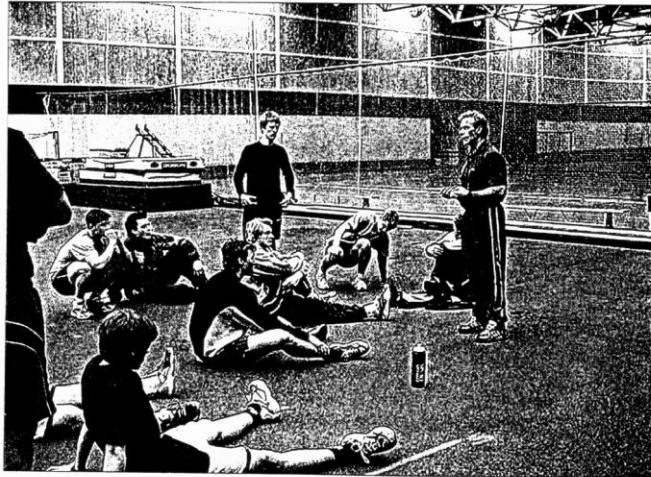


Physical Training for Children and Youth

By
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An ice hockey player's career has tended to become longer. Today, youngsters begin their athletic practice in organized form as early as 5 – 6 years of age. How long one plays ice hockey is dependent on the ambition and educational level of the individual. Some quit playing hockey as early as 20 years of age, others wait until they are 35 – 40 years old. Those who choose to quit when they are 20 years old have in spite of everything played for about 15 years. 15 years of training in a period when both the physical, mental and social development is immense.



During the summer's "raisin" camps there is a great deal of off-ice training.

We know that humans are built for activity, but also that the risk of injury in the training of growing children and youth is great with improper training. Improper training maybe a lot of early specialization combined with one-sided exercises which were performed incorrectly. It may also be due to one using a training program with young people which is intended for our adult elite players. The responsibility we leaders have is very great!

In this article we would like to give some tips to the leaders about various exercise forms which develop young players in their endeavor to become good hockey players. It is important that the associations (clubs) and leaders can offer the players a stimulating training environment. The leaders should encourage the players to practice a great deal!

The training of children and youth should:

- * Be for the prevention of injuries
- * Increase the performance capacity
- * Offer increased self-confidence
- * Have a balance between training – diet – rest/ sleep
- * Be FUN!

We have chosen to prioritize the training exercises which we consider are good and developing to carry out with youngsters during the so called “Golden Ages” (9 –14 years).

Coordination

The coordination capacity (ability) maybe divided up into several different coordinative sub-qualities and partial functions.

Balance:

- * Walk on the inside/ outside of the feet
- * Heel to toe walk
- * Lunge walk forward and backward, at the same time passing a ball to each other
- * Balance walk on a gymnastic beam or up and down a turned over bench:
 - Go forward, backward, 360 degree turn
 - Drop the hand to the floor
 - Dribble with a ball and stick
 - Balance various objects
 - Shut one's eyes and go
- * Jump on a line with turns



Uni-cycling is good balance training!

Movement Accuracy

- * Different forms of passing and shooting drills
- * Juggling (vary with hands and feet)
- * Juggle with stick and ball. Standing still and while moving
- * Various variations of passing with somersaults, rolls and jumps
- * Dribble one ball with the stick and one with the feet.

Orientation Capacity (ability)

The ability to know where the different body parts are.

- * Somersaults
- * Cart-wheels
- * Vaulting
- * Jumps and spins, jumps on a trampoline

Rhythm

Use music, vary the tempo.

- * Jumps over hurdles

- * Jump rope in different directions
- * Jump in hula-hoops (feet together and one-legged jumps)
- * Different forms of dribbling between pylons
- * Jumps over the bench in pairs at the same time
- * Skating jumps and stickhandling in pairs against each other
- * Running over sticks, intensification runs.

Combination Capacity (Ability)

Motor skill combinations are the ability to be able to perform movements with different parts of the body at the same time.

