



Hockey Zones

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Tucker Hockey's official newsletter—reinforcing hockey's POSITIVES to all ages!

For the LOVE of the GAME!



Critical Years of Hockey Development Ages 7 to 12

Editor's Note: There are many different schools of thought on hockey development. For a player, the timeframe between the years seven and 12 are very important, especially if a player aspires to become an elite hockey player. Lyle Hanna, Buddy Gale and Coach Rex decided to explore this area of the game. During the process, we had varied opinions and many colorful conversations. After much thought and discussions, we agreed on the following ten components which are very significant for proper hockey development. I trust you will enjoy the read... opinions to the editor are truly welcomed!

A fun positive learning environment

- Fun for players, parents and coaches
- Creates an environment that allows the development of the player's self-esteem
- Coaches and instructors are able to teach correct technique

Friendships and Social

- Early exposure to the game with their friends and family in a positive and enjoyable environment
- Buddies like to play with buddies – good camaraderie

Athleticism

- Inherited and dormant
- Individual players show athletic development occurring at different stages in their life. This is why the 7 to 12 year old stage is so critical. It is setting the base for later development.

Positive Initiation

- Learn to skate correctly and acquires the right taste for the sport of hockey

Acquires a Love of the Game

- Starts with fun and the challenge of improving which becomes a love of the game. A player has a burning desire to go to the local rink to practice and to play and to get better each and every day.

Personality Traits of the Player

- Dedication – persistence – discipline – determination
- Level headed emotions – team player – pays attention to coaches and other players to

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More Great Sports Tips

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“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us”

–Ralph Waldorf Emerson

Tucker Hockey

Director: Rex Tucker
Executive Assistant Karen Adler
Hockey Consultant Lyle Hanna
Business Consultant Ern Rideout
Marketing Consultant Jennifer Leduc
Hockey Assistant (Summer) Mark Bomersback
Hockey Assistant (Summer) Frank Portman

On-Ice Instructors

Head Instructors Rex Tucker
..... David Mahoney
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Hockey Zones Newsletter

Managing Editor Rex Tucker
Advertising Sales Accounts Karen Adler
Contributing Writers Lyle Hanna
Morris Lukowich Martin N. Walker
Steve Matthews Michael White
Michael Gartner Nick Portman
Steve Moncion Rex Tucker

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Advertising Enquiries: Karen at
programs@tuckerhockey.com

Send ads with "Tucker Hockey Ad" in
subject line to nicole@ableprint.ca.

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 82113, 1400 - 12th Ave. S.W.,
Calgary, AB T3C 0N0

Ph: 998-5035 Fax: 244.5037

E-mail: programs@tuckerhockey.com

www.tuckerhockey.com



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Critical Years (cont'd. from cover)

- improve.
- Empathic to lesser skilled players on the team.
- Realizes good is never good enough and that you need dedication to be the best.

Healthy Family Support

- It plays a very important part in a player's development but many players have succeeded in a very negative environment. In fact, hockey can be an escape for some players, who live in a negative home environment.
- Parents should offer good encouragement but sincere encouragement – not too high and flattering and not too low and negative.
- Listen to their child's wants and needs to avoid burnout – too many games etc., and to offer proper guidance and support.
- Avoid too much pressure to play and to perform.
- Keep the fun in the sport!

Good Coaching/Instruction

- Teach learn to skate, scrimmage and have fun
- Teach proper technique especially balanced skating
- Teach basic hockey skills/fundamentals of the game
- Teach fair play, and doing a player's

best

- Teach how to play the game – positional play / strategies
- Foster creativity in players – to enhance development and stretch their game / potential
- Teach not only hockey skills but life skills as well

Proper Equipment

- It makes a difference in a player's development and performance. It's hard for parents to keep up, even for parents, who know about equipment because of growth spurts and more than one child playing in the family.
- Equipment issues include proper fitting of skates, proper stick length, proper helmet fit and hockey pants not too short – equipment fitted for safety first.

Luck and Fate

- It has forever played a role in sports. It is sometimes called the unseen hand. For example, when the puck hits the post or crossbar and goes out. One quarter of an inch and it would go in. It occurs every game. Time after time deflections – bounces – missed pucks.
- Near misses and near goals, being in the right place and at the right time in a game and in life has defined many a hockey success /failure and ultimately hockey careers.



Next Issue:

Spring 2007

Features

- Letters to the Editor/Prize Winner Announcement
- Hockey – The Short Game
- Buddy Gale – A Unique Hockey Person
- Flames Draftees – Where Are They Now?
- Why Balanced Skating?
- Insights into Off Ice Training

Welcome to Hockey Zones

The official newsletter of Tucker Hockey.

The Winter 2007 issue consists of fresh hockey education and teaching articles, an expression of hockey philosophies and viewpoints, addresses various hockey issues for public discussion, provides features on hockey people at the "Calgary grass roots rink level", features upcoming Tucker Hockey Adult and Minor hockey programs, and provides hockey quotes, stories, and prize contests. In summary, it will create good hockey... "Food for Thought!"

Enjoy your hockey—the World's greatest sport! – and I hope you enjoy our Tucker Hockey Newsletter!

–Past Issues Available at www.tuckerhockey.com–