

# GBAYHA Coaching Guide

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## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
It is All About Fun!.....	1
Leadership and Communication .....	2
Your Words/Your Actions=Your Philosophy .....	3
Ethics.....	3
SafeSport.....	4
Pre-Season and Beginning of Season Guidelines.....	4
During the Season Guidelines.....	6

## Introduction

THANK YOU for giving your time and talents to the young skaters of Green Bay Area Youth Hockey. As an organization, we believe that the great game of hockey offers the benefits of fitness, sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, and cooperation. In turn, it is our job to ensure each player can achieve his or her personal goals, and contribute to the greater good of the community. The coach is the **primary factor** in this equation for the player. The purpose of this guide is to help YOU fulfill the mission of our hockey association.

## It is All About Fun!

***It's No Longer Fun.*** The number one reason kids quit sports is when it is [no longer fun](#). In a 2014 study for George Washington University, researcher Amanda Visik interviewed numerous youth athletes and asked them why they played sports. Nine out of Ten athletes said the number one reason they played was it was **fun!** The children in the George Washington study defined fun as trying their best, being treated respectfully by coaches, parents and teammates, and getting playing time. They listed eighty-one characteristics of fun, and winning (#48), playing in tournaments (#63) and practicing with private trainers (#66) did not finish high on the list.

#### MORE FUN

1. TRYING YOUR BEST
2. WHEN COACH TREATS PLAYER WITH RESPECT
3. GETTING PLAYING TIME
4. PLAYING WELL TOGETHER AS A TEAM
5. GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR TEAMMATES
6. EXERCISING AND BEING ACTIVE

#### LESS FUN

48. WINNING
63. PLAYING IN TOURNAMENTS
66. PRACTICING WITH SPECIALTY TRAINERS AND COACHES
67. EARNING MEDALS OR TROPHIES
73. TRAVELING TO NEW PLACES TO PLAY
81. GETTING PICTURES TAKEN

*Much less of a priority than simply having a chance to play.*

If young athletes are not having fun, they will eventually walk away, regardless of talent or how good their team or coach is. Adults rarely do voluntary activities such as exercise or community service work that they do not derive enjoyment from. Why do we think our kids will?

**Solution:** Your athletes are never too old, or too talented, to answer the question “Are you enjoying yourself out there?” Ask it! Chances are, the more they enjoy themselves, the better they play, the more they play, and the harder they will work. **IT HAS TO BE FUN!** And if it stops being fun, you need to figure out a way to make it fun, or before you know it, kids will choose early retirement

## Leadership and Communication

Your primary role as a coach with GBAYHA is not only to teach the skills of hockey, but also to know, understand, and implement the USA Hockey American Development Model (ADM) principles. You also need to effectively communicate with players, parents, association representatives and officials (plus make it FUN for the kids!). In addition, it is your responsibility to follow the guidelines and policies outlined by USA Hockey and the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association. The leadership you demonstrate should be based on developing a positive teaching and learning environment. A Growth Mindset is important in order to maximize learning. Mistakes are part of the game and provide opportunity for teaching and learning. Research shows if athletes have coaches who follow the guidelines listed below, the athletes generally enjoy playing more, think of their coaches as more knowledgeable and have a greater desire to continue playing in the future.

- **Be Enthusiastic** - Be an enthusiastic coach of your group. Your enthusiasm is important, as it will affect your players' enjoyment of the game of hockey.
- **Be Positive** - interact with your players in a positive manner. Set a good example of desired behavior. Give constant encouragement and feedback to the players.
- **Be Demanding But Considerate** - Clearly establish what is expected of the players. Your expectations of the players should be based on their abilities and experiences. Don't expect more than is reasonable and realistic.
- **Be Patient** - The coach's best virtue will be patience. Remember, they're kids! Give recognition at every opportunity and your patience will pay off.
- **Set realistic team and individual goals** (NOT winning)
- **Be a good example** of desired behavior

- **Encourage effort** , what it means to be a good teammate, and always demonstrate good sportsmanship

