LITTLE FALLS YOUTH HOCKEY

TEAM MANAGER GUIDE

Ice Mites & Mites · Expectations, checklists, and tips for running your season

WHY YOUR ROLE MATTERS

At Ice Mites and Mites, the team manager is the bridge between new families and LFYH. Most of these families are new to hockey, and the experience they have with your team largely decides whether they come back next year.

You handle communication, scheduling, and logistics so your coaches can focus on the players. That includes making sure families know how the association works. When parents miss a volunteer requirement, don't know about raffle tickets, or quietly stop showing up, it usually traces back to a gap in information. You are the person best placed to close that gap. You are also an extension of LFYH, so communicate clearly, promptly, and positively.

FUN FIRST. Every decision, from how many events to schedule to how you talk to parents, should help kids love the game and make families want to stay. That includes modeling good sportsmanship and keeping the team positive and inclusive for every family.

NON-NEGOTIABLES

These apply to every Ice Mite and Mite team, every season. If something isn't in place, raise it right away.

YOUR OWN COMPLIANCE

- ☐ USA Hockey registration is current
- ☐ SafeSport certification is current
- ☐ Background check is current

The association tracks compliance for players and coaches. Managers are responsible only for their own.

TEAM POLICIES TO COMMUNICATE AND ENFORCE

- **24-hour rule:** parents wait 24 hours after a game or event before raising a concern with coaches.
- **No parents on the ice or player benches.** The only exception is the early days of Learn to Skate.
- **Parents must be present for practices** at the Ice Mite and Mite levels. This is not drop-off hockey.

Confidentiality: you will have family contact details and may learn sensitive information. Never share it outside the team's official use.

WHO HANDLES WHAT

The association schedules practice ice. Finding travel events for your team is your job.

Area	LFYH handles	Team manager handles
Practice ice	Schedules all practices and posts them on the LFYH website and app	Sends a weekly schedule and expectations message; flags conflicts
Compliance	Tracks USA Hockey registration, SafeSport, and background checks for players and coaches	Keeps your own compliance current
Home jamboree / event	Works with you on ice and logistics	Plans and runs the event with your volunteers
Away jamborees and travel events	Scheduler can help find opportunities	Finds, registers for, and confirms events within the limits below
Association communications	Sends policies, deadlines, volunteer and raffle info	Confirms families saw it and helps explain it
Attendance	Needs to know about drops and quits	Tracks attendance and reports concerns

WHEN SOMETHING COMES UP

- **Player-related** (playing time, behavior, development): work with your head coach.
- **Everything else** (policy, parent conflict, scheduling, anything you're unsure about): contact the LFYH President.

When in doubt, ask early. A small question in October is easier than a big problem in February.

EVENT LIMITS BY LEVEL

These limits protect kids and families from burnout. More events is not better at this age.

Level	Home events	Away / travel events	Full-ice games
Ice Mites	Max 1 home jamboree	Max 2 away jamborees	None
Mites	1 home event per team	Max 4–5 travel events per season	Max 10, none before January 1

- For Mites, **full-ice games count toward the 4–5 travel events.** They are not added on top.
- Check every event against these limits before you register. If you're unsure whether something counts, ask before committing.

SEASON CHECKLIST

Work through these in order. Each phase builds on the one before it.

1 · PRESEASON AND FIRST PRACTICES

- ☐ Attend the LFYH team manager meeting, if offered
- ☐ Confirm your own compliance is current (USA Hockey, SafeSport, background check)
- ☐ Meet with your head coach: agree on which tasks they want you to handle (every coach is different), communication style, and how you'll handle parent concerns
- ☐ Choose and set up your team communication app, if you'll use one

  Crossbar has the LFYH schedule built in. TeamReach adds group messages and polls but does not include the LFYH schedule, so you'd add it manually (room for mistakes) or families check two places.
- ☐ Confirm every player has at least one parent or guardian in the app. If you use email instead, confirm every family's address is correct.
- ☐ Decide how you'll take attendance: periodically by hand, in the Crossbar app, or another method
- ☐ Point families to the schedule on the LFYH website and app

  Family Calendar for their own schedule; Schedule tab for the full arena schedule.
- ☐ Send a welcome message to families: who you are, how you'll communicate, and where to find the schedule
- ☐ With your head coach, hold a parent meeting during or right after one of the first practices, covering:
  - ☐ Introductions: you, the coaches, and families
  - ☐ Fun first: what the season will look like at this level
  - ☐ Parents present at practice; no parents on ice or benches
  - ☐ The 24-hour rule
  - ☐ Volunteer hour requirements and where to find them
  - ☐ Raffle tickets and other association fundraising
  - ☐ Where association communications come from and how to see them (check spam if emails from littlefallsyha@gmail.com aren't arriving)
  - ☐ Open time for questions
- ☐ Confirm every player has a jersey before the first event (players can borrow an association jersey for events if they don't have one)
- ☐ Ask a responsible parent to be your backup for any event you can't attend
- ☐ Start looking for jamboree and travel opportunities; ask the scheduler for help if needed

