



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](mailto: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. Learning to move with confidence on hockey 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, and instruction to ensure the kids have a great first experience with hockey. Mini-Mites are for kids ages 4 - 6. Mites are ages 7 - 8.

**When do they practice?** Kids in the Mini-Mite and Mite program practice two days per week after school, Mondays & Wednesdays at the Kotler Ice Rink. \*2019/20 Schedule

**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. Learn to Skate helps build confidence on the ice prior to joining hockey.

**Does my child have to know how to skate to participate in the Youth Hockey program?** Yes, but we will help them get there! USA Hockey studies show that a strong skating foundation is critical to success in hockey, as well as the amount of fun kids will have on the ice. It's awfully frustrating for kids trying to coordinate stick & puck skills when their skating is weak. This can lead to a lack of fun, which is the opposite of what we are all looking to achieve for your child.

Because skating skill is such an important foundational piece of hockey instruction, new players will be required to pass basic skating skills before they are able to fully participate in hockey practice. This is both for the betterment of the individual player and skill development, and for the greater good in allocating practice time to hockey instruction. The first practice of the season will be a skating class taught in conjunction with our skating coach. After the first practice new players who need a little more help with skating will be required to attend skating class until they pass basic skating skills. Learn to Skate practices will be offered at an affordable rate for new hockey players looking to pass their skills.



If you're interested in giving your child an extra boost with their skating skills, you should consider enrolling 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 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?** The full 2019/20 season will run from November 11<sup>th</sup> to March 13<sup>th</sup>.

**HALF SEASON OPTION** TVF is now offering a half season of Mini-Mites for those parents who do not want to commit to the full 18 week season. This is an EXCELLENT option for brand new players to do Learn to Skate for Session I, and then join Mini Mites during Session II.

**Session I November 11<sup>th</sup> to January 17<sup>th</sup> . Session II January 20 to March 13<sup>th</sup>**

**How do I register my child?** All players MUST register online at [www.tetonvalleyfoundation.org](http://www.tetonvalleyfoundation.org). As part of registration, you must also register with USA Hockey. It's free for Mini Mites. Starting with Mites the USA Hockey/IAHA fee is \$54 a year.

**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. USA Hockey & the IAHA support our program with grants, resources & training to better the program.

**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 \$55. 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 That is 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** – Can purchase at the rink.
- **Stick** – Purchase at the rink. straight is a good option at this age
- **Hockey Tape** – Can purchase at the rink. Used to hold socks up.

**What is the refund policy if my child doesn't like it?** Mini mites are allowed two practices to try it out and see if they like it. After the first two practices we do not issue refunds. Exceptions can be made for a partial refund prior to January 1<sup>st</sup> 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 /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 cross ice jamboree (play versus other teams but for fun only, no score is kept). There are also optional travel events.

**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. All of our coaches are required to complete the USA Hockey Safesport training program, and a background screening through IAHA to ensure the safety of our youth players both on the ice and off. Email us to learn more about coaching at [rink@tetonvalleyfoundation.org](mailto: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 volunteer hours are needed. Volunteer support helps create a sense of community among parents and keeps costs low. Teton Valley Youth Hockey requires 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. **Parents will be required to present a \$150 volunteer deposit check to ensure this much needed help is covered.** Once the parent fulfills their hours, their check will be returned to them.