

WHAT IS TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE DAY?

The fifth-annual Hockey Weekend Across America, presented by Reebok, will take place February 17-19, 2012. Launched by USA Hockey, Hockey Weekend Across America is a nationwide initiative to celebrate the game at all levels and to expose hockey to new audiences.

On Saturday, February 18, rinks across the nation will host Try Hockey for Free events introducing young kids to youth hockey for the very first time. This program is a joint-effort between USA Hockey, the National Hockey League and NHL member clubs.

The goal is to have 200 locations host a try hockey for free clinic for kids between the ages of 4 to 9. With many beginner programs starting in February and other youth sports wrapping up, this event provides local associations the perfect opportunity to introduce new families to youth hockey. More details on Hockey Weekend Across America will be available in the coming weeks on our website, www.usahockey.com/programservices.

HOST SITE REQUIREMENTS

- One hour of ice
- Volunteers
 - On-ice
 - Check-in
 - Getting dressed
 - Off-ice recruiter
 - Marketing
- Equipment
 - Helmet, skates & gloves (can be winter gloves) are required
 - OneGoal equipment is recommended if available

WHAT HOST SITES RECEIVE

- 40 USA Hockey jerseys
- 40 goodie bags
- On and off ice guidelines
- USA Hockey Sanctioning
- Online management and registration tool
- Grassroots promotional tools
 - Customizable templates for printable material
- Best practices on attracting new families
- National marketing

KEY DATES

January 6th

- Registration deadline

January 9th – 13th

- Webinar Week
 - In order to receive your marketing material, jerseys, goodie bags and to be promoted as a participating location, a representative from your host site must participate in one of the webinars being offered this week

Early-February

- Jerseys arrive
- Goodie bags will come in a separate shipment
- Valentine's Day cards arrive in a third shipment

February 18th

- Try Hockey For Free Day



COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: How many kids can I expect to attend?

A: Sites that follow our recommendations, and do at least three of our marketing programs, have averaged 32 new kids.

Q: Who is responsible for the ice?

A: The local association/rink host is responsible for securing ice and the associated cost.

Q: Who organizes the coaches and administrative help?

A: The host site is responsible for collecting volunteers to make sure the event is well-staffed and managed.

Q: What about equipment?

A: To run a sanctioned USA Hockey growth event, every player minimally must be wearing skates, helmet and winter gloves. You can do a used equipment drive or solicit association members to see if you can borrow helmets. A limited amount of OneGoal Starter Equipment is available for \$70 a set through USA Hockey. Please make sure your rink has rental skates.

Q: How do I make sure that I am not liable if a child get injured?

A: In order to be a host site, you need to call your Associate Registrar and sanction your event as a grow the game event. Then when participants arrive at your site, their guardians sign off on the provided IMR/Waiver form. You return a copy of the IMR/Waiver form to USA Hockey and the participants will be covered by USA Hockey insurance for your try hockey for free clinic.

Q: When will I receive my jerseys and goodie bags?

A: They arrive in two separate shipments at least 1 to 2 weeks prior to the event. In order to receive these items, a representative from the host site must attend one of the webinars being offered January 9th through the 13th.

Q: What if more than 40 kids show up and we don't have enough jerseys/goodie bags for everyone?

A: Associations that succeed at attracting a large group will need to get creative; unfortunately, there are not enough jerseys and goodie bags to send more. Most groups use them as an incentive for early online registration, promoting that the first 40 to sign up will receive a jersey and goodie bag.

Q: How do I get printable marketing pieces?

A: There will be customizable templates for flyers, Valentine's Day cards and posters. If you need help customizing, please communicate with your Program Services rep. A limited amount of Valentine's Day cards will be shipped to you; these are to be distributed to your association's families. All other printing costs are left up to the host site.

Q: Why is the event only being promoted to 4 to 9 year olds?

A: Almost all kids begin playing youth hockey between the ages of 4 to 9. Your association will benefit most by focusing your recruitment efforts to kids in this age group. Maximizing the amount of players that can easily transition into your existing programs will increase your chances for player retention.