Parents are provided a coaching evaluation at the conclusion of the year – priorities and objectives for the season include:

- Practice sessions are organized, instructional, and disciplined. Use USA Hockey mobile coach app and other practice resources on USA Hockey website.
- Coach teaches appropriate skating and hockey skills for the level of play. Reference [USA Hockey Skill Progressions](#) for more specific information.
- Coach is effective in teaching skills necessary to advance player to the next level.
- Coach distributes playing time appropriately.
- Coach develops a good relationship with the players.
- Coach provides positive motivation for the players.
- Coach is a role model for the players in conduct and sportsmanship.
- Coach provides effective feedback to the players.
- Coach communicated effectively with players and parents.

Additionally, we ask parent to rate their skaters overall hockey experience and their own hockey experience, and if they would recommend the coach for the next season.

## Your Words/Your Actions=Your Philosophy

Establish your role as a competent and willing coach. Be fair and considerate, set a good example, and earn the respect of your players and parents... don't demand it. A coach's philosophy is built on experience, knowledge and abilities acquired over the years. To be able to demonstrate and express a sound philosophy, you must be able to:

- Be an effective teacher; this means doing more listening and learning than talking
- Be a model of cooperation and fair play
- Be accountable for your actions
- Share responsibilities with assistants and players
- Develop in your players a respect for teammates other participants
- Develop self-respect and self-discipline in your players

To have a significant, positive effect on the players you coach, it is necessary to establish both in your own mind and in your behavior, a sound, personal philosophy. Share this philosophy with your players and parents to start the season.

## Ethics

**COMPETENCE:** Coaches will maintain a standard of excellence with regard to education and information related to coaching and makes an on-going effort to maintain competence in the skills they use. All

coaches must complete annual USA Hockey Coaching Education Program certifications by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**INTEGRITY:** Coaches will exercise integrity in the practice of coaching and be honest, fair and respectful of others.

**RESPECT FOR PARTICIPANTS:** Coaches will respect the fundamental rights, welfare, dignity, values, opinions and worth of all participants and will be aware of cultural and individual differences including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socio-economic status.

**RESPONSIBLE COACHING:** Coaches will be aware of ethical responsibilities to society and the community in which they work and live as well as comply with the law and encourage the development of policies which serve the interest of the sport and USA Hockey.

**DISCRIMINATION:** Coaches will not engage in or condone discrimination based upon age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status or any other basis prescribed by law.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** Coaches will not engage in sexual harassment which includes but is not necessarily limited to sexual solicitation, unwelcome physical advances and verbal or non-verbal conduct. Coaches will not deny any participants the right to participate in any activity based upon their having made or their being the subject of a sexual harassment claim.

**HAZING/BULLYING:** Coaches will not engage in or condone behavior which is harassing, harmful or demeaning to participants.

**ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO:** Coaches will refrain from using alcohol, tobacco or drugs in conjunction with, including traveling to or from, any USA Hockey competition or practice session.

## SafeSport

All USA Hockey coaches are required to complete SafeSport certification. As a certified USA Hockey coach, you must familiarize yourself with each form of potential misconduct and shall refrain from engaging in misconduct and/or violating any of these policies. USA Hockey has ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse and misconduct. How USA Hockey and its Member Programs respond to an allegation of abuse or misconduct is described in Section V of the SafeSport Handbook.

## Pre-Season and Beginning of Season Guidelines

### Assistant Coaches

As the head coach, you have the responsibility and autonomy to select your assistant coaches. Assistants play a vital role during practices and games. It is important to communicate expectations with assistants before the season to make sure they know what you expect of them and that they are aligned with your coaching values and philosophy. All on ice and bench assistants must complete all CEP requirements.

### **Team Manager**

As the head coach, you also have the responsibility to select a team manager. Be sure to meet with your team manager at the start of the season to discuss responsibilities and parent communication. GBAYHA has a full list of duties that the team manager is required to fulfill before, during, and after the season.

