2021 GIRLS U18 NATIONAL PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

USA Hockey Girls Player Development Program

The enclosed guide outlines USA Hockey's Girls Player Development Program. USA Hockey continues to produce female player development programming that aligns with U.S. Women's National Team programming. The Girls Player Development program aims to further develop and evaluate the top female players for the next level of play and create a competitive environment for the best female players across the country. The enclosed guide provides specific details about the objectives, eligibility, and dates of the 2021 Girls Player Development Program.

USA Hockey Girls National Development Camp
OBJECTIVES

The objectives at all three USA Hockey Girls National Development Camps are:

- ✓ **Skill Development**
- ✓ **Long-Term Athlete Development**
- ✓ **National Competition**
- ✓ **Evaluation**
- ✓ **Measure Improvement**
- ✓ **Synergy with Women's National Team**

Objectives & Development Process

USA Hockey continues to adjust and enhance the effectiveness of its female player development programs to further develop and evaluate the top female players for the next level of play and create a competitive environment for the best female players across the country. The overall objective is to provide all girls who participate in USA Hockey's National Player Development Camps with the resources for effective training to maximize their playing potential. The experience at national camps exposes participants to various 'best practices' and training strategies so players can return home with the tools to develop their skills over the course of that season (and seasons to come). The age-appropriate resources and developmental programming at Girls National Player Development Camps are aligned with the Women's National Team's training, expectations, and culture, giving emerging U18 players the proper foundation necessary to progress and develop into players that have the hockey skills, off-ice training, and mental skills necessary to succeed at the highest level. Four-time Olympian, Julie Chu, notes the benefits of these camps:

"National Player Development Camps are critical to the improvement of our players and the foundation for our future National Team members. Having gone to these development camps as a player, and more recently as a coach, I know the difference they can make. They allow our players to understand what it takes to train and compete against the best in our nation. Instead of waiting until players are older to understand the culture and the standards of our program, the development camps introduce these concepts early on so these players are better prepared to represent the United States at the collegiate and international levels."

Players during off-ice training at 16/17 Camp

USA Hockey has enhanced its scouting and evaluation process over the last five years to track and develop each individual player who advances to any of the Girls National Player Development Camps and particularly those who earn return invitations. While a District Tryout is the best way for USA Hockey to evaluate players and compare players' abilities among the best in each District, USA Hockey also works to evaluate players and scout games throughout the hockey season. USA Hockey values effort and improvement. Each camp or scouting opportunity is considered a benchmark and an opportunity to measure a players' growth.

USA Hockey looks for players who leverage the information and resources shared with them and who demonstrate steady improvement in the various areas they were exposed to during previous camps (i.e. off-ice testing, on-ice concepts, hockey IQ, work ethic, coachability, team play, attitude, etc.). Every player at these ages who is applying the training strategies provided by USA Hockey will have the opportunity to maximize her development. Nicole Hensley, member of the gold-medal winning 2018 Olympic Women's Hockey Team, provides her take on the increase in talent at each age and continuous improvement:

"As a Strength and Conditioning coach at camp, it was impressive to see the improvement in off-ice testing numbers and how the players value their off-ice training. The camps stress the importance of getting better every day, and each girl receives feedback they can take home with them and continue to work to improve their own game."

Being identified as a player who advances to the Girls U18 Select Player Development Camp indicates that she has advanced quickly in the 15-17 year old range, but USA Hockey cautions that being selected to this camp is not an effective long-term indicator of who will be an elite player at the collegiate and/or National Team level. Every girl who attends a USA Hockey National Player Development Camp has the potential to emerge as an elite player.

While playing for a competitive collegiate program is a goal for most players who attend National Player Development Camps, USA Hockey also understands the overarching goal and dream of each player is to play for Team USA on an international level. It is important to note the average age of a player on the 2018 U.S. Women's Olympic Team was 24 years of age (six years of development beyond the oldest U18 player development opportunity). Recognizing the importance of long-term athlete development is a critical component to players putting themselves in the best position to reach their goals.

Three-time Olympian, Kacey Bellamy

Kacey Bellamy, three-time Olympian, shares her experience with the development program:

"Working towards your goals, day in and day out, representing your country proudly, and doing it with your best friends is not only an honor but also a dream. USA Hockey has given me the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than myself. It has surrounded me with some of the most competitive, driven, and hardworking people, with whole-hearted, genuine personalities that have left lasting impressions on my heart."

