



## **HYHA PARENT AND PLAYER INFORMATION HANDBOOK**

### **About Henniker Youth Hockey Association**

The Henniker Youth Hockey Association, Inc. (HYHA) was founded and incorporated as a non-profit corporation in November, 1991. A board of directors, who are elected to serve three-year terms, governs the association. Volunteers fill all positions. A complete list of our current board members and their contact information can be found on our website [www.hyha.com](http://www.hyha.com). The by-laws for HYHA may also be found on our website. HYHA is a member of the NH Amateur Hockey Association and USA Hockey, Inc, which is the governing body for all amateur hockey in the United States from local associations like HYHA to the Olympic Team.

HYHA offers programs from Learn-to Skate to competitive travel team hockey. Our home ice is the Lee Clement Arena, located on the New England College campus in Henniker NH. Our travel teams typically participate in the New Hampshire Amateur Hockey's Association Granite State League. We presently have teams in all levels from Mites to Bantams. Information about the Granite State League teams, schedules, statistics and tournaments can be found at [www.nhhockey.com](http://www.nhhockey.com).

### **What is USA Hockey?**

USA Hockey, Inc. is the country's principal national governing body for the sport of ice hockey. In this role, USA Hockey provides a registrar to register teams, a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs and an initiation program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play for youth players and their parents. USA Hockey also studies and makes recommendations for protective equipment, distributes Hat Trick, Playmaker and Zero Club awards and provides insurance plans.

For coaches and officials, USA Hockey requires an intensive Coaching Education Program and an Officiating Education Program. USA Hockey also promotes uniformity in playing rules and the interpretation of those rules.

### **Our Philosophy**

The Henniker Youth Hockey Association's mission is to provide a foundation for the growth and development of HYHA participants through designing programs aimed at improving skills and providing a responsible environment for the conduct of youth hockey. Primary emphasis is on the development of skills, sportsmanship and teamwork, and to deemphasize excessive competition and win-at-all-costs attitude. The following values reflect this philosophy:

**ENJOYMENT:** It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for all participants.

**SPORTSMANSHIP:** Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Foster friendships with teammates and opponents alike.

**TEAMWORK:** We value the strength of learning to play together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience.

**INTEGRITY:** We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations.

**RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:** Treat all others as you expect to be treated.

**PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE:** Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.

**PARTICIPATION:** Since everybody pays, everybody should play. Players are expected to participate in practice and as such earn the right to play in games. While exactly equal game playing time can never be assured, the goal is to have all players fully participate in every game. Whether the team is winning, losing, or in a close game – no player should sit at the end of the bench.

### **Henniker Youth Hockey Programs**

**Learn-to-Skate** is a program for the first time skater. The program provides 10 hours of instruction over a 5-week period. The objective is to develop basic skills and build confidence. HYHA offers two Learn-to-Skate sessions each season, one in the fall (November and December) and one in the winter (January and February). Players can “graduate” to Learn-to-Play, or many younger players will play in one or both Learn-to-Skate sessions.

**Learn-To-Play** is designed to meet the needs of beginning players ages 5 and up. Basic skating and hockey skills are taught in a non-competitive environment. Physical skill development and fun are stressed in 20 one-hour sessions over 10 weeks.

**Competitive Teams:** These provide an opportunity for skill development for players who have a desire for a competitive experience. A balance of winning and sportsmanship is stressed. Bi-weekly practices and travel are required for competition with other teams with in the Granite State Hockey League. HYHA provides the following competitive level teams, as per USA Hockey guidelines:

<b>Division</b>	<b>Age as of December 31</b>
Mite	7-8 year old children (younger highly skilled or experienced 6 years olds can play *subject to Coach and parent discretion)
Squirt	9-10 year old children
Peewee	11-12 year old children
Bantam	13-14 year old children

## **Games and Practice Times**

Nearly all games start after 8:00AM on weekends and practices, which are typically held during the week for older players, start before 8:00PM. Approximately half of our games are “home” games and are played in the Lee Clement Arena at NEC in Henniker, and the remainder of our “away” games typically require one-hour or less of travel time. Travel teams will frequently play in one or two tournaments, which often occur over the weekend. Some of these tournaments are in New Hampshire, while other times tournaments can be out of state.

