

NDL

Novice

Development

League

Operations

Manual

Contents

Program Overview	3
Philosophy.....	3
Program Goals and Objectives.....	4
Program Guidelines and Structure	4
Player Development.....	5
Coach Education Specialty Clinics.....	5
Parent Education Seminars	6
Officials Educational Clinics	6
Game Format	6
Travel Permits.....	7
Esso Minor Hockey Week	7
The Four Pillars of A Solid Foundation.....	7
Highlights of the Novice Development League.....	8
The Association’s Responsibilities	8
Recruiting Volunteers	9
Key Roles for a Successful Program	10
Novice Age Category Director	11
Coach Coordinator	13
Coaches	14
Mentor Coach Coordinator	15
Coach Mentors	16
Introducing the Game	17
APPENDICES	19
10 Key Factors Influencing L.T.A.D Correlating to Minor Hockey in Calgary	20
Molson Open ice Summit	22
Sources Cited	24

Program Overview

The Novice Development League (NDL) is a partnership between Hockey Calgary and its 16 community associations in which they operate the Novice age category as a skills based age category. The NDL focuses on skill development and the fundamentals of hockey for kids aged 7 and 8. The purpose of this league is to address the need for more skill development in the novice age category. The NDL is a league in which the associations promote coach, parent, official and player education during the start of each season. The structure of the NDL allows associations to host four weeks of skill development sessions before conducting any evaluations. Each player will be evaluated fairly and placed on a team where they are best suited.

According to the Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) novice aged kids (males 6-9, females 6-8) fall under the fundamental age grouping. According to the LTAD “skill development in the fundamental stage should be well structured, positive and fun (LTAD 38).” The novice development league focuses on the fundamentals of the game of hockey. The NDL follows the LTAD recommendation for teaching the fundamentals. The LTAD model suggests- “fundamental movements and skills should be introduced through fun and games. Fundamental sports should follow and include basic overall sports skills”. The NDL league follows Hockey Canada’s Skills Development model that focuses on skill development rather than games and team strategy.

Hockey is classified as a late specialization sport, which means that the complex skills of hockey need to be mastered after maturation. Over specialization in late specialization can lead to one sided sport training, lack of agility, balance and coordination, early burnout and early retirement. With the stipulations set forth for the NDL, the league puts strict stipulations on games to practice ratios, giving players more time to have fun and develop skills while still providing players with the opportunity to play other sports.

Philosophy

The NDL encourages an environment in which children can learn the fundamentals of hockey through skill development and small area games. Coach education and development are integral components of the NDL that directly correlates to better coaching, on and off the ice.

Program Goals and Objectives

Goal: To Provide a Positive Environment for Learning the Fundamentals of Hockey

1. Each NDL coach will strictly adhere to the Hockey Calgary Fair Play Codes.
2. At least one coach from each team will be certified to coach at the Novice Age Category and also hold their safety and speak out certifications.
3. At least one coach from each team will attend a minimum of one skating and puck handling specialty clinic administered by Hockey Calgary.

Goal: Stimulate Interest and Desire to Continue Playing the Game of Hockey

1. Provide a fun environment for players to develop skills through on ice games.
2. Educate coaches on skill development and small area games.
3. Provide a learning environment that fosters a desire for players to play the game of hockey. Practices will focus on the FUNDamentals.

Goal: Develop Coaches Skills and Abilities through Mentorship and Specialty Clinics

1. To host at least 25 Coach Specialty Clinics for novice coaches.
2. To promote and develop mentorship programs for each association.
3. To promote Hockey Calgary's development programs through parent and coach seminars.

Program Guidelines and Structure

Each association will follow the guidelines set forth in the NDL manual. Each association will promote the purpose of this program to the parents and coaches within their respective association.

The association seasons will begin on September 2, 2009. Each association will submit its team's seeding placements to Trevor Morgan by September 25th, 2009. Each association will use the grid system to format how many teams they will have and in what divisions.

Each association will operate development sessions until October 30th, 2009.

Hockey Calgary recommends that associations conduct evaluations on the weeks of October 1st- 15th, 2009.

Associations should have their teams picked by October 30th, 2009. Player movement deadline is December 10th, 2009.

Each team will play their seeding games starting on: November 1st, 2009 and will complete their 8 seeding games by December 10th, 2009. The reseed meeting will take place at a location and date yet to be confirmed.

