



## Try Hockey For Free Day

**A National Opportunity to Grow Your Youth Hockey Program Locally**

### WHAT IS TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE DAY?:

Try Hockey For Free Day will be Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> as part of Hockey Weekend Across America. This program, designed to provide youth hockey associations a national platform to introduce new kids to the sport, is a joint-effort between USA Hockey, the National Hockey League and NHL member clubs.

The goal is to have 500 locations host a try hockey for free clinic for kids between the ages of 4 to 9. With fall youth sports wrapping up, this event provides local associations the perfect opportunity to introduce new families to youth hockey.

### HOST SITE REQUIREMENTS:

- One hour of ice
- Volunteers
  - On-ice
  - Check-in
  - Getting dressed
  - Off-ice recruiter
  - Marketing
- Equipment
  - Minimum of 40 helmets, skates & gloves (can be winter gloves) are required
  - Full sets of equipment to let participants borrow is recommended if available
- Facilities or associations are eligible to host a USA Hockey Try Hockey For Free event if they intend to seek registration for the participants in a USA Hockey sanctioned program

### WHAT HOST SITES RECEIVE:

- USA Hockey jerseys & giveaways
- On- and off-ice clinic guidelines
- USA Hockey sanctioning
- Online management and registration tool
- Grassroots promotional tools
  - Customizable templates for printable material
- Best practices on attracting new families
- National marketing

### KEY DATES:

#### January

Try Hockey Training Video

- To receive your marketing material, jerseys, giveaways and to be promoted as a participating location, a representative from your host site will need to watch the Try Hockey training video.

#### Early-February

- Jerseys arrive
- Giveaways/Valentine's Day cards will come in a separate shipment

#### February 23<sup>rd</sup>

- Try Hockey For Free Day



## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

**Q: How many kids can I expect to attend?**

A: Sites that follow our recommendations, and do at least three of our marketing programs, have averaged 32 new kids.

**Q: Who is responsible for the ice?**

A: The local association/rink host is responsible for securing ice and the associated cost.

**Q: Who organizes the coaches and administrative help?**

A: The host site is responsible for collecting volunteers to make sure the event is well-staffed and managed.

**Q: What about equipment?**

A: To run a sanctioned USA Hockey growth event, every player must be wearing at a minimum skates, helmet and winter gloves. You can do a used equipment drive or solicit association members to see if you can borrow helmets. Please ensure your rink has rental skates available for use.

**Q: How do I make sure that I am not liable if a child get injured?**

A: In order to be a host site, we will contact your Associate Registrar and sanction your event as a grow the game event. Then participants will need to register through [TryHockeyForFree.com](http://TryHockeyForFree.com) and they will be covered by USA Hockey insurance for your try hockey for free clinic.

**Q: When will I receive my jerseys and giveaways?**

A: They arrive in two separate shipments at least 1 to 2 weeks prior to the event. In order to receive these items, a representative from the host site must attend watch the training video in September.

**Q: What if more than 40 kids show up and we don't have enough jerseys/giveaways for everyone?**

A: Associations that succeed at attracting a large group will need to get creative; unfortunately, there are not enough jerseys and goodie bags to send more. Most groups use them as an incentive for early online registration, promoting that the first 40 to sign up will receive a jersey and giveaway.

**Q: How do I get printable marketing pieces?**

A: There will be customizable templates for flyers, Halloween cards and posters in your host site portal. If you need help customizing, please communicate with your Program Services rep. A limited amount of Halloween cards will be shipped to you; these are to be distributed to your association's families for their trick or treaters. All other printing costs are left up to the host site.

**Q: Why is the event only being promoted to 4 to 9 year olds?**

A: Almost all kids begin playing youth hockey between the ages of 4 to 9. Your association will benefit most by focusing your recruitment efforts to kids in this age group. Maximizing the amount of players that can easily transition into your existing programs will increase your chances for player retention.