

# Parent/Player Guidebook

## **Philosophy:**

The Motor City Stars Hockey/Skate to be Great Program was founded in 2007. This program is committed to providing special needs athletes the opportunity to have fun on the ice while learning the basic skills and how to play the game of ice hockey.

The Motor City Stars Hockey Program strives to teach the basic hockey skills of skating, stick handling, passing and shooting, all which facilitate the development of motor skills and hand/eye coordination. Beginner through advance levels of players are welcome as no experience is necessary.

The largest focus will be on the “life skills” that a team sport hockey can provide. Some of the benefits to our athletes include:

- Development of the skills necessary to play hockey
- Enjoyment and recreation
- Commitment to teamwork
- Increasing of self-esteem and self-confidence
- Building a good work ethic
- Understanding of good sportsmanship
- Socializing with other athletes

## **Membership with the MORC Stars Hockey/Skate to be Great Program**

All players and volunteers are required to register on the team website [www.motorcitystars.org](http://www.motorcitystars.org). We encourage parents and guardians to set up a login for themselves on the site as well. Parents do not need to register themselves for the season.

## **Volunteers**

The Motor City Stars Hockey Program is a volunteer organization. Without our volunteers, we would not exist. All of our coaches, off-ice staff, and fundraising personnel are all volunteers. We invite you to participate as well.

We are looking for volunteers for the following:

- Locker room attendant/assistant (must complete a background check before taking on this position)
- Tournament volunteers (bus leader, rink leader, pin distributor, etc)
- Fundraising support(sponsorships, auction items, event volunteers)

## **Program Rules**

### **Attendance and Communication**

Communication concerning attendance is expected from coaches and players alike. There is an expectation that if a player will be absent, he/she will notify the team. Coaches develop practice and game plans based on the number of anticipated athletes on the ice. If a player does not communicate an absence, it forces the coaches to make last minute changes, forcing a delay for all other players. If repeated unannounced absences occur, we will meet with the player and parent to discuss whether or not the Motor City Stars organization is an appropriate fit.

Most invitations to games will be sent through our registration system. If you are invited to participate in a game/tournament or other event, it is up to you to register. If you do not register, we assume you were not interested. Anyone who attends a game/tournament or other event, but did not register will be invited to watch, but will not be permitted to participate. If you are unsure as to whether or not you registered for an event you can verify it by logging into the Motor City Stars website, or you can send us an email to ask for confirmation.

For communication that requests a response of either yes or no, we expect a reply. 2 or more ignored responses will automatically remove the player from being invited to further events outside of practice.

### **Games and Practices**

Weekly practices- (arrive no later than 20 minutes prior to your scheduled ice-time.) Each Motor City Star athlete is eligible to participate in our weekly practices. Coaches attempt to provide the best experience possible for all the athletes. This is the cornerstone of the program.

Games/Tournaments- (arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled ice-time.) These opportunities, when presented, will be on an invitation basis. There are multiple factors that determine which athletes will be invited to participate in which event. We try our best to incorporate as many players as possible.

When coaches are meeting with players in the locker room prior to a game, we ask that all parents head to the stands. This allows the coaches an opportunity to discuss the game without any distractions.

All athletes must be dressed and ready to go on the ice 10 minutes before the Zamboni begins re-surfacing. No athlete is permitted on the ice until the Zamboni has left the ice and the doors have been secured.

### **Parent/Guardian Expectations**

As a parent it is important to realize that you represent the entire Motor City Stars Organization. The Stars have earned a good reputation in the special hockey community. The coaches, players, and the families have all played a part. We have high expectations for our volunteers and our families. We believe this is vital to ensure we are maximizing the experience for everyone.

**We encourage family and friends to:**

- Provide positive encouragement to the athletes
- Cheer for the players (this may be after a nice play, a nice effort, skating onto the ice, etc.)
- Cheer for the opposing team (yes, we even encourage cheering for our opponents)
- Help create a warm and welcome environment for everyone, promoting good sportsmanship on and off the ice.

**We respectfully ask that family and friends refrain from the following:**

- Shouting instructions to the players, banging on the glass, or distracting the players in any way
- Shouting at the referee, opposing players, or opposing coaches
- Standing on or too close to the benches (unless requested by a coach)
- Distracting the coaches during practices or games (please respect the time and commitment of the coaches and volunteers- they are trying to ensure the best experience for everyone.)
- Yelling, foul language, derogatory comments, or negative attitudes in general

**Rumors/Gossip**

We believe that rumors and gossip can cause harm to any organization. If you have a concern about something you have heard, please do not hesitate to bring it to our attention. Our goal is to invite all members to be a part of a positive, non-judgmental environment, and to allow each individual their privacy.

**Have Fun**

People play hockey because it's fun and exciting. As a parent, it is important that you do your best to make this an enjoyable and educational experience for your athlete.

**Responsibilities of the Players**

**Player Conduct**

It is important that athletes realize that they represent the entire MORC Stars Organization and any inappropriate behavior at team functions, tournaments, hotels, ice rinks, etc., may result in disciplinary action.

**Respect and Sportsmanship**

Players must show respect at all times to teammates, parents, coaches, referees, and opposing team members. Disrespect, abusive language, negative attitudes, or derogatory comments will not be tolerated. Players who violate this will be disciplined on an individual basis and the outcome will be discussed with parents.

### **Team Play**

We will always play as a team. Individual or selfish play will not be tolerated. As a team, we practice together, play together, win together and lose together.

### **Personal Responsibility**

We will have locker room leaders for each group (male and female). This does not mean that you can drop off a player at the rink and expect that the locker room leader will make sure they are dressed and ready to go. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their son/daughter is prepared to head onto the ice. Leaders are mainly there to make sure that players know where they need to go, how much time they have before they need to be out on the ice, to keep the chatter positive, etc. If you are unsure as to how to help your player dress for a game/practice, please talk with your locker room leader, and they will teach you. If a player is unable to tie their own skates, or get dressed on their own, and their parent/guardian is not making themselves available to assist, we will request a meeting with the player and parent to address and correct this issue.

Players/Parents are responsible for packing their equipment bags and making sure that all equipment/clothing is included. If equipment needs replacement or repair, please do not wait until game time to address this. You will be provided with contact information for all equipment issues and we ask that you make contact once the athlete is off the ice and equipment is being examined before packing up to go home.

All equipment is to be aired out and cleaned after each practice/game, and jerseys are to be washed and hung up (not stuffed into the equipment bag). Harmful bacteria can grow very quickly in a hockey bag from the combination of wet equipment/clothing and sweat. Coaches will know when equipment and jerseys are not properly cared for by the distinctive smell that clings to them. If this becomes a problem, a parent will be contacted and the athlete will not be permitted to participate again until the equipment has been addressed. It is good practice to empty out your bag when you get home, clean equipment and jerseys immediately, and then leave them out to air until the next game/practice.

### **Equipment required prior to stepping out on the ice:**

- Skates
- Helmet
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow pads
- Shin pads
- Gloves
- Cup
- Stick

**Optional (but highly recommended)**

- Neck guard (required in Canada)
- Mouth guard

**Equipment**

If equipment no longer fits or has worn out from use and needs to be exchanged, we will do our best to accommodate you. You may be required to purchase the equipment yourself if we do not have a viable option.

Please make every effort not to lose any pieces of equipment. Lost items must be replaced at your own expense.