Each team will be permitted to play exhibition and tournament games after December 1st, 2009.

No Novice team will be permitted to play a game before November 1st, 2009.

No Novice team will be permitted to play an exhibition and/ or tournament game before December 1st, 2009.

Each team should consist of a maximum of 17 players.

If the Novice Development League is sponsored each associations Novice teams will be required to wear the sponsors jerseys and will not be permitted to put on any other sponsors names, or logos on these jerseys. It will be mandatory that these jerseys are worn during each game played by every novice team. It is recommended that that the associations jerseys should be worn for practice.

Each practice will follow the Hockey Canada Skills Development program Model:

- 75% Technical Skills
- 15% Individual Tactics
- 10% Team Tactics
- 0% Team Play
- 0% Strategy

Player Development

The start of each season will focus on four weeks of skill development for all players playing in the Novice Age Category. During these sessions, coaches will follow Hockey Canada's skills and drills and will focus primarily on skating and puck handling drills. After the first couple weeks are complete the sessions will begin to teach players basic rules and positioning. By doing so, first year Novice players will be given the opportunity to learn the game before getting evaluated. As a result of doing so, Timbits coaches can spend their entire season on skill development, rather than teaching positional play.

Coach Education Specialty Clinics

At the start of each season Hockey Calgary will conduct coach specialty clinics to teach coaches the fundamentals of skating and puck control. Each coach will go through a 1.5 hour classroom session and a 1.5 hr on ice session. Each coach will be provided with a NDL Coach Manual that will be discussed during the Specialty Clinic. Each coach will also be provided with a seasonal plan that they can use to run practices throughout their season. Each association will be provided with a recommended skills book that can be used while administering it's development sessions at the start of the season.

Parent Education Seminars

Hockey Calgary has developed a parent's education seminar that will be used to educate parents on the importance of skill development. The NDL will also adhere to the NDL Parent's Manual. During these information sessions Hockey Calgary will go through these manuals and answer any questions or concerns parents may have. Hockey Calgary will also train associations who would like to administer the parent's sessions on their own. A power point presentation will be done up outlying the parents seminar.

Officials Educational Clinics

Officials who are officiating the Novice Age Category will be put through an official's educational clinic, which will outline the proper techniques for officiating. During these clinics senior mentor officials will work with these officials. The officials will receive a NDL Officials Manual that will guide them in their first year of officiating. These clinics will provide on ice training as to proper positioning and game management. The officials will officiate a controlled game, where senior officials will help guide and teach officials proper officiating techniques. Each official will also be required to attend Central Zone Referees Councils two day officials clinic.

Game Format

No Novice Age Category teams will be permitted to play a an exhibition game, tournament game, seeding round game or regular season game before November 1st, 2009. Teams are permitted to use the last 10-15 minutes of a practice to scrimmage and teach kids the rules of the game (I.E. Teach off sides). Any coach and or team caught playing a game before November 1st, 2009 will be suspended as per the Hockey Calgary Rulebook. Each team will play 8 seeding games, 10 regular season games and 3 games during EMHW. This will give each team the opportunity to play 24 exhibition and/ or tournament games. The max amount of games a Novice team can play is 45.

Each team will commence its seeding round on: November 1st, 2009 and will play 8 games during the seeding round. No schedule windows will be permitted before December 30th, 2009 for the Novice Age Category.

A re-seed meeting will be conducted to seed these teams where they are most suited. A date and location has yet to be determined.

After December 1st, 2009 teams are permitted to play tournaments and exhibition games. In order to play exhibition games teams must fill out the exhibition and tournament sanction webform via the Hockey Calgary website. Each Novice team is permitted to play 24 exhibition and tournament games. (If teams do not fill out this form their insurance may be void).

Starting on the first Monday in January, each team will play 10 regular season games. No stats and or standings will be kept. Each team will be permitted one schedule window for the regular season.

Each Novice team will play 3 games during EMHW.

The Novice Age Category will finish its season on/ or before March 31st, 2009.

Each Novice Game will be permitted a 1 hour ice permit. They are to do their best to play a 12, 15, 15 minute stop time game. Teams are permitted to play longer permit times during tournaments and exhibition games.

Each game will be played full ice 5 on 5 with a two person officiating crew. Each team will be permitted to play a goalie. All games will follow the Hockey Calgary Black Book in regards to rules and regulations.

