



## CAHA STRATEGIC PLAN & ACTION STEPS



## **USAH ADM 10U-12U-14U-16U-18U AGE GROUP GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **USAH/CAHA GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL AGE GROUPS**

The key principles for all age groups is to align with USA Hockey's ADM best practices for practice to game ratios, maximizing skill development, increasing value to families, and playing more games locally while minimizing overall travel costs. For House programs, most programs are currently at a 1:1 practice to game ratio so any movement towards a 3:1 practice to game ratio will increase overall skill development. Recommended guidelines for practice to game ratios, maximum games/game days, and geographic boundaries are designed to increase retention, improve family value, and increase skill development.

<b>6U</b>	<b>24x36 nets</b>	<b>5v5 Cross-Ice Games</b>	<b>Blue pucks</b>	<b>House only + Jamborees</b>
<b>8U</b>	<b>36x48 nets</b>	<b>4v4 Cross-Ice Games</b>	<b>Blue pucks</b>	<b>House only + Jamborees</b>
<b>10U</b>	<b>48x72 nets, 36x48 in half-ice games</b>	<b>4v4 or 5v5 Half-Ice and Full-Ice Games</b>	<b>Black Pucks</b>	<b>Travel Hockey Available</b>
<b>12U &amp; older</b>	<b>48x72 nets</b>	<b>Full-Ice Games</b>	<b>Black Pucks</b>	<b>Travel Hockey Available</b>

### **ADM GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SEASON STRUCTURES BY AGE GROUP/LEVEL**

<b>AGE GROUP</b>	<b>TARGET # PRACTICES (50-60 mins)</b>	<b>OFF-ICE SESSIONS PER WEEK</b>	<b>GAME DAYS OR GAMES - RECOMMENDED FOR ALL AGES IN 2020-21</b>	<b>GAME FORMAT FOR 2020-2021</b>	<b>TARGET PRACTICE TO GAME RATIO</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM TRIPS OUTSIDE OF CAHA</b>
<b>6U/8U</b>						
<b>6U</b>	50-60	1	16-20 GAME DAYS	Cross or ¼ ice	3:1	0
<b>8U</b>	50-60	1	16-20 GAME DAYS	Cross-Ice	3:1	0
<b>8U Development</b>	60-75	1	20-25 GAME DAYS	Cross-Ice	3:1	0
<b>10U</b>						
<b>10U House</b>	50-60	2	20-25 GAME DAYS	25% Half-Ice	2:1	0
<b>10U B/Select</b>	50-60	2	20-25 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	2:1	1
<b>10UA</b>	75-80	2	20-25 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	3:1	2
<b>10UAA</b>	75-80	2	20-25 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	3:1	3
<b>12U</b>						
<b>12U House</b>	60-70	2	30-35 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	2:1	0
<b>12U B/Select</b>	60-70	2	30-35 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	2:1	1
<b>12A Travel</b>	80-90	2	30-35 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	3:1	2
<b>12AA/AAA Travel</b>	80-90	2	30-35 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit
<b>12U Girls Travel</b>	80-90	2	30-35 GAME DAYS	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit
<b>14U</b>						
<b>14U House</b>	80-100	2	40-50 GAMES	Full-Ice	2:1	0
<b>14UB/Select</b>	80-100	2	40-50 GAMES	Full-Ice	2:1	No limit
<b>14A/AA/AAA Travel</b>	120-130	2	40-50 GAMES	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit
<b>14U Girls Travel</b>	120-130	2	40-50 GAMES	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit
<b>16U/18U</b>						
<b>16/18 House</b>	80-100	2	50-60 GAMES	Full-Ice	2:1	0
<b>16/18 B/Select</b>	80-100	2	50-60 GAMES	Full-Ice	2:1	No limit
<b>16/18 A/AA/AAA Travel</b>	120-130	2	50-60 GAMES	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit
<b>19U Girls Travel</b>	120-130	2	50-60 GAMES	Full-Ice	3:1	No limit

## **GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE TO GAME RATIOS, GAME DAYS OR GAMES, AND GEOGRAPHIC TRAVEL**

**Why is CAHA recommending a certain amount of game days or days for youth hockey's age groups?** Our goal is to increase the number of players playing hockey in the Carolinas and this can be done through attracting more players and retaining more existing players. Right now our retention rate after 10U is flat and then declines and we believe this is in part due to too many games which negatively impacts the optimum practice to game ratio. Retention is also impacted by the value that families get out of hockey and in many cases the value equation is skewed because families are spending a large amount on travel expenses to play games. USA Hockey ADM Model recommends a specific amount of game days or games for each age group. We want to clearly communicate these to the Associations and recommend that they are followed. Ideally, we work to improve practice to game ratios especially at the 10U and 12U age groups where skill development needs to be maximized.