## **HYHA Coaches**

HYHA coaches are dedicated volunteers from local communities. In order to coach in the HYHA, the individual is required to attend a Coaching Education Clinic conducted by USA Hockey each season and successfully complete thorough Age Specific training for the level of play that they wish to coach. In order to participate as a coach, individuals must also attend a mandatory pre-season coaching meeting as well as have a national criminal background check by the New Hampshire Amateur Hockey Association. Selection of coaches who have met these requirements is done by the HYHA Board of Directors with recommendations by the Coaching Director. The criteria for selection are based upon results from the parent “Coach Evaluation” forms from the previous season, experience, training and the ability to serve as a positive role model. HYHA coaches are required to adopt the following Coaches Code of Conduct recommended by USA Hockey:

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
- Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved, be consistent; honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; be an effective communicator and coach; do not yell at players.
- Adjust to the personal needs and problems of players: be a good listener; never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills; gain confidence and develop self-esteem; teach them the basics.
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques and strategies of hockey; encourage all your players to be team players.
- Maintain an open line of communication with your players’ parents. Explain the goals and objectives of your association.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.

## **HYHA Parents**

HYHA wants the hockey experience to be a rewarding one for your child. As a parent, you can help to ensure that it is in many ways, such as volunteering to help with the numerous tasks required to make our program successful. Be sure that your child has and wears properly fitting equipment. Ensure that your child attends all practices and games. Finally, HYHA strongly encourages you to observe the following Parents Code of Conduct suggested by USA Hockey:

- Do not force your child to participate in sports, but encourage his/her desire to play their chosen sport. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn by example, so applaud the good players of both teams.
- Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. Deemphasize games and winning in the lower level age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Applaud a good effort in a victory and in defeat and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice - it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of our children and the sport. Communicate with them and support them.
- If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about it and volunteer.

#### **HYHA Parent Coordinators**

To assist with the many tasks we require of our coaches, HYHA asks parents to volunteer as Parent Coordinators. Coaches will recruit one or several Parent Coordinators at the start of the season. Parent Coordinators are responsible for communicating team-related news and information to the other parents of the players, coordinating fund-raising efforts, organizing team events and handling game related paperwork. Parent Coordinators relieve the coaching staff of these important tasks, which allows them to focus on your child's development as a player. We thank, in advance, all of you who will volunteer for this much-appreciated role.

#### **Zero Tolerance Policy**

From the NHAHA By-Laws:

On-ice officials will stop the game when the parents/spectators displaying inappropriate and disruptive behavior interfere with the other spectators or the game. The on-ice officials will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing the parent/spectators from the spectating area and game area. Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by the local governing body. This inappropriate and disruptive behavior shall include:

- Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
- Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence, or physical violence.
- Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players' bench, penalty box or on the ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.

## **Sexual Abuse Policy**

It is the policy of USA Hockey and HYHA that there shall be no sexual abuse of any minor participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs, camps, clinics, tournaments or other USA Hockey or HYHA events by an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant occurs when an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor touches a minor participant for the purpose of causing the sexual arousal or gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer, or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant also occurs when a minor player touches an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor for the sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer, or independent contractor, if the touching occurs at the request of, or with the consent of the employee, volunteer or independent contractor.

Neither consent of player to the sexual contact, mistakes as to the participant's age, nor the fact that the sexual contact did not take place at the hockey function are defenses to a complaint of sexual abuse. Upon proof of violation of this policy, the violator will be permanently banned or suspended from USA Hockey or HYHA sanctioned programs.

## **Player's Code of Conduct**

At the beginning of each season all players are required to sign and commit to adhere to a Players Code of Conduct. Also, HYHA coaches strive to teach players the following values recommended by USA Hockey:

- ❖ Play for fun.
- ❖ Work hard to improve your skills.
- ❖ Be a team player-get along with your teammates.
- ❖ Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline.
- ❖ Be on time for practices and games.
- ❖ Respect your coaches, your teammates, your parents, opponents and officials.
- ❖ Never argue with an official's decision.

