

Eden Prairie Hockey Association

Mite/8U Program



Information

Mite/8U Parent Meeting:

We will have a Mite/8U parent meeting in mid September before registration for clinics closes. Please plan to have at least one person from your household attend this important meeting. There will be lots of valuable information about the upcoming season!

Preseason Clinics:

Preseason clinics are the kick off to the season and begin in October. These are hour long sessions, led by volunteer coaches.

- Clinic Dates: Clinics will occur in early -mid October. There will be no clinics over MEA Weekend.
- Groups and times will be posted to the Mites/8U page on the EPHA website (ephockey.com) by late September.
- Groups are randomly assigned, you must attend with your designated group.
- We recommend arriving at least 30 minutes early on the first day. Generally speaking, arrive at least 20 minutes before your ice time for each clinic thereafter.
- Equipment: Participants should be in full hockey gear. If you are a first year EPHA player and interested in our new equipment rental program, please contact the Mite Equipment Coordinators via the [Equipment Program](#) webpage
- All Clinics will be held at **Velocity Hockey Center in Eden Prairie. Address: 7901 Fuller Road, Eden Prairie, MN 55344.**
- Any schedule or group changes and teams will also be posted in the same location. Please check back occasionally for updates.

Evaluations & Team Assignments - Mite 3 and Mite 4 Boys & 8U 3 Girls:

Mite 3 and 4 boys and 8U 3 girls will participate in a graded skills evaluations and scrimmage in October to determine their assignment to a team. Level assignments are based strictly on the results of evaluations.

- Evaluations will be based on one day of graded skills and scrimmage
- Players are introduced to the drills during the October clinics.
- For evaluations, all players shall wear a plain white, red, grey or black jersey without visible names or identifying words or marks; socks may be from a previous EPHA season or plain red, white or black or a combination of those colors. Jerseys may be worn inside-out, provided all identifying information is not visible. Gloves should be EPHA colors. Laces should be black or

white, no team signifying colors. **All non-EPHA stickers and any numbers should be removed from helmets.**

Teams Placement:

Team Assignments will be posted to the Mite/8U page on ephockey.com. Players will stay with their assigned team for the entire season.

Mite/8U 1&2:

- There are no evaluations at the Mite/8U 1&2 levels.
- Teams will be determined by the Mite/8U Directors with input from coaches.

Mite 3&4 /8U3:

- Players will be assigned to a team based solely on their evaluation scores.
- Players will be allowed to play up one level if they are assessed in the top 1/3 of the level that they want to play in. If they are not rated in the top 1/3 of the level, they will be assigned to a team in the level aligned to their age/grade.
- No player will be allowed to play up two levels, e.g., a 1st grade player (who would typically be a Mite 2) will not be permitted to play Mite 4.

Registration will ultimately dictate the number of teams EPHA is able to field at any of our Mite/8U levels. Changes to the number of forecasted teams are at the discretion of the EPHA Board and subject to change at any time.

Teammate Requests:

Mite / 8U 1 & 2: We will take teammate requests into consideration but cannot make any guarantees. We understand that playing with friends can ease anxiety and help kids feel comfortable, especially at the beginning of the season and will do our best to make sure each player has a friend on his/her team whenever possible. Our goal is to create balanced teams at each level and there are many variables to consider. During registration, you may submit up to 3 names of children at the same level who your child would like to have on his/her team with the notion that we will try to match them up with one of these players. Do not rank the list, all of them will be assumed to be equally acceptable.

Mite 3&4 / 8U3: Requests for specific teammates are not accepted at these levels as players may request friends who do not evaluate at the same level.

Season Schedules:

Team schedules for the first month will be available when teams are posted. The schedule for the rest of the season will be posted on a monthly basis. The season starts the end of October and runs through early March.

- Teams will typically practice twice each weekend, with some weeks having a third practice on Thursdays.
- Scheduled times will vary from week to week but will typically be between 8:00am and 8:00pm.
- Practices will typically have 2-3 teams sharing the ice.

- Schedules and practice locations will be posted on the individual team' Mite/8U page of the EPHA website.

Games:

Mite/8U 1 & 2 - We will designate specific days for “games” between the two Mite/8U level 1 &2 teams sharing the ice. Games usually occur on Sundays but may be scheduled on other days depending on ice times.

- All players will have equal playing time, and lines will switch every minute at the buzzer.
- Scores will not be kept. Again -it's all about fun, and at this age, with no score posted, most of the kids come off the ice happy, feeling confident about their skills and certain that their team won :-)
- Throughout the season, coaches may spend a small portion of their practices on scrimmages. However, the focus of the time on the ice will be developing skating and hockey skills.

