

Join Hockey and Experience...
"Fun, Friends, Teamwork, Sportsmanship, Challenge, Fitness"

GOLDEN MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR FIRST-TIME HOCKEY PARENTS

Welcome to GMHA!

This information guide is intended to provide answers to questions commonly asked by parents of children becoming involved in hockey for the first time. This guide is for you if:

- you are registering a child in hockey for the first time
- you have not been involved in a hockey program before, and
- you have questions about how the game of hockey is organized and played at your child's level, what is required, and what you can do to prepare for his/her first hockey season.

Most of our first-time players begin at the Initiation level. The various levels of hockey are contained in the chart showing Division. As it is not unusual for players to join at other levels, there is useful information in this guide for parents of new players at all levels.

WHAT AM I GETTING MYSELF INTO?

The decision to become involved in hockey is an important step for you and your child. The skills and personal development that your child experiences will serve him/her for a lifetime. The rewards for you as a parent can be many. The time you spend together can bring some of the most satisfying experiences that you can share with your child.

At the beginning level, hockey is not about winning – it is about learning the basics of the game, coupled with personal development and acquisition of life skills. Hockey is a unique opportunity for your child to grow and for you to share in that growth.

Your child needs your help and support to make the most of this opportunity. Understanding your responsibilities as a parent is an important step toward ensuring your child's success in hockey.

How much work is involved for me as a parent?

At a minimum, you are expected to provide for your child's transportation, equipment and fees. Normally, your child will have two practices each week in the evening and at the Atom level and up, due to League requirements, weekend games are common. Transportation to and from the games and practices, as well as purchasing and maintaining equipment, and registration fees are parents' basic responsibilities.

In addition to the basic responsibilities, the amount of work for you as a parent depends on the extent to which you become involved in your child's team or GMHA. You may want to coach, assistant coach, manage or time keep for the team, or you may want to become involved in the GMHA Executive or Recycling/Fundraising. Becoming more involved, while requiring a sometimes substantial time commitment, can also greatly increase the satisfaction that you and your child derive from the hockey season. The Association is run entirely by the efforts of volunteers, so the efforts of parents like you are vital to its continued success.

ORGANIZATION

What is the Golden Minor Hockey Association?

The Golden Minor Hockey Association (GMHA) is a non profit organization largely run by dedicated volunteers and operating under the guidance of the BC Hockey Association. GMHA operates with funding from grants, income generated from the Concession at the Golden Arena, various fundraising efforts and of course membership fees. We currently have an account set up at the Golden Bottle Depot so that anyone wishing to donate their empties to GMHA may drop them off there. For more information you can check out the website (yet to be updated) at **goldenhockey.com**. Another great resource is **bhockey.net** for courses and other info related to Amateur Hockey. Our season generally extends from the 2nd or 3rd week in September until March Break.

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DIVISIONS are as follows: ** Some exceptions wrt Division may apply when making up teams**

Division	Age (years)	Year of Birthdate	*Cost
A/B Initiation	5 and 6	2003 and 2004	\$100
Novice	7 and 8	2001 and 2002	\$250
Atom	9 and 10	1999 and 2000	\$350
Pee Wee	11 and 12	1997 and 1998	\$350
Bantam	13 and 14	1995 and 1996	\$350
Midget	15, 16 and 17	1992- 1994	\$350

*First Time Players' fee is \$199 regardless of Division – A/B Initiation first time player fee is \$50.00
If 3 Registered Players per family then deduct \$50

What are the "Initiation" and "Novice" categories?

Initiation is the beginning level for hockey. All players who are less than seven years old before January are classed as "Initiation" players. A player who turns seven after December 31st of the current calendar year is still in the "Initiation" category. Initiation and Novice players are given the opportunity to play all positions.

The Initiation program is for beginners, while Novice is for more advanced players who are ready to begin learning the game of hockey.

