



Dear Parents,

I'm very excited to announce that beginning with the 2017-18 season, the PMHA is undertaking extensive changes to its Initiation/Tyke program to better meet the needs and capabilities of our players. While our goals and objectives haven't changed, how we deliver the program will be.

The overarching goal of our program remains to **teach the fundamentals of hockey in a fun, supportive and stimulating environment.**

To achieve this goal, we have made some big adjustments including:

- Creating a new introductory initiation level that practices only once a week and is half the cost
- Extending our Saturday morning ice from 7:00 to 8:30 (adding ½ hour) and utilizing that ice to run both a practice and cross-ice game in one session
- Adding cross-ice hockey to the Tyke division in addition to their GBTLL schedule
- Making cross-ice games mandatory for the Initiation division and adding them to the schedule
- Providing more opportunity to schedule shared practice/games with other centers for Initiation levels
- Introducing new personalized small-area & small-group skills development sessions to augment practice schedules
- Delivering more total time on ice for all our returning players
- Providing more consistency with our ice times

These changes and other more minor changes were proposed by an Initiation/Tyke review committee formed after the AGM. This committee included PMHA board members, former and current coaches, and parents representing the best interests of all the kids in the Initiation/Tyke program. It is the belief of this committee that these changes will significantly improve the delivery of the Program and the value that parents receive for the time and money they spend during the hockey season.

A Program outline is available on the PMHA website that includes a very detailed description of how the program will be delivered. It includes all the rules and guidelines that we will be following for the coming season. As this is the first season running the program in this manner, we encourage your feedback throughout the year and thank you for your patience as we make adjustments to fine tune the delivery for future years.

To get a better understanding of how these program changes will affect your child, here is a level by level breakdown of how the program will be delivered next year:

- **Initiation I (Intro To Hockey)**
  - For kids aged 5 & under
  - Focus on learning to skate + very basic hockey skills. No games.
  - 1 hour of ice time per week on Sat. at 7am or 11:55am
  - 20-25 on ice hours total for year (1 hour/wk on average)
  - Multiple special events
  - Registration Fee: \$250
  
- **Initiation II (Mite)**
  - For kids aged 6 (or capable 5 year olds with 1+ year experience)
  - Focus on fundamental hockey skills + power skating
  - 40+ hours of team practice that focuses on skills development
  - 5+ hours of personalized small group & small ice skill development to augment team practices (subject to ice availability)
  - 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 cross ice games post Dec 1
  - 1.5-2.5 hours of ice time per week in one or two sessions on Fri., Sat. or Sun.
  - 1 tournament & multiple special events
  - 50-60 on ice hours total for year (2+ hours/wk on average)
  - Registration Fee: \$475
  
- **Tyke**
  - For kids aged 7 (or capable 6 year olds with 2+ years experience)
  - Focus on individual hockey skills + advanced power skating
  - Graduate from cross-ice games to full ice games in preparation for Novice
  - 2.5-3.5 hours hours of ice time per week on Fri., Sat & Sun
  - 40+ hours of team practice that focuses on skills development
  - 5+ hours of personalized small group & small ice skill development to augment team practices
  - 10 games of cross-ice 3-on-3 before Dec 1
  - 14 game full ice season in the GBTLL after Dec 1
  - 2 tournaments & multiple special events
  - 65-80 on ice hours for year (2.5+ hours/wk on average)
  - Registration Fee: \$550

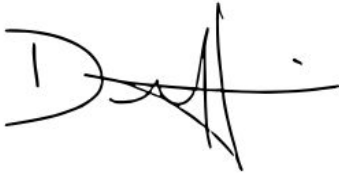
With registration for the 2017-18 season underway, we ask that you sign up **under the appropriate group based on age**. The first two practices for the Initiation groups will be used to evaluate players for movement to different levels in our program. At that time, you will be asked to pay the difference in fees if your child is moved to a higher level. There is more information on level movement in the PMHA Initiation/Tyke program outline.