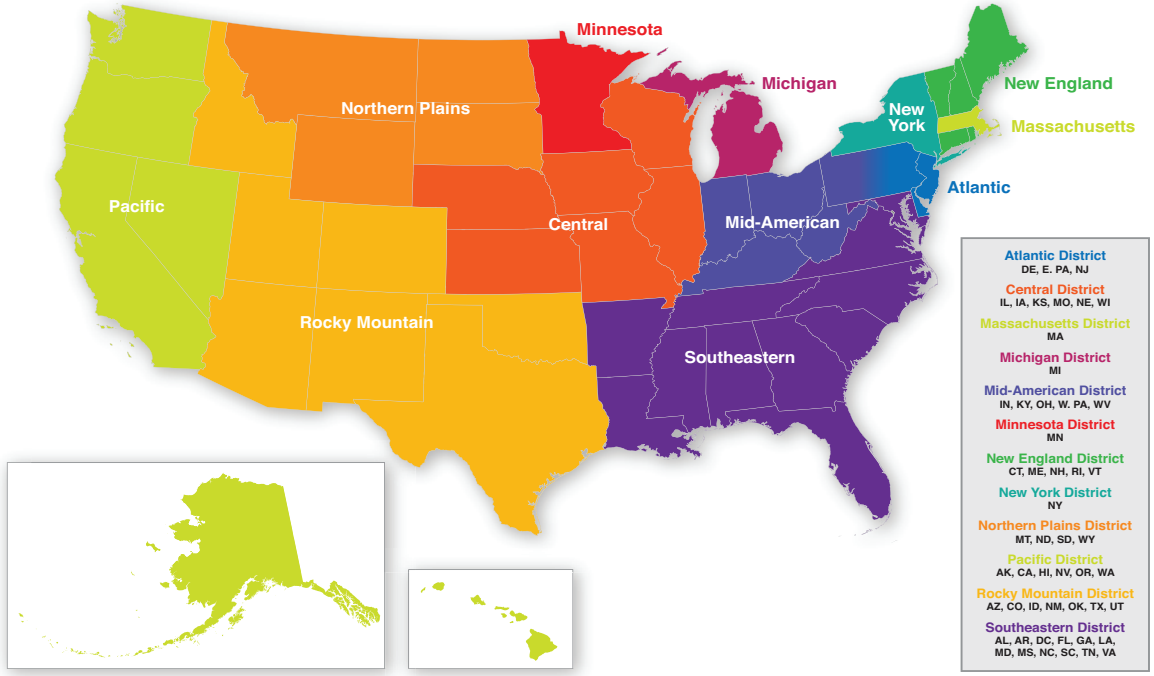
Eligibility Criteria for Girls National Development Camps

Each player must meet the criteria below to be eligible for potential advancement to the 2021 Girls National Development Camps:

1. Player must be in one of the three eligible birth years (2004, 2005, or 2006);
2. Player must hold U.S. citizenship; and
3. Player must participate in her district tryout process.

Each District has a unique player development process in her "home district" that must be followed for a player to be eligible for opportunities at the District, Regional, and/or National level. A player's "home district" is the district where her family's primary residence is. The typical player development process that a player must follow in her "home district" is:

Affiliate/State or Open Tryout → District Tryout → District, Regional, and/or National Player Development Camps



Note: Due to the number of players in a District, the geographical size of a District, and other factors affecting each unique District, an Affiliate or open tryout may not be required prior to a District Tryout, and in some Districts additional steps may be required in addition to those listed above. Please review the District-Specific Girls Player Development Guide or contact the Girls'/Women's Section Representative in your District to learn more about your District's player development process.

2021 GIRLS 15 PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CAMP

Participants: 216 Players
120 Forwards
72 Defense
24 Goalies

Birth Year: 2006

Camp Dates: July 10-15, 2021

Location: St. Cloud State Univ. *(St. Cloud, Minnesota)*

At the Girls 15 Camp camp players will experience a competitive, age-specific environment with on-ice training (drills, small area games, competitions, etc.) and off-ice training (strength & conditioning, team building, nutrition, classroom, etc.).

