



# TOMPKINS GIRLS HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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Player and Parent Handbook  
2024-2026



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# Welcome to Tompkins Girls Hockey Association

Tompkins Girls Hockey Association (TGHA) is the oldest girls hockey organization in New York State. We are a member of USA Hockey and the Central Section of the New York State Amateur Hockey Association (NYSAHA), and our mission is to give every girl in the greater Tompkins County area the opportunity to experience the joy of ice hockey.

Also known as the Ithaca Shooting Stars, TGHA has been developing the player and the person since 1972. We are proud of our 52+ year history and all the wonderful girls and young women who have been part our program, and we look forward to empowering the next generation of Shooting Stars—in hockey and in life.

## Our Philosophy

TGHA is dedicated to fostering the social, personal, and athletic growth of girls through the game of ice hockey. We help every player develop the skills, teamwork, and discipline needed to achieve success on the ice. At the same time, we promote the values of sportsmanship, integrity, and mutual respect that help produce young women of character.

At TGHA, we recognize that athletic ability and commitment to hockey will vary among our players. Our goal is to meet every player where she is and to help her become the best player and person she can be. Whether a player is looking for a competitive environment or a more recreational experience, TGHA has a place for every girl who wants to play hockey.

Hockey is a competitive sport, and trying to win is inherent in its play, but above all, hockey should be fun. As an organization, we will have succeeded if all of our players have had fun, improved their skills and contributed to the team to the best of their abilities, made meaningful and lasting friendships, and developed a lifelong love for the game.

Hockey is for everyone. TGHA values diversity among our players, and we encourage families of all backgrounds to participate in the great game of hockey.





## Teams

TGHA follows USA Hockey age classifications for girls teams: eight and under (8U), ten and under (10U), twelve and under (12U), fourteen and under (14U), sixteen and under (16U), and nineteen and under (19U). Typically, we field teams from 8U to 16U, with younger and older teams if possible. 8U and younger teams play cross-ice; 10U and older teams play full-ice. TGHA and USA Hockey have rules governing players playing “up” on an older team. For more information on TGHA’s “move up” policy, please contact the [board of directors](#).

Beginning at 12U, teams may declare eligibility for the New York State Championships (“States”). Teams that are eligible for the state tournament are known as tournament-bound (TB) teams. Teams that do not declare for the state tournament are known as non-tournament-bound (NTB) teams. Tournament-bound teams play other tournament-bound teams in Central Section in order to qualify for States.

At 12U and above, team formation typically begins with tryouts in the spring. Those who do not attend tryouts in the spring are still eligible to play in the fall. Whether you’re on a TB or NTB team, you can expect a fun, robust, and memorable season of hockey.

## Season Schedule

For most of our teams, the season begins in late September or early October and ends in early March, but some teams may start after Labor Day and/or play until mid-March. TGHA reserves two nights a week for practices at the Rink, also known as the Community Recreation Center (1767 East Shore Drive, Ithaca). For those at 10U and above, there is usually an additional weekly or biweekly night of skating and skills development with [SpeedSkills](#). The frequency of practices and SpeedSkills sessions depends on the age level of the team.

Saturdays are typically reserved for home games and Sundays for away games. Most teams also participate in our home tournament, the Kevin R. Talty Shooting Stars Tournament, which usually takes place the first weekend of December. Teams will also travel for jams, showcases, and other tournaments throughout the season. For a detailed schedule of the current season, visit our website at [www.ithacagirlshockey.org](http://www.ithacagirlshockey.org).

## Commitment and Expectations

Playing hockey requires a substantial investment of time, energy, and resources. This may include significant travel within New York State, especially at older levels. Please make sure your family understands the commitment required to play hockey before you register.

Players at TGHA are expected to attend all practices and games. Families are expected to RSVP in a timely way using the [Crossbar mobile app](#) so that coaches can plan accordingly. The coaching staff of each team will establish rules and expectations at the beginning of each season. It's important to respect team rules, including any consequences for absences. The more committed your player is, the more success and fun she'll have!