## **General Rules and Reminders**

**New England College** NEC's Lee Clemet Arena is our home ice for practices and games. The arena belongs to the college and we all need to respect the rules of the facility. Please park in designated areas. Help keep the facility clean. Please leave the locker rooms clean upon your departure. There is no running or horseplay in the arena. There is no hockey playing with either a puck, a tape ball or any other object in the arena lobby or the locker rooms. Please adhere to policies posted by NEC in and around the arena.

For their own safety, only players are allowed on the bench side of the arena during games and practices. Children are not allowed to be in the clock box or penalty box area with or without an adult.

**USA Hockey has mandated several new rules for behavior in all youth hockey locker rooms. These rules are in place for the safety and privacy of our children:**

- Use of cameras or cell phone cameras in locker rooms is strictly prohibited.
- A responsible adult will be present in the locker room at all times. This should be a coach, a parent coordinator or another individual designated by the coach.
- Female players will be offered the option to change in a separate room from the male players. It is up to the individual player and her parents to decide to use this option.
- Mouth guards are a mandatory piece of equipment for players Peewee age and up. HYHA requires mouth guards for all younger players on competitive teams as well. The referee will not permit a child to play in a game without a mouth guard. If a player does not have a mouth guard, the team may have to serve a bench penalty if the referee deems it appropriate.

### **Evaluation Process**

Every spring evaluations will be held for each age group to determine teams for the following season. HYHA has developed an evaluation process, which is intended to place players on teams matching the individual skills and competitive level of each child. During HYHA evaluations, great care is taken to ensure that the process is equitable. Players wear “pinnies” to insure anonymity and impartial evaluators are sought to provide evaluations. Participants are evaluated while executing drills designed to test each skill and ability in a game situation. The evaluations are put together along with the player evaluations from the end of the previous year (if available) to determine each child’s team assignment.

The evaluations are then used for the selection of players for teams by the Coaching Committee with input from Head Coaches for each level and the Board of Directors.

### **Moving Players**

It is HYHA’s policy that a player may be moved to another level in certain circumstances. This requires Coaching Committee approval if the placement is for the entire season. If you have a player who is having difficulty at the level he/she has been placed, you may request that the Coaching Committee move the player to a different level. It is important that you work with the child to develop his/her skills as best you can. Also, it is our policy that all players should be given the same opportunity to practice and play as his/her teammates. The child always comes first; neither the score nor outcome of the game. As levels of play increase, it is important to understand, through the coaching staff, how a game situation may be handled.

**Please note:** Travel players who play 3 or more games at a higher level are not permitted to return to the lower level. Also, players must play at least 50% of regular season games to participate in the Granite State tournament. Therefore, players who wish to play up a substitute for players at a higher level should take care in doing so to ensure that they are not disqualified from participating at the level for their age group for play-offs.

## Registration

Following evaluations in the spring, families will be required to sign a “Letter of Commitment” to the HYHA Program and make a deposit to hold their child’s place for the following season.

Registration is accepted on a first-come first-serve basis. However, priority is given to the previous season’s participants. Since enrollment is limited, HYHA cannot guarantee a space for all children who are registering for the first time. Nor can HYHA hold openings for participants from previous seasons after the close of registration. Players transferring from another organization must bring a signed release from that organization.

## Payment of Tuition

HYHA tuition fees are due in full at registration in the Fall when the hockey season begins. All registered participants are required to register for USA Hockey as well, which is a modest fee. Tuition payments are broken into 3 installments - May 15, July 15, and September 15. Other payment plans can be negotiated if necessary. Players who have **not paid** and have **not yet set up a payment plan** at the beginning of the season will **not be permitted to play**. Family discounts are available. Participation in the Learn-to-Skate program cannot be discounted or applied to a family discount.

## Tuition Refunds

All Tuition payments made to HYHA are NON-REFUNDABLE. The HYHA Board of Directors may consider requests for refunds if there are special circumstances that the Board determines may warrant a full or partial refund of tuition payments. A player leaving the association due to dissatisfaction with some aspect of the association or team is not considered a special circumstance.

## Past Due Fees

The value of any equipment or uniform, which were not returned from the previous season will be added to a player’s tuition. **Any outstanding tuition balance from a previous year must be paid in full before the next season.** Post-dated checks will not be accepted.