Each District receives specific forward and defense allocations based on the number of female players registered in each district in the 2006 birth year. Each district receives one goalie allocation and the remainder of the goalie positions are considered 'at-large' allocations.

Players selected to attend the Girls 15 Camp are not eligible for advancement to the Girls U18 Select Camp. Only 2006s named to the initial roster on June 9, 2021, will attend the U18 Select Camp.

2021 GIRLS 16/17 PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CAMP

Participants: 144 players
80 Forwards
48 Defense
16 Goalies

Birth Years: 2004 & 2005

Camp Dates: June 26 - July 2, 2021

Location: St. Cloud State Univ. *(St. Cloud, Minnesota)*

Each District receives allocations (i.e. a specific number of spots at the forward and defense positions) for the 2004 & 2005 birth year generated by the number of registered girls in the District coupled with the performance of that District's specific birth year in prior camps. All goalie positions are considered 'at-large' allocations. USA Hockey appointed scouts will work with each District's evaluation team to identify goalies who will advance to the 16/17 Development Camp.

At the 16/17 Development Camp, USA Hockey continues to provide a competitive and challenging learning environment for participating players. In addition to USA Hockey's priority of focusing on player development, this camp is an evaluation-based camp to determine which players will advance in the remaining available spots for the Girls U18 Select Camp.

2021 GIRLS U18 SELECT PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CAMP

Participants: 72 players
40 Forwards
24 Defense
8 Goalies

Birth Years: Primary focus is 2004 & 2005 birth years *(though 2006 will be eligible)*

Camp Dates: July 16-22, 2021

Location: St. Cloud State Univ. *(St. Cloud, Minnesota)*

There are no set allocations for this camp. USA Hockey's National Scouting/ Evaluation staff leverages in-season competitions, district tryouts, district camps, the Girls 16/17 Camp, along with prior regional, district, and National Player Development Camp experience to collectively determine who is selected to advance to the U18 Select Development Camp.

At the U18 Select Development Camp, USA Hockey continues to provide a similar curriculum that is used at all of the Girls National Development Camps. In addition to USA Hockey's priority of focusing on athlete development, this camp is also an evaluation-based camp to determine which players will advance to future U18 programming.

Note: Players attending any of the National Development Camps may be tracked for future National Team opportunities and are also eligible to advance to future U18 programming if their performance warrants.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

USA Hockey's Girls Player Development Program implements a tiered approach to age-specific development that helps build a broader core base of players. With this enhanced programming, there are additional opportunities available to girls at the District and Regional level. Participation in these opportunities provides players with valuable resources that can be applied to her long-term development and growth as a hockey player. The District and Regional opportunities available will vary by District. Most opportunities focus on 14-17 year-olds (2007-2004 birth years), but additional opportunities may be available in some Districts for the 2003, 2008 and 2009 birth years. Where available, 14-year-old players should still participate in the District Tryout process so that players are eligible to advance to District and Regional Development Camps. Additionally, 14-year-old players can gain exposure to the process and expectations so they can effectively prepare for the following year when they are eligible for advancement to National Player Development Camps.

USA Hockey values the role District Tryouts play in determining which players advance to USA Hockey National Player Development Camps as well as other District and Regional opportunities. To streamline the communication surrounding selections, USA Hockey and its twelve districts follow a National Notification Timeline to notify players of Girls National Camp Selections on a targeted date built into the annual District Tryout calendar. A player will be notified by her home district of her selection to National Camp and will be sent an invitation via email from the National office. The National Player Development Camp fee is $175 and each player is responsible for booking and paying for her own travel.

Girls 16/17 and Girls 15 Camp Process: USA Hockey allocates forward and defensive spots for the 2004 and 2005 birth years based on the prior performance of that districts' specific birth year. All goaltender spots for the 2004 and 2005 birth years and 12 of the 24 spots at the 2006 birth year are considered "at-larges." USA Hockey allocates forward, defensive, and the remaining goaltender spots for the 2006 birth year based on number of female players registered in this birth year in each district. Players will be evaluated throughout their 2021 District Tryout process to be selected for the Girls 16/17 or the Girls 15 Camps and will be notified in accordance with the 2021 National Notification Timeline below.