### **Start of Season Team Meeting**

Make sure your team experiences a positive and successful season by getting everyone involved on to the same page from the very start. Avoid parent/coach conflict, and instead become a powerful force of encouragement and support by working together. As a coach, it's your responsibility to take the lead in these relationships and to set behavioral standards. Let them know that yelling or coaching from the stands won't be tolerated, and that problem parents will be addressed. This is best done in a pre-season meeting between coaching staff and parents before the first practice, so that everyone fully understands the season expectations ahead of time. There are several things to focus on when leading this meeting. In addition to simply introducing yourself to the parents, coaches should outline their coaching philosophy and goals for the season. This is a good time to hear from parents what they hope to get out of the season for their kids, and to make sure their goals align with yours.

The pre-season parent meeting also is a good time to deal with season logistics such as schedules, paperwork and volunteer needs. Parents play an important role in making sure their kids arrive on time, get enough sleep and have the right equipment and uniform. A sample agenda for your parent meeting can be found [here](#)

### **Level Liaison**

Each level (U8, Squirt, Pee Wee, Bantam, Girls) has Level Liaison assigned by the Coaching Committee. If you need help with items relating to your team, contact your level liaison, contacts can be found on GBAYHA website.

### **Parent Concerns**

Maintain an open line of communication with parents by setting expectations at the beginning of the year. Parents are crucial partners in the development of their young hockey player. Fill parents' emotional tanks with truthful and specific praise when their child does something positive. Thank them for helping you build a positive team culture. Try to tell them something positive about their child every time you see them (again being truthful and specific). If you do, they will think you are a genius as a coach! If a parent has a concern, set parameters up front – avoid email and ask another coach or level

liaison to be present for a meeting. Use the resources that you have available and maintain your calm if confronted by a parent.

## **Locker Room Policy**

Youth players are particularly vulnerable in locker rooms, changing areas and restrooms due to various stages of dress/undress and because they are often less supervised than at other times. Athlete-to-athlete problems, such as sexual abuse, bullying, harassment or hazing, often occur when a coach or other responsible adult is not in a position to observe – this is especially true in locker rooms.

**Adherence to a locker room policy enhances privacy and significantly reduces the likelihood of misconduct. It is the policy of USA Hockey that all USA Hockey Member Programs must have at least one responsible screened adult (which may include coaches, managers or other volunteers) present monitoring the locker room during all team events to assure that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room.**

Acceptable locker room monitoring could include having locker room monitors inside the locker room while participants are in the locker room, or could include having a locker room monitor in the immediate vicinity (near the door within arm's length and so that the monitor can sufficiently hear inside the locker room) outside the locker room that also regularly and frequently enters the locker room to monitor activity inside. If the monitor(s) are inside, then it is strongly recommended that there be two monitors, both of which have been screened.

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, which includes voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras, increase the risk for some forms of abuse or misconduct. As a result, the **use of a mobile device's recording capabilities in the locker rooms is not permitted at any USA Hockey sanctioned event, provided that it may be acceptable to take photographs or recordings in a locker room in such unique circumstances as a victory celebration, team party, etc., where all persons in the locker room are appropriately dressed and have been advised that photographs or recordings are being taken.**

A coach and/or team administrator that fails to take appropriate steps to ensure the Locker Room Policy is adhered to, and any USA Hockey participant or parent of a participant who otherwise violates this Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Visit [www.usahockey.com](http://www.usahockey.com) for a complete Locker Room Policy.

## **During the Season Guidelines**

### **Practice**

USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) provides a set of principles and structure as it relates to long term athlete development (LTAD). The ADM and LTAD is a developmentally appropriate approach to hockey training that is based on extensive research and modeled after successful training programs from multiple sports all over the world. Here is an overview of the ADM:

**USA HOCKEY** USA Hockey's American Development Model

**Hockey for Life**  
 Any Age – Players can enter at any stage. "Hockey for Life" can provide quality recreational opportunities for all ages. USA Hockey also hopes that as adults we lead a physically active lifestyle and continue to contribute to the sport through volunteerism as coaches, referees and administrators.

