



# DEMONS YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

2020 – 2021

**O**RIENTATION **G**UIDE

# About DYHA



Founded in 1972, the Demons began as the Ashland Youth Hockey Association. Although the Association became the Demons by name sometime in the 1980s, the official change did not occur until 2007.

Demons Youth Hockey is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization, organized to instill the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage and reverence in the youth of the community.

Demons Youth Hockey participates in the **Valley Hockey League** for Squirt, Pee Wee and Bantam level teams and the **Northstar Youth Hockey Program** for the Mite teams.

For schedules and team information visit: [Demonsyouthhockey.org](http://Demonsyouthhockey.org)



## Welcome to Demons Youth Hockey

On behalf of Demons Youth Hockey Board of Directors, welcome to the 2021-2022 hockey season.

Over the past year, the Board has increased efforts to improve communication with membership, especially in supporting the Association’s mission, goals, and

policies. Toward the end of last season, we held a meeting with newer Mite parents to better inform them of what to expect through the placement process. We also revised and published the [Player Placement Process](#) document on our website. This orientation guide is our next step towards this effort, and we hope it helps families new to hockey and those that are veterans of the sport alike.

We also would like to take an opportunity to recognize the many who coach, manage and teach our hockey players throughout the season. If not for these people volunteering countless hours of their time, Demons Youth Hockey would not be the special program it is for our children.

We will be actively soliciting feedback through a survey at the end of the season. If you have any suggestions on improving our program before then, please reach out to any members of the Board. Your feedback is always appreciated.

Improving our program requires volunteers who give of their time and talents to the many jobs necessary to run this organization. If you want to help, please reach out to us.

We hope you and your family enjoy the hockey season,  
**DYHA Board of Directors**

## USA Hockey American Development Model

Demons Youth Hockey follows the USA Hockey’s American Development Model (also known as ADM).

An overview for parents on ADM is available at [www.admkids.com](http://www.admkids.com)

## Coaches

All of our coaches are volunteers and are taking time out of their schedules to help coach our children.

Coaches apply for teams after rosters have been finalized. If more than one coach applies, there is an interview process. The head coach selects the assistant coaches for the season. In addition to their coaching responsibilities, all coaches must be a member of USA Hockey, have an up-to-date USA Hockey Certification, complete USA SafeSport Training and have a valid CORI on file.

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## Age-Levels Defined:

- Mite:** Early elementary players ages 5-8, born 2012/13/14
- Squirt:** Elementary players ages 8-10, born 2010/2011
- Pee Wee:** Upper elementary ages 10-12, born 2008/2009
- Bantam:** Middle schoolers ages 12-14, born 2007/2006

## SSU Play App

**SportsSignUp Play** is a free team and league management system which provides team schedules, calendars, communications, rosters, directions to the rinks and more in an easy-to-use app. Enter your email address and your available teams should appear.



## COVID-19 Best Practices for Parents / Participants

Based on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Massachusetts Hockey guidelines, Demons Youth Hockey Association has developed this list of required and recommended best practices. Our main goal is to resume play while keeping our community safe. DYHA understands that many of these rules will change how we normally operate but our ability to hold practices this season will depend on everyone's cooperation in following these guidelines. Please learn these as they apply to both players and spectators. Parents, we will certainly need your help in reviewing these policies with your players. If a player or parent cannot follow these policies, it is best for them to not participate until able to do so.

It is important to understand that DHYA utilizes multiple rinks for practices and games between two different leagues. Practices and procedures may vary from rink to rink. Players and parents will be expected to follow any minimum guidelines as posted. As such, this document will pertain to on-ice and preventative measures.

### DYHA Policy on Attendance

- ❖ Prior to attending or participating any DYHA sponsored event all persons must self-certify that they meet the following criteria:
  - Show no signs or symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days [as defined by the CDC](#)
  - Have not had a fever for the past 14 days. The MA Department of Public Health has defined a fever as a temperature over 100.3 degrees
  - Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 or exhibiting flu-like symptoms in the past 48 hours.
  - Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official
- ❖ Self-certification will be documented before all DHYA events by filling out the Covid Acknowledgement Form found on the DYHA website under HOME>ONLINE FORMS>[COVID Acknowledgement Form](#).
- ❖ If at any time during the season the self-certification cannot be met please notify your coach or manager immediately
- ❖ If you or your player have underlying health concerns or have been determined to be at risk please stay at home
- ❖ Team managers will be confirming the self-certification prior to every DYHA sponsored event

### Parents and Spectators

- ❖ Spectators are required to follow social distancing guidelines and face coverings are required at all times during DHYA events.
- ❖ Guidelines for capacity and spectators differ from rink to rink. Please respect any guidelines listed. These may include the inability to use locker rooms or to remain in the rink to watch a practice or game.