Girls U18 Select Camp Selection Process: USA Hockey's National Scouting/Evaluation staff leverages in-season competitions, district tryouts, district camps, along with prior regional, district, and National Player Development Camp experience to evaluate and select the 72 age-eligible players who will be invited to the 2021 Girls U18 Select Player Development Camp. A partial roster for the U18 Select Camp will be named on June 9, 2021. The remainder of the U18 Select roster will be named on July 2, 2021 on the final day of the Girls 16/17 Camp. Players attending the Girls 16/17 Camp will be competing for the remaining roster spots for the U18 Select Camp.

Note: If a selected player has an extenuating circumstance (emergency, injury, sickness, etc.) that prevents her from participating in a camp, it is possible that a player named as an alternate may be invited by the National Office to attend camp after the final National Notification Timeline date, and this invitation to attend the camp may happen as late as the start (or even a few days into) the camp(s).

NATIONAL NOTIFICATION TIMELINE

JUNE 9, 2021

- Partial roster named for the 2021 Girls U18 Select Camp
- Player selections for ALL districts for the 2021 Girls 16/17 Camp
- Player selections for ALL districts for the 2021 Girls 15 Camp
- Player selections for at-large spots for Girls 16/17 and Girls 15 Camps
- All players named as "alternates" for the Girls 16/17 or Girls 15 Camps

JULY 2, 2021

- Final forward, defense, and goalie selections for the Girls U18 Select Camp will be named on the final day of the Girls 16/17 Camp
- All players named as "Alternate" selections for the Girls U18 Select Camp

Frequently Asked Questions

Why attend USA Hockey Girls Player Development Camps?

USA Hockey hosts a series of annual National Player Development Camps for girls ages 15, 16 and 17. Participants are chosen through an annual evaluation process conducted at the local and District levels. Participants receive on and off-ice training under the direction of leading USA Hockey coaches, current and former Women's National Team players, and collegiate coaches. At its camps, USA Hockey reinforces the integral role that continuous improvement and on-going training have on players' development.

Is the curriculum the same at all Girls National Player Development Camps?

The Girls National Player Development Camps provide players with age-appropriate resources and developmental programming directly aligned with the U.S. Women's National Team's training, expectations, and culture. The curriculum provided at all three camps incorporates four key areas: on-ice training, off-ice strength/conditioning, nutrition, and mental skills/team building. The curriculum is built as a progression from the Girls 15 Camp to the Girls 16/17 Camp to the Girls U18 Select Camp, providing players with additional layers of information, resources, and training to help advance each player to the next level.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for advancement to a Girls National Player Development Camp, a female player must:

1. Be born in 2004, 2005, or 2006 birth years;
2. Hold U.S. Citizenship; and,
3. Participate in her "home district" tryout.

Are players allowed to attend more than one District Tryout in a given year?

No, a player may only participate in the District Tryout process in one District in a given year.

Are dual-citizens eligible for Girls National Player Development Camps?

Yes. An age-eligible, female player is eligible for Girls National Player Development Camps as long as she has proof of U.S. Citizenship. However, for a dual-citizen to be eligible for international or IIHF-sanctioned events (i.e. U18 World Championships), additional requirements must be met.

I'm in the process of obtaining my U.S. citizenship. Am I eligible for Girls National Player Development Camps?

No. A player must have proof of her U.S. Citizenship in order to be eligible for Girls National Player Development Camps. However, some Districts may allow a non-U.S. citizen in this scenario to attend a District opportunity (tryout or camp) under the condition that she is ineligible for potential advancement to any of USA Hockey's Girls National Player Development Camps.

Three-time Olympian, Meghan Duggan on the ice with U18 Select Players

If I am a U.S. citizen but live in another country, am I eligible to attend a District Tryout?

Yes. If this situation applies, the player should contact USA Hockey's National Office immediately to determine which District she should register in for player development opportunities.

If my family owns more than one home, can I choose which District I register in for player development opportunities?

No. A player must register for player development opportunities in the District where her family's primary residence is. If you have questions about what constitutes "primary residence," please contact USA Hockey's National Office.

If I billet, live at school or attend school in another District, can I choose which District I register in for player development opportunities?

