



**WILDCAT YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION
COACHES HANDBOOK**



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www.wildcathockey.org

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Club Coaching Philosophy

Wildcat Youth Hockey Association (WYHA) follows the USA Hockey American Development Model (ADM). The ADM is a nationwide model for successfully developing American hockey players. It is a tool that will ensure every kid will have the same chance to succeed and develop their full potential. It will help kids prepare, improve skills, and perform to their fullest potential.

To maximizing player puck touches and player development, USA Hockey recommends that associations strive to follow a 3:1 practice (on ice + dry land) to game ratio. Without circumstances beyond our control, WYHA will strive to follow this recommendation and any team wanting to deviate from this must present its case to the WYHA Board of Directors for Review.

	Practices / Season	Games / Season	Number of Dry Land
Mite U8	35 to 40	16 to 20 Cross Ice Games	1 times a week (30 - 40 min)
Squirt	75 to 80	Max 25 Game Days and Max of 35 Games	2 times a week (30 - 40 min)
Peewee	80 to 90	Max 35 Game Days and Max of 40 Games	2 times a week (30 - 40 min) 1 Chalk Talk or Video Review
Bantam	120 Hours	Max 50 Games	2 times a week (30 - 40 min) 1 Chalk Talk or Video Review

More information about the ADM can be found on the USA Hockey Website at <http://www.usahockey.com/> and <http://www.admkids.com/>

Equal Participation

Skaters at each program level will be provided the opportunity to play in all regular season and tournament games. Wildcat coaches recognize that each player is entitled to play in every game. While the time may vary from game to game, the amount of accumulated skating time over the course of a month or the season should be as equal as possible. The only exceptions to this rule are in the case of a work ethic, behavior, attendance or disciplinary issue. In minor situations, the issue(s) will be discussed with the player, whereas parents will be informed by the head coach if the issue(s) during a practice or game results in a significant amount of decreased playing time during a game or practice.

Generally speaking, Coaches should also rotate the players in all positions at least through the month of January in order for players to learn all positions on the ice and to allow coaches more time to evaluate where a player's strongest/weakest position is. Players who switch positions become more valuable players when they understand the function and expectations of each position. A forward who has played defense will back-check more, while a defender who played forward will know where his forwards are supposed to be and will look for the wide-side skater.

Coaching Staff Selection Process

To be considered as a WYHA Coach, all Coaches must complete the Online Coaches Application. The ACE Director and Coaching Committee will review the coaching application forms and arrange interviews as needed with the Coaching Committee. The Coaching Committee consists of the ACE Director, Head Coach Elect, ACE Emeritus, President, President Elect and Past President. The committee will present their choices for Head Coaches to the WYHA Board for final approval.

After approval, Head Coaches will appoint Assistant Coaches from a pool of eligible coaches supplied by the ACE Director.

Each team, at Squirt level and above, will require a minimum of one Head Coach and two Assistant Coaches. U6 and U8 Mite teams will have a minimum of two coaches per team. There will be no maximum number of coaches allowed on the ice for practice, but only four coaches will be allowed on the bench in a game situation per USA Hockey for Squirt Level and above. U6 and U8 Mites will follow the local league rules for coaching assignments during game play. Please remember all coaches must abide to the USA Hockey Regulations for on ice coaching (see CEP Level Requirements Below).

Student Coaches may also be used. Student coaches must follow the WYHA Student Coach and USA Hockey Policy found later in this manual. Use of minors as coaches or on-ice helpers, unless registered and certified as a Student Coach, is strictly prohibited.

The WYHA Board reserves the right to approve or deny all coach selections that are made. The Board also reserves the right to appoint additional coaches as well as remove or replace coaches as they see fit.

