



# ORONO WESTONKA GIRLS HOCKEY COOPERATIVE

## 8U PROGRAM OVERVIEW 2025-2026

### PURPOSE

To provide an enjoyable introduction to hockey for players of all abilities. The goal is to align the Warrior levels for the 8U age girls to provide age-appropriate development based on the skill levels of the individual player. To provide more opportunities for engagement among parents to build passion and friendships. Create a defined growth path for player development in the Warrior program.

### PHILOSOPHY

The 8U group is the fundamental stage of the Warriors. Creating a positive, healthy environment for the youngest members is essential to a player's long-term participation, growth, and successful experience in hockey. The program will focus on skill development for all players to build fundamental skills in a fun environment.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The success of the Warriors relies greatly on the commitment and conduct of parents. We ask that you help support the program in the following ways:

- Ensure that your player is at practice on time and ready to skate at the start of practice.
- Conduct yourself in a positive, healthy way by following USA Hockey's Parents' Code of Conduct. Players require a good example as opposed to criticism.
- Help make your child's participation rewarding for all participants.
- Be understanding and supportive of the coaches, level rep, and managers.
- Support and assist the program in a positive manner.

The parent is the most important example to which a child can relate. Be everything you want your child to be.



## WARRIORS 8U LEVELS

- **Girls 1 (G1):** New skaters with limited skating experience. Typically ages 4–7.
- **Girls 2 (G2):** One to two years prior skating experience. Typically ages 5–7.
- **Girls 3 (G3):** Intermediate level, progressing to advanced, two to four years prior skating experience. Typically ages 6–8.
- **Girls 4 (G4):** Advanced, highest skill level, three to five years prior skating experience. Typically ages 7–8.

Levels tend to follow Minnesota Hockey age groupings as players continue through the program, but can vary slightly based on skill level.

## EVALUATIONS

At the beginning of the season, there will be evaluations to help guide level placement. Pre-K and first-year kindergarten skaters do not need to attend evaluations; they will automatically be placed on the G1 team.

Evaluations are completed to ensure girls are placed where they can continue to grow their skills alongside players of similar ability. They take into account overall hockey skills and readiness, but are not meant to be a test — rather, they give coaches a snapshot of where each player will have the best chance to learn, develop, and succeed.

Our goal is to provide each child with the best opportunity to build confidence, improve, and enjoy the game of hockey. Evaluation results are not an indication of a child's long-term hockey potential or future success.



## GIRLS 1 (G1)

**Practices/Games:** 2 practices per week (Saturday/Sunday). Typically shared with Girls 2.

**Player Developmental Skills Goals:**

- Develop basic skating fundamentals in a fun environment.
- Introduce edges, stopping, and skating backwards as season progresses.
- Introductory hockey skills like proper way to hold stick, puck handling, and shooting to prepare for Girls 2.

**Organization:** 1 team, with a G1 lead coach and team manager.

## GIRLS 2 (G2)

**Practices/Games:** 2 practices per week (Saturday/Sunday). Typically shared with Girls 1..

**Player Developmental Skills Goals:**

- Emphasis on skating skills, such as inside/outside edges, crossovers, and backward skating.
- Additional time on hockey skills like puck handling, passing, and shooting.
- Introduce competition drills, such as 1 vs 1 puck battles and angling.
- Informal half-ice scrimmages and jamborees against outside teams.
- Introduction of goalies during practices and scrimmages with quick-change pads.

**Organization:** 2 teams, with a G2 lead coach and 2 team managers.



## GIRLS 3 (G3)

**Practices/Games:** 2–3 practices per week (Saturday/Sunday + 1 rotating weekday)

**Player Developmental Skills Goals:**

- Developmental Skills Goals:
- Continue developing puck and skating skills from G1/G2 levels, but at a higher tempo with larger stations and more space.
- Emphasize puck skills (stationary and moving) while adding more advanced shooting skills.
- Introduce small-area game concepts to increase competition, along with shared practices/scrimmages with outside associations and jamborees.
- Begin light dryland activities in addition to on-ice practices.
- More goalie development, incorporating goalie skills nights.

**Organization:** 2 teams, with 2 G3 lead coaches and 2 team managers.

## GIRLS 4 (G4)

**Practices/Games:** 3+ practices per week (Saturday/Sunday + 1–2 rotating weekdays).

**Player Developmental Skills Goals:**

- Focus on team play concepts, small-area games (passing, head manning the puck, spreading out, positional play, competition, angling).
- Build advanced skating and puck handling skills, passing/receiving passes, and teamwork.
- Teach knowledge and terminology needed for the U10 level through drills and practice concepts.
- Shared practices/scrimmages with other advanced U8 teams with an emphasis on full-ice development.
- Dryland activities in addition to on-ice practices.
- May have a dedicated goalie.

**Organization:** 2 teams with 2 G4 lead coaches and 2 team managers.

**NOTE: G3 AND G4 ARE CONSIDERED READINESS LEVELS FOR TRAVEL HOCKEY. PLAYERS ARE BUILDING THE FOUNDATION NEEDED TO TRANSITION INTO 10U.**