

# Coon Rapids Youth Hockey Association Mite Family Guide

Welcome and thank you for joining Coon Rapids Youth Hockey Association (CRYHA)! The mission for our Mite program is to provide an enjoyable introduction to youth hockey for players of all abilities. We aim to teach all Mite skaters the fundamentals of hockey as well as develop their individual skills including: skating, balance, agility, shooting and puck control; all within a healthy and fun environment. Our Mite program provides the opportunity to play at a level that is appropriate to strengthen your child's development.

In this guide you will find information to help you navigate CRYHA Mite hockey. If you have a question that is not addressed here, please ask! We are all one big hockey family. We were all new at some point, everyone you meet is willing to help!

## **Who is USA Hockey and how is CRYHA related?**

In order to register with CRYHA you first have to register with USA hockey. USA Hockey is recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the governing body for organized ice hockey in the United States. USA Hockey provides affiliated associations, like CRYHA, with tools, training and resources to provide kids with fantastic hockey experiences and to make sure everyone is safe at the same time.

USA Hockey divides associations by state; we are a part of Minnesota Hockey. Minnesota Hockey divides associations by geographic districts, CRYHA is a part of District 10 (usually referred to as D10). USA Hockey sets the minimum standards and rules that every affiliate in the nation needs to follow. From there states and districts can sometimes make rules stricter, but never less. Typically, CRYHA takes all of its direction straight from D10 Hockey.

## **What is a "Mite"?**

One of the first things you'll notice about youth hockey is that we have weird names for each level of play. These levels go by age: Mite (4-8), Squirt (9-11), Peewee (11-12) and Bantam (13-14). There are also girls-only teams that match the age groupings, they are U8, U10, U12 & U15. Mites/U8s have the largest age range and therefore make up a large portion of the kids in our association. While it is never too late to start hockey, most kids start as a Mite.

## **Junior Cardinal Camp (JCC)**

Each fall CRYHA hosts a camp for new skaters that we call Junior Cardinal Camp. This camp is several 45-minute sessions where kids who have never skated before or who are relatively new are introduced to hockey. This camp is run by CRYHA coaches, most of whom are current Mite coaches. This camp focuses on the very basics of skating for the brand-new skaters and also has some elements you'll find in a typical Mite practice for the kids to experience once they get moving on their skates. Full hockey equipment is required which can be loaned to participating families free of charge (a signed deposit check is required but will not be cashed unless equipment is not returned).

## **Equipment**

After your child is registered with USA Hockey and CRYHA but before they get on the ice with us, they will need equipment. The list can be overwhelming and many families fear the cost of it all but **CRYHA is here to help!** We are dedicated to making sure that every kid who wants to play hockey gets the opportunity that we will loan all of the equipment you need to get started free of charge (refundable deposit required)! Hockey is a contact sport and although "checking" is not allowed for many more years, collisions do occur and we want our kids protected. This is why it is important to make sure that all of their equipment fits properly. If the gear is too small, they'll be uncomfortable and if it's too big it won't protect them so a proper fit is important! You can always exchange any or all pieces for bigger gear as your child grows. If you prefer to buy your child their own equipment here is a list of what you'll need:

Helmet with full face shield (Mites no color requirement) • Mouth Guard • Neck Guard (optional) • Shoulder Pads • Elbow Pads • Hockey Gloves • Protective Cup (Boys)/Pelvic Protector (Girls) (Shorts with pad and Velcro to hold up socks) • Shin Pads • Breezers (Mites no color requirement) • Skates • Hockey Stick – Junior • Hockey Bag • Skate Guards • Hockey Tape

**DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR CHILD'S SKATES SHARPENED!** The skates you get from a store or in our equipment room may or may not be sharpened so please check (if you're not sure, ask!). Skating on dull or unsharpened skates is very difficult and hinders learning, so make sure skates are sharp and make sure your child does not walk on any hard surface (concrete, metal) without skate guards. Most arenas have areas of rubber flooring around the ice itself that is ok to walk on without skate guards. Depending on the level of use and abuse, skates will likely need to be sharpened multiple times per season. Sharpening is available at hockey retailers (Lettermen Sports, Dave's Sport Shop, Pure Hockey, Play It Again, etc.) as well as at most hockey arenas (including CRIC). Sharpening typically costs about \$5-\$7.