Travel Permits

No travel permits will be permitted before December 1st, 2009 for teams wanting to play an exhibition and/ or tournament game. Teams may apply for travel permits if they wish to practice outside of zone 9. There are no limits as to how many travel permits a-team is permitted.

Esso Minor Hockey Week

During Esso Minor Hockey Week novice teams will play a ladder format tournament giving Novice Players the opportunity to take part in a competitive environment. The week will still give each team the opportunity to play 3 games. If you win your first game you will move to one side of the ladder and continue to play. If you lose your first game you will move to the other side of the ladder. By playing this format, only one team is guaranteed to win all 3 of their games and only one team is guaranteed to lose all of their 3 games.

The Four Pillars of A Solid Foundation

PLAYERS

- Exposure to a developmental philosophy that creates learning opportunities
- Exposure to a program that focuses on skill development rather than games

PARENTS

- Provide leadership and training to volunteers as program instructors, managers and safety personal
- To become an active participant rather than an idle observer

□ Exposure to informal and formal parent education seminars and information to ensure an understanding of the role of the parent and player development model in minor Hockey

Coaches

□ Trained volunteers in Hockey Canada's Coach Level, Safety Program, and Speak Out Abuse and Harassment Program.

(Mandatory one coach holds certification in all of the above, but Hockey Calgary encourages all coaches/ instructors to take the course)

□ Mentor other instructors new to the program

□ To create ownership in the program, so that coaches are active participants rather than idle observers

Age Category Directors/Coach Mentor Coordinators

□ Conduct meetings with parents to inform them on the NDLC and its philosophy. Hockey Calgary will conduct coach mentorship sessions for coaches, officials and parents. Hockey Calgary will also host age category director meetings for Novice Coordinators from the community associations to provide them with any assistance needed. It will be the responsibility of the Mentor Coach Coordinator and the Coach Coordinator to select coaches who will be coaching. It will also be their responsibility, with guidance from Hockey Calgary to conduct mentor coach clinics and seminars.

Highlights of the Novice Development League

- Skating and Puck Control Coaching Clinics held for Novice Coaches
- Mentoring of Novice Coaches to increase their knowledge in coaching
- Coaching curriculum for each coach in Novice
- Promotion of the program through various media outlets, brochures and manual
- Opportunity for sponsorship from major corporation or organization

The Association's Responsibilities

Who enrolls in the Novice Development League? All Hockey Calgary Players aged 7 and 8 will be enrolled in the NDLC. Hockey Calgary expects every Association within Calgary that has a Novice Age Category (7 & 8 yr olds) to call its Program the Novice Development League and to follow the guidelines stipulated within the Novice Development Manual which was developed in partnership with representation from each community association in Calgary.

Each association will run the league as a FUNdamental program based on skill development in a practice setting. Hockey Calgary expects that the teams will only play the amount of games stated within this manual. Associations and parents must realize that winning is not a main objective in youth playing sports. Parents and associations need to be prepared to deal with it, and not lose sight of the fact that this program has been

designed for the children, not adults. Without the help of each and every association, parent, coach and volunteer this program will not see similar success to that of the Timbits Program. Hockey Calgary deeply appreciates the time, effort and input everyone has offered in developing this league. The Novice Development League will be a National Leading program for player development.

Associations are responsible to identify and recruit volunteers to manage the Novice Development League (Age Category Directors)

1. A ratio of 1 volunteer per 10 participants is ideal.
2. Associations should provide training and support to the Novice Coordinator
3. Associations should provide training and support for the technical personnel (coaches) beyond the Novice League. Calgary Hockey Development offers coaching clinics. Hockey Calgary offers specialty clinics and the Coach Mentorship Program.
4. It is suggested by Hockey Calgary that experienced coaches should help mentor individuals new to coaching.
5. An experienced instructor or committee member should provide follow up training to the next committee member the following year. It is also a good idea to evaluate each year's program. Communications between the Novice Coordinator and other areas of the association should be open, as should the communication between Hockey Calgary and each association. Volunteers are the future of your association.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Leadership is the key in the NDL just as it is in any of the other age categories. In addition to developing player's hockey skills and promoting physical fitness, instructors, coaches, parents and coordinators are responsible for encouraging initiative, and stimulating interest in the sport and 'instilling a desire for continued success. The goal of the program is to have every player to increase his or hers skills and to return the following year.