Certifications Required by level (CEP from USA Hockey)

1. All coaches must have the required certification level by January 1 of the current season.
 - (a) All coaches must enter USA Hockey's Coaching Education Program at Level 1, and must continue their education with a coaching clinic each year until, at a minimum, they achieve Level 3. **EXCEPTION:** Coaches of 8U or younger players may remain at Level 1 or their current level. A coach may attend only one (1) certification clinic per year (not including age-specific requirements). Coaches who do not coach in continuous years must re-enter the program at the next level when they resume coaching responsibilities. Once Level 3 is achieved, periodic renewal [as outlined in Paragraph (c) below] is required for coaches who have not achieved Level 4. Coaches who attain Level 4 certification are not required to attend any further certification clinics but must adhere to the age-specific requirement as outlined in Paragraph (b) below.
 - (b) For WYHA, Paragraph (b) pertains to all U6 Mite Coaches and above. In addition to the training in paragraph (a) above, coaches must also complete online age-specific training modules specific to the level of play they are coaching, if they have not already taken that module. This requirement applies to all coaches at all levels, 1 through 5. Coaches may complete more than one age-specific module in any given season.
 - (c) Coaching certification at Level 3 is valid for two (2) seasons, as indicated by the expiration date.

A coach whose Level 3 is due to expire must take the online Level 3 Recertification Track 1 curriculum or they may move up to Level 4. Level 3 Track 1 Recertification is valid for two (2) seasons.

A coach whose Track 1 Level 3 recertification is due to expire must take the online Level 3 Recertification Track 2 curriculum or move up to Level 4. Level 3 Track 2 Recertification is valid for two (2) seasons.

Coaches whose Track 2 Level 3 Recertification is due to expire must attend a Level 4 clinic prior to the expiration of their Level 3 Recertification.

Coaches must complete the online recertification program in order to recertify their Level 3 certifications. Attending a clinic or workshop is no longer valid for recertifying any certification level.

YEARS OF COACHING	CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
Year 1 (ex: 2014-15)	Level 1 clinic + age-specific component
Year 2 (ex: 2015-16)	Level 2 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 3 (ex: 2016-17)	Level 3 clinic (expires Dec. 31, 2018) + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level

Year 4 (ex: 2017-18)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 5 (ex: 2018-19)	Complete the online Level 3 Recertification Track 1 (expires Dec. 31, 2020), or attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 6 (ex: 2019-20)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 7 (ex: 2020-21)	Complete the online Level 3 Recertification Track 2 (expires Dec. 31, 2022), or attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 8 (ex: 2021-22)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 9 (ex: 2022-23)	Must attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 10 and beyond	No Level recertification required but must complete age specific component if not previously taken for current age level. Coaches are highly encouraged to attend a continuing education course every two years.

2. Evidence of Level

All USA Hockey coaches will possess a USA Hockey Coaching Education Program card with valid certification stickers (if certification was received prior to September 1, 2011), or a printout from the USA Hockey online certification list (if certification was received after September 1, 2011).

It is the responsibility of the local association to identify those coaches who do not meet the certification requirements. All coaches have until December 31 of the current season to attend a USA Hockey coaching clinic and complete the online age-specific playing level module to become properly certified.

Prior to the start of all games throughout the season all coaches are required to indicate their current certification status on the score sheet, regardless of their certification level. All coaches (except for juniors) must legibly print their USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP) card number, their CEP level (levels 1-5), their online age-specific playing level module and the year their CEP level was attained.

Beginning January 1 of the current season, prior to the start of each game, all coaches present are required to sign the designated area of the score sheet in order to verify the accuracy of the playing roster, as it appears on the score sheet, for that game.

3. Penalty and Enforcement

All coaches must have current certification and online component verification beginning January 1 of the current playing season. Any coach not in possession of these requirements will be ineligible to coach for the remainder of the season.

Districts and/or affiliates are required to uphold this penalty. It will be the responsibility of the local association registering the team to enforce the national policy.

Practice Plans

Coaches are expected to have a practice plan completed and communicated with the other coaches prior to the start of practice. The most effective plans use all of the coaches and their abilities and keep the players learning and moving. If applicable, Coaches will follow the outlined ADM practice plans outlined via USA Hockey.

Level of Competition

In an effort to improve the overall performance of our skaters, WYHA encourages coaches to work with the respective team managers to schedule challenging, competitive opponents. When scheduling non-league or region games and/or tournaments, attempts should be made to schedule a higher level of competition that will challenge the team. For example, a strong Squirt 2A team should schedule some Squirt 1A teams to push the team to a higher level. Our teams do not improve when they win by large margins. Our philosophy is not about winning, but about learning the game and striving to become better hockey players. Playing higher levels of competition can provide a much better learning experience than an easy win.