## **Mite Camp & Team Placement**

Mite camp is the first official CRYHA event for Mites each season and usually takes place in October. There is no additional cost for this camp, it is included in the registration fee with CRYHA each year..

Our Mite camp serves several purposes:

- To get kids that are new to hockey used to skating, playing with their peers and coaches. Also to give them a taste for what practices and games will be like.
- To get returning kids back into the swing of hockey.
- To prepare kids for evaluations/team placement (more on that below).
- To give coaches a feeling of skill levels for the group as well as start evaluating how kids respond to being coached.
  - This is important, especially for kids who are brand new to hockey, since kids this age tend to pick up skating and hockey skills very quickly. Some new kids, older Mites especially, may be so new that they don't do well during evaluations but their skills begin to explode a few weeks into the season. While it is impossible to predict with 100% certainty, a lot of times the coaches can tell early on if a skater is already showing signs of improving rapidly.

At the end of Mite Camp, we hold Hockey Education Program (HEP) Testing that is used to assess where each skater's skill level is currently. The main part of HEP Testing is a series of 5 timed drills happening simultaneously. Kids are assigned to groups which rotate through stations. After HEP is completed there will be at least one (sometimes more) "practice scrimmage(s)" that we use to help us make sure that the kids are placed at the appropriate levels. **It is important to note that this is NOT a tryout. It is used to balance teams as closely as possible and to help us place each player at the level that is appropriate for maximum skill development.** After the practice(s)/scrimmage(s) are completed, families will be notified as to which level (U8, A, B, C, D) their skater(s) have been assigned.

## Mite Hockey Levels/Teams

We place kids at levels based primarily on skill level and not age; in most cases it breaks down like this:

- D Mites – typically pre-k – 1<sup>st</sup> graders.
- C Mites – typically kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> graders
- A/B Mites – typically 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> graders
- U8 (girls only) – typically 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> graders\*

Please note that this age chart isn't a rule, but it is what we typically see. While we place kids primarily on skill level, most kids tend to follow the chart fairly closely.

**C/D** levels are in-house, all practices and games are CRYHA members. In a typical year D Mites and C Mites will practice and play within their level. *C Mites may play other C Mite teams from nearby associations but we keep this to a minimum, if at all.* Some years, depending on the number of kids registered and the number of coaches who volunteer, we may need to combine the C & D groups together. We end the C/D season with a "Jamboree", which is our own in-house tournament.

**A/B/U8** level games will be against teams from other associations. Based on the number of kids who register and the results of evaluations, we determine how many A/B/U8 teams we will have. The teams from these levels typically practice together. These levels also include tournaments and/or jamborees. Tournaments and jamborees vary year to year but typically each team will play in at least one in-town and one out-of-town.

***\*U8 is the same as A/B but is for girls only, see the U8 description under “what to expect”.***

### **What to expect:**

**D Mites** – when trying to explain D Mites, someone coined the phrase “organized chaos” and that fits perfectly. The focus of D Mites is getting kids comfortable on skates and making sure they have fun! Often during practice D Mites will not actually play hockey, instead they will jump over sticks, slide under tunnels, play with soccer balls, play tag, or a number of other games. Of course, there will be hockey too but please know that this is on purpose! By playing fun games the kids already know but with skates on their feet we are teaching the most important part of hockey – **SKATING!**

- The D Mite level is heavily subsidized by CRYHA in order to keep costs as low as possible for newer players.
- Registration fee is \$150 for returning mites (registration for first year mites is waived this season). You will not have any other fees for the D Mite level.
- D Mites will typically skate two to three days per week
- Skating lessons with the CR Skating School typically one day per week.

