



## U6 LEARN TO SKATE GUIDE TO SUCCESS For Associations

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Initiation of fundamental movement and development of physical literacy through general sport participation
- To introduce overall motor skills like balance, coordination, agility in a fun and safe environment that promotes self-confidence on skates
- To introduce all fundamental movement skills, including skating
- To develop an awareness of Ringette and create a welcoming environment for all participants

### COMPLIANCE INFORMATION FOR U6 LEARN TO SKATE

- Focus on FUN!
- 100% Development
- Two or more coaches on the ice at all times
- No scores posted
- No positional play
- Emphasis on skating skills, introduction of basic ring skills
- Two minute buzzer should be utilized to introduce line changes within modified games
- One year-end event (with modified games) per player – e.g. three games on the ice at once, identical participation awards, off-ice activities – **where numbers require, a U6 Learn to Skate player may also participate in one year-end event with a team from an older division**

### WHAT SKILLS DO WE FOCUS ON AT U6?

- Basic Skating Skills:
  - Basic stance, falling and getting up, edges, balance on skates, start, stop, walking all directions, forward/backward stride and glide

### STARTING THE SEASON

- Associations should identify objectives for the U6 Learn to Skate program based on the skill competencies of the athletes (you could consider using the ORA Skills Matrix to assist with this)
- Consider using Ringette Canada's ABC Program, focusing on the Red and Yellow Bandanas
- Associations should assist the U6 coach(es) in developing a Long Range Plan for the season
  - The Ringette Canada ABC Program can be used as a guide
  - This should be an on-going process throughout the season

- Consider placing all of your U6's on one TRF

### **ADDITIONAL ON-ICE COACHING CLINICS**

- If you have someone with a strength in a particular skill area within your Association, invite them on the ice to coach your coaches on a specific skill – how to break it down and instruct it, common errors in execution, etc.
- These experts can then be additional resources throughout the season

### **EVENTS**

In addition to hosting your regular annual tournament you could host an event with modified game structures (e.g. multiple games on one surface, 3-on-3 format, etc.)

- Athletes could register as individual players, and teams for the event could be formed with players from various Associations
- Could include Skills Exhibitions
- Could include off-ice activities as well
  - Face-painting, colouring, crafts, clowns, balloon art, magic show, etc.
  - Participation awards
  - Pizza party
  - Candy jar table

### **ATHLETE VOLUNTEERS**

- Early in the season in your Association form a pool of athlete volunteers who have various areas of expertise (e.g. skating, shooting, passing, goal-tending, etc.)
- This is a great way to involve your athletes who don't have the time to commit to being a full-time coach
  - Contact information for these athletes should be distributed to coaches at the start of the season and athletes can be contacted to come out to practices for any team who can use them
  - Some of the athlete volunteers may be able to make the commitment to be at every U6 Learn to Skate on-ice session
- Athlete volunteers should always be under the supervision of an adult coach
  - Many of these athletes may be in high school and looking to complete their requisite Community Involvement volunteer hours, so may ask the coach to sign their volunteer hours sheets when they come out to help
- These athletes can be used on-ice to:
  - Assist with less-skilled players and to provide one-on-one instruction (one athlete volunteer could work with the same younger athlete all the time)
  - Demonstrate and correct skills/drills
  - Provide feedback to coaches/recommend drills
  - Set up/clear up drills
- These volunteers can be encouraged to run drills on their own
- Ask them for suggestions and really listen to what they have to say

- Coaches should give feedback to these athlete volunteers to let them know how they are appreciated and how they could improve
- Consider an interview process for selecting appropriate volunteers to help out on the ice
- Track success – identify those who take on more – expand to the next job
- Consider offering an award to be given annually to an older athlete who has made a difference with the younger athletes by volunteering their time with practices, at games, and also at special events

**PLEASE SEE THE ACCOMPANYING GUIDE TO SUCCESS FOR U6 LEARN TO SKATE COACHES**