### Player Equipment

- ❖ Players are required to supply their own water bottle for all games and practice. Water bottles should be filled at home if possible. The player's name should be clearly labeled on the water bottle.
- ❖ Goalie equipment that is shared by players will be sanitized and quarantined for 48 hours before being passed to another player. Goalie helmets will not be shared. Teams will receive a sanitizing spray from the DHYA equipment manager specifically to kill Covid 19.
- ❖ Players will not be required to have a face covering while playing on ice. Face coverings are recommended while walking through the rink or in the locker room.

### Coaching Expectations *Note these may differ from rink guidelines. Always follow rink protocols.*

- ❖ Coaches will be required to wear a mask while walking through the rink or in the locker room.
- ❖ Coaches will be required to wear a mask while on ice for practice and during games
- ❖ Assistant coaches working the doors or giving individual advice to players on the bench are required to wear a mask.

## Equipment Checklist

When it comes to equipment, it's important to check your child's equipment regularly to ensure that it is in appropriate playing condition. Poorly fitted or maintained equipment can hinder your child's development as a hockey player and put them at risk for injury.

Demons Youth Hockey Provides goalie equipment for each Mite and Squirt Team. Families are responsible for everyday gear.

### Helmet

- has a full cage or shield
- has an HECC sticker, check expiration date
- has a chin strap, must be buckled during play
- inspect helmet regularly to ensure screws are tightened and in-place

### Jersey

- Red practice jerseys with player's name and number are available for purchase before each season
- Home and away game jerseys with player's name and number need to be purchased before the season. Game jerseys are only to be worn during games
- Natick Outdoor Store is available during spring placements for game and practice jersey sizing

### Stick

- check your stick height before the season begins: when standing in skates and the stick blade on the floor, the end of the stick should fall between the player's chin and nose
- tape blade and handle
- check the blade of the stick to make sure it is not splitting or separating

### Protective Gear

- shin pads
- elbow pads
- hockey pants
- athletic supporter (both boys and girls)
- shoulder pads
- gloves

### Skates

- sharpened regularly, usually once or twice a month depending on how often the player is on the ice
- inspect blades regularly for nicks or gouges
- remind your player to stay on rubber pads; avoid cement and metal.
- skate sharpening is available at NorthStar Rink, Pure Hockey in Marlboro and the Natick Outdoor Store

### Additional (optional) Equipment

- mouth guards are required at the Squirt level and above and encouraged at younger levels.
- neck guards are not required but strongly encouraged.
- hockey tape for socks
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**Buying Equipment:** With kids at this level growing out of equipment so quickly, we believe that used equipment is as good as new.

### New and used Equipment is available at:

- Kleen 'n Hard in Worcester
- Play-It-Again Sports, Dedham
- Pure Hockey, Marlboro
- Natick Outdoor Store (Demons gear available here, too!)





## Conduct and Policies

Demons Youth Hockey takes safety seriously on and off the ice and we have a number of policies in place to promote safety which are in-line with USA SafeSport Guidelines and are available for review on the Demons Youth Hockey website at [demonsyouthhockey.org](http://demonsyouthhockey.org) → Documents → “Code of Conduct”

### Guidelines for the locker room:

1. Players should never be left unattended in the locker room. A coach or parent should be in the vicinity of the room.
2. No photography in the locker room area. No exceptions.
4. No horseplay or hockey playing in the locker rooms or hallways.
5. All of the above rules apply for siblings.
6. Violations of the above rules may result in removal from the locker room area.
7. For co-ed teams, players should arrive with their base clothing on. Players can change in the bathroom area, not in the open locker room.
8. Players should be fully dressed not less than 10 minutes before a game. Coaches need this time to go over lines and strategies.
9. Help your child become self-sufficient by teaching them how to put on their equipment and skates.
10. Parents are generally encouraged to remain outside of the locker room 10 minutes before the game so the coach can review game plan.