Active Start	FUNDamentals	Learn to Train	Train to Train	Learn to Compete	Train to Compete	Train to Win
<p><b>Ages 6-6 Female</b>            This early development period is essential for acquiring fundamental movement skills (running, gliding, jumping, kicking, catching, striking...) that lay the foundation for more complex movements, thereby preparing children for a physically active lifestyle. USA Hockey encourages activity that incorporates fundamental movement skills in the 4 environments that lead to physical literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the water: Swimming</li> <li>On the ground: Athletics</li> <li>In the air: Gymnastics</li> <li>On ice and snow: Sliding (skating)</li> </ul> <p>Kids should start with a learn to skate program and then a learn to play program as their initial steps into ice hockey.</p> <p><b>6 &amp; Under (Males):</b>            50-60 ice sessions            2-3 ice sessions per week            50-60 minute ice sessions            7-9 skaters per team            0 full-time goalies            34-40 quality practices            16-20 cross-ice game days</p>	<p><b>Ages 6-8 Female</b>  <b>Ages 6-9 Male</b>            The objective of this stage is to refine fundamental movement skills and begin to acquire basic sports skills. This is the time when a foundation is laid for future acquisition of more advanced skills.</p> <p>The focus is on the development of physical literacy. Fundamental movement skills should be mastered and motor development emphasized, while the participation in many sports/activities is encouraged. For optimal skill acquisition, the basic hockey skills of skating and stick control are introduced. FUN competitions are also introduced in a team environment.</p> <p><b>8 &amp; Under (Males):</b>            50-60 ice sessions            2-3 on-ice/1 off-ice sessions/week            50-60 minute ice sessions            9-12 skaters per team            0 full-time goalies            34-60 quality practices            16-20 cross-ice game days</p>	<p><b>Ages 9-11 Female</b>  <b>Ages 9-12 Male</b>            This is the period of accelerated learning of coordination and fine motor control and is the critical stage for the acquisition of hockey skills.</p> <p>Prior to the beginning of the growth spurt, players have the best opportunity to learn and begin to master fine motor skills that can be used in combination with other skills. In most cases what is learned or not learned in this stage will have a very significant effect on the level of play that is achieved later on.</p> <p>Players should be able to begin to transfer skills and concepts from practices to games. Group interaction, team building and social activities should be emphasized. A balance of practices and games will promote the continued development and mastery of key hockey skills.</p> <p><b>10 &amp; Under (Squirts):</b>            95-100 ice sessions            3-4 on-ice/2 off-ice sessions/week            60 minute ice sessions            10-12 skaters and 1 goalie            75-80 quality practices            20-25 game days</p> <p><b>12 &amp; Under (Peewees):</b>            100-120 ice sessions            4 on-ice/2 off-ice sessions/week            60+ minute ice sessions            12 skaters and 2 goalies            80-90 quality practices            30-35 game days</p>	<p><b>Ages 11-15 Female</b>  <b>Ages 12-16 Male</b>            The focus of this stage is to further develop sports specific skills, begin to introduce competition, and start to emphasize support training to continue development of speed, strength and stamina while maintaining flexibility.</p> <p>Players should consolidate sport specific technical skills with an increased emphasis on hockey and a reduction in the number of other sports played. A continued emphasis is also placed on the development of individual and group tactics. Social and emotional considerations are addressed by placing an emphasis on team-building, group interaction and social activities.</p> <p><b>14 &amp; Under (Bantam) &amp; 16 &amp; Under (Midget):</b>            160 ice sessions            4-5 ice sessions per week            80 minute ice sessions            Combined and separate practices for team/position            9 month training calendar            16 skaters and 2 goalies            120-130 quality practices            40-50 games            Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage</p>	<p><b>Ages 15-18 Female</b>  <b>Ages 16-18 Male</b>            This is the time to prepare athletes for the competitive environment, continue to refine technical skills, ancillary skills and develop the physical attributes.</p> <p>The focus is on optimizing fitness preparation and to begin to specialize in ice hockey. Training should be individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation, fitness and recovery. During this stage, training volume will increase, as does training intensity. Competitions become more important and the focus shifts to performance. Training will stress the development of position specific technical and tactical skills under competitive conditions. Mental skills that contribute to performance are also emphasized.</p> <p><b>18 &amp; Under (Midget) &amp; 19 &amp; Under (Female):</b>            200 ice sessions            2-4 ice sessions per week            80 minute ice sessions            Combined and separate practices for team/position            10 month training calendar            18 skaters and 2 goalies            130-140 quality practices            50-60 games            Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage</p>	<p><b>Ages 19-21 Female</b>  <b>Ages 19-23 Male</b>            The objective of the Train to Compete stage is to transfer from the training environment to a competitive environment. Athletes must consolidate technical skills, and maintain ancillary skills and underlying physical capacities. During this stage training volume remains high while intensity increases with the importance of competitions. The training is usually 10+ months of the year and is disciplined and hockey-specific. Athletes will usually be required to move away from home for training and competition environments that fit this level of athlete development. The training is individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation, fitness and recovery.</p> <p><b>Junior, NCAA:</b>            Training calendar that equally supports both training and competition.</p>	<p><b>Ages 19+ Female</b>  <b>Ages 19+ Male</b>            The focus of this stage is the stabilization of performance on demand characteristics and excellence within the highest level of performance at the NHL, World Championships and Olympics. This is the final phase of athletic preparation that only a very small minority will achieve. Motivation is complete and all the performance factors should be fully established to optimize performance in national or international competitions. The athletes in this stage will be the performers in the highest level professional leagues and at the highest international level. It is important to build a winning strategy with these athletes, and to individualize training and recovery programs to prevent over-training.</p> <p><b>NCAA, Professional:</b>            Appropriate training that supports competition calendar.</p>