Initiation

Beginning players who have never skated wearing hockey equipment before, and are not ready for competitive hockey, will usually benefit from Initiation. This program is based on the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) Initiation program. It is intended to teach beginning skaters (usually 5 and 6 year olds) how to move and skate wearing hockey equipment.

The program features basic movement and skating through development drills for about 2/3 of each one-hour ice slot. The remaining 1/3 of the session is devoted to playing non-competitive fun games that develop the skills learned in the practice portion of that ice slot.

Sessions will be held at the same time and location (Golden Arena) each week, however, actual times have not yet been determined. **Please note: availability of a Initiation program depends on the level of interest indicated during registration.**

REGISTRATION AND FEES

What does it cost to register?

Registration fees are set each year by the Executive. See Chart above for costs.

Roughly two-thirds of the fees are needed to pay for ice rental. The remainder pays the cost of courses for training volunteers, equipment, insurance, scheduling, and various other operating costs.

What other costs are there?

Depending on your team's preferences, in addition to registration fees and equipment costs, you may encounter additional expenses for items such as:

- Tournament registration fees
- Hotel and food costs for out of town overnight stays
- Donations to fund the teams' HOME tournament
- Team apparel if you choose to buy some
- year end party

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How do I get my child into hockey?

In-person through an advertised registration location. Announcements are normally distributed through the schools and in the local newspaper. You may register outside of this time by contacting the Registrar, Diane Knezacek, at 250-439-8210

Registration forms must be completed to register your child. Photocopies of your child's birth certificate must be supplied for first time players, as well as the name and phone number of an alternate emergency contact person.

The information on the registration form is used to officially record the player with BC Hockey and the Golden Minor Hockey Association (GMHA), as well as to apply for insurance and prepare Team contact information lists.

Is there any Financial Assistance Available?

For those families that require financial assistance with Registration Fees, there are a few options:

1. "Youth In Sport" through the Golden Employment Centre provides up to \$100 in funding to eligible applicants. Visit the Golden Employment Centre to obtain an application.
2. KidSport BC provides up to \$200 in funding to eligible applicants. Visit www.kidsportcanada.ca (British Columbia Chapter) for guidelines and application.

HOCKEY EQUIPMENT

Your child will need the hockey equipment listed below. Used equipment in good condition is generally a good alternative to new equipment.

Item

- CSA approved helmet and full cage mask wire or clear plastic
- Mouth guard (optional in lower divisions)
- neck guard - must be BNQ approved
- one set of shoulder pads
- one pair of elbow pads
- one hockey jersey (supplied by GMHA)
- one pair of hockey gloves
- one pair of hockey pants
- one athletic cup
- one pair of shin pads
- one pair of hockey socks
- skates - please have them sharpened!
- hockey stick
- black tape for hockey sticks/ clear tape for socks if desired
- hockey equipment bag
- skate guards (optional)

Equipment need not be expensive. Locally, there are many families with gear that their child has outgrown that are more than happy to pass it along – just ask around or check out the Minor Hockey Information Board next to the Concession. Kicking Horse Gear Exchange as well as the Thrift Stores in town are other sources of equipment. SportChek has a skate exchange program and Canadian Tire offers affordable all-in-one packages.

Sources used hockey equipment in Calgary area include:

- United Cycle 10328 - 78 Ave. 433-1181 new & used
- Play It Again Sports 2055 111 St. 450-0400 new & used.
- Allsports Replay 8315 Argyll Road 440-4835 used equip...
- Sports Exchange (Totem) 7430 - 99 St. 432-0070 new & used

In addition to the equipment noted above, the GMHA supplies goal equipment for the team, a practice jersey and a numbered jersey for each player **to be worn for games only**.

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What should I know before buying hockey equipment?

The most important pieces of equipment are skates and helmet. Skates should fit snugly, but should not "pinch" the foot when tightened. Have the child's foot measured and have the skates checked by a qualified individual to ensure that they fit properly. Skates should not be more than 1/2 size larger than your child's current skate size. Don't buy skates that are too big and wait for your child to "grow into them". Your child will find it much harder to learn to skate, and could develop ankle problems if his/her skates are too big.