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## Placement and Evaluations

Evaluations are a complex process that evolve year over year. Demons Youth Hockey has attempted to create a process that places players on a team at the appropriate skill level where they will develop as effectively as possible.

Tryouts generally take place in early spring. For the 2019-2020 tryouts, there were three sessions: one set of drill-based tryouts and two competitive scrimmages.

Players were evaluated by committees of Demons Youth Hockey coaches and volunteers at each age level. This season coaches evaluated their players on the following categories: coach evaluation, placement evaluations and a review by the board placement.

It's important to remember that at the youth level, placements and player skill are all very fluid and can change dramatically from year-to-year and even mid-season. It is also very difficult to compare players from one team or age group to another. Many variables come into play. A player may practice all summer or grow and suddenly become a dominant player at their level. Some may not feel comfortable when facing more skilled / physical competition. This is especially true of our younger players. They are still learning and changing dramatically both physically and emotionally. The important thing is that the players have fun and are placed in a way that allows them to develop as a hockey player, regardless of the competition level! **In 10 years, they will remember they played hockey for the Demons, not the Squirt "X" team.**

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## Practices

At the Mite and Squirt level, expect **two** practices a week, typically on weekdays. There may also be extra weekend practices when ice availability allows.

Practice times are generally scheduled by age-group. Mites will have earlier ice times, followed by Squirts, Pee Wees, and Bantam. Each practice is equally important and will help develop different sets of skills.

Practices are typically held in Westboro at NorthStar. However, they sometimes are held in Marlboro at Navin and at Veterans Rink in Franklin when ice time becomes limited during the high school season.

Players need to be at all practices and games. Coaches understand that conflicts with school, other sports/activities and family events will happen from time to time.

**Communicate ongoing and unique conflicts with your coach in advance.** This can help the coach better plan for practices and games.

Practices are typically 50 minutes in length, which means coaches have very limited time to work with their players. **Players should be on the benches before the practice begins.** Locker rooms can get crowded with gear, parents and siblings. It is helpful to be at the rink 30 minutes before practice begins to get your player ready.

**Both on and off the ice, it's important for players to be respectful to coaches and each other.** They should give their attention to the coaches when on the ice. Often times we see kids hitting each other and being distracting. Help your coach out by communicating to your child the importance of paying attention.

At the Mite and Squirt Level in particular, we are encouraged by USA Hockey to spend very little time on Systems, so don't expect power play drills or extensive amounts of time spent on positioning. The



focus at this level is primarily on skills, with some secondary emphasis on “hockey sense.” Expect your child to experience every aspect of the game.

**NOTE:** At the Mite and Squirt levels, it is recommended that parents remain at the rink during these practices. Please help manage players’ behavior before they get on the ice. If your child sees you taking practice seriously, they will too. This time is also a great opportunity for you to meet other families in the program.

**NorthStar Ice Arena** 15 Bridle Ln, Westborough, MA 01581

**Navin Arena** 451 Bolton St, Marlborough, MA 01752

**Pirelli Veterans Arena** 910 Panther Way, Franklin, MA 02038

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## Games

Practice ice becomes available mid August at NorthStar Ice Arena and games begin around Labor Day.

Mite teams will play all of their half-ice games at NorthStar. Demons travel teams typically play one game per week depending on their league schedule (not including tournaments). Our home rink is NorthStar Arena in Westborough, and as a league we do our best to schedule as many home games as possible as ice-time permits. Away games for our teams are generally a 20-30 minute drive from Hopkinton. You can expect to play games in locations in metrowest, central Massachusetts and the north shore.

Mites will typically play around 25 games in a season. Games are 50 minutes and they play 4-on-4, half ice. In development games, a buzzer will sound every two minutes to signal shift changes. Upper-level development teams and travel teams will conduct line changes on the fly. Expect to play on smaller “Mite” nets at most rinks. **At the Mite level, body contact is allowed but body checking is not.**

Squirts and above will typically play around 35 games in a season in the [Valley Hockey League](#) . Their games are played over three 12-minute periods. Should a team have a lead of more than five goals in the third period, running time will commence. Offsides and icing are called at the Squirt level and above. New to USA Hockey, Icing will be called on the Penalty Kill as well. Body checking begins in Bantams.

