



HERSHEY JR. 'BEARS'



NEWSLETTER

The NHL/NHLPA Learn to Play program is the perfect first step for kids who want to get started in hockey. In partnership with the NHL, NHLPA, and USA Hockey, the Hershey Jr. Bears have designed a program that makes it easy, fun, and affordable for families to get started in the game.



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Learn To Play

For many years, the Hershey Jr. Bears Bear Bites program was the starting point for hundreds of youth hockey players who first learned how to play the sport of ice hockey. Unlike other learn to play hockey programs in the region, beginning this season, the Hershey Jr. Bears have partnered with the NHL and NHLPA to be one of only 7 affiliate programs in non-NHL markets to host the Learn to Play program! Learn to Play introduces boys and girls ages 4–10 to the sport in a welcoming environment where they'll build skills, confidence, and friendships—both on and off the ice.

Creating a safe environment for families to develop a love for hockey is integral to the Learn to Play program and the first step in doing so is providing all participants with head-to-toe equipment. New participants will be properly fitted with equipment during an in-person fitting event.

The inaugural Fall Session began on November 3 and concluded on December 22. Children must have basic skating skills before signing up for the program. Once enrolled, Head Coach Tyler Shearer, along with Coach Rob Shearer, focuses on having the kids understand the game of hockey and develop their skills through both structured and fun activities to prepare them for team hockey. "Every kid is unique and by the end of the session, we want to see them utilizing a basic understanding of the game, be able to use their core abilities, and teach them independence and individuality."

Mike F. enrolled his son, Josiah, and he has been impressed with the way the program has been run. The coaches took the time to answer all his questions and enjoys the family atmosphere. He says his son has learned more at Learn to Play in Hershey than at other introductory hockey programs. "My son absolutely loves it! We're actually thinking of coming to the (Hershey Junior) Bears next year."

Next session begins January 5, 2026. To sign up your child and to learn more about the Learn to Play program, visit :

www.hersheyjrbears.org/page/show/8809931-nhl-nhlpa-learn-to-play-with-the-hershey-jr-bears

www.learntoplay.nhl.com/



Featured Team

10U American Squirts Shine During Philly/Princeton Weekend

The Hershey Jr. Bears 10U American Squirt team enjoyed an exciting and memorable weekend on November 15–16 as they traveled to the Philadelphia and Princeton areas for a combination of competitive play, team bonding, and collegiate hockey inspiration.

The weekend kicked off with a thrilling 4–3 overtime victory against Snider Hockey. The Bears showed determination and grit throughout the matchup, with regulation goals scored by Leen, Kaminski, and Smink. In overtime, it was Leen who struck again, burying the game-winner and securing an electrifying finish for the team.

Off the ice, players and families attended the Princeton vs. Stonehill NCAA game, watching Princeton earn a tight 3–2 win. The experience gave the players a firsthand look at high-level college hockey and added an extra layer of excitement to the weekend.

On Sunday, the Jr. Bears carried their momentum into their next match-up, delivering a dominant 9–0 victory.

With two wins on the weekend and plenty of fun both on and off the ice, it was a fantastic weekend for the Hershey Jr. Bears!



If you have a story suggestion or would like to feature your team, coach, or one of your players, email rex.burman48@gmail.com.

Team Fundraising

Is your team looking to raise funds for a tournament or pay for other expenses? Consider volunteering your team's parents with Hershey Entertainment. Work a food and beverage stand or as an usher at various events, such as a Hershey Bears game or a concert.* No experience is necessary as training will be provided. Past teams have raised as much as \$2,000!

These fundraisers not only help with immediate team expenses, but they also foster a sense of community and teamwork as families come together to support their team's needs. Team's receive 80% of funds raised with 20% given back to the general Hershey Jr. Bears fund.

*Must be at least 18 years old. For more information, contact Rex Burman (rex.burman48@gmail.com).



Announcements

Save The Date!
The 2025 Hershey Jr. Bears
Skate-A-Thon
Monday, January 19, 2026
Hersheypark Arena

The Hershey Jr. Bears annual fundraiser is next month!

We are asking for each team to donate a gift basket for our annual Skate-A-Thon. Teams in the past have donated baskets with gaming consoles, entertainment tickets (Bears games, Hersheypark, etc), electronics, sports equipment, collectibles, food*, and gift cards (restaurants, groceries, etc), just as a few examples. Gift baskets will be raffled during the Skate-A-Thon.



*No bottles of alcohol

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