2 · EARLY SEASON (FIRST 4–6 WEEKS)

- ☐ **Weekly, all season:** send a message with the week's schedule and expectations
- ☐ **Every 1–2 weeks, all season:** send a photo or team update to the LFYH publicity coordinator for social media
- ☐ Register for events and confirm they fit within the event limits
- ☐ Verify game times and locations on the host team's website before each event
- ☐ Tell families about any schedule change as soon as you know
- ☐ Coordinate home jamboree / event dates with the association
- ☐ Check in personally with each new family: any questions, how is it going?
- ☐ Review attendance regularly and follow up on any player who seems to have missed a few in a row
- ☐ Make sure families are receiving each association communication, and answer questions that come up

3 · MID-SEASON (DECEMBER–JANUARY)

- ☐ Mites: confirm no full-ice games are scheduled before January 1
- ☐ Run your home jamboree / event
- ☐ Be on site for your team's picture day so every player and coach is accounted for
- ☐ Remind families of volunteer hour status and raffle deadlines
- ☐ Keep reviewing attendance; report any player who has stopped coming to the association
- ☐ Plan a simple team bonding activity, like open skating or a pizza party, if families want one

4 · LATE SEASON AND WRAP-UP

- ☐ Confirm all event commitments are complete
- ☐ Final reminders on volunteer hours and any outstanding association items
- ☐ Help organize an end-of-season celebration and coach gifts, if your team wants them
- ☐ Send thank-yous and a wrap-up message to families, coaches, and volunteers
- ☐ Talk to families about next season and registration timing

  Watch for spring and summer opportunities; registration typically opens in June.
- ☐ Share feedback with the association: what worked, what didn't

GAME DAYS AND HOME EVENTS

Use the first list for every event, and the second whenever your team hosts.

EVERY GAME DAY

- ☐ Send families the arena name and address before departure
- ☐ Have a digital copy of your USA Hockey roster available
- ☐ Arrive early and handle team check-in (at tournaments, often at least an hour before the first game)
- ☐ For home events, know how the clock and music work so you can teach parents and help troubleshoot, and be ready to cover or replace a no-show
- ☐ Share event details with families as soon as you receive them

HOSTING A HOME JAMBOREE OR EVENT

- ☐ Be the point of contact for your team and visiting managers
- ☐ Make sure parents show up per the work schedule and every position is covered. Report no-shows to the Board.
- ☐ Check locker rooms for cleanliness before and after use
- ☐ Keep the schedule updated, if assigned
- ☐ Support the tournament director and help resolve issues quickly and professionally

MONEY RULES

At this level, team managers typically do not handle team money. The few exceptions:

- **Group apparel:** a jamboree team apparel order
- **Pooled team funds:** if the team chooses to pool money for a coaches' gift, team party, or similar

If you collect money for any of these, keep a simple record of who paid and how much, and share it with families when the purchase is done. For anything else involving money, check with the association first.

ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

These levels have the most new families in the association, so keeping them is one of your most important jobs. Too often a player quits mid-season and nobody, including the association, knows until registration time next year.

TRACK IT

- Decide how you'll track attendance. The Crossbar app is the easiest. It doesn't need to be fancy, just consistent.

- Review it weekly.

WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS

- Two or more missed sessions in a row with no explanation
- A family that stops responding to messages
- A player who seems unhappy or a parent who seems frustrated

ACT ON IT

1. Reach out personally and kindly. Ask how things are going, not why they've been missing.
2. Loop in your head coach if it's player-related.
3. Let the association know if a player has stopped attending or has decided to quit, even if you're not sure of the reason.

HELPFUL TIPS

- **Assume nothing is known.** New hockey families don't know the jargon, the gear, or how the association works. Explain it simply, and more than once.
- **One channel, one rhythm.** Pick one main communication tool and send a weekly message with the schedule and expectations, even though the schedule is posted online. Fewer, clearer messages get read.
- **Repeat association messages.** If LFYH sends something important, assume half your families missed it.
- **Build a parent bench.** Recruit two or three reliable parents early to help with events and errands so you're not doing it all yourself.
- **Keep it fun for families too.** A team social or a fun jersey day helps new families feel they belong.
- **Protect your time.** Set expectations about when you'll respond to messages. You're a volunteer, too.
- **Write things down.** Notes on what worked this season help next year's manager, even if that's you.

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING! Questions about players go to your head coach. Everything else goes to the LFYH President. When in doubt, ask early.