**C Mites** – C Mites is similar to D Mites in the sense that it is still a bit chaotic and the kids will spend a good amount of time playing games that don’t look like hockey. We add in more hockey at C and we also dedicate time to work with the CR Skating School on skating development. We typically have these special practices once per week and you are **HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** to come to every one if possible.

- The C Mite level is heavily subsidized by CRYHA in order to keep costs as low as possible for newer players.
- Registration fee is \$150 for returning mites (registration for first year mites is waived this season). You will not have any other fees for the C Mite level.
- C Mites will typically skate three to four days per week.

**A/B Mites** – The A/B levels are more hockey-focused and practices will be more drill focused. While they still play games during practice, it will be geared toward hockey more often. CRYHA utilizes third-party skating and hockey coaches at the A/B levels as well. Again, all of our Mite coaches are volunteers (parents), so we like to bring in a team of coaches that specializes in teaching hockey specific skills to the young players. We typically have these special practices once per week and you are **HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** to come to every one of them if possible.

**U8** – U8 is exactly the same as the A/B levels except that it is strictly for girls. Girls do not have to play on a U8 team, they can also play A/B; it is their choice. We co-op with Champlin Park for our U8 team. Any girls who play U8 will play 2 days per week in Champlin and 2 days per week in Coon Rapids.

**A/B/U8 cost** - There is a higher commitment level required from families at these levels, which also comes with a higher monetary cost. Before the season begins and registration opens CRYHA determines the cost of the A/B/U8 season. *The cost for each level will vary slightly due to the number of games played. A Mite teams will play a few more games/tournaments than B Mites/U8 and therefore will cost slightly more for the season.*

Once teams are formed and after your initial registration fee of \$150, you will have two options on how you can pay for the season. You can either pay for the season in full when you receive your first “ice bill” in November or you can pay by three equal monthly payments in November, December, and January. The November bill will be sent as an invoice and after that the two remaining “ice bills”, December and January, are automatically debited from the card used to make the November payment.

- All team costs are split evenly amongst all players per team. Even if you do not attend a practice or a game, you are still charged your share, thus we highly encourage you to attend everything you can!
- Player fees (your portion of the team cost) for Mite A/B/U8 generally cover practice ice and games. Fees for player development activities, jamborees (generally 2 per season), jersey and socks, and skills clinics may be covered by the Association, or passed on to players, depending on the availability of funds for a given season.
- Player fees will vary from year to year. This will depend on multiple factors, the largest being the number of kids who register with CRYHA and the number of kids on each team.
- A/B/U8 Mites will typically skate four days per week - on two weekday evenings and Saturdays and Sundays. Typically, the weekday evenings will be practices and games will be on the weekends but this is not always the case.
- A \$500 volunteer check is required from all A/B/U8 families. This WILL NOT be cashed if you complete your volunteer requirement for the season. (More info in another section of this guide)
- **For the 22/23 season the cost per team will be as follows:**
  - **A Mites - \$675 (\$150 registration followed by 3 payments of \$175)**
  - **B Mites - \$585 (\$150 registration followed by 3 payments of \$145)**
  - **U8 - \$585 (\$150 registration followed by 3 payments of \$145)**

## Where we play

CRYHA hosts practices and games at both Coon Rapids Ice Center (CRIC) and Schwan's Super Rink (SR) in Blaine. We try to keep our Mites at CRIC as much as possible but we will likely skate at the Super Rink as well.

Coon Rapids Ice Center  
11000 Crooked Lake Blvd.  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433  
(763) 951-7221

Schwan Super Rink  
1700 105th Ave  
Blaine, MN 55449  
(763) 785-3687

**CRIC** – there are 2 sheets of ice at CRIC, one indoor and one outdoor. Mites utilize the outdoor ice for practices as much as possible because it is much less expensive. Games are typically held on the indoor sheet, but not always.

***\*COLD WEATHER RULE - The outdoor ice rink at Coon Rapids Ice Center will close if the air temperature reaches -5 or the wind chill reaches -20.***

When you arrive at CRIC you will notice a box office directly inside the front doors. Above the ticket window is a TV that will have the locker room schedule on it. Please look for your group/team and follow the instructions for which locker room to use for dressing your skater.

