

## **Hello BYHA Families!**

We kicked off clinics for all travel levels this past week. To help everyone feel prepared, we've put together a list of FAQs and important info regarding clinics and tryouts. Please be in contact with the Tryout Coordinator if you have any questions, tryout conflicts, injuries, issues, concerns, etc. The Tryout Coordinator tracks all the attendance with tryouts and if you tell a board member or a coach - it doesn't get on the spreadsheet and properly accounted for your skater. Contact info is below and on the tryout page.

## **Tryout Frequently Asked Questions**

DON'T let us know if you can't make a clinic. DON'T attend the clinic for the opposite group as we need to keep the numbers right for kids on the ice. Clinic attendance is not tracked and is not mandatory, they are simply there for your player to get on the ice prior to tryouts.

DO let us know if you have conflicts during tryouts. Football, HP hockey, other sports, family reunions, weddings - we get it. Many are excused absences and WILL NOT count against you, though you need to make 50% of the tryouts to be placed. PLEASE let us know about your conflicts as soon as possible. Note: A conflict from 9-11AM does not excuse you from a tryout at 3:45PM.

Let us know if you have an injury that will prevent you from trying out, or if you experience an injury during tryouts. This includes not feeling well enough to skate. We have procedures in place for this! Don't try out through an injury and risk getting hurt worse. We do require a doctor's note for injury/illness exceptions.

Also, any last minute exceptions that need to be noted - opt out of A/AA team, sibling placement changes (same level), etc - please let us know BEFORE Tryout #1.

[CLICK HERE -> TRYOUT PAGE <- CLICK HERE](#)

EMAIL: [tryouts@buffalohockey.net](mailto:tryouts@buffalohockey.net)

We have been working hard this year to make tryouts as successful as possible. We have been searching and interviewing for the best evaluators we can find. We will be utilizing an experienced on-ice team to run some clinics prior to tryouts as well as all the tryout sessions, and we are digging into our evaluation software and making sure we utilize it to its full potential.

**Tryouts are hard, let's not make them harder.**

We need your help! Build your skaters up, talk through it with them, remind them hockey is a game, and they get to play no matter what! Have them get enough sleep and eat well. Help them have their equipment ready and everything they need in place. Skates sharp and sticks taped. PLEASE ask us questions if you have them. Don't talk negatively about the tryout process in front of your skater or they will also have a negative view going in. If you have questions, please reach out!

### **Anything I should know about equipment?**

Yes! Helmet stickers need to be removed before your first tryout (Goalie helmets are exempt), and **only white/black/purple/grey socks AND SKATE LACES are allowed**. You will be asked to go change if you wear socks or laces other than BYHA colors (anything from AAA, camps, clubs, or other). **Stick tape can only be BYHA colors, white/black/purple/grey**. Also, PLEASE make sure your skater turns in their tryout jersey at the rink after each tryout - they get washed nightly. Goalies - you keep your jersey until tryouts are finished.

### **Do I need neck protection?**

YES. Neck protection is now required as of 8/1/24 (see [HERE](#) for info) and don't forget your mouthguard!

### **When can I get in the locker room?**

Locker rooms will be available 30 minutes prior to your scheduled session. You must go straight to the locker room and get dressed and then remain in the locker room until the current tryout group is off the ice.

### **I haven't been added to any tryout groups on SportsEngine.**

We don't roster any kids to the tryout groups on SportsEngine. You can use the app if you want, i.e. search "Buffalo Squirt" and look for squirt development group 1 for tryout group 1 (Make sure you select year 2025-2026). You can select the proper tags on the association calendar on the website (again, make sure you choose the correct year) and view there or link it to your phone calendar, or view/print the schedules on the tryout page. \*\*Reminder to the boys - you may switch groups during tryouts! Any changes will be communicated via email. Squirts after Tryout 1, Pee wee/Bantam after Tryout 2.

### **Why is the arena closed during tryouts?**

The arena is closed because we need the evaluators to be able to focus on the ice and not be influenced by people in the stands. We also want the kids to focus on what they are doing on the ice - not looking up to see if mom or dad saw them miss a pass or slip and fall because they

were trying their hardest vs not trying to mess up. The evaluators want to see kids at their limit, not 50%, not 75%...

### **Why do some people go into the arena during tryouts?**

Tryout coordinators are in for all sessions. HOC VP/Board Pres/Board Liaison is there for all sessions. Head coach applicants are allowed in by invitation only. They have no access to any tryout info and are in a separate area from the evaluators. Any others are by board invitation only. Board members are allowed to come and see the process and how it works. Locker room monitors will be in the locker room area only and not allowed to watch tryouts. Arena staff will be in and out doing their thing.

For the levels that have external scrimmage partners - their parents will be allowed in to watch with the understanding they are not allowed to cheer, advise, coach, or otherwise distract the players on the ice. They will have a designated area to sit and not be allowed to interact with our coaches or evaluators. These teams travel to us and help us out, we can't expect them to sit in their cars. This is standard practice and the same if our teams go to any other tryout scrimmage. Our parents would be allowed in with the same understanding and theirs would not be.

### **Who evaluates?**

We have spent a lot of time this year searching out and interviewing candidates for evaluation roles. We have qualified people lined up to help out. Some are from within the association just like before and we pay special attention to utilize them where they have no conflicts or "skin in the game," and we have also found qualified evaluators from outside of our association to join us this season! All evaluators have a great sense of the game through playing, coaching, refereeing, evaluating and scouting experience. Your skater will be evaluated by the same team for all of their tryouts, and all groups at each level (when applicable) will be evaluated by the same group for consistency.

### **Why do you mix up the groups?**

The boys side has (2) tryout groups per level. Skaters were placed into these groups at random to start. After Squirt tryout 1 and PW/B tryout 2, the groups are shuffled so the skaters can be evaluated against others with similar abilities.

### **Who is on the ice?**

During clinics we rely on our dedicated coaches to get the kids out there. They will run the bulk of the clinics. We have a talented group on ice for several of the clinics prior to the tryouts and all the tryout sessions. They should be able to keep the kids moving during tryouts with consistent delivery from on ice staff to give each kid an equal opportunity to shine while making

the most efficient use of the ice time. We have a communication plan set up between the coordinators, on-ice staff, and evaluators to ensure each skater gets evaluated for each item on the score sheet. If a couple jersey numbers need to run a drill again - we'll make it happen.

**My kid needs help with their skates!**

Have them get dressed and come to lobby for you to help with equipment issues.

**I need to use the restroom!**

There is a restroom in Peterson, otherwise Kwik Trip is literally a *quick trip* down the road (and you need a cup of coffee anyways, right?)

**When will I know what team my skater made?**

We try really hard to put teams together as efficiently as possible, but the handbook does allow us 48 hours. We post teams to the level pages as soon as they are finalized and send an email letting everyone know they are posted.

**GOALIES**

You guys rock! Please refer to information from the Goalie Coordinators, scroll to the bottom of the [TRYOUT PAGE](#) or go direct to the goalie tryout page [Goalie Tryouts](#). You can email the Goalie Coordinators [HERE](#).

Reminder: Goalies utilize your goalie group and view the skater schedules on the tryout page. Clinics are optional, but tryouts are required. PLEASE if you have TRYOUT conflicts let both the Goalie Coordinators and the Tryout Coordinator know.

Again, if you have additional questions please don't hesitate to reach out to [tryouts@buffalohockey.net](mailto:tryouts@buffalohockey.net)

***See you at the rink!***

***Mike Peteron***

***Tryout Coordinator***