It is up to you to keep the skates sharp! Put in new laces and keep a spare pair of laces in the equipment bag. (Tip: thin foam insoles cut to fit the inside of the boots may make the skates more comfortable to wear.)

The helmet must fit snugly at the front and back, as well as the sides. (Tip: put the helmet on your child and hold it securely in your hands. Ask the child to move his/her head up and down, and side to side. Watch for excessive head movement inside the helmet. Adjust to fit snugly.) The face guard may be either wire-cage or clear plastic – plastic is easily scratched and therefore may be more suitable for older players who can take care of it. Be sure that the chin strap fits snugly, but does not hurt the chin.

Be sure that the hockey stick is junior-sized. Small hands need a hockey stick with a small shaft. (Cutting the end off Dad's old hockey stick won't do. The shaft will be too broad for your child to grip comfortably.) Cut the stick below the child's chin level when standing on skates. A stick that is too long can hinder player movement and development.

My child can't skate. What should we do?

Your child may benefit from the Initiation program. This program is based on the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) Initiation program. It is intended to teach beginning skaters (usually 5 and 6 year olds) how to move and skate wearing hockey equipment.

If your child is shy or frightened, please tell one of the coaches – a little gentle encouragement is often all that's needed.

Above all, don't worry. Young players soon learn that everyone falls down lots when starting out, and that it doesn't hurt when you're wearing all that padding – in fact, it's actually fun! You'll be amazed how quickly your child learns to stand, walk, glide and stop on the ice.

Hockey professionals say that 80% or more of the game of hockey is skating. Most of the practice time is devoted to learning to skate. The coaching staff and others will help your child learn to skate. If you want more, consider enrolling your child in the CanSkate Program. This year we are excited about having Power Skating Instructor, Debbie Strome from Extreme Ice Hockey in Cranbrook, come in October to teach both the players and coaches.

There's no substitute for ice-time. Public skating, Parent and Tot skating, outdoor arenas – all give your child the opportunity to practice skating. Inquire at the Town of Golden for ice times. Children 6 and under skate for free!

YOUR TEAM

What can I do to help the team?

Your team will welcome any help that you can offer. Become involved as a coach, assistant coach, manager or timekeeper, if you can. (Please indicate your preference on the registration form or by sending an email to Diane Knezacek at bradyanddiane@telus.net). Even if you don't volunteer as coach or assistant, there will be many off-ice tasks that need to be done during the year. You may be able to help with some of these - ask your coach or manager or see below to find out where you may be able to help out. .

Support the coaches on and off the ice. They are all volunteers and they need all the help and support that you can give them. If you have any questions or concerns resolve them as quickly as possible.

Work with the other parents to car-pool or assist with transportation to practices or games. Single parents may especially need this assistance.

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How is the Team Structured?

In addition to the registered players, Each TEAM shall consist of a group of volunteer parents responsible for filling the following roles: **HEAD COACH, ASSISTANT COACHES (2), TEAM MANAGER, CONCESSION COORDINATOR, EQUIPMENT (JERSEY) PERSON AND SAFETY PERSON** (not necessary until Atom or PeeWee). Please ask about position responsibilities if you can help out.

All our team staff such as coaches, managers and safety persons must complete the **RESPECT IN SPORT/Speak Out clinic** (Abuse and Harassment Awareness). All coaches must complete a **BC Hockey coaching clinic** relevant to the division they are coaching. All Safety Persons must complete the **BC Hockey HSPC** training course. Opportunities to become a certified Referee also exist. Certified **REFEREES** are needed for games and tournaments. They are required to take the **BC Hockey Officiating Clinic**. Officiating is an ideal way for a young person or adult to make some spending money as each ref is paid a small fee for each game they work.

