



**“ GREAT MOMENTS ARE BORN
FROM GREAT OPPORTUNITIES. ”**

The meaning of these words hasn't changed since Herb Brooks used them to motivate the 1980 Miracle on Ice team. Today, we have a great opportunity to change how we play, coach and administer hockey here in the United States. This is our time to unlock the full potential that lives in every kid who laces up a pair of skates. And after researching hockey and sport and child development practices from around the globe, USA Hockey has developed a program that will provide a better future for all. All ages. All talent levels. All organizations. All of hockey. This program is the **American Development Model (ADM).**

A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL



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WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE



4

360° of a Kid
The most important part of being a kid is being a kid. We cannot lose sight of this.



6

Long-Term Athlete Development
The nuts and bolts of the ADM.



7

Club Structure
How the ADM is implemented across the board.

“THE PROGRAM IS ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC. THE PRINCIPLES ARE DEAD ON.”

NEW BEGINNINGS

With too many kids feeling burned out or left out of hockey, there's no better time for the ADM. This brand-new day for USA Hockey starts with the idea that we need to let kids be kids. That they and their families need to get the most out of hockey, without feeling like they need to be the next superstar. What follows that idea are guidelines designed to help kids play, love and excel in hockey.

TOOLS, NOT RULES

The ADM is a nationwide model for successfully developing American hockey players. It is a tool that will ensure every kid will have the same chance to succeed.

For example, part of that success will come from kids of all skill levels being exposed to each association's top coaches. They'll be able to work with the best coaches and learn from each other as they grow and develop in the sport of hockey. Another great benefit of having more kids on the ice together is that the total cost of ice goes down per player. Again, the ADM is a set of guidelines and best practices designed specifically to help kids reach their full potential.

AT THE HEART OF THE ADM

How can the sport of hockey be so important in the future success of a young man or woman? After all, it's just a game. But it can be so much more than that. It's a beacon of hope for wayward kids. A fitness program to fight the epidemic of childhood obesity. A meeting ground for lifelong friends. But at its heart hockey is, and should be, fun. A chance for kids to pour out their passion and creativity on the ice. For them to learn and grow with every practice. To just be a kid and enjoy the game. That's what the ADM is all about.

So while we honor our past accomplishments, we need to look ahead and create a brighter future for all. With your guidance, the ADM will provide those great moments for our kids.

BRIAN BURKE

The director of player personnel for the 2014
U.S. Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Team.



360° OF A KID

Put yourself in the shoes of an 8-year-old and ask yourself some questions. What's important to you? What kinds of things do you want to be doing? (And, maybe most importantly, what's for dinner?) Now list the things that would be appealing to the 8-year-old version of you. Family. Playing with friends. Goofing off. Because this is what kids do. They act like kids.

There isn't a parent, teacher or coach who wouldn't agree that today's kids are brimming with potential. And there's that word: potential. It's the great "what could be" in a kid if they're given the proper push.

A push from an encouraging parent, great friend or dedicated coach. Wherever that potential forms, it takes time to develop and it's different for each kid. The potential to be a doctor. A Hollywood star. An NHL center. The mission of the ADM is to pull out that vast potential in every kid.



If we can change how we view kids and hockey – if we can let kids act like kids and develop at an appropriate pace – we can improve a lot more than just the quality of youth hockey. We'll have better kids.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE ADM

The ideas of play, love and excel are the foundation that the ADM is built on. Once the kids are on the ice and playing, the game itself can only take them so far. There need to be reasons to love the game. And if all they're doing is playing hockey 365 days a year, there's a good chance the game they're supposed to love becomes more of a chore than a passion. That amount of exposure too early on can put undue stress and pressure on them and give the kids plenty of reasons not to love hockey.

PLAY Playing the game is where kids learn that the game is, in its simplest form, fun. By mixing in age-appropriate training and practice with an introduction to skills and athleticism, kids will have even more fun. And to keep it fun, there should be a low priority placed on winning and losing and a high priority placed on just introducing the game to a young kid.

LOVE Once kids learn to play the game and begin to develop skills and athleticism, hockey begins to take priority among their other activities. Skills become more refined, their physical and mental makeup is stronger and the friendships they developed early on continue to grow. The games become more important, and hockey in general becomes a bigger part of their lives.

EXCEL Now that they play and love the game, a higher premium can be placed on excelling at it. Tougher competition and more of a focus on mastering skills play an increased role in their development. Hockey starts to take a larger priority over other activities. But, above all, the game is still fun and the friendships that were forged back in Mites are as strong as ever. The bottom line is that if we can give kids reasons to stick with the game, we can unlock their potential and help them excel at the game they play and love.