Mite/8U 3 & Mite 4 - In-house games will begin in December, typically as cross-ice games. Beginning mid-January, teams will play games against other nearby associations.

- The schedule is TBD but will be confirmed by mid-December. Game scheduling is an intricate and on-going process, and opportunities are presented at various times during the season. Expect schedule changes as games and scrimmages are added. Thank you in advance for your patience and flexibility with this process!
- We do our best to match up teams evenly for games, but it is the nature of Mites/8U that there will be some lopsided match-ups. Each association levels its program differently due to size, talent, available ice, and other factors. It is not a perfect system. Coaches are expected and encouraged to make adjustments to even out the teams as much as possible: switching forwards and defense, changing goalies, requiring players to pass three times before shooting, etc.
- All players will have equal playing time and lines will switch every minute, at the buzzer.
- Throughout the season, coaches may spend a small portion of their practices on scrimmages. However, the focus of the time on the ice will be developing skating and hockey skills.

Equipment:

All players must wear required equipment and protective gear.

- Helmet with approved facemask and mouth guard
- Throat protection devices (neck guards) must be worn per District 6 guidelines
- Hockey Gloves
- Elbow pads
- Shoulder Pads
- Supporter with cup/pelvic protector
- Shin Pads
- Breezers (pants)
- Hockey Skates
- Hockey Stick

- Goalie equipment consisting of leg pads, chest & arm pads, blocker glove, catcher glove and stick is provided by EPHA

Outdoor Ice:

Outdoor ice will begin in January and run until the city closes the outdoor rinks (mid to late February). Each team will be assigned to a park and will have ice allocated to them on 2 weeknights: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday at 6:00pm or 7:00pm for an hour. Please note: These are very laid back, totally optional and frequently get cancelled due to weather.

Practice Locations:

Teams will practice at both of the following locations during the season:

- Velocity Hockey Center (7901 Fuller Road, Eden Prairie, 55344) or
- Eden Prairie Community Center (16700 Valley View Rd, Eden Prairie, 55346).

Fundraising and Required Volunteer Hours:

- Mite/8U level 1 & 2 families, **ARE NOT required** to complete a specific number of volunteer hours. However, we strongly encourage each family to volunteer when they can and put in at least a few hours supporting our Mite program either through coaching, being a team manager, volunteering at our annual Mite Day, helping with Rookie Camp or Recruiting Events.
- Mite/8U level 3 and Mite 4 families **are required** to complete 6 volunteer hours.
- Mite/8U parents are always welcome to volunteer during our weekend tournaments held at the EP Community Center. Running the clock, managing the penalty box or helping in the tournament office are great ways to see more of our association and what your kids will be doing as they get older. And it's always fun to watch the games!

Dibs

Volunteer hours are claimed through the 'Dibs' tab on the EPHA website. You will be notified by email when Dibs are posted. There are many opportunities to volunteer and earn your volunteer hours (e.g., Coaching, Team Manager, assisting at EP hosted tournaments including: running the clock, managing the penalty box or helping in the tournament office). Occasionally, there will be special opportunities to volunteer for Mite/8U and Growth events (Mite Day, Try Hockey for Free, Rookie Camp, World Girls Hockey Day, etc.) that will be included in communications from the Mite Director

Buyout/Penalty:

- Mite/8U 3 and Mite 4 families have the option to buy out of their volunteer requirement at the time of registration.
- If hours are not completed, a penalty per incomplete hour will be assessed.

Exemptions: Mite/8U 3 and Mite 4 Coaches and Team Managers are exempt from the volunteer requirement. 1 Head Coach and 2 Assistant Coaches will be exempt from each team. If there are more than 2 Assistant Coaches, the Head Coach will receive 12 hours to distribute among the assistants. If a manager position is shared, each person will receive a 3 hour credit.

Parent Involvement:

There are a variety of ways that parents can support the kids and their coaches:

- Have your child ready to go on the ice 5 minutes before scheduled start time with full equipment. This includes neck guards (a District 6 requirement). This usually means arriving at least 20 minutes before the scheduled ice time
- Support your coaches by reminding your child to listen, follow instructions and put in 100% effort for the entire time on the ice. And always speak positively in front of your child about their coaches.
- Parents should definitely stay and watch practices but we ask that you remain behind the glass.
- For safety reasons, no one is allowed on the bench during practices except to quickly assist players with water bottles.
- Refrain from comments, gestures or body language that will be distracting to your child or other players.
- Do not leave your child at the rink without a parent or other responsible adult immediately available. At this age, the kids are too young to be dropped off and left alone. Every child must always have an adult easily accessible within the building.