NDL may be the very first time that some of your players have attended an organized event outside the home. Therefore, the Novice Mentors/ Coaches may be the first authoritative figure, other than the parent, that the child encounters. Again, because of the fact that they are dealing with entry level players, coaches, parents, administrators and mentors will have to be positive, energetic, creative, fun-loving and above all, patient.

Volunteers are not paid -- not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless-unknown

KEY ROLES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

No matter where you recruit the volunteers necessary to conduct a successful Novice Development League, a strong nucleus of volunteers is essential. Each association must recognize the need for a number of roles to be filled to effectively operate the program and deliver the curriculum. However, in a number of minor hockey associations, a single individual may be able to fill one or more roles. The basic framework or structure of the personnel required to implement the Novice Development League is not very complex.

Hockey Calgary suggests that these five roles be filled with each association:

1. Novice Age Category Director - Each associations elected personnel
2. Coach Coordinator
3. Coaches
4. Coach Mentor Coordinator
5. Coach Mentors

Hockey Calgary will assist associations that currently do not have these types of positions on their board.

By filling these positions from people with your association, your minor hockey associations are on the way to staging a very positive and fun filled learning experience for beginner hockey players in your community. Each of these individuals has a specific role to play in the delivery of the Novice Development League; each somewhat distinct, yet, interdependent upon each other to achieve a successful program.

Novice Age Category Director

The Novice Age Category Director is directly responsible for overseeing the implementation and delivery for the program. This volunteer plans, organizes, and administers the program for the minor hockey association. The Novice Age Category director may be an executive member of your minor hockey association or may simply be the liaison to the association's executive. This position is responsible to report directly to the minor hockey association's board of directors.

The Novice Age Category Director has a number of responsibilities to fulfill which require a number of administrative skills. Some of the duties of the director may include budgeting, liaising with the minor hockey association's executive, recruitment and placement of mentors, organizing mentorship sessions, coordinating the evaluation of the program, undertaking special events and recommending changes to the program and its delivery. He or she must work closely with Hockey Calgary Novice Age Category Director and the Manager of Hockey Development with Hockey Calgary. The qualifications within a typical recruitment advertisement for the Novice Age Category Director may contain the following requirements:

- Understand the fundamental elements of the Timbits Program and the NDL
- Possess a commitment to the established goals of the NDL
- Possess strong organizational, interpersonal and communication skills
- Have the ability to conduct group presentations
- Have the ability to liaise with volunteers, board members, administrators, mentors and parents
- Has demonstrated ability to provide adequate time for the delivery of the NDL
- Has an enthusiastic attitude working with parents, administrators and youngsters

PRE-SEASON

It is the Age Category Directors responsibilities to get everything in order for the division they over see. They must work with the coach coordinator to ensure that the evaluation process and coach application processes are in place and properly dictated to its members.

Hockey Calgary suggests that they look after acquiring and setting up the following:

- supplies (paper, pens, envelopes, binders, lesson manuals, etc.)
- training fees (so the that Mentor Coach Cord. and the Coach Cord. can conduct education sessions for coaches and offer specialty clinics.
- room rentals (to conduct meetings)
- promotion supplies (posters, photocopying, pamphlets, VHS tapes)
- first aid supplies and kits
- instructor recognition (certificates, etc.)
- preparation of a preliminary ice schedule for skill development and evaluations. Must work in conjunction with the association's ice scheduler.
- secure appropriate ice time in conjunction with the minor hockey association
- preparation and implementation of recruitment procedures for participants, coaches and mentors. Job descriptions below
- co-ordinate the registration of participants with the associations registrar

- assist in the selection and training of mentors and coaches with the Coach Cord. and Mentor Coach Cord.
- conduct a PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING to familiarize parents of prospective participants with the objectives of the Novice Development League

ON-ICE DELIVERY

1. co-ordinate the initial evaluation of participants for the purpose of evaluations
2. liaise with the minor hockey association's board, Coaches, Mentor Coach Coordinator, Coach Mentors, and Parents of the participants
3. co-ordinate special events (photo sessions, mini-games, etc.)

POST SEASON

1. prepare equipment and supplies for storage- Jerseys, Pylons, Pucks etc
2. undertake necessary actions for preparation for the next season
3. attend Hockey Calgary's post season Novice Development League Meeting

Coach Coordinator

Job Description: Coach Coordinator

The coach coordinator is an individual who will work closely with the Mentor coordinator and Coach Mentors. This person is not a coach and or hockey expert. This individual is responsible for coach administrative tasks. This individual will be responsible for knowing Hockey Calgary's rules and regulations and will be responsible for ensuring that all coaches within their respective association hold the valid certification for the level they are coaching.