- * Stickhandling at the same time as you run
- * Stickhandling in place, quick feet – quiet upper-body
- * Stickhandling in place, quiet feet – quick upper-body
- * Jumps in place in pairs and pass a ball between each other
- * Jump quickly and pass calmly
- * Jump easy and pass quickly
- * Walk/ run and juggle
- * Skating hops/ jumps and pass balls between each other

Direction Changes:

- * Fake toward fixed or moving opponent (adversary)
- * Run in different speeds in for example the woods/ forest
- * Tag/ fun games
- * Different forms of games

Speed

Special speed is called within ice hockey ice hockey speed. Ice hockey speed may be divided into skating speed, action speed and thinking speed (Read more in the book Ice Hockey's Training Theory)

Action Speed

- * Quick shots and passes in various forms
- * Quick turns and direction changes
- * Sprinting between sticks which are set out with different spaces in between
- * Zig-zag jumps/ hops as quickly as possible, one/ two leg(s))
- * Quick jumps on one or two leg(s) in different combinations
- * Jump rope (one/ two leg(s))

Thinking Speed

- * Street (Land) hockey
- * Basketball
- * Drop ball

Strength

You may train strength in many different ways and by using many different exercises. Remember that strength in the trunk creates conditions for stability and balance. If you lose the tension or control in the trunk then the balance becomes poor. It thus is really important that the young players train the trunk a great deal, especially in order to improve balance and avoid injuries at a later stage.

Below are simple exercises young players can make use of:

- * Stickhandling with a weight on the stick
- * Forearms, roll up a weight

- * Hand press with handspring or a rubber ball
- * Shoulder press sitting (pairs, one stands behind and resists, work up and down)
- * Push-ups
- * One-legged squats
- * Sit-ups (Pairs with medicine ball)
- * Trunk twisting (Pairs with medicine ball, from side-to-side)
- * Squats on balance board

Endurance

Here are given examples in part of long interval training and in part short interval training.

- * Long interval 6 min. - rest 3 min., 4 min. - rest 2 min.
- * Short interval 15 - 15 sec., 70 - 20 sec., 60 - 60 sec.

Interval training doesn't have to mean only running, but can be carried out with obstacle courses, inline hockey, floor hockey/ indoor bandy, basketball, drop ball, etc.

Ice hockey-specific training forms off-ice (indoor bandy/ floor/ street hockey)

Small team games with different themes 1-1, 2-2, 3-3, 5-5 (Read more in the book Game Understanding)

- * Width, depth, triangle play
- * Play in small or large area
- * Against several goals
- * With stationary or moving outlet passers

Shooting

- * Standing still shoot toward a goal
- * Shoot while moving plus running toward the goal for rebounds
- * Shoot from different angles with obstacles in between
- * Several shots in succession, shoot as quickly as possible
- * Sharpshooters



Practice a lot of shots even off the ice.

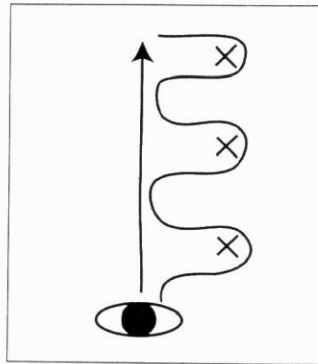
Passing

- * Various passes with pucks, big or small balls
- * Passing accuracy between cones
- * Short or long passes
- * Direct (one-touch) passes
- * Passes with tempo changes, direction changes, somersaults
- * Receiving with stick, hands and feet

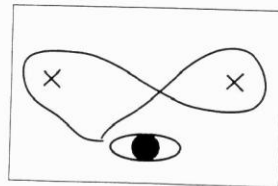
Puckhandling (Stickhandling)

Remember to stand in a hockey position (stance) with bent knees and eyes up.

- * Side-to-side, forward- backward, diagonal, figure-eight
- * Against stationary or moving opponent (adversary)/ object
- * Vary the tempo
- * Large and small play area



Jog straight ahead and make quick dribbles around the pucks that are set out.



Puckhandling in a "figure-eight". Start the drill in different directions.