

# RETENTION PHONE CALL PROGRAM

## *A Step-By-Step Model For Retaining Players*

### INTRODUCTION

Every hockey association has turnover from one year to the next. Many families forget to sign up before the start of the season and do not return to hockey primarily because they figure that it is too late to play.

Each season over 40,000 kids stop playing youth hockey. Much of this loss can be reduced through a little extra follow up; there is no better follow up than a personal phone call.

### 1. BUILD THE FOUNDATION

#### Email

- Focus the retention email purely on registering uncommitted players
- Feature benefits of youth hockey
- Layout their options
  - Provide all playing options, not just what they did last year

#### Timing

- It is recommended to send the email at the beginning of August
- Time email for window when people start thinking about the fall

### 2. FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL

#### Optimal Time

- Make follow-up phone calls no later than 10 to 14 days after email
- For best response, call Sundays through Thursday between 5:30 pm—8:00 pm

#### Call Center

- Gather your volunteers at one location
- Make it a social opportunity—have a pizza party
- Split up the calls so that they get done efficiently
- Use impartial parents
  - Coaches give impression of being recruited to certain teams
  - Sell the organization and not a single team



### 3. **SCRIPT**

- Have a basic script with talking points
  - Cover the positive aspects of upcoming season
  - Stay away from internal politics and team placement
- Here is a basic script to model after:

#### **SAMPLE PHONE SCRIPT:**

This is (*YOUR NAME*) with the (*ASSOCIATION NAME*). We are getting ready for another great season of youth hockey and noticed that we didn't have (*THEIR CHILD*) signed up for the coming session.

Last season you may have noticed youth hockey help your child make many big strides on and off the ice. We really enjoyed seeing (*THEIR CHILD*) at the rink and want to see (*HIM/HER*) back on the ice this fall. We have a great season planned, filled with lots of fun and skill development.

If you would like I can help you get (*THEIR CHILD*) signed up right now.

### 4. **TURN PROBLEMS INTO SOLUTIONS**

- Some parents have participation issues beyond forgetting to sign up.
  - Board member available to answer organizational questions
    - Show you care
  - List of common structural questions and answers
  - Track issues and use to examine current structure and programs

### 5. **DON'T GIVE UP**

- Even if player doesn't return, don't stop communicating
  - Send newsletters
  - Upcoming program registration
- Keep trying to get child involved all season long
  - House League
  - Initiation Program
  - Shortened winter season
  - Spring League

**For more information, contact Program Services at  
(719) 576-8724 or [growthegame@usahockey.org](mailto:growthegame@usahockey.org)**