Responsibilities:

This person is responsible for tracking and ensuring that coaches and managers have guidance in regards to managing their hockey teams. This individual will also be responsible for ensuring coaches and team officials hold valid coach certifications i.e. Safety Training. This person will also be responsible for conducting coach clinics to administer Hockey Calgary's Whitebook policies and procedures pertaining to Travel Permits, Tournament Sanctioning, and Player Transfers etc.

Specific Skills:

Co-ordinate all coach meetings, and assist with planning, implementation, and evaluation of the mentorship program.

Essential Skills:

Communication skills, Working with others, Problem solving, Decision making, Critical thinking, experience in program development and delivery is beneficial.

Coaches

Coaches of minor hockey association's are generally recruited from the participants' moms and dads. In some situations coaches may be volunteers from other segments of the community including students (a minimum of 16 years of age), post-secondary students and other adult volunteers. (See the section on recruiting). This position entails the delivery of the Hockey Calgary's/ Hockey Canada's Novice Curriculum. The qualifications within a typical recruitment advertisement may contain the following requirements:

- possess a coaching and/or hockey background or a strong desire to begin to learn instructional techniques in the delivery of fundamental ice hockey skills
- possess an enthusiastic attitude and desire to work with beginning hockey players
- possess strong communication skills
- possess a commitment to the goals and philosophy of the NDL
- One coach/instructor from each team must have a Coach Level Certification, Hockey Canada Safety Certified, and Speak Out Abuse and Harassment Certified

Hockey Calgary encourages all coaches to get certified and to take part in Hockey Calgary's Mentorship Sessions. The typical coach job description may contain the following:

1. deliver the program's curriculum to the assigned groups
2. arrive at the ice rink approximately 30 minutes prior to the ice session
3. exemplify fair play and co-operation
4. provide instruction in a manner that motivates and challenges the participants while respecting each individual
5. demonstrate effective leadership on and off the ice, for example, providing effective feedback to the participants
6. provide feedback to parents of the participants
7. assist in the evaluation of the participants and the NDL in general
8. demonstrate necessary risk management skills at all times by doing an on ice inspection before each practice.
9. ensure practice schedule is respected
10. explain and demonstrate drills and games to the participants;
11. co-ordinate the orderly entrance and exit to/from the ice surface by the participants
12. utilize the appropriate equipment for the lesson plan
13. pick-up all equipment prior to leaving the ice surface

Mentor Coach Coordinator

Job Description: Mentor Coach Coordinator

The coach mentor coordinator is a crucial position for every association. Coach education is essential in developing better skilled hockey players. The more support and education we provide our coaches the better skilled our players become. The coach coordinator is responsible for acting as the liaison between their respective association's coaches and Hockey Calgary. The coach mentor coordinator should have a passion for the game of hockey and coaching. It will be the coordinators responsibility to oversee the mentorship program within their association.

Responsibilities:

This individual will be responsible for having the contact information and knowledge of Coaching clinics, certification requirements, clinic dates, and Hockey Calgary's rules and regulations involving coaches. The coach mentor coordinator will also be responsible for promoting Coaching Day in Alberta.

Education:

Ideally the coach coordinator will have taken part in some coach clinics and holds certification in one or more levels. The coach mentor coordinator should have also taken part in Coach Mentorship training seminars through Hockey Calgary, Hockey Alberta and or Hockey Canada. This individual may have also attended other association's coach mentorship seminars and or clinics.

Experience:

Several years experience in a hockey capacity is beneficial. (Ideally as a coach)

Area of Functional Expertise:

Event planning and organization, Program planning and development, Program implementation and delivery, Program evaluation.

Specific Skills:

Co-ordinate all coach mentor workshops, meetings, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

Essential Skills:

Communication skills, Working with others, Problem solving, Decision making, Critical thinking, experience in program development and delivery is beneficial.

Coach Mentors

Job Description: Coach Mentors

The coach mentor is an individual who exerts influence on others by educating and instructing others on how to become an effective coach, reaching a nationwide goal of player development.