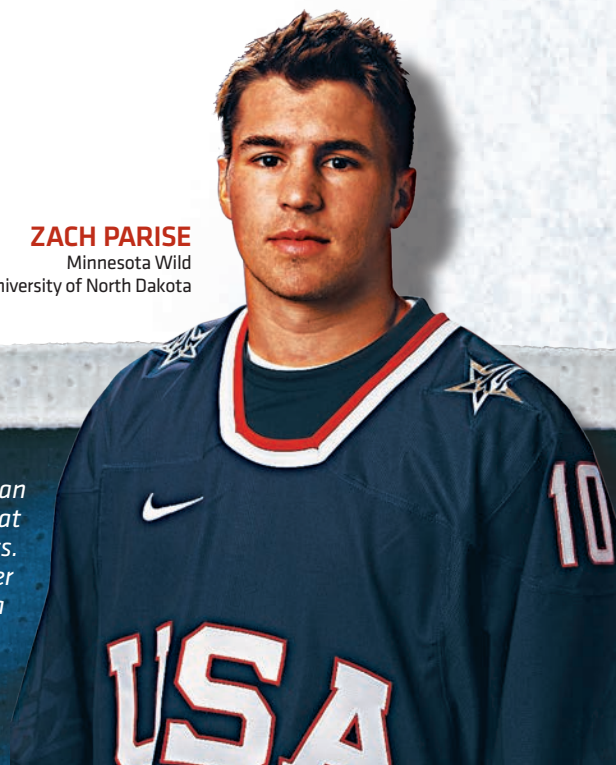
LEARNING THE RIGHT WAY

If kids want to truly excel at hockey, they'll need to learn the right way to play the game. Which is to say less emphasis on stats and win/loss records and more focus on learning the technical aspects of the game. Fundamentals and building both physical and mental skills are crucial to success in hockey. These things can't be learned efficiently during a game – they have to be learned in practice. And practicing the right way is how kids will be able to unlock their limitless potential.

ZACH PARISE

Minnesota Wild
University of North Dakota

"I think it's pretty cool (the American Development Model). I like the fact that kids are encouraged to play other sports. Hockey is a great sport, but playing other sports definitely helps you become a better hockey player."





LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

"We should always strive to do the right things for kids and the American Development Model does just that. I think as hockey has evolved in our country, coaches and parents have certainly tried to do the right thing in regard to development. But we haven't had a national blueprint for associations to use – something that is based on solid research – until now. This is a major step forward and USA Hockey is to be commended for its leadership."

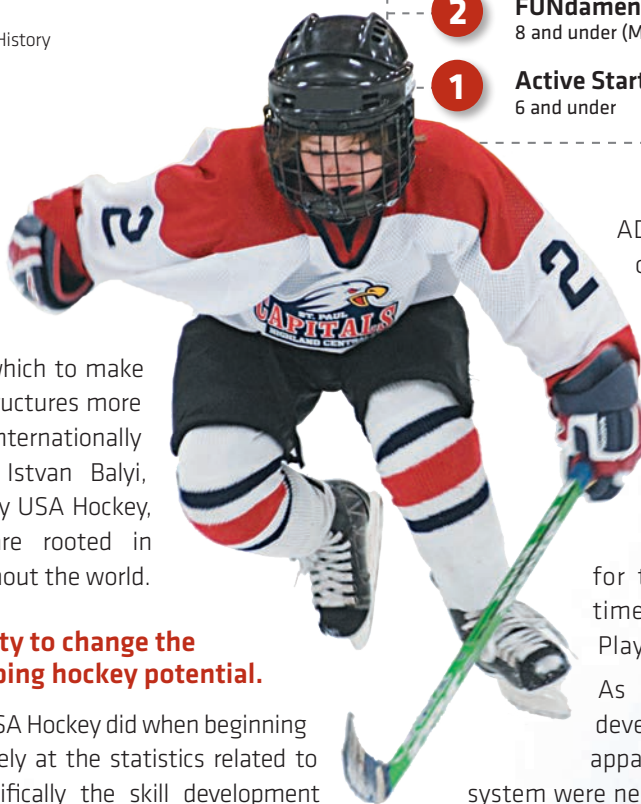
RON WILSON

2010 U.S. Olympic Men's Hockey Coach
7th All-Time Winningest Coach in NHL History

The ADM utilizes long-term athlete development (LTAD) principles as its framework. LTAD principles can be used as a basis on which to make our existing systems and structures more consistent. Developed by internationally renowned coach educator Istvan Balyi, and adapted to ice hockey by USA Hockey, the principles of LTAD are rooted in successful programs throughout the world.

This is a great opportunity to change the way we go about developing hockey potential.

One of the first things that USA Hockey did when beginning this project was to look closely at the statistics related to player development – specifically the skill development time each player has when in both a practice setting and a game setting. When viewed from the perspective of how kids learn the number of repetitions of specific skills and situations that occur in practice versus a game, we quickly learned where players have a chance to develop the most: practice. So a model was created that valued practice and proper training above all else. This isn't to say that the



LTAD STAGES

- 8 **Hockey for Life**
- 7 **Training to Win – adulthood**
19+ Junior (NCAA, NHL)
- 6 **Training to Compete – early adulthood**
Junior (NCAA)
- 5 **Learning to Compete – early adulthood**
18 and under (Midgets)
- 4 **Training to Train – late adolescence**
15-16 and under (Midgets) / 13-14 and under (Bantams)
- 3 **Learning to Train – early adolescence**
12 and under (Peewees) / 10 and under (Squirts)
- 2 **FUNDamentals – late childhood**
8 and under (Mites) / 6 and under (Mites)
- 1 **Active Start – early childhood**
6 and under

ADM is about taking the fun out of hockey, quite the contrary. Practices can and should be fun, especially if the kids are all playing together and having a blast with a game that they love. The more they play it, the better chance that they'll love it. And when you combine a passion for the game with increased puck time, kids will start to excel at it. Play, love, excel. That's the ADM.

