

NWAHA Development Plan- Based on ADM (American Development Model)

Core Program Foundations

- Universal access to the Game
 - Age-appropriate development
 - Multi-sport participation
 - Fun and engaging environments
 - Quality engaged coaching
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NWAHA Focuses on Core Hockey Fundamentals Development – these concepts are the foundation of skills and individual training sessions at all ages

Fundamental	Key Components
1. Skating Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stance and edge control- Forward and backward strides- Quick starts and stops- Turns, crossovers, pivots
2. Puck Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stickhandling under pressure- Accurate passing (forehand/backhand)- Varied shooting techniques (wrist, snap, slap)- Puck protection and shielding
3. Game Sense & Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reading play flow- Anticipating teammates and opponents' moves- On-ice communication (calls, signals)- Quick transition choices (attack vs. defend)
4. Positional & Tactical Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understanding each position's responsibilities- Gap control and support positioning- Offensive spacing and defensive structure- Special teams basics (power play, penalty kill)
5. Physical & Safety Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Competitive contact- Checked and checking drills (age-appropriate)- Falling, recovery, and safe-landing habits- Equipment checks and maintenance
6. Mental & Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sportsmanship and respect for officials- Teamwork, leadership, and accountability- Goal setting and self-reflection- Work ethic, resilience, and time management

Stage-Based Athlete Development

Stage	Age	Key Focus
Active Start (8U)	0–6	Learn to skate/play, movement skills, fundamentals
FUNDamentals (8U)	6–9	Skating, puck control, basic movement, focused fundamentals
Learn to Train (10U)	8–12	Coordination, skill transfer to games, decision making, special teams foundations
Train to Train (12U)	11–16	Tactical concepts: zone coverage, breakouts, defensive structure, strength, speed, technical skills, competitive contact
Learn to Compete (14U)	13–18	Conditioning, tactical systems, checking, positioning, advanced spacing and close quarters decision making, mental prep, systems prep, introduce video analysis
Train to Win (16U+)	16+	Peak performance, advanced systems play, forecheck schemes, transition offense,

Practice Design – NWAHA coaches use IHS (Ice Hockey Systems) to build age appropriate, skills focused practice plans

- Use cross-ice/half-ice formats for 8U–10U. Keep drills active and fun
 - Integrate small-area games across all levels. Examples: Competitive contact, close quarter decision making, both equal and unequal strength competition
 - Balance skill stations, scrimmages, and off-ice agility
 - Progress off-ice training from play-based to structured conditioning.
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Culture & Communication

- Celebrate skill milestones with players/teams
- Discuss goals transparently with individual players as well as broader team goals
- Keep sessions dynamic and playful- foster the “love of the game”
- NWAHA Clinics and Resources
 - Summer Camp – NextLevel 30 Hours on ice and/or provide own camp

- KeserichGoaltending Camp – 2 Day in Season
- Weekly Skills Sessions – Powerskating and Station
- Supplemental Mini-Skills Sessions as available
- External/Independent Training as available