Responsibilities:

It is the Mentors responsibility to promote the coach mentorship program and its benefits. The mentor should be available through email, and or phone to help answer any questions fellow coaches may have. The mentor will also be responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating the coach mentorship program within his or hers respective associations mentor coordinator. The mentor should also have suffice time to a lot to fellow coaches to conduct on ice mentoring. The mentor should also be one of the main instructors when their respective association presents coach educational seminars/clinics.

Education:

The Mentor should hold certification in one or more coaching levels. The Mentor should have also taken part in Coach Mentorship training seminars through Hockey Calgary, Hockey Alberta and or Hockey Canada. This individual may have also attended other association's coach mentorship seminars.

Experience:

Several years experience in a hockey capacity as a coach, instructor and or player is beneficial.

Area of Functional Expertise:

Coaching, and instructing hockey. This individual will also have expertise in developing practice plans.

Specific Skills:

This individual will have leadership, and instruction skills that they can use to educate fellow coaches in an effective and efficient manner that makes mentoring an enjoyable, beneficial experience.

Essential Skills:

Communication skills, Working with others, Problem solving, Decision making, Critical thinking, experience in program development and delivery is beneficial.

INTRODUCING THE GAME

With beginner hockey players it is imperative that coaches/instructors start with the basics, by educating the parents. You can guarantee that there will be a few parents who don't understand every rule and or aspect involving the game of hockey. You must also take into account that some of the parents may have never played hockey before.

Therefore might not even know the proper ways of dressing their young ones. With this said, coaches and team officials should hold a meeting before the first practice to teach parents the proper way to dress and fit kids for hockey equipment. One parent might know how to dress their child but how about the other one? Single parents and 24hr work schedules makes for no guarantees on who will be bringing the kids to the rink. Don't forget to educate parents on little things like, proper skate sharpening, and the difference between "rockered and unrockered skate blades". This might sound a little over the top or over whelming but if you are the kid who's never had rockered skates and ends up with rockered skates after one sharpening, hockey's no longer a fun experience.

It is imperative to educate the parents before the first ice session. It is also a good idea to educate the kids on the equipment they are wearing and its purpose. They might not fully understand but this way they can tell you when something is bothering them. You can almost guarantee that two or three kids will complain about their equipment the first ice session, whether its skates being tied to tight or pants not done up tight enough, it will happen! When introducing kids to the game of hockey start with the basics and make the experience enjoyable. Remember that kids tend to have short tension spans. Start off each ice session with a 10 minute warm up. Incorporate games into this section. Kids can tremendously improve their skill levels by playing games. If you've ever watched them get chased playing tag, it might be the fastest you see them skate the whole practice. Incorporate games like bowling for kids that incorporates jumping and agility. Another great game to improve balance is soccer on ice. It also builds confidence in the kids. They might not feel confident to lift one foot of the ice during practice but when they go to kick a soccer a ball they won't think twice. After you play games and warm up for 8-10 minutes be sure to include a stretch. Kids at any age need to properly stretch to decrease the chance of injury. Once the team is warmed up start teaching skill sets. Concentrate on 2 or 3 skill sets each practice. If you try and do too much it becomes overwhelming for the kids and they will lose concentration.

Remember the little things when you're on the ice. Take the kids away from the glass where parents are standing when you explain a drill, get down to their level, talk slow, get them to relay what you just said and make sure to demonstrate the drill once or twice. Most importantly, have enough instructors on the ice to keep everything running efficient and effective. If your association, self, coaches, or instructors need any help and or have any questions in regards to practice plans feel free to visit the Hockey Calgary Coaches Resource Room. With beginner players it is suggested to teach a new rule of the game each ice session. Start small and uncomplicated and as the year goes by teach the more complicated aspects like off side. Remember to keep reiterating the previous lessons. When explaining the rules of hockey demonstrate what you are trying to explain.

It's also a good idea to have the kids demonstrate so they get familiar with the game of hockey. The earlier we teach the kids the basics of hockey, the stronger their game will be in the long run. Teaching the Fundamentals at the grassroots level will have a significant positive impact in the development of Calgary's hockey players. Think of the Timbits Program and the NDL as a continuum that builds upon a foundation on a yearly basis.

APPENDICES

Novice Age Category- 7 & 8 year olds

Hockey Statistics

Where do players develop skills: practices or games? What separates an Elite Hockey Player from his/her peers?

