

THE BENEFITS OF U9 HALF-ICE HOCKEY



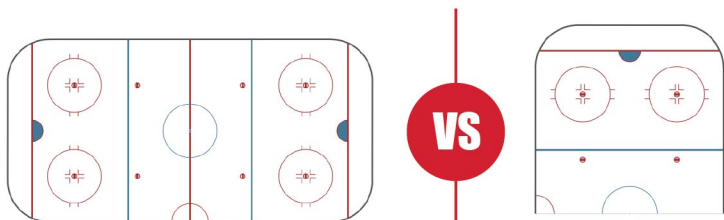
HOCKEY CALGARY
**EVERYONE'S
GAME**



DECREASE THE SPACE, INCREASE THE PACE.

Full-ice hockey has young players chasing the puck far more than they touch it. Half-ice hockey shrinks the space so every player gets more reps, more touches, and more fun while building the skills they'll need as they move up and continue to develop

FULL ICE vs. HALF ICE



**MORE SPACE ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER.
RIGHT-SIZED ICE BUILDS PLAYER CONFIDENCE**



THE NUMBERS



3x

more puck touches, direction changes, pass attempts, and puck battles per player compared to full-ice



4x

more shots per player compared to full-ice



2x

more ice time during games thanks to the more inclusive playing format



2x

opportunities to be engaged in the play when the playing area is smaller



The half-ice surface delivers the same relative stride distance for a child as a full sheet of ice does for an adult as per a Hockey Alberta study.

Source: Hockey Canada Study, 2024



SKILL DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS

- ✓  Increased emphasis on skating skills: agility, balance, coordination and quickness
- ✓  Significantly more puck battles, building confidence in puck control and puck protection
- ✓  Reinforces the fundamentals: skating, puck control, passing and shooting
- ✓  Less time and space means players make hockey decisions faster and more often
- ✓  A more challenging environment that improves ice awareness and hockey sense
- ✓  Increased incidental contact teaches players to play with their heads up and builds spatial awareness
- ✓  Better ice utilization: more players active during every session
- ✓  Increased competition for all players and more fun for everyone



THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT CASE

Hockey Canada's Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model is built on a simple principle: children should only be placed in competitive situations that suit their skill level and abilities.

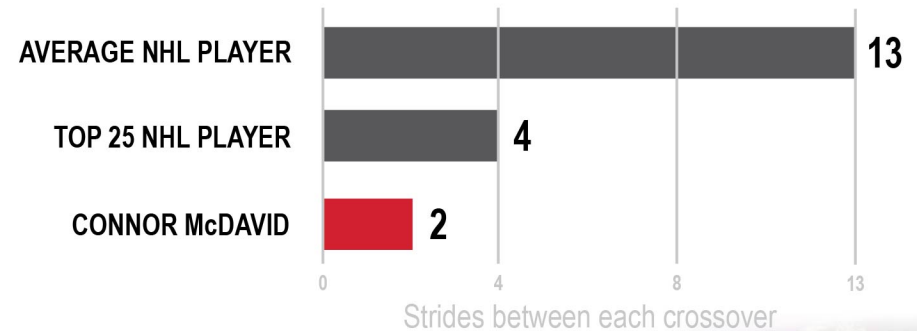
Putting young players into a full-ice, adult-scaled environment too early compromises development the same way we wouldn't hand a child an adult-sized bike or basketball hoop.

Half-ice and cross-ice hockey is the hockey equivalent of a smaller field or a lower net: an age-appropriate scale that lets kids build real skill, not just survive the game



RESEARCH

The Hockey Alberta Skating Study looked at what separates elite players from the rest and it isn't straight-line speed. Fewer strides between crossovers means more time spent actively changing direction.



The best players are constantly changing direction to evade opponents and create space. A smaller surface **trains turns, pivots, stops, starts, transitions, and lateral movement** rather than simply skating fast in straight lines.



THE BOTTOM LINE



More touches.



More shots.



More decisions.



More skating skills that matter



More engagement for every kid on the ice, regardless of ability.

DECREASE THE SPACE, INCREASE THE PACE. IT'S THE NATIONAL STANDARD.