Here is the registration fees:

- Initiation I - 4 & 5 year olds (born 2012 or 2013) - \$250
- Initiation II - 6 year olds (born 2011) - \$475
- Tyke - 7 year olds (born 2010) - \$550

The Initiation/Tyke review committee and the PMHA board are very excited about these program changes and I hope you are too. If you have any questions, please take a look at our FAQ or the program outline on the PMHA website. You can also email me ([duane@homick.com](mailto:duane@homick.com)) and I would be happy to answer them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Duane Homick', written in a cursive style.

Duane Homick  
Tyke Convenor



## Introduction To Cross-Ice Hockey

Beginning in the 2017-18 season, Hockey Canada is implementing a new policy that mandates cross-ice/half-ice hockey for players at the Initiation age level (under 6 years old).

While the policy making it mandatory is new, half-ice/cross-ice hockey has been part of the Initiation Program in the Ontario Minor Hockey Association since it was first developed more than 35 years ago. The purpose of the Initiation Program is to introduce the basic skills of the game, and make a child's first introduction to the game one that is safe, enjoyable, and fun.

The differences in skill-development opportunities with cross-ice hockey are significant: players receive five times more passes and take six times more shots. They're called on to have to make more decisions more quickly, and are overall more engaged in the game.

A modified playing environment and the continued use of age-appropriate equipment such as the 4 oz. lightweight blue puck is consistent with others sports such as soccer, baseball, basketball and tennis and is reinforced through Hockey Canada's Long Term Player Development model.

In the PMHA, we are going one step further and introducing cross-ice hockey to our Tyke program as well. Beginning at the start of the season, the Tyke program will utilize the newly extended early Saturday morning ice time and run a standard practice followed by a 24 minute cross-ice game.

After Dec 1., when the Tyke program moves to full-ice games in the GBTLL, the Initiation II program will take over this ice time and participate in practice sessions followed by 24 minute cross-ice games as well.

These games will utilize the following format:

- 24 minute run time clock with 1:30 line changes (on the buzzer)
- 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 depending on numbers
- No more than 2 lines per team
- No referees or official timekeeper
- No offsides or icing
- No faceoffs other than to start the game
- No record tracking or standings will be kept

Cross-ice games will greatly benefit our players in both the Initiation and Tyke levels and the PMHA is excited about the development opportunities it will present our players.

If you have any further questions on cross-ice hockey, I encourage you to look at the videos posted on the Hockey Canada website (<http://www.hockeycanada.ca>) or to review the detailed Initiation/Tyke program outline available on the PMHA website.



## Introduction to Skills Development Sessions

Beginning in the 2017-18 season, the PMHA will introduce Skills Development Session (SD for short) to our Initiation II and Tyke schedules. SD sessions will be used to augment our existing practice schedules and provide additional ice time opportunities to our players. They will not take away time on ice from other age groups and will provide a tremendous opportunity for coaches to provide personalized instruction making them a great addition to our program.

Skills development sessions differ from traditional practices in a number of ways:

- SD sessions are delivered on 1/5th the ice surface - barriers are placed on the hash marks to split the rink - while another team (or teams) performs a standard practice on the remaining 4/5th of the ice
- SD sessions are overseen by 2 or 3 coaches and involve only 6-8 players at a time offering a great coach to player ratio
- SD sessions are programmed to appropriately challenge the skill level of all the players involved and can include individualized programming that targets specific areas for improvement of the players

Small area/small group skills development has been growing in popularity among elite hockey programs and hockey training centers for years. It often costs upwards of \$40/hr per player to attend one of these specialized sessions. By offering this enhancement to our Initiation/Tyke program, we hope to be accelerate skill acquisition and development of our players and to be able to improve players' specific weaknesses with 1 on 1 support.

Teams that have SD sessions on their schedule will work out a rotation among the players. A typical team of 14-16 would have two groups though more groups may be necessary depending on our registration numbers. This means that every 2nd or 3rd week, your child will receive an extra 1 hour of on-ice, highly effective, skill based training.

The PMHA is acting as a leader in delivering this type of programming to this age group. As such, we may need to tweak our model or our delivery mechanism as the season goes on. We welcome feedback on the SD sessions and thank you for your patience as we roll out this new innovative concept.