Skating – Speed & Lateral Movement & Edge Control

Puck Handling Skills

Shooting

Passing

1 PRACTICE will give a player more skill development than 11 GAMES collectively.

Each player should have a puck on his/her stick for 8-12 minutes in a 1 hour practice.

Each player should have a minimum of 30 shots on goal in a 1 hour practice.

99% of the feedback coaches give players is when they have the puck. Ironically, players only have the puck on their stick 0.2% of the game. George Kingston did a study in 1976 and found that Novice Aged Players had the puck on their stick an average of 34.8 seconds during a 65 min straight time game.

Source: Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada

Hockey Calgary Statistic

1 in 84,615 kids who play Hockey in Calgary will make it to the NHL. Therefore every 6 years one former Hockey Calgary participant will make it to the NHL.

Source: Hockey Calgary February Newsletter.

Canadian Sport for Life- Long Term Athlete Development. (L.T.A.D)

The Canadian Sport Centre Classifies the Fundamental Stage for athletes as:

Males Ages 6-9 and Females 6-8

Novice falls within the fundamental stage according to the L.T.A.D model. “Skill development in the Fundamentals stage should be well structured, positive and FUN! (L.T.A.D, 38.)

10 Key Factors Influencing L.T.A.D Correlating to Minor Hockey in Calgary

1. The 10 year Rule

Research indicates that it take 10 years and 10,000 hours of training for an elite athlete to reach elite levels. In essence it takes a talented athlete approximately 3 hours of training a day, for ten years to become an elite Hockey Player. Optimal training takes place through practice, therefore skills based practices are imperative for developing skills in the game of hockey.

2. The FUNdamentals

“FUNdamental movements and skills should be introduced through fun and games. FUNdamental sports should follow and include basic overall sports skills” (L.T.A.D, 20). Hockey Calgary currently follows this way of thinking through the Timbits program which is based around the FUNdamentals in a fun and games atmosphere. The Novice Development League will build upon the Timbits foundation.

3. Specialization

Hockey is a sport in which it is classified as late specialization. This means that complex skills need to be mastered after maturation. Over specialization in late specialization can lead to one sided sport specific training, lack of agility, balance and coordination, early burnout and early retirement. With the Novice Development League putting stipulations on the number of games allowed, players will then have the opportunity to free up time, where they may get the opportunity to play other sports, which will ultimately increase their hockey skills.

4. Developmental Age

Kids aged 8 and 9 are starting to go through the growth and maturation stage in life, therefore they will begin to understand more complex ideas, such as off sides and other rules in the game of hockey. Some kids may also start to go through growth spurts; as a result repetition is imperative to get the body familiar with specific movements. The first four weeks of skill development will provide coaches the opportunity to increase players knowledge of the more complex skills of the game like off sides and icing.

5.

Trainability

“Skill- The window for optimal skill training for boys takes place between the ages of 9 and 12 and between the ages of 8 and 11 for girls” (L.T.A.D 26).

6. Physical, Mental, Cognitive, and Emotional Development

One of the major objectives for the L.T.A.D is to take player development in the form of a holistic approach. “This includes emphasis on ethics, fair play, and character building throughout the various stages, an objective that reflects Canadian Ethics” (L.T.A.D, 28). Hockey Calgary has already started this initiative through the Fair Play Initiative, Timbits Hockey and the Turning Point Program. The NDL will only increase the development of the players, building on the foundations set forth by previous coaches.

7. Periodization

Periodization is a planning technique that builds a foundation of arranging a time line in which specific skills sets need to be taught. Hockey Calgary already does this through the Coach Mentorship Program and also through Hockey Canada Specialty Clinics. These clinics develop specific skill sets that players begin to work on at an early age, and thus can increase their skill sets from year to year if coaches, parents and hockey administrations buy into a program that focuses on fundamentals. Hockey Calgary currently has the Timbits league and a Novice Development League will greatly increase player's skills and knowledge in the game of hockey. Hockey Canada also created skills manuals for divisions Timibts through Midget.

8. Calendar Planning and Integration

According to the L.T.A.D “developing the physical capacities take precedence over competition” (L.T.A.D, 31). According to the L.T.A.D the training to competition ratio at the FUNdamental Stage should be activity Fun Based. The NDJ will limits the number of games permitted for teams, thus providing more emphasize on the physical capacities rather than games.

9. System Alignment and Integration

The Long Term Athlete Development is a tool that for change towards a system alignment and integration. By operating a Timbits and Novice Development League, Hockey Calgary is taking initiative to follow this L.T.A.D model in a proactive approach.