Annual Team Parent Meeting

Coaches will schedule and conduct a Parent meeting at the beginning of each season with the team parents. Topics Covered:

- Introduce Assistant Coaches and Team Manager
- Introduce ALD and explain their role
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Expectations: Time to arrive for games, practice, calling to notify of absence in advance, etc.
- Phone number, email, and other pertinent contact information review
- Practice / General Coaching philosophy and format. Dryland, etc.
- Game travel guidelines
- Tournaments: Number, distance , cost

Equipment (Helmets)

According to USA Hockey, all Coaches are required to wear Helmets at all times on the ice. Any person on the ice without a helmet is required to leave the ice immediately. It is recommended that all Coaches follow the same HECC Helmet rules as defined in the Parent Handbook.

Wisconsin Concussion Laws

All WYHA Coaches are required to follow USA Hockey, WI, WAHA, and WIAA Concussion Laws.

<https://www.wiaawi.org>

Volunteer Credits / Pay

- Squirt level and above Head Coach and up to 2 assistants receive 20 hours of volunteer hours for the season. Additional coaches may be approved as needed.**
- For U6 and U8 Mites, 2 coaches per team will receive 20 hours of volunteer hours for the season. Additional coaches may be approved as needed.**
- WYHA will reimburse coaches the cost of USA hockey coach registration

- WYHA will reimburse coaches for the registration fee for the coaching certification through Level 3 certification and Level 3 re-certification
- WYHA will reimburse coaches the cost of USA Hockey Age Specific Modules.
- WYHA will reimburse coaches the cost of Region 4 and WAHA mandated Background Checks.
- WYHA will reimburse coaches the cost of USA Hockey mandated Safe Sport training.
- Non Parent Coaches who are on the official team roster will receive a stipend if they are approved by the WYHA board.
- ** Please see the Parent Handbook for any additional volunteer hours that must be worked.

Coaching Evaluations

Parents will evaluate their players' respective coaches in the middle (Thanksgiving) and at the end of the season using an online WYHA Coach Evaluation form/survey. The ALD's will facilitate completion of the evaluations. The completed forms/surveys will be compiled and made available to the Coaching Committee led by the ACE Director.

The Ace Director, Head Coach Elect, and ACE Emeritus will distribute and review the completed evaluations with each coach and/or coaching staff. Any issues or areas for improvement will be discussed and an action plan will be generated to address the concerns.

Coaching evaluations may also be used to help determine whether a coach will be asked to coach again in the subsequent season.

Player Evaluations

Player evaluations should be performed informally on an ongoing basis throughout the season in order to help each player become the best player they can be. At the completion of each season, the team's coaching staff will complete a written player evaluation and discuss with each individual player. The evaluations will help each player determine skills to improve upon during the off season.

The team coaching staff will provide their team's individual evaluation forms to the Ace Director and Coaching Committee at the end of the season.

Back Ground Check Process

WYHA will conduct background screening of all coaches in compliance with USA Hockey, WAHA and Region 4 policy. A person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as an employee or volunteer of USA Hockey and/or WYHA if compliance is not met.

WYHA Student Coach Policy

WYHA provides an opportunity for older skaters (13 to 17 years old) to act as Student Coaches per the USA Hockey guidelines for younger skaters in the organization.

1. Must always be under the supervision of a carded, screened adult coach during all practices, clinics, try-outs, and in the locker room.
2. May help out at practices, clinics, try-outs only. (May not participate as a player in scrimmages or games when acting as a STUDENT COACH).
3. May not act as the head coach or an assistant coach during practices or games.
4. May be on the bench during games with an adult. The STUDENT COACH will count as one of the maximum of four Team Officials allowed on the bench.
5. Must wear a helmet with full face shield, gloves, and skates while on the ice. Must wear helmet during games while on the bench.
6. May only work with players at least one full playing age level down (e.g., a Bantam age player may act as a STUDENT COACH at the Pee Wee, Squirt or Mite level).
7. A Student Coach Application Form must be completed and submitted to the ACE Director.
8. Student Coach Form can be found on the Coaches tab of the WYHA web page.
9. Upon reaching the age of 18, the STUDENT COACH must comply with the USA Hockey Screening Program and meet the USA Hockey Coaching Education Program requirements which will qualify him/her to act as an assistant or head coach.
10. All Student Coaches (18 years of age and under) are required to fill out a Student Coach Application found on the WYHA Coaches tab of the website.
11. Student coaches need to be a positive addition to the practice environment; they are on the ice to help, not for extra ice time. Whether student coaches are welcome to help with practices, and the number of student coaches on the ice for practices is the head coach's prerogative.
12. Must attend a training session conducted by the local association, or audit a Level 1 clinic (not required to pay nor will they receive certification credit).