For complete details, visit [ADMkids.com](http://ADMkids.com)

For some, the ADM principles represent a shift in thinking and approach. As a coach, always be a learner, open minded, and take time to explore the resources on [WWW.ADMKIDS.COM](http://WWW.ADMKIDS.COM) for more information.

Practices are an integral part of overall training. Each team is paired with another for on ice practice during the season and it is expected that ice utilization and practices include no less than 50 of 80 minutes devoted to shared skill development and station based practice. We only have so much time with the kids so we need to be efficient and give them what they need most at each stage. This approach optimizes player development and limits coaches' frustrations in attempts to teach what kids are least receptive to, i.e. SYSTEMS!

BE PREPARED FOR PRACTICE. Have a written practice plan, meet and discuss the plan with all coaches PRIOR to going on the ice. Plan ahead for equipment needs and communicate and assist rink personnel with nets, etc... Emphasize tempo, and be attentive to the ratio of activity and rest/recovery. Consult USA Hockey for practice plan ideas, as well as the skills progression handbook to know what is developmentally appropriate for each level of play. Teach skills and concepts (e.g. 2 vs 1) as opposed to systems or tactics, such as power play or defensive zone coverage. Use time away from the ice to go over systems of play, if desired.

## **Positions and Game Day**

Game day preparations are the responsibility of the coach. Communicate effectively with the team manager, players and parents regarding your expectations for arrival time, minor officials, warm up, etc...

Make sure you inform your players and parents regarding your philosophy with positions and line combinations. It is encouraged and recommended that players at the squirt level and below play all positions and with multiple line mates. At the Pee Wee and Bantam level, it is the coach's discretion to make decisions about positions and lines. It is expected that each player should be afforded a similar playing experience. Although you can never guarantee equal playing time for all players, all of the players on your team should always have a regular shift. If you limit ice in the last minute of play, during a power play or killing penalties, consider this, how will kids ever learn or improve if they are never given an opportunity in a critical situation during the game?

Be sure to communicate your philosophy and expectations as it relates to playing time at the beginning of the year meeting. If you intend to use playing time as a way to discipline players for being late, missing practice without an acceptable excuse, misbehavior, penalties, etc..., this must be communicated to players and parents well in advance at the start of the season.