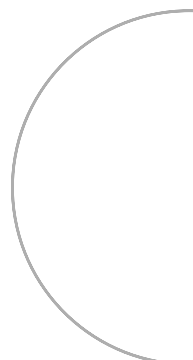
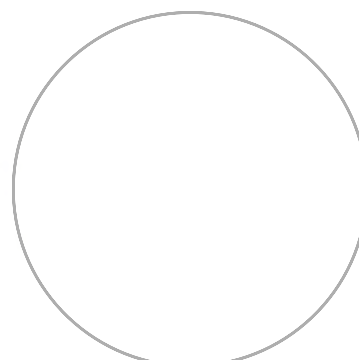
## Registration

Registration opens each summer for the next season. The price of registration includes all practices and regular games, SpeedSkills sessions for players at 10U and above, the entry fee for our home tournament if applicable, and the entry fee for one other tournament.

Visit our website at [www.ithacagirlshockey.org](http://www.ithacagirlshockey.org) and sign up with Crossbar if you haven't already, then follow instructions for registration. During registration, families will be prompted to sign up with USA Hockey, upload documents, sign waivers, and order uniforms and practice jerseys if needed. Families can choose between a payment plan or payment in full and between electronic check or credit card. Any balance from a previous year must be paid in full before a player can register for a new season.

## #3 Daryl Pace Scholarship Award

During registration, families may apply for the [#3 Daryl Pace Scholarship Award](#), named in honor of former TGHA and Ithaca Sirens player Daryl Pace, who passed away from ocular melanoma in 2019. Scholarships are limited and awarded on a per case basis by the TGHA Executive Leadership Team and may be granted in full or in part.





## Dual Rostering

Players who play for another association may dual roster with TGHA if the presidents of both associations sign a Multiple Association Participation Agreement. In addition to meeting all their commitments to their primary association, dual-rostered players must meet all commitments established by their team at TGHA.

## Equipment

The following hockey equipment is required of all skaters:

- helmet (certified)
- face mask
- mouthguard
- neck guard
- shoulder pads
- elbow pads
- gloves
- pelvic protector
- pants
- shin pads
- stick
- skates

Goalies are expected to have the same or the equivalent, plus additional goalie gear. **For all players at 12U and above on full-season teams, including dual-rostered players, helmets, pants, and gloves must be black or dark blue!** (The exceptions are goalie masks and gear.) Black or dark blue is also recommended for younger players.

## Uniforms and Practice Jerseys

**All players at 12U, 14U, and 16U, including those who are dual-rostered, are required to purchase personalized home and away jerseys and home and away socks** (unless there is financial need). Those who do not have their own will use loaner jerseys and/or socks. Consult our website for current uniform requirements for each team.

Players are also required to use reversible TGHA practice jerseys. Uniforms, socks, and/or practice jerseys can be ordered during registration. Players may only choose numbers that are available in the jersey number registry on our website.

## Player Safety

At TGHA, the health, safety, and well-being of our players is paramount. By its nature, hockey is a fast-moving and potentially dangerous sport. Players should always try to be in control, both physically and emotionally, during practices and games. This will help ensure a safe environment for individuals, teammates, and opposing players alike.

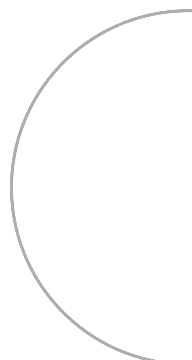
TGHA adheres to USA Hockey's protocols for [concussion management](#). Any player with a suspected concussion will be immediately removed from play. Those with a suspected or actual concussion must receive medical clearance and complete USA Hockey's Concussion Management Return to Play Form before they can resume normal play.

## Locker Room Policy

Our concern for the health, safety, and well-being of our players extends off the ice as well. TGHA also adheres to USA Hockey's [SafeSport Program](#) to help protect our players from all forms of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. All board members, team managers, coaches, and locker room monitors must be SafeSport-certified and undergo background checks.

To maintain personal privacy and reduce the risk of misconduct or abuse, TGHA has adopted the following locker room policy based on guidance from USA Hockey:

- TGHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas, generally 30-45 minutes before and after practices and games, both home and away.
- At these designated times, locker rooms and changing areas must be supervised by a rostered and SafeSport-certified locker room monitor.
- With the exception of 8U, parents who are not monitors are prohibited from entering the locker room when other players are present unless it is a health emergency.
- Locker room monitors must give the "all-clear" before coaches can enter the locker room before and after games.
- Cell phones and other recording devices are not permitted in the locker room.