Coach's Code of Conduct

- Never verbally or physically abuse a player, official, parent, spectator or other coach.
- Care more about the child than winning the game--winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.
- Give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence, and develop self-esteem.
- Adjust to each player's personal needs and challenges. Be a good listener.
- Encourage all your players to be team players
- Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of your players.
- Be generous with your praise when deserved; be consistent, honest, fair and just. Never criticize players publicly.
- Maintain an open line of communication with your players and their parents. Reinforce the goals and objectives of WYHA.
- Teach the basics and continue to study and learn the game in order to become a better coach and communicator.
- Know the rules, techniques, and strategies of hockey.
- Organize practices that are challenging and fun for your players.
- Follow All USA Hockey Coaching Requirements
- Follow the Wisconsin Concussion Law and WYHA guidelines
- Never be under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol while coaching any game or practice.

As a coach, you will be held accountable for your actions both on and off the ice. As a member of Wildcat Youth Hockey, you represent our teams and association at practices, games, hotels, restaurant, etc. WYHA expects you to conduct yourself in a sportsmanlike manner at all times and to observe the following coach's rules:

- Respect – You are to show respect at all times for coaches, officials, players, spectators and opponents. Do not argue with referees, linesman, timekeepers, scorekeepers, spectators or coaches. Disrespect will not be tolerated and will result in appearing before the Discipline
- Profanity – ZERO TOLERANCE. Use of profanity is strictly prohibited on the ice, in locker rooms, hotels, restaurants while representing WYHA. The first violation of this policy will result in a verbal warning. A second violation will result a one (1) game suspension. The WYHA Executive Board shall determine the penalty for repeated violations.
- Intentionally damaging WYHA equipment and or facilities will result in appearing before the Discipline Committee.
- Conduct on the ice – If a coach receives a misconduct or a game misconduct penalty, the coach will be suspended for one (1) game immediately following a report to the WYHA Executive Board per USA/WAHA rules.
- Other inappropriate behavior – will be handled in accordance with the Grievance Procedures.

Grievance Procedures

Identifying and addressing a problem or concern is not always easy. Therefore, we have established a line of communication beginning with the Team Manager and culminating with the WYHA Executive Board to resolve conflicts or issues as follows:

1. The Team Manager is the first line of communication for all parents and players. The complaint must be presented to the Team Manager.
2. If the problem is such that the Team Manager is unable to resolve the conflict it should be escalated to the Age Level Director.
3. As a last resort, the complaint may be presented to the ACE Director, appropriate Age Level Director, and the WYHA Board Officers (President, President-elect, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Past President.)
4. The complaint must be submitted to the WYHA Board Officers in writing.
5. The WYHA Board Officers will review the complaint within 24-72 hours after notification and will contact the individual(s) filing the complaint to further assess and review the problem.
6. The individual(s) against whom the complaint has been filed shall appear before the WYHA Board Officers and asked to respond to the complaint.
7. The WYHA Board Officers, acting in the best interest of WYHA, will further investigate the complaint as deemed appropriate and is authorized to enforce disciplinary actions as appropriate. These actions may include written warnings and/or temporary and/or permanent suspension from the program.
8. All actions taken by the WYHA Board Officers will be communicated only to the individuals involved during a closed session.

USA Hockey Safe Sport Policy

The safety of its participants is of paramount importance to USA Hockey. USA Hockey SafeSport is the organization's program related to off-ice safety. All WYHA Players, Coaches, Team Managers, Board Members and Parents must follow the policies set forth in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook.

USA Hockey has long had systems in place to protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of abuse and misconduct that can be harmful to youth hockey players and other participants. These include without limitation Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Screening, Locker Room Supervision and Hazing Policies, in addition to Codes of Conduct applicable to administrators, coaches, officials, parents, players and spectators. The USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook is intended to update and collect USA Hockey's various policies to protect its participants from all types of misconduct and abuse.

More information on the topics listed above can be found in the Safe Sport Program Handbook. <http://www.usahockey/safesport>