**Super Rink** – Schwan Super Rink has 8 sheets of ice located in 2 separate buildings that are connected via a “skyway”. The rink you are skating at is indicated on your schedule by SR and then a number 1-8. The main building houses sheets 1-4 and the other building has 5-8. Typically, Coon Rapids skates on sheet 1 (SR1) which is in the main building.

- Just like CRIC, Super Rink has a monitor just inside the front door on the right hand side that will tell you your locker room assignment.
- The door and parking lot for the main building (sheets 1-4) are on the North side of the building facing 105<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- The door and parking lot for the other building (sheets 5-8) are on the East side, behind the main building. There are two entrances to this building, one for sheets 5&6, the other for sheets 7&8.
- **Please remember cell phones are prohibited in the locker room per USA Hockey rules and regulations.** Get your child dressed and then move them out to the hallway to take as many adorable photos as your heart desires, just don't do it in the locker rooms!

## Scholarships

CRYHA strives to make hockey affordable for everyone and a large part of how we do that is through scholarships. Scholarships are available for A/B/U8 levels and will be granted based on determining factors and/or extenuating circumstances. Determining factors are based on if the family is receiving free meals and/or reduced priced meals and families with extenuating circumstances (e.g., changes in employment status, family illnesses, etc.). If you would like more information or to apply for a scholarship please contact the CRYHA Mite Director.

## Volunteering

CRYHA does not require Mite families to complete volunteer hours (DIBS). However, we are a volunteer run organization and really need the help of our families to fulfill coaching and team manager needs. These positions are critical to the success of our kids and is a great way to be involved!

**Coaching** – We are always searching for parents who would like to coach. We can never have too many! Coaching is a great way to help out and see the kids grow. Don't worry if you have never coached, don't know anything about hockey, or can't skate. We have had coaches start off not knowing any of these things! Our program is designed to be taught by a group of coaches so you'll never be alone and there will always be help. Those who have coached with us before are more than willing to teach you everything you need to know (even how to skate).

USA Hockey requires that all coaches need to register with USA Hockey, submit a background check, take an online concussion training course, take an online SafeSport course and go to a Coaches Education Program (CEP) class. There are costs involved with these requirements but CRYHA will reimburse you for all of them if you submit your receipts. While this sounds like a lot, it's really not too bad and it is all in the interest of keeping all of our kids safe both on and off the ice.

**Team Manager** – Team managers are the parents' connection to CRYHA, a role that is equally important as coaching. The team manager's primary role is to receive communication from CRYHA and pass it along to their parents and vice versa. The manager also organizes team functions, helps coordinate jerseys and pictures and generally fosters a positive team spirit and atmosphere. Taking on the role of team manager also **fulfills your volunteer hour requirements** for the season. Although mite families do not have to complete hours, if you have other children at the traveling level this would fulfill your hours for the season.

## Communications

Once your child is registered with CRYHA you will begin receiving email communication from the association. Before the season starts and typically weekly throughout the season you will get email messages from our Communications Coordinator with important information about a number of topics. **Please make sure to read these messages** as they keep you informed as to what CRYHA is up to and what you need to know! You will also receive periodic, Mite-specific, emails from the Mite Director, especially as the season is beginning. Once teams are formed however, **the majority of information will come from your Team Manager**.

**Website** – CRYHA's website is [www.coonrapidshockey.com](http://www.coonrapidshockey.com). There is a vast amount of information here and while you can view it on mobile devices, to utilize all of the features it is best to do so on a computer.

The main page of the website will have the most pertinent information for what's currently happening within the association. Here is a quick rundown of the other places you can go:

**Home** – here you'll find information about the Board of Directors, Policies and Procedures, Rink Info, Jr. Cardinal Camp, Calendar of Events, High School Hockey, Season Kick-off Party, and our Sponsors.

**Registration** – this is where you go to register your player(s) or register as a coach. You will also find registration information including age classifications and some pertinent policy information as well.

