



Teton Valley Foundation Youth Hockey Mini-Mite and Mite Program (4-8 year olds) Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome to Teton Valley Foundation Youth Hockey and our Mini-Mite and Mite program. This is where – for many children – a lifelong passion for hockey begins.

For many *parents*, this is also where a big commitment of time and resources begins - and for that reason we want to make your entry into hockey as smooth as possible!

Below are many frequently asked questions regarding the Mini-Mite & Mite program. If there is a question we haven't answered, feel free to email us at rink@tetonvalleyfoundation.org

What is the "Mini-Mite" and "Mite" program? Mini-Mites and Mites is designed specifically for kids (both boys and girls) that are brand new to hockey, and focuses on the fundamentals of skating. Learning to move with confidence on skates for the first time is a challenge, especially for kids ages 4-8 with shorter attention spans than older kids. The program combines fun, small area games with skating instruction to ensure the kids have a great first experience with hockey. No skating experience is required. Mini-Mites are for kids ages 4 - 6. Mites are ages 7 - 8.

When do the Mini-Mites skate? Kids in the Mini-Mite and Mite program practice two days per week after school, typically on Wednesdays & Fridays at the Kotler Ice Rink.

How old does my child have to be to play hockey? The earliest age for children entering the program for the first time is 4 years old. For kids who are adventurous, athletic, social, or ambitious, they will do great at 4 years old. If your child is a little more on the timid side or less mature for their age—both physically or emotionally—we recommend they start with the Learn to Skate program at age 4 which is 8 to 16 weeks of skating instruction. Learn to Skate helps build confidence and then your child can join Mini-Mites at age 5.

Does my child have to know how to skate to participate in the Youth Hockey program? No, the programs are designed to teach the fundamental skills that are required to play the sport of hockey. Skating is the most important skill and is heavily emphasized throughout the Mini-Mite season. If you're interested in giving your child an extra boost with



their skating skills, you should consider our Learn to Skate program that is designed to work for both beginner hockey players and beginner figure skaters. They can simultaneously do Learn to Skate AND Youth Hockey if they want extra skating instruction. There are also open skate times available at the rink Fri – Sun to work on fundamental skills without a stick or puck. Affordable season passes or daily fees are required for our open skate sessions.

How long does the season run? In the 2017/18 the season will run from mid-November to mid-March. For the 2018/19 season, the season will start at the end of October.

How do I register my child? All Mini-Mites MUST register ONLINE by going to the www.tetonvalleyfoundation.org Youth Hockey page which automatically links you to our registration website **sportsngin.com**. As part of registration, sportsngin.com will also steer you to register with USA Hockey. Mites and Mini-Mites do NOT need to pay a USA Hockey fee. Once a player becomes a squirt they will need to pay a required \$40 fee to USA Hockey

Why do I need to register with USA Hockey? Idaho Amateur Hockey Association, the governing body of youth hockey for the state, requires all participants to be registered with USA Hockey for insurance and safety purposes.

Birth Certificates: A copy of the birth certificate is required for registration of all youth hockey participants. You can scan it online when you register or bring a copy to the first day of practice. Without it your child will not be able to step on the ice

What do my fees include? Are there any other costs or fees that I will need to pay later in the year? The registration fee for mini-mites covers all the ice time for the season and one home tournament. You have the option of renting gear for your child for \$50. Register early and you will save money! Travel tournament fees are NOT included

What equipment does my child need? Players need a full set of hockey equipment to participate. Rental gear includes: hockey socks, shin guards, elbow pads, hockey shorts, shoulder pads, gloves, practice jersey, helmet, and a game jersey (handed out for games)

Equipment Not Included in the Rental Gear Bag:

- **Skates** – Make sure your kids are properly fitted for skates; sizing will differ from their shoe size. Used skates can be purchase at Play it Again Sports in Idaho Falls, the Jackson Hockey Swap in September, or at Victor Seconds in Teton Valley.



- **Supporter/cup/garter belt** – Purchase at the rink. These items are integrated into one piece of equipment
- **Stick** – Purchase at the rink. straight is a good option at this age
- **Hockey Tape** – Can purchase at the rink to hold their socks up.

What is the refund policy if my child doesn't like it? We generally do not issue refunds, but make exceptions for a partial refund prior to January 1st if there is a serious medical reason (injury or illness) with a doctor's note.

Will my child be placed with other children from his/her school? Can I sign my child up with a friend? At Mini-Mites & Mites, all the kids are on the ice at the same time. During practices, the kids are broken up into small groups and are with different kids each practice.

Do Mini-Mites have full-ice games? Mini-Mites and Mites is about the fundamentals of skating and they do not play in formal games. A few times a year, we will put the kids into teams and play cross-ice games. These events have a game-like atmosphere and are a great opportunity for friends and family to support their skater. There is one home tournament. There are optional travel tournaments.

I'm interested in coaching, what are the requirements? Parent coaches are a vital part of any hockey program. USA Hockey mandates a designated level of coaching certification for each age classification. Mini Mite and Mite coaches will need to have Level 1 certification course completed by December 31. In addition USA Hockey requires an age-specific online module to be completed by each coach during the same time frame. Locations and dates of area coaching clinics can be found at the USA Hockey website. Email us to learn more at rink@tetonvalleyfoundation.org

Am I required to provide any other support to the organization? In order to continue developing our nonprofit Youth Hockey program, a significant number of generous volunteer hours are needed. Volunteer support helps create a sense of community among parents and keeps costs as low as possible as we work to grow our organization. In 2017/18 and beyond, Teton Valley Youth Hockey will now require parents of all players to **volunteer at least four hours of time per season per child**. This can include, coaching, supporting tournaments, fundraising, being a team manager, and more. You will need to agree to the commitment in the registration process. New in 2017/18 You will pay a \$50 volunteer commitment deposit and at the end of the season you will be reimburse once you fulfill your commitment.