If none of the above interests you, parents or family members are asked to help out by volunteering to help the team with their obligations - mainly planning and working at the Home Tournament and helping in the concession. Teams will have scheduled weeks when they are responsible for working the Concession at Public Skate or Golden Rockets Home Games in addition to having one volunteer in the Concession during EACH Practice and/or Game. The Grill in the Concession generally only operates during Rockets games or at Tournaments. When the Grill is in operation at least one person working in there must have the **FOOD SAFE** course.

*GMHA is also looking for someone to help out as **Recycling Co-ordinator** – arranging for collecting and dropping off bottles to the Depot for Fundraising!*

CLINICS/COURSES:

GMHA will reimburse all volunteers who take any of these clinics (RESPECT IN SPORT, COACHING, HSPC Safety course, FOOD SAFE and OFFICIATING) in order to help out Minor Hockey. RESPECT IN SPORT Is available online at bchockey.net but all the rest of the courses must be coordinated with GMHA to either bring the course to Golden or find the closest clinic. If you are interested in volunteering and taking any of these courses, please contact someone from the Executive list below.

What kind of Player commitment is there to the team?

In addition to being there to have fun and meet friends, there is also an expectation that players will attend all practices (when possible) in order to improve their skills, and to learn team tactics. Playing in tournaments and league games is a privilege for GMHA players, and the players are expected to attend practices in order to earn their spot on a GMHA Team.

*****PLAYERS AND PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO RESPECT THE ATHLETE'S AND PARENT'S CODE OF CONDUCT INCLUDED IN THE REGISTRATION*****

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TOURNAMENTS and LEAGUE PLAY:

Tournaments are generally 1 day for Initiation A/B and 2-3 days for the higher divisions. The number of tournaments attended is up to the discretion of the team/parents but generally in addition to the HOME tournament, teams participate in 2 out of town tournaments. Teams playing at the Atoms level and higher may be playing in a League. League play involves much more commitment and travel obligations. Costs vary and may be all or partially covered by profits generated by the Teams' Home Tournament.

Games

Please be on time for the games. Games must start as scheduled, or they will impact on others to follow. *If you can't make it to a game, let the coach, manager or another parent know.*

All games are played on full-ice. Sanctioned referees are used, and all rules are enforced. Body checking begins at Pee-Wee level.

Practices

Practices are important. They are the best opportunity your child will get to learn to skate and play the game of hockey. *They are not optional.* If you must miss a practice, let the coach, manager or another parent know in advance, if possible.

If you have problems getting to a practice, talk to the coach. You may be able to work out an arrangement with another parent, family member or friend.

Practices generally include a combination of skating, puck handling and passing drills designed to teach skating and the basics of hockey. They may also include on-ice games and/or scrimmages.

Your child will have two practices per week during the week. You will be notified in advance when and where the practices are to be held.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN GOLDEN MINOR HOCKEY!!! Remember... Participating with your child, and becoming involved with Minor Hockey, will greatly enhance your enjoyment of the game of hockey!

!!! GET INVOLVED IN THE EXECUTIVE !!!

Let your voice be heard – Join the Golden Minor Hockey Executive! Currently seeking persons to fill the following positions: **COACH COORDINATOR** and **EQUIPMENT MANAGER**.

If you are interested, please contact someone from the list below.

GMHA EXECUTIVE CONTACTS:

President	Brady Knezacek:	H 250-439-8390
Vice-President	Brad Cable:	H 250-344-6050
Registrar	Diane Knezacek:	H 250-439-8210
Treasurer	Jody Cable:	H 250-344-6050
Secretary	Donna Rintoul:	H 250-344-6301
Concession Manager	Karen Jones:	H 250-344-7351
Initiation Coordinator	Nicole Lussier:	H 250-344-7012
Referee in Chief	Kelly Dahlin:	H 250-344-2390
Ice Manager/Fundraising	Gloria Sime-Vivian:	H 250-344-6515
Risk Manager	Dave Wan:	H 250-344-7317
EK District Coordinator	Bill Soles:	H 250-344-2095