10. Continuous Improvement

The Novice Development League would see continuous improvement in the way in which we educate the coaches, players, officials, parents and administrators. It will positively increase everyone's knowledge in player development, resulting in better skilled players, coaches and officials, who in return will enjoy the game more, resulting in a greater hockey experience.

Molson Open ice Summit

How Does Hockey Calgary Align With The 11 Recommendations From The Open Ice Summit?

Please note the following is taken from the Hockey Canada website.

“After two days of presentations and discussions, participants unanimously agreed upon 11 recommendations for hockey in Canada”:

1. “Create a system of mentor/master coach for every minor hockey association. One master coach for every 20 teams. Move toward a mentor/master coach being a paid professional. Ensure that coaches are trained to reward and encourage a child's use of creativity and imagination while practising and playing”. Hockey Calgary has already taken the proactive approach to this suggestion and implemented the Coach Mentorship Program in the fall of 2007. During the 2008-2009 Hockey Season, Hockey Calgary administered over 35 clinics benefiting over 1,000 coaches.
2. “Adjust the practice-to-game ratio so that the number of games does not exceed the number of practices. (The ratio is currently as low as 1-to-3 in Canada.) Need to examine and redefine the meaning of "practice". With Novice becoming a development league and putting tighter restraints on exhibition games and the amount of games allowed, we would be increasing our practice to game ratio significantly. Currently Calgary has a 1.2 to 1 practice to game ratio.
3. “Examine the date of age determination. (The cut-off date is currently December 31st, but some thought has been given to rotating it throughout the calendar year. The objective is for a player to not always be the youngest or oldest in a given division.)” NA
4. “Raise awareness of the importance of skill development and establish a system to measure and celebrate skills”. By operating Novice as a development league Hockey Calgary would be increasing awareness of the importance of skill development and the Long Term Athlete Development Model. Hockey Calgary promotes Hockey Canada’s Skills Testing, and suggests that each NDL coach tests their team 3 times. After each testing coaches can celebrate the players improvements.
5. “Expand the implementation and marketing of the Initiation Program, including the use of the public school system. (The Initiation Program is designed to introduce children to hockey, with an emphasis on fun and skill development.)” Hockey Calgary was one of the first organizations to implement the Timbits program and the FUNdamental philosophy. With Novice being ran as a

development league Hockey Calgary would be taking this initiative one step further as many of its Novice players are first time hockey players.

6. “Include a "software skills" module and a mentor program as part of the ongoing rewrite of the coaching program. ("Software skills" are the mental skills that help players make the best decision at the best time.)”
Apart of the Novice Development League would include the mentoring of coaches, parents and officials. Hockey Calgary’s Coach Mentorship Program.
7. “Examine the raising of draft ages (NHL and CHL). (Currently, draft ages are 18 for the NHL, 15 for the Western League, 15 for the Ontario League and 16 for the Quebec League.)” NA
8. “Initiate a public awareness campaign on the positive values of hockey and having respect for all participants, rules and the game itself.”
The Novice Development League will increase awareness of the importance of having fun and developing the FUNdamentals of the game. It will dictate positive values regarding the game of hockey.
9. “Educate all Canadian players, partners and stakeholders in Canadian hockey on the recommendations of Open Ice.”
This is currently being done by Hockey Calgary in regards to the Timbits Program, Coach Mentorship Program and Specialty Clinics. The Novice Development League would only create more awareness of these 11 recommendations.
10. “Promote cooperative efforts between school boards, local hockey associations and sponsors, to better utilize ice times and school facilities and move towards development of sport schools.”
The Novice Development League combines efforts and input from each association in Calgary. The league would ultimately have the goal of increasing practice to game ratio in a fashion that will utilize ice in the most efficient and effective way possible. This may include combined practice times for three or more teams during one ice time to conduct skills based practices. With Novice being operated as a development league it may open doors to sponsorship avenues that could be pursued. Sponsorship revenues could be used to develop and mentor coaches through coaching seminars, specialty clinics and the coach mentorship program. This could be similar to that of the Timbits Program.
11. “Expand communication amongst all partners in hockey with respect to program developments.”
The Novice Development Hockey League is currently expanding the communication between every association by conducting meetings to gather input from associations in regards to what they would like to see for changes involving the Novice Age Category in Calgary.

Sources Cited

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