## Tuition Assistance

Limited tuition assistance is available due to the generous donations of individuals and local businesses. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis by the HYHA Board of Directors. To apply, submit your request in writing and include information regarding the amount of assistance you seek. Tuition assistance is only available to a specific player on a one-time basis.

## Grievance Policy

HYHA expects Directors, Coaches, Referees and Parents to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical and responsible manner that is consistent with USA Hockey regulations and that reflects well upon HYHA.

HYHA hopes to instill in each volunteer a willingness to observe the standards of conduct not because he/she must, but because he/she takes pride in the program and has a desire to see HYHA operate

efficiently and attain its' objectives. Failure to observe the standards of conduct may lead to corrective action.

### **Grievance Procedure**

It is HYHA's purpose to provide effective means for all volunteers to bring problems and complaints concerning the program to the attention of the Board of Directors without fear of recrimination.

If you have a complaint regarding HYHA policy or if you feel you or your child has been mistreated or unfairly disciplined, we ask parents to report the problem to the Board of Directors in writing (email is acceptable) no later than one week after the occurrences of the event or situation.

### **Getting on the Monthly Board of Director's Meeting Agenda**

The Board of Directors holds a directors meeting once a month. Anyone wishing to submit issues to the Board for general discussion should request from the President of the Board that the matter be added to the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting. The issue must be submitted to the President in writing (e-mail is acceptable) at least one week prior to the meeting.

### **Board of Directors Meetings**

Board meetings are typically held once a month. The actual times, dates and locations have a tendency to change slightly. Please check the HYHA website or contact a Board member for the next regularly scheduled meeting.

### **Equipment**

Participants of all HYHA programs must wear the minimum protective equipment required by USA Hockey (HECC approved). Learn-to-Skate participants are required to have hockey skates and a helmet. Learn-to-Play participants are required to have full hockey equipment. HYHA strongly recommends that all children be outfitted with full protective gear. Participants in Mite level and above are required to wear the full complement of protective equipment listed below:

- Helmet with full-face cage
- Mouth guard
- Neck protector
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow pads
- Hockey gloves
- Cup and athletic supporter
- Shin pads
- Hockey pants
- Jersey
- Hockey socks
- Hockey skates
- Hockey stick

Hockey jerseys are provided to all Initiation Program participants. Players at the Mite level and above will be provided with Game jersey and socks. Game jerseys must be returned at the end of the season. Mites and above must provide their own practice jerseys and socks.



\*HYHA has a collection of used equipment that is available to our players on a first-come first-serve basis. Please contact the Equipment Director about obtaining used equipment. HYHA also gladly accepts contributions of used equipment for this purpose.

### Other General Program Information

- Visit the HYHA website [www.hyha.com](http://www.hyha.com) for schedule information, HYHA news as well as a list of HYHA Board members and their contact information. Please promptly address any concerns or questions to any board member, coach or your team Parent Coordinator. We will do our best to give all parents' concerns immediate attention. There is also a link on the HYHA website to submit parent feedback to the Board of Directors.
- Players and parents will receive regular communications from Coaches and Parent Coordinators via emails about schedule changes, team news and general HYHA information. Please check your email regularly, and notify the Coach and/or Parent Coordinator if your e-mail address changes.
- Visit [www.arenamaps.com](http://www.arenamaps.com) for directions and addresses to all rinks.
- Visit the Granite State Hockey website [www.nhhockey.com](http://www.nhhockey.com) for team standings and statistics as well as upcoming tournament dates.
- Contact your Parent Coordinator or Coach in a timely manner, if you are unable to attend a practice or game.
- **HYHA is solely run by volunteers.** Please do your part and help out your child's team in any way you can: run the game clock, fill out the game sheet, help with fundraisers, compose weekly newspaper write-ups for the local papers etc. Ask your Parent Coordinator how you can help.
- **Weather Cancellation:** Only very rarely does NEC close the rink due to inclement weather. In the event NEC does close the rink, you will receive communication from your Parent Coordinator or Coach via email or phone. However, many times the rink will be open in bad weather and practices will still be held. Our HYHA players come from varying distances and locations and it is understandable that the weather in your town may be different than it is in Henniker. Use your own discretion when deciding if it is safe to travel with your child to practice or games if the conditions are questionable.