## Player Code of Conduct

TGHA expects all of our players to:

1. Commit themselves to the team and the sport of hockey.
2. Work hard to improve their skills.
3. Be punctual for all practices, games, and team events.
4. Be a good team player by supporting teammates at all times.
5. Listen to and respect coaches and communicate concerns appropriately.
6. Respect opposing players and refrain from using abusive language on or off the ice.
7. Respect officials and their decisions and show good sportsmanship at all times.
8. Respect parents, locker room monitors, arena staff, and TGHA volunteers.
9. Refrain from using profanities.
10. Refrain from fighting.
11. Say no to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, especially at hockey-related events.
12. Respect our arena and those we visit.
13. Refrain from bringing cell phones and other recording devices into the locker room.
14. Be a good ambassador for TGHA both on and off the ice.

## Parent/Guardian Conduct

TGHA expects parents and guardians to model the kind of behavior we expect of our children. This includes being positive with your child and supportive of her teammates, respecting coaches and their decisions and communicating concerns appropriately, respecting officials and their decisions and showing good sportsmanship at all times, and being a good ambassador for TGHA both on and off the ice. Inappropriate behavior may lead to action by the board of directors. For more, please see our zero tolerance policy.

Parents are also expected to make sure their child is always ready and able to play hockey. This includes everything from providing safe and comfortable equipment to getting your child to the rink on time. Hockey parents are a special breed, and we appreciate all that you do!

## Communicating with Coaches

At TGHA, we believe in open dialogue between players/parents and coaches. We also believe that coaches deserve to be treated with respect. If you have questions or concerns about your player and/or her team, please approach the head coach or the coaching staff in constructive ways. Whenever possible, empower your child to advocate for herself. If parents prefer to communicate directly, **please observe the “24-hour rule”**: wait at least twenty-four hours after a game before approaching the head coach or the coaching staff about a game-related concern to ensure you are in the best frame of mind.

## Zero Tolerance Policy

TGHA enforces USA Hockey’s [Zero Tolerance Policy](#) for players, coaches, officials, parents/spectators, and administrators. For example, parents/spectators who display “inappropriate and disruptive behavior” will be removed from the premises and may face further disciplinary action by the association. For players and parents/spectators alike, further action may include, but is not limited to, suspension from all TGHA activities, including practices and games, for a specified period of time. The board will endeavor to hear all parties but reserves the right to impose discipline at its sole discretion. SafeSport violations will not be tolerated. Even a first offense will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the association.

## Reporting

If you witness behavior that violates USA Hockey’s Zero Tolerance Policy, please contact the [board of directors](#), who will investigate in accordance with association and district guidelines and take action as necessary. If you witness or suspect SafeSport violations in the form of sexual, physical, and/or emotional abuse, including bullying, threats, harassment, or hazing, please contact USA hockey at [usahockeysafesport@usahockey.org](mailto:usahockeysafesport@usahockey.org) or 1-800-888-4656 or [file a report online](#). Also contact the board of directors, who will cooperate in full.





## Volunteering for TGHA

Tompkins Girls Hockey Association is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization. TGHA would not exist, much less thrive, without the dedication and generosity of parents and other volunteers. Every TGHA family is expected to give of their time so that all of our players have the best experience possible. Volunteer opportunities abound, from pitching in on game day to helping organize our annual tournament. Here are some of the ways you can help!

### ***Board of Directors***

The board of directors oversees all aspects of the organization and the hockey season, from ice contracts to registration to fundraising. The board, which can include up to eleven members, usually meets once a month throughout the year. Each board term is two years, renewable up to eight years. Board positions include president, vice president, registrar, treasurer, secretary, and at-large members. The president, vice president, and one other member compose the Executive Leadership Team. More than others, board members provide stewardship for the organization. Current board members are listed on our website. If you are interested in joining the board, please complete this [volunteer application form](#).

