.

Our goal is that each of the above will say of the program, "That was GREAT!"

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email us at: convenor.initiation_2@stittsvillemha.com

We are here to help. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us.

Remember, during the season, the Conveners and Director are here to help you. But, should an issue arise on your team, please discuss with the Coach of your team first. If the coach is not able to resolve the problem, or you are not satisfied with how your issue has been handled, you may then approach the Conveners. Should we be unable to assist, we will go to the Director of Hockey Development, and finally the President of SMHA.

However, should you attempt to skip any of these levels, you will be directed back to the appropriate person. We always encourage the 24 hour rule. Hockey is a passionate sport, and as a parent, one can become quite passionate about their children. Please ensure you present any problems in a calm manor. We are all volunteers, and your problem will be more likely to be resolved to your liking if you approach it this way. Remember to ask yourself, "Is this how I would like to be approached?".

We wish you and your child a positive and fun experience in the Initiation program this year!