**CRYHA Traveling** – if you have a traveling player (boys and girls between 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade), this is where you'll find information specific to their program including: tryouts, season cost, volunteer requirements, and team pages.

**Mite Program** – this is where you'll find all of the information about our Mite program (pre-k – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade). There is information about Mite Camp/HEP, season fees, team pages, and a digital copy of this guide.

**For Our Members** – this tab has a lot of information including SportsEngine help, Fundraising, Volunteer Requirements, Managers Info, Weekly Communications, Charitable Gambling Info, and S.K.A.T.E. (academic celebration) Info.

**Dibs** – this is where you would go to sign up for volunteer opportunities. ***\*There are NO volunteer hours required for Mite families for the 22-23 season unless you also have children playing at the traveling level.***

**SportsEngine** – this is an app that we highly encourage you to use, its largest purpose being to view and RSVP to your team's schedule and to send messages to your team. Your manager will be able to communicate with the entire group quickly and efficiently should a sudden change occur and your coach will greatly appreciate knowing who will or will not be at every game.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising is a great way to offset the cost of hockey for your family. It's completely optional and it's very easy to do! CRYHA typically hosts 3 major fundraising events each season where you can raise money for your family: Wreaths, Butter Braids and Heggie's Pizza. There are usually a few much smaller fundraisers sprinkled in that benefit CRYHA (to help us subsidize as much as we can for EVERY level).

At the beginning of each fundraising event the Fundraising Coordinator will provide pricing and ordering information. These packets of information are placed at CRIC and an email will be sent with specific information at the start of the event. This information can also be found under the Fundraising tab on the CRYHA website.

### **How it works:**

- CRYHA offers products for sale at a base price. The sale price (the price families can sell each product for) will be set by CRYHA and will include the base cost and the profit to the seller, as well as a small profit for CRYHA (to help subsidize EVERY level).
  - *For example, CRYHA buys a product for \$5.79. CRYHA sets the sale price at \$9.00 and the seller profit at \$3.00 leaving CRYHA to profit \$0.21 for each item sold.*



- Each person that purchases products from the seller will pay the seller directly via cash or a check **made out to the seller** (NOT to CRYHA).
- At the conclusion of the fundraiser, the seller will return order sheets/envelopes to CRYHA at specified order turn in events. The seller will pay CRYHA the base cost for each item ordered via cash or check payable to CRYHA. The seller will keep their earned profit to offset their payments.
  - Any “profit” earned belongs to the seller and is not the responsibility of CRYHA.
  - Sellers are responsible to report any earnings, if applicable, on their yearly taxes.

**Wreaths** – The first fundraiser of the year is wreaths from Mickman. This usually begins in late September and runs through mid-October and delivery is in early November.

**Butter Braids** – Our second fundraiser begins just after the wreath fundraiser, usually in the beginning of October. It runs to late-October and delivery is just before Thanksgiving.

**Heggie’s Pizza** – Always a fan favorite, our Heggie’s fundraiser runs from mid-January to early February with delivery taking place in late February or early March.

## **Charitable Gambling**

Charitable Gambling (Bingo/Pull tabs) is used to offset as much cost for our families as possible. The more money CRYHA earns through its charitable gambling sites the more we are able to pay for as an association and therefore ***the less we have to charge our members*** to play hockey. We use charitable gambling money toward: scholarships, non-parent coaches’ salaries, on and off ice training for our players and coaches, as well as training materials and equipment.

CRYHA currently offers charitable gambling at 3 locations: Chanticlear Pizza Grill, Muddy Cow & Scoops Pub. All 3 sites offer pull tabs (every day) and bingo (schedule can be found at: [www.coonrapidshockey.com/charitablegambling](http://www.coonrapidshockey.com/charitablegambling)).

## **Association Business**

The CRYHA Board of Directors is made up of 16 volunteers and 4 paid personnel who all want to provide the best hockey experience that they possibly can. The Board meetings are held on the last Sunday of every month in the conference room at CRIC, typically at 7:00 pm (the meeting dates and times are on the Upcoming CRYHA Events calendar on the main page of the website). Everyone is welcome to attend any and all regular Board meetings.