### ***Non-board Positions***

Please use the form above to volunteer for other key non-board positions:

- Tournament Director (for the Kevin R. Talty Shooting Stars Tournament)
- Core Values Coordinator (for the New York Development Model)
- Association Coaching and Education (ACE) Coordinator
- American Development Model (ADM) Coordinator
- Communications Coordinator
- Ice Time Master Scheduler
- Player Safety Coordinator
- SafeSport Coordinator
- Cub Club Coordinator
- Fundraising Coordinator
- Equipment Manager

## ***Coach***

TGHA is proud of our experienced, knowledgeable, and dedicated coaches. Every coach must be approved by the board of directors, and only approved coaches who are in compliance with USA Hockey coaching requirements are allowed on the ice and in the locker room.

Coaches should strive to create a fun, supportive, and inclusive environment for every player. Their goal is to help every individual grow as both a player and a person. Coaches must be enthusiastic, communicative, well-organized, and committed, willing to continually improve their knowledge of hockey and to serve as ambassadors for TGHA. If you haven't coached for TGHA before and would like to volunteer, please complete our [coaching application](#).

## ***Team Manager***

The team manager is an essential parent volunteer role. The manager maintains close communication with coaches, parents, the board, and other teams. Managers receive training as needed and maintain the "team book." For managers of TB teams, this includes filing scoresheets and keeping track of tournament-qualifying games. The team manager must be approved by the head coach and the board of directors.

Team managers also stay in close contact with game schedulers or serve in that capacity themselves. Moreover, team managers will help coordinate (home) game day volunteers, such as scorekeepers, time clock operators, and penalty box attendants (see below).

## ***Game Scheduler***

Game schedulers are responsible for scheduling all games and tournaments for their respective teams. As aforementioned, team managers may also serve as game schedulers. Game schedulers work with other TGHA teams and the Ice Time Master Scheduler to ensure that all home ice is used and shared equitably among teams. If you are interested in serving as a team manager or game scheduler, please speak to the head coach of your child's team.





## ***Locker Room Monitor/Mom***

Locker rooms monitors are required before and after every game, both home and away. Because we are a girls hockey organization, locker room monitors are always “moms.” Locker room moms help girls stay on task, supervise behavior, and enforce our locker room policy (see above). All locker room moms must be SafeSport-certified. If you are interested in serving as a locker room monitor, please complete the [volunteer application form](#).

## ***Game Day Volunteers***

Every home game requires a scorekeeper, time clock operator, and penalty box attendant. These important roles are staffed by families, and every family is expected to take a turn. Training with scoresheets and the time clock at the Rink will be provided early in the season. The best way to overcome any uncertainty about these roles is to get your feet wet and learn on the job. Be on the lookout for calls for game day volunteers from your team manager.

## ***Tournament Volunteers***

Every year in early December, TGHA hosts the Kevin R. Talty Shooting Stars Tournament, named in memory of a longtime TGHA parent, coach, and tournament director. Our tournament hosts teams from across New York State and beyond. It is not only a great weekend of hockey but also an important fundraiser.

Hosting a hockey tournament is a significant undertaking that requires the help of many. The tournament director leads a number of coordinators in areas such as scheduling, corporate sponsorship, tournament swag, raffle baskets, rink decorations, and game day volunteers. Every family is expected to contribute in some way to the tournament. You can expect to hear from the tournament director and/or area coordinators about opportunities to volunteer!

## Fundraising

Another important way that families can get involved is through fundraising. In addition to our home tournament, TGHA organizes an annual fundraiser, and all families are expected to participate. Our annual fundraiser helps to lower the cost of registration, provide scholarships for players, and ensure our financial future. It may also help offset in-season expenses, such as the entry fees for additional tournaments. Individual teams may also organize their own fundraisers with approval from the board of directors.

## Cub Club

Founded in 1995 by former TGHA and Cornell women's ice hockey player Megan Shull ('91), Cub Club is a mentoring program that pairs TGHA players who are twelve and under with "big sisters" from the Cornell Women's Ice Hockey Team.

Through a pairing ceremony, a skills session, and other fun events like bowling and movie nights, young players get to spend time with and learn from those who know what it takes to play hockey at a high level. There are also unique opportunities to be part of Cornell women's ice hockey games as "stick girls" and the Cub Club Bear. Best of all, the program is free!

For more information, visit the [Cub Club page](#) on our website.

## Join TGHA

Whether you are a past, present, or prospective TGHA family, we hope you will join us for the upcoming season—it's going to be a great one! For more information, visit our website or email [tghahockey@gmail.com](mailto:tghahockey@gmail.com).

See you at the rink!