**Note:** Coaches are expected, in general, to give players equal ice time. As younger players are getting accustomed to line changes, coaches will often wait for a whistle to change before advancing to live changes. Be aware that this can sometimes lead to long or short shifts.

Teams are initially placed in their league and division based on the program’s strength over the past two seasons. Teams then play two sets of parity games or 6-7 games each. After each parity round, teams are adjusted based on their performance. It’s not unusual to see lopsided scores or win/loss records during this time. It’s important for parents and players to remain positive during this process, as it can be frustrating if you start the season with a string of losses against superior teams. Sometimes it’s just a tough initial placement.

The ultimate goal is to place the team in a competitive division as quickly as possible. At the end of the season all teams advance to a single-elimination playoff tournament. These playoffs begin in March and end in April. Once eliminated, your season has ended.

Often parents have questions around the physicality of the game. It is important to remember that there is no checking in youth hockey until the Bantam level. Mite, Squirt and Pee wee are all co-ed and do not allow body checking, however some body contact is part of the game and will occur. If you have any questions, talk to your coach, or reach out to a Bantam coach for advice.

**Call Up Policy** When a team is missing a number of players for a game, they may request to “call up” players from a lower team based on skill level and age level. The coach of the higher level team will reach out to the coach of the lower level team to request call ups. The coach of the lower team will then select the player(s). The coach calling up should never reach out directly to a parent or player requesting them specifically to play for their team without speaking with their coach first. This removes opportunities for favoritism and provides the lower level coach the opportunity to reward players for reasons he/she sees fit. This is often a big deal for the player chosen to be called up.

Important to note: A higher level player (age or skill) cannot play for a lower level team. A player can only play a limited number of call up games. Mites cannot play full-ice hockey. No exceptions.



## Tournaments

On average, a team will typically participate in two tournaments throughout the season. These tournaments fall into two categories:

**Stay-at-home:** Hosted by area programs, typically around the holidays

**Destination:** More expensive tournaments at premier locations that include amenities such as all-inclusive meals and water parks. Examples include Falmouth, Lake Placid and Jay Peak

With most tournaments, you can expect a minimum of three games played from Friday-Sunday with a championship game on Sunday. Registration costs for most tournaments are included in the team fund. Cost can also vary depending on age and location. Additional out-of-pocket expenses may

include hotel, food and team activities. Tournaments are also fun for the parents to socialize, and families are welcome.

The Team Manager will typically identify a hotel and reserve a block for the team. Destination trips to locations like Lake Placid can cost significantly more but often have amenities like all-inclusive meals. It is important to remember at tournaments that we are representing Demons both on and off the ice. Ultimately we ask the coaches and parents to monitor their players' behavior and practice common

sense. Some hotels specialize in hockey tournaments, and allow for massive knee-hockey games in their hotels. Others will take your sticks away. Coaches may set team rules, including a player curfew, or request that certain activities be avoided (swimming is a big one) until after a game. Please help the coaches out by enforcing these team rules.

## District & State Playdowns

For Squirts and up, Demons teams are encouraged to participate in district playdowns, which are single-elimination tournaments played in local rinks used to decide which program will represent our District (District 8) in the Mass Hockey State Championships.

Each team in a town program is assigned a “Tier” based on the previous year’s registration numbers.

### Sportsmanship

**As parents we are good role-models for our children at the rink.** Families should cheer as loud as they can and be supportive, but avoid yelling or coaching from the stands. Allow the coaches to coach, the players to play and referees to ref.

Yelling from the stands creates confusion for players and parents can often contradict what a coach is asking of a player or what a player is seeing on the ice. We want players to develop the ability to read the games for themselves, make mistakes on their own and learn from them with our help.

Also, don’t start fights with the opposing parents.

During a lopsided game, a coach may request his players to pass the puck around, and not shoot, or shoot after a set number of passes in order to keep the score reasonable.

At the end of every game, regardless of outcome or circumstances during the game, players will skate the handshake line before coming off the ice. Players are expected to be respectful to each opponent and coach, shake hands and/or fist bump. Punching, bumping or skating away from players without shaking hands is not tolerated.