**What difference does it make if we play more games?** There are several reasons why ADM specifies how many games each age group should play. First, 1 practice delivers as much skill development as 11 games. Skill development is optimized when players have a 3:1 practice to game ratio so moving towards an optimum number of games at an age group may free up time to add practice time which increases development. Second, we want to provide more value to families. Playing games is much more expensive than practice. For example, 1 game costs approximately 50-100% more than 1 practice. If a team exchanged 5 games for practices, they could get 7-10 more practices and exponentially more skill development.

**Why geographic guidelines and recommendations by age group and level?** We want to encourage Associations to provide more value to parents. Some travel outside of CAHA and overnight is fun and a positive experience. Too much travel and overnights increase the overall cost of playing hockey and lowers the value received by families. Over time, we see burnout when families spend too much time and money traveling at the 10U and 12U age groups.

**Will the CHL be more competitive?** We hope so. We are encouraging more local play so if all teams play in the CHL, teams should be able to get more games in the Carolinas against a greater number of competitive teams. Currently there are teams that do not play in the CHL because they feel it is not competitive.

**How will CAHA keep Associations accountable for implementing the new guidelines and recommendations?** First, we hope that the Associations will do their best to adopt these Best Practices. They are guidelines and recommendations – not mandates. We believe this is an educational process where CAHA and USA Hockey can help Associations be more effective in delivering the best practices of skill development and the best hockey programs possible. We are committed to working with the Associations to help them achieve this and feel that these USA Hockey ADM Guidelines and Recommendations are the best practices for a great hockey experience. We will also have a pre-season ADM Program registration of teams via SportsEngine that will outline the specifics of each team in every program.

## 10U AGE GROUP

Key principles at 10U are to follow age-appropriate concepts and skills so players enjoy the experience and develop both as hockey players and young kids. The focus is on fun, engagement, active practices, age-appropriate training, and basic hockey knowledge. To increase retention and the value to families, we look to achieve 3:1 practice to game ratios, increase local play, and reduce travel.

- **Practice to Game Ratio** - we encourage the use of 3:1 practice to game ratio. For a full season, the target is 75-80 practices (50-60 minutes in length) and 20-25 game days at this age group. This does not include 10U scramble or team Jamborees. At the House level, we want to appeal to those players who are content with 1 practice and 1 game per week but we also want to increase the focus on skill development versus games. Therefore a 2:1 practice to game ratio is attainable if practices are increased and number of games is decreased. To achieve this, we recommend 3 teams on ice in practices.
- **Supplemental Skill Development** - We encourage House Associations to offer supplemental skill development programs for those players who wish to improve their skills to move into Select or Travel hockey.
- **Teams Rosters** - Team rosters of 11-12 skaters plus goalies. Goalies play out as player when not in goal.
- **Game Format** – 25% of all House 10U games be in the Half-Ice format with all travel 10U teams will play 4 Half-Ice games per season.
- **Game Days** - recommended maximum game day count is 20-25 days for all ages and levels at 10U. Time spent in practices should be optimized at this age group.
- **Jamborees** - There is no limit on participating in 10U scramble or team Jamborees.

### 10U ADM Guidelines & Recommendations

Age	Level	Practices (2:1 to 3:1 Ratio)	RECOMMENDED GAME DAYS	Off- Ice	GAME FORMAT	Recommended Geography
<b>10U</b>	House	50-60	20-25 games	2 per week	25% of games must be Half-Ice	Local
	House Select/B	50-60	20-25 games	2 per week	4 Half-Ice games per season	Recommend no more than 1 trip outside of CAHA per season.
	A	75-80	20-25 games	2 per week	4 Half-Ice games per season	Recommend no more than 2 trips outside of CAHA per season.
	AA	75-80	20-25 games	2 per week	4 Half-Ice games per season	Recommend no more than 3 trips outside of CAHA per season.

## 10U AGE GROUP FAQs

### Why are you testing Half-Ice 4v4 for 10U games for House?

Much of the basis for half-ice 10U games can be found in the reasoning behind the 8U cross-ice format. 10U Half-Ice games provide more touches and skill development for all players. This format also helps to increase the value to families and enables programs to improve their practice to game ratios. All other sports introduce the adult-sized version of their game to children at the age of 13-14. Hockey has 9-year-olds playing the adult-sized game. The Pacific Northwest and Alaska have embraced this format and seen a dramatic increase in skill development, player retention, fun, and positive parent comments. This also provides a logical transition from 6U/8U cross-ice to 10U half-ice to 12U full-ice. It makes for less of a giant leap from 8U cross-ice to full-ice immediately. We want to continue to try this at the House level, measure the results and learn from it.

