

Program Goal: To introduce children to ice skating and hockey by letting them enjoy the same sports on the ice that they play off the ice. The program's playgroup environment will be a familiar setting that is safe, non-competitive and encouraging to give children the confidence they need, so they will know that they can skate and can learn to play hockey. This 12-week program will be followed by a separate 12-week cross-ice program.

Where: Stoneham Ice Arena
Montvale Avenue
Stoneham, MA

When: Beginning Saturday, October 18th and continuing through Saturday, December 3rd* (12 weeks)

Time: TBD

Cost** \$65 per player per 12 week session

*the program will run for 12 sessions; however there may be blackout dates based on ice availability that may require skipping certain Saturdays

**Players must register online with USA Hockey Program at <http://www.usahockeyregistration.com>. Players born before 2002 will be subject to a \$35 USA/Massachusetts Hockey registration fee

For More Information Contact

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<http://www.syhockey.org>

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Questions and Answers

- Q:** How do I know this program is right for my child?
- A:** Our program is an experimental program that we can bring to you at a low cost because of Massachusetts Hockey's grant. No program can guarantee success, but our goal is to make learning to skate fun, and we are very committed to accomplishing this goal.
- Q:** Who should participate?
- A:** Boys and girls ages 4-9 years old who want to learn to skate and have fun.
- Q:** Does my child have to play hockey?
- A:** Stoneham Youth Hockey is committed to increasing the number of children that enjoy the sport of hockey. However, you are not making a commitment to any hockey program. Although we hope your child will continue to have a successful hockey career, we really just want to see more children enjoy ice skating and our beautiful Stoneham Ice Arena.
- Q:** What equipment will my child need?
- A:** Besides skates, USA Hockey requires that all children must wear a HECC certified hockey helmet with full face mask. For the first 8 weeks the only other required equipment is a pair of winter gloves which will allow the child to grip a bat and ball (no hockey gloves). We recommend nylon wind pants, shin pads and elbow pads. For weeks 9-12, hockey gloves will be required. We will provide you with a hockey stick (to keep in week 9).
- Q:** What if my child has never skated before?
- A:** That's GREAT! We hope that this first experience will lead to a lifetime of skating. We believe the games will take away your child's fear of the unknown and help them have fun learning a new and exciting sport. We will take them from using crates to skating on their own. Your child will have the opportunity to play all the games with children of similar ability.
- Q:** What if I don't live in Stoneham?
- A:** The program is limited to 60 children. The program is open to Stoneham residents first, but we will welcome children from other communities if space allows.
- Q:** Can I volunteer?
- A:** A goal of the program is to maintain a 6:1 player to volunteer ratio. Please indicate if you are willing to volunteer and we will be in touch with you before the season begins.
- Q:** Are there any special requirements for volunteers?
- A:** Volunteers must be approved by the Learn-to-Skate Director, register with USA Hockey, and have completed the Initiation Coaching Program. The most important requirement is the love of kids and hockey.
- Q:** Where can I get more information?
- A:** You can email Jim Maimone at coachjimm@comcast.net or view the grant proposal at <http://www.syhockey.org>.



Stoneham Youth Hockey's Learn-to-Skate Program

**LEARN-TO-SKATE
BY
FUN & GAMES**

Made possible by
**THE MIKE CHEEVER
"GROW HOCKEY"
DEVELOPMENT GRANT
PROGRAM**
from



Learn-to-Skate by Fun & Games

Program

The Program: Stoneham Youth Hockey is going to change its Learn-to-Skate program to the “Learn to Skate by Fun & Games” program, which will teach kids not by instruction, but by fun and games. We know every child enjoys playing games like Simon Says, Red Light/Green Light, etc. We also know many more kids play basketball, soccer and baseball than hockey. Therefore, let’s bring the games kids are familiar with to the ice.

Tee Ball on the ice is a great game for kids to play because it involves hitting a ball, running (or skating) the bases, and fielding. Every kid can hit a ball off of a tee with a big “Fat Albert” bat. Swinging a bat at the ball will help the kids with hand-to-eye coordination and prepare them for hitting a puck on the ice with a skinny, flat, curved hockey stick. Swinging the bat will also help kids transfer their weight from their back foot to their front foot and teach them to twist their core as they follow through with their swing, which will be helpful when learning to shoot a hockey puck.

After the child hits the ball they will need to run (skate) the bases. Skating the bases will encourage the child to push after hitting the ball and encourage stopping at the base so they are not tagged out – volunteers will make sure everyone makes it to a base safely because it’s fun, this will build confidence and a healthy attitude.

Fielding will require kids to get that push to the direction the ball is hit and bend to pick up the ball. Kids will be encouraged to bend using their knees so they don’t fall over. Throwing will also teach kids to shift their weight from their back foot to their front foot, which will be helpful when they begin to learn to shoot.

Basketball is another great sport that kids are taught at an early age. A Little Tykes basketball net can be seen in a child’s playroom or backyard

as soon as they can walk.

The Learn-to-Skate by Fun & Games program will bring basketball to the ice. Kids will learn hand to eye coordination catching and shooting the basketball; they will learn knee bending when they have to pick up the ball off the ice and they will learn balance, pushing off, and knee bending as they try to shoot for a basket. The Little Tykes basketball nets have three height adjustments which will allow all children to be successful, while learning basic skating fundamentals.

Soccer is another fun game that children enjoy at a very young age. Kicking a soccer ball is a great way to encourage young players to bend their knees, shift their weight from one leg to the other, and help them with their balance. Kicking a soccer ball will help them move from shuffling their feet to stepping forward to a full skating stride.

After six weeks of “Fun & Games” we will move to the most fun game of all – Hockey! First, all participants will be given a straight blade stick and a blue puck. For weeks 7-9 we will set up 6 mini-nets around the ice. The children will be encouraged to skate around and shoot their puck. The children will be encouraged to push the puck and they will be taught basic stick handling and shooting techniques on a one-on-one basis.

Finally, weeks 10-12 will consist of cross-ice hockey games. The games will be non-competitive (no scoring will be kept) with ninety second running time shifts.

Program Premise: Too often, learn-to-skate programs try to teach children the most unnatural sport a child will play – ice hockey – using the most idiosyncratic methods. If you visit your local rink, inevitably you will see kids lined up against the boards waiting to skate to the other side and back again – BORING! There are ways that children can learn to skate without knowing their inside or outside edges or the proper knee bend.