**NICKEL BLADES SKATING CLUB**

**CANSKATE PROGRAM**

The CanSkate program is geared to beginners of all ages… children, adults, newcomers to Canada and athletes with disabilities. Whether you are looking to improve basic skating skills for figure skating, hockey, ringette or speed skating, or you wish to skate for recreation, fitness or fun, CanSkate will get you there. Conducted in a fun, friendly environment, the CanSkate program showcases a comprehensive series of balance, control and agility skills, using nationally tested and proven curriculum that supports skater success in developing stronger basic skills on the ice. – Skate Canada

**CanSkate**

Our 12 week program focuses on agility, balance and control with a variety of circuits that are circulated each week. Each session is 45 minutes long and includes warm-up, circuit time, group activity and cool-down. Our session is designed for 90% continuous movement to maximize learning and practice time in a fun and active group setting. Each coach on the ice is certified by the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) and trained in teaching the mechanics and proper technique of skating. Coaches are assisted by trained program assistants who are easily identifiable by their bright-coloured shirts. Throughout the season coaches will be circulating to evaluate each skater on different sets of skills that they have worked on the previous week. At the end of our 12-week program skaters and parents will have access to the evaluations that can be found on your skater’s profile once you log into nickelblades.ca. On the 12th week of the program, skaters will receive any ribbons they have earned throughout the season.

**Emails**

Email is the primary communication between the Club/Coaches and the skater’s parent(s)/guardian(s). Please ensure you are registered to receive emails from Nickel Blades Skating Club as there is always valuable information being sent out either by board members or coaching staff.

**Skating Attire**

* **CSA-approved helmets must be worn at all times.** Bicycle helmets are not allowed as they are not CSA-approved. Skaters will not be allowed on the ice without an approved helmet. Hats underneath helmets is highly discouraged as they fall in front of skaters’ eyes as well as it causes their helmets to not properly fit the skaters head.
* Ensure your skater is dressed in warm but non-restricting clothing on the ice – light jacket, pants, gloves, etc
* Ensure skaters have proper sitting skates (either figure skates or hockey skates) as well as checking that their blades have been sharpened especially if the skates are brand new.

**What to expect**

* When you first enter the arena there will be a table set up with nametags for your skaters please ensure it is visible on your skaters when they enter the ice for attendance purposes. Nametags will be taken off by the coaches and program assistants at the end of the session.
* We ask you to NOT CROWD at the boards during sessions as it distracts the skaters and coach staff.  Parents/spectators are to be seated in the stands to enjoy and watch your skater's progress!
* Do not leave the arena: your skater might need to get off the ice and we will not let them get off unless handed to a parent/guardian.  With that said, try to have your child use the washroom before their session.
* Lastly, TRUST us – your skater will progress, and some take longer than others – We have been awarded CanSkate Excellence – Exceed Standards by Skate Ontario and pride ourselves in the best CanSkate program for over 40 years.  Some of our sessions are full and very busy, but we are accustomed to this and we areready and excited to teach your children the fundamentals of skating!

**Skates**

* Skates need to fit properly and provide firm ankle support.
* The blade should feel centred when walking
* For second-hand skates, ensure that the skate is in good condition and still has good support. Check that the blade still has sharpening left. For figure skates check that the pick is in good condition and that the back of the blade has not been rounded off.
* If possible, have the skates properly fitted by knowledgeable individuals to ensure you have the correct size for your skater. If you are sizing by yourself, consider these points
	+ Skates should be fitted with only one pair of tight fitting socks
	+ Pull the laces of the boots very loosely through the instep before trying them on.
	+ Slide the foot forward to the front of the boots so that the toes touch the end but are not cramped (they should not curl under).
	+ Have skater stand with weight evenly distributed over both feel (“like a soldier”)
	+ Bend knees but do not lift heels.
	+ The space at the back of the heel should be no more than a pencil width.
	+ Have the skater walk around in the skates off the ice; they should feel comfortable
* Wear protective guards when walking to and from the ice surface and use a dry cloth to wipe the skates once the session is finished.
* Don’t forget to remove guards for storage between sessions or the blades might rust.

**Fundraising**

CanSkate participants are not required to fundraise. However, our club does make it optional for CanSkaters to participate in some activities (e.g., pizza sales). We also encourage parents to attend club fundraising events.