**Annual Meeting** - Each year the Board of Directors holds an Annual Meeting where every member is encouraged to attend to hear important information/updates about the association, what has happened over the past year and what is planned for the upcoming year. At the Annual meeting Board Member elections take place to make sure that the membership is well-represented by the Board.

**Board Elections** - The majority of the Board must always be composed of representatives selected by a democratic election process by the members of the association. The term for each

elected position on the Board of Directors is 2 years. The Board of Directors considered elected positions are: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Youth Traveling Director, Girls Traveling Director, Mite Director, Player Representative, Recruiting and Retention Coordinator, Coaching Director and District Representative.

The elected positions up on even year elections are: Vice President, Youth Traveling Director, Girls Traveling Director, Recruiting and Retention Coordinator, and Treasurer.

The Board of Directors positions elected on odd year elections are the President, Secretary, Mite Director, Coaching Director, Player Representative, and District Representative.

The other board positions are appointed each year by the elected members of the Board at the first Board meeting following the Annual Meeting election. These positions hold 1-year terms and are: Volunteer & Fundraising Coordinator and Communications Coordinator. Registration Coordinator, Ice Coordinator and Gambling Manager(s) are also appointed by the Board of Directors but have no voting privileges as they are paid positions.

Any member may run for any position on the Board of Directors when said position is up for election/appointment. Rules pertaining to the election process can be found in the CRYHA Bylaws which is available on the CRYHA website.

## Who Do I Talk To?

If you have questions throughout the season, it is usually best to start with your Team Manager. You can also reach out to the Mite Director directly if necessary.

Here is a list of potential needs or questions and who you should talk to for each:

Equipment Needs or Questions	Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Perry Troyer	equipment@cryha.com
Junior Cardinal Camp	Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Dan White	danwhite@cryha.com
Volunteer or DIBS questions	Volunteer & Fundraising Coordinator	Deb Pulskamp	debpulskamp@cryha.com
Registration questions/concerns/issues	Registration Coordinator	Mandi DeGrote	mandidegrote@cryha.com
4th of July Parade info or questions	Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Dan White	danwhite@cryha.com
Association Apparel Questions	Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Stacey Johnson	staceyjohnson@cryha.com
Recruitment questions	Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Dan White	danwhite@cryha.com
Manager Questions	Communication Coordinator or Vice President	Jessica Morgan or Jessica Ables	jessicamorgan@cryha.com or jessicaables@cryha.com
Mite Program	Mite Director or Mite Coordinator	Nick Hanzlik or Alicia Kirschling	<a href="mailto:nickhanzlik@cryha.com">nickhanzlik@cryha.com</a> or miteadmin@cryha.com

New to hockey? Where to start?	Mite Director or Recruitment and Retention Coordinator	Nick Hanzlik or Dan White	nickhanzlik@cryha.com or danwhite@cryha.com
Web errors	Communication Coordinator	Jessica Morgan	jessicamorgan@cryha.com
Coaches Questions	Mite Coaching Director	Corrie Niska	corrieniska@cryha.com
Sponsorship	Sponsorship Coordinator	Tia DuHamel	sponsorshipcoordinator@cryha.com
Fundraising Questions	Volunteer & Fundraising Coordinator	Deb Pulskamp	debpulskamp@ctyha.com

*A full directory of the Board of Directors is available on the CRYHA website.*

## **Summer Hockey**

CRYHA offers a Summer Training Program for mites and traveling players. Information is posted on our Mite Page. There are also many programs in the area that you can participate in if you choose to. Summer hockey is completely optional, it is up to you and your family; there are valid arguments both for and against it. If you decide that you want to have your child play summer hockey you can search “summer hockey near me” and you will receive a long list of options. Popular choices for CRYHA skaters include Hometown Hockey (league) (Andover), Breakaway Hockey (league) (Elk River), and Tradition Hockey (camp) (Blaine) but there are MANY more at varying price points.