As research was conducted in developing the ADM, it became apparent that critical areas in our system were neglecting kids at a very early age. As children mature, they each progress through the same development stages. And certain aspects of these stages must be addressed at the appropriate points along the development curve in order for our children to reach their genetic potential. Maximum development occurs through age-appropriate structure and content. Without developing skills and certain physical and mental

LTAD

attributes at the appropriate time, the long-term prospects of becoming a truly elite player diminish each day. The ADM, through the utilization of LTAD principles, allows us to integrate training, competition and recovery programming with relation to biological development so that we can fully get at a kid's potential. To make an athlete out of a kid. To make a hockey player out of an athlete. The ADM offers equal opportunity for recreation and competition – a key to retaining younger players.



CLUB STRUCTURE

1

8 & Under (Mites):

- 50–60 ice sessions per season
- 2–3 ice sessions per week, 1 off-ice session per week
- 50-minute ice sessions
- 20 weeks per season, 5 to 6 months
- 9–13 skaters per team; no full-time goalies
- 4+ teams per ice session
- Minimum of 16 cross-ice/half-ice games and 34 practices
- Maximum of 20 cross-ice/half-ice games and 40 practices
- Players grouped: Top 1/3, Middle 1/3, Bottom 1/3

2

10 & Under (Squirts):

- 95–100 ice sessions per season
- 3–4 ice sessions per week, 2 off-ice sessions per week
- 60-minute ice sessions
- 6-month training and competition calendar
- 10–12 skaters and 1 goalie per team
- 3 teams per practice session
- 75–80 practices and 20–25 games
- Players grouped: Top 1/2, Bottom 1/2

3

12 & Under (Peewees):

- 105–120 ice sessions per season
- 4 ice sessions per week, 2 off-ice sessions per week
- 60-minute ice sessions (minimum)
- 7-month training and competition calendar
- 15 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- 2 teams per practice twice a week, 1 single team practice
- 80–90 practices and 30–35 games
- Players grouped: 2 teams at highest level

Hockey for Life:

Players can enter at any age. 'Hockey for Life' can provide quality recreational opportunities for all ages. The opportunity to play and have fun in our sport should be available to all players with various levels of commitment. Even later in life, USA Hockey hopes that as adults we lead a physically active life style and continue to contribute to the sport through volunteerism as coaches, referees and administrators.

4

LTAD

Once a player has reached the Bantam level, he or she can take part in an accelerated track. This track is designed to get them more ice time, which means more time can be devoted to specific skill development. It is a more rigorous track, but it is also one that provides talented skaters with more opportunity to hone their craft.

Like the kids it aims to help, ADM will no doubt take time to reach its full potential. But with passionate coaches, administrators and parents, we can lay groundwork for the years to come. Groundwork that begins with proper training.

And proper training starts with praising and coaching players equally instead of showing bias toward kids who display early aptitude. We need to get away from praising talent and start to praise effort. Praising talent is de-motivating and not really accurate because at young ages it really may not be talent. It's crucial that, for developmental purposes, we allow kids to develop at their own pace. Kids that excel early tend to be physically more mature. Even six months can make a huge difference.

Everyone is familiar with the story of Michael Jordan – the most famous basketball player of all time – being cut from his high school basketball team. His story is living proof that kids reach their potential at different times.

13-14 & Under (Bantams):

- 160 ice sessions per year
- 4-5 ice sessions per week
- 80-minute practice sessions
- Combined and separate practices for team and position
- 9-month training and competition calendar
- 16 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- 120-130 practices and 40-50 games
- 16 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage

4

15-16 & Under (Midgets):

- 160 ice sessions per year
- 4-5 ice sessions per week
- 80-minute practice sessions
- Combined and separate practices for team and position
- 9-month training and competition calendar
- 16 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- 120-130 practices and 40-50 games
- 16 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage

18 & Under (Midgets):

- 200+ total ice sessions per year
- 5-6 ice sessions per week
- Combined and separate practices for team and position
- 10-month training and competition calendar
- 130-140 practices and 50-60 games
- 18 skaters and 2 goalies per team
- Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage

5





PUT WORDS INTO ACTION

We are counting on your support to make this great opportunity a reality. Spread the word to other coaches and parents through your own network or use our materials to reach out to other people. We can provide you with ADM posters, videos and other educational materials. Be sure to use the website www.admkids.com as a resource as well.

Together, we can create great moments from this great opportunity. Together, we can get more American kids to play, love and excel at hockey.

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thanks.