### Why only implement some 10U half ice games?

We want to test the concept, work out the logistics and give Associations the opportunity to see the benefits of half-ice.

### How will my player be ready to play full-ice games if they play games in a Half-Ice format? What about teaching off-sides?

Age-appropriate training is one of the most important cornerstones of the ADM. 8U & 10U players should concentrate the majority of their time on skating and puck handling skills. Concepts such as off-sides, positions, & face-off positioning can still be introduced at the 10U level for that portion of games that is full-ice. These concepts are easier to learn as the cognitive ability of players increase with age. Most coaches will tell you that teaching positioning, off-sides and face-offs takes very little time versus teaching elite skills like skating, puck handling, body contact, & hockey sense.

### What are the rules for Half-Ice 10U games?

Games will be run in 2 run-time halves and teams will switch ends at the half. 4 teams will play at the same time (2 games will be played simultaneously and they will utilize the same clock. Teams will share benches and penalty boxes. A premium will be on keeping the game moving so there are very limited face-offs. Nets will be placed at the usual spot for 1 net and at the other end for a second with a crease drawn by the referee. Referees will call penalties. Scoring flip cards will be used for all games. The scoreboard will only be used for the time with both games using the same clock.

## 12U AGE GROUP

Key principles at 12U are to follow age-appropriate concepts and skills so players enjoy the experience and develop both as hockey players and young kids. The focus is on fun, engagement, active practices, age-appropriate training, skill development, and competitive contact. To increase retention and the value to families, we look to achieve 3:1 practice to game ratios, increase local play, and reduce travel.

- **Practice to Game Ratio** - USAH encourages the use of 3:1 practice to game ratio. For a full season, the target is 60-90 practices (1 hour in length) depending on the level and 30-35 game days for all levels at this age group. At the House level, we want to appeal to those players who are content with 1 practice and 1 game per week but we also want to increase the focus on skill development versus games. Therefore a 2:1 practice to game ratio is attainable if practices are increased and number of games is decreased. To achieve this, we recommend 3 teams on ice in practices.
- **Game Days** - recommended maximum game day count is 30-35 days for all ages and levels at 12U. Time spent in practices should be optimized at this age group.

### 12U ADM Guidelines & Recommendations

Age Group	Level	Practices (2:1 minimum to desired 3:1 Ratio)	Recommended GAME DAYS	Off-Ice	Recommended Geography
12U	House	60-70	30-35 Game Days	2 per week	House only
	House Select/B	60-70	30-35 Game Days	2 per week	Recommend no more than 1 trip traveling outside of CAHA per season.
	A	80-90	30-35 Game Days	2 per week	Recommend no more than 2 trips traveling outside of CAHA per season.
	AA	80-90	30-35 Game Days	2 per week	Recommend no more than 3 trips traveling outside of CAHA per season.
	AAA	80-90	30-35 Game Days	2 per week	No limitations but encouraged to minimize travel and lost school days

## 14U & 16U & 18U AGE GROUPS

Key principles at 14U/16U/18U are to follow age-appropriate concepts and skills so players enjoy the experience and develop both as hockey players and young kids. In 14U, the focus is on fun and engagement, practice activity and structure, age-appropriate training, skill development, and body contact/body checking. At 16U/18U we add team play, training, and learning to compete as additional focus areas. To increase retention and the value to families, we look to achieve 3:1 practice to game ratios, increase local play, and reduce travel.

- **Practice to Game Ratio** - USAH encourages the use of 3:1 practice to game ratio. For a full season, the target is 80-130 practices (1 hour in length) depending on the level and 40-45 games for 14U and 50-60 games for 16U/18U. At the House level, we want to appeal to those players who are content with 1 practice and 1 game per week but we also want to increase the focus on skill development versus games. Any movement towards a 2:1 practice to game ratio is desired – more practices and fewer games. Recommended games per season are 40-50 for 14U and 50-60 for 16U & 18U.

### 14U & 16U & 18U ADM Guidelines & Recommendations

Age Group	Level	Practices (2:1 to 3:1 Ratio)	Recommended GAMES	Off-Ice	Recommended Geography
14U	House	80-100	40-50 games	2 per week	House only
	House Select/B	80-100	40-50 games	2 per week	No limitations but encouraged to minimize travel and lost school days
	A/AA/AAA	120-130	40-50 games	2 per week	No limitations but encouraged to minimize travel and lost school days
16U/18U	House	80-100	50-60 games	2 per week	House only
	House Select/B	80-100	50-60 games	2 per week	No limitations but encouraged to minimize travel and lost school days
	A/AA/AAA	120-130	50-60 games	2 per week	No limitations but encouraged to minimize travel and lost school days