No. A player must register for player development opportunities in her "Home District" (ie. where her family's primary residence is). If you have questions about what constitutes "primary residence," please contact USA Hockey's National Office.

What if I am unable to tryout in the District where my family holds primary residence?

The best opportunity for a player to be evaluated for potential advancement to one of USA Hockey's Girls National Player Development Camps is by attending the tryout in the District where her family holds primary residence. However, USA Hockey acknowledges that certain circumstances may preclude a player from trying out in her "Home District." When that scenario arises, players are required to complete the 2021 Girls District Tryout Waiver Request Form as soon as possible but no later than the conclusion of the player's home affiliate or district tryout.

If I have an extenuating circumstance (emergency, injury, sickness, etc.) that prohibits me from attending my District tryout, can I still be considered for District, Regional and National opportunities?

Yes. If this situation arises, the player should immediately contact her District Girls'/Women's Section Representative to relay the circumstances.

Players face off during game at Girls Player Development Camp

I am currently 14-years-old, but turn 15 this calendar year. Am I eligible for the Girls 15 National Player Development Camp?

Eligibility for opportunities at the District, Regional, and National levels are based on a player's birth year, not her current age. For National opportunities during 2021, the 2006 birth year is eligible for the Girls 15 National Player Development Camp, and the 2004 and 2005 birth years are eligible for the Girls 16/17 National Player Development Camp. All three birth years (2004, 2005, and 2006) are eligible for the Girls U18 National Select Player Development Camp. At the District and Regional level, the above birth years and additional birth years may be eligible for District and Regional opportunities. There may be limited district/regional opportunities available this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

After I attend my District Tryout, how will I know if I am selected to attend one of USA Hockey's Girls National Player Development Camps? USA Hockey will follow the National Notification Timeline in this Guide. Prior to each of the notification dates listed in the National Notification Timeline, USA Hockey's National Office Staff will communicate with District Representatives in each of the Districts listed to relay players' statuses. The process by which a District notifies selected players can vary. Some Districts will notify players by phone call and others may elect to post the list of the selected players on their District website. Once you have received notification from your District representative, USA Hockey's National Office Staff will send your official camp invitation via email. That invitation will contain details about the camp the player has been selected to attend and will outline all information USA Hockey will need from the player and parent/guardian prior to camp.

If selected for the Girls 16/17 Camp, would I also be eligible to attend the U18 Select Camp? Yes. A partial roster will be announced for the Girls U18 Select Camp; however, all players participating at the Girls 16/17 Camp will be competing for the remaining spots at the Girls U18 Select Camp. A final roster for the Girls U18 Select Camp will be named on the final day of Girls 16/17 Camp and select players will be invited back for the Girls U18 Select Camp. Players selected to attend the Girls 15 Camp are not eligible for advancement to the Girls U18 Select Camp. The only 2006s eligible for U18 Select Camp are those named to the initial roster on June 9, 2021.

If I have been selected or named as an alternate for one of the three Girls National Player Development Camps, but I have an extenuating circumstance (emergency, injury, sickness, etc.) that prohibits or may prohibit me from attending the camp, who should I contact? A player who has been selected or named as an alternate, but has an extenuating circumstance that prohibits or may prohibit (i.e. unsure if player will be cleared from an injury), the player should notify USA Hockey's National Office and her District Girls and Women's Section Representative of the circumstances immediately.

Girls at U18 Select Player Development Camp participate in team building competition

How are the player status terms defined?

- A player who is "**selected**" has been named to attend one of the three Girls National Player Development Camps as indicated by the National Office and District Representatives.
- "**At-larges**" are extra spots at the Girls 16/17 Camp and Girls 15 Camp which can be awarded to any player in any district outside of each District's set allocations.
- A player who is an "**alternate**" for one of the three Girls National Player Development Camps may be invited to camp by the National Office if a selected player in the same position and same birth year is unable to attend the camp for any reason, an alternate may be invited to camp as late as the start (or even a few days into) the camp.

If I am not selected to attend one of the National Player Development Camps, should I attend my District Tryouts next year? Yes. USA Hockey encourages players to continue to attend District Tryouts and Player Development Camps to obtain valuable resources that she can apply to her future development and improvement as a hockey player. Recognizing the importance of long-term athlete development is a critical component to players putting themselves in the best position to reach their goals.