### Referees

**Please give the same consideration to referees. Without referees we cannot play.** Young referees often cite verbal abuse and stress caused by coaches and parents as a key reason they leave. Referees will inevitably make mistakes, but yelling at a referee will not improve the situation. While referees strive for consistency, this is challenging at the younger skill levels where players are inconsistent and inexperienced.

At the youth level, you’ll often see two officials on the ice but remember, these officials need to keep track of 12 players, two benches and a 200’x85’ sheet of ice while constantly moving for an hour, 5 or 6 times a day. There may be a situation where a player gets out of hand, playing recklessly, slashing at the goalie, taking many penalties, etc. While this may be frustrating to watch, trust in your coach to handle the issue by communicating with the referee (or the player, if it’s our own.) Parents should never approach the benches, a referee, an opposing player, coach or locker room.

## Being a Positive Player-Parent

Parents can have an active role in the outcome of a game by being positive, making sure their child is positive, and helping players prepare for the game.

### Here are some ways to be a great player-parent:

- ★ Make sure your player has rested appropriately before a game, especially a morning game. Treat the night before an early game like a school night for happy, rested players.
- ★ Make sure your player has fueled properly before a game, regardless of the time of day. A light meal or snack, can go a long way to ensure your child has energy for the game. Don't skip this just because the game is early or "just before dinner."
- ★ For younger players, check the hockey bag before you leave home WITH your child. This ensures they (and you) aren't stressed about missing a piece of equipment. It also builds good habits when this becomes their responsibility as they become older.
- ★ Don't be a distraction during the game. Banging on the glass, calling for your child's attention or coaching from the stands can cause confusion.
- ★ Avoid "car-coaching" after games. Instead, ask your child three things they thought they did well and one thing they believe they should work on. They probably already know what you were thinking, or they'll tell you what the coach has already suggested.
- ★ Avoid speaking negatively of teammates or parents. Remember, they're all learning how to play the game and have varying skills. Habits are tough to break, especially if they have worked for a player in the past.
- ★ Take care of your goaltenders. They are the last line of defense, often because the other players on the ice have been beat. No parent, coach or player should be questioning the ability of a goaltender or placing blame on the goaltender for a goal or loss at this level. It is unfair to do so.
- ★ Remember: Both parents and players \*love\* to hear the positives. A simple "Way to hustle off, it led to a goal!" can go a long way to boost a player's confidence. Little plays make big plays happen.
- ★ Watch a hockey game and learn the game together on television or in-person. Players and parents are often fixated on goals and shots, but hockey is much more than that. Learn the nuances!
- ★ **Don't be afraid to ask questions of the coach.**

## Part of the Team

Though you will spend the most time with your player’s team, joining the Demons means joining a large, extended family. Between weekend games and weeknight practices, you will spend a lot of time together.

Teams also participate in social events and activities organized by the team manager. Please support your team’s manager by responding to his/her emails and participating in organized events.

We encourage all families to participate in our annual fundraiser, booths at local town events and other social events organized by the teams and the league.

## Team Fund

Each team will require one parent volunteer to serve as the team’s Manager. The manager collects a fund which will help cover any tournament fees, social events, and coach gifts.

The team fund ranges from \$75 to \$250, depending on the amount of tournaments and activities the team manager has planned.

## 2021-2022 Teams and Coaches

### Mite White

Coach: Robert Resnick  
Asst Coaches: Katie Blasi

### Mite Red

Coach: Dana Arsenault  
Asst Coaches: Mike Manzella

### Mite Black

Coach: Travis Gross, Dan MacMillan  
Asst Coaches:

### Mite A

Coach: Tyler Vivian  
Asst Coaches: Joseph Cacace, Joshua Fournier

### Mite B2

Coach: Steven Gamache, Chris Cook

### Mite B

Coach: Brian Jean  
Asst Coaches: Alex Foster, Jason Russak, William Floeckher, Joshua Urovitch

### Squirt A

Coach: James Welsh  
Asst Coaches: Dan MacMillan

### Squirt AA

Coach: Nathanael Oram  
Asst Coaches: Christopher Cook, Travis Gross, Paul Ward

### Pee Wee A

Coach: Jason Boyer  
Asst Coaches: Joe Barbieri, Paul Ward, Peter Matthes

### Bantam A

Coach: Brian Dacey  
Asst Coach: Brian Higgins, Chad Roberts, Dexter Siglin

## Demons Youth Hockey Board of Directors

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