**Caledonia Nordic Ski Club**

**2018/19 Jackrabbit Program Parent Handbook**

**The Caledonia Nordic Ski Club (CNSC):**

Our values reflect the way in which we will conduct our business operations. Our core values are present and considered as a part of every decision that is made by a staff member or volunteer on a daily basis. Caledonia Nordic Ski Club’s values can best be expressed in the following value statements:

**Community** - Creating a happy environment and atmosphere that promotes Sport for Life

**Accountable** – We are open and transparent about what, how and why we operate

**Collaborative** – We work with our members and partner with key stakeholders to enhance our programs, services and facilities

**Service Oriented** – We lead and support our community with passion and integrity

**Family** –Our club fosters togetherness through the appreciation of nature and love for Nordic sport and summer recreational activities.

The club’s membership consists of over 1500 members with over 350 Bunny Tots and Bunnies (Age 3-5), Jackrabbits (age 6-9), Track Attack skiers (age 9-12), Jackalopes (age 9-12), Biathlon Bears (age 9-11), Junior Racing Team (complete training/racing program for youth age 12-18) Junior Racing biathletes and Masters (Ages 19+)

We also have a very active adult membership. The CNSC offers recreational Adult Lessons in both skate and classic techniques each season. There are also Masters Racing and Masters Training groups that train throughout the winter season.

The CNSC is also proud to host many regional, national and international cross country and biathlon events, with a strong contingent of Club volunteers.

**The Jackrabbit Program Philosophy:**

**Is for children to learn basic cross-country ski skills**

**in a fun and supportive environment.**

The Caledonia Nordic Ski Club’s Jackrabbit program, for children aged

4-14 years, *promotes fun and skill development on cross country skis.*

**The program is also designed to**:

* Help develop confidence.
* Provide an opportunity to ski and socialize with ski friends.
* Build overall motor skills by developing the ABC’s of Athleticism for this age of athlete: skill, balance, coordination and speed.
* Help children develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural environment.
* Instil a lifelong interest in cross-country skiing.

Our program follows Cross Country Canada’s Jackrabbit structure. It also follows Sport Canada’s Long-term Athlete Development Model ([www.LTAD.ca](http://www.ltad.ca)).

**Program Overview:**

**Skill Development Programs:**

**Dates**

Approx.. 10 Tuesdays/Saturdays from **January– March, 2019**

\*In the event a session is cancelled due to cold/inclement weather, there will not be a makeup session. Typically, we have one or two cancellations per year.

**Time**

Tuesdays: 6:00-7:30pm

Saturdays: 10:30am-12pm

Please arrive a few minutes early to find your child’s group. If you arrive late and your child’s group has left the stadium, it may be difficult for you to find his/her group.

**Location**

Caledonia Nordic Centre; meet in the stadium (Look for your flag colour or your coach and ski friends)

**Levels**

The CNSC’s Jackrabbit program follows the Cross Country Canada Jackrabbit program. This program focuses on progressive skill development in a fun, non-competitive environment. There are four skill levels, five snow goals, five sprint levels and five hat tricks offered in the Jackrabbit program.

**Group placement**

We try hard to create groups with common skills and goals so that each Jackrabbit can work on their skiing in a fun environment. We also try to group similar aged children together as much as possible.

Group assignments are based on the number of registrants in the program, the needs of the coach, and the individual participant (age, skill level, experience, etc.). As such, we may not be able to always honour special requests to be grouped with specific friends or coaches.

We will reassess the groups during the first few weeks of the program and strive to make any reasonable changes to ensure a positive Jackrabbit experience for everyone. If you have any concerns about your child’s placement during this time, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s coach and/ or the Program Coordinator.

A “typical” day/evening of Jackrabbit skiing looks like this:

* Kids meet their group in the stadium
* Warm-up/drills in the stadium area
* Head out for a ski
* Return to the stadium for a game
* Head inside for Cookies, Hot Chocolate
* complete mileage log books, update skill development sheets.

**Special events**

Throughout the program we schedule special-events that provide the Jackrabbits an opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills in a fun environment and to have fun with other groups. In the past, these special events have included chocolate races, fun days, loppets and/or games days.

**Cold Weather:**

Jackrabbits will not run on very cold days. Our guideline is -15 ‘C with no wind; however, we will use some discretion (e.g.. cutoff would be -10’C to -12 ‘C with moderate to high winds).

The decision to cancel Skills Development Programs will happen by 4:30 pm Tuesdays and by 9:00am on Saturdays. Please watch your emails and the SDP Calendar for updates on Programs

Notice posted on our website **http://www.caledonianordic.com/events/sdp-calendar**

**Gear Requirements:**

For your child to enjoy cross-country skiing, please ensure that he/she has well fitted skis and boots, and the correct length of poles. Here are a few guidelines to get you started:

Second-hand equipment is fine. Higher performance gear is not necessary when first starting out.

Your child’s first introduction to cross-country skiing will be the classic technique. Typically, this technique will be the focus of instruction for at least the first two years of the program

**Classic skis** should reach somewhere between the top of the skier’s head and just below the wrist of the skier’s outstretched (above head) arm. Skis that are too long can be very frustrating for young children.

**Classic poles** should roughly reach the child’s armpit.

Note that there are two different types of classic skis:

* Wax-able (smooth base)
* Wax-less (fish scales on the base).

Wax-able skis are preferable, but not necessary for a beginner skier. More advanced skiers may find that wax-able skis offer better glide and wax can provide better grip in variable snow conditions.

Note that there are also two different systems of ski bindings/boots SNS and NNN. When you are buying gear, please ensure your boot system is compatible with the ski binding system.

After about two seasons of the classic technique, their coaches may begin to introduce the skating technique. Your child does NOT need two sets of gear for classic and skate skiing for the first couple of years.

After consulting with your child’s coach, you may wish to purchase just a set of longer poles for skate skiing. These should roughly reach your child’s chin.

**Rental option:** If you don’t want to purchase skis, **Stride & Glide Sports** (located at 1671 15th Ave) has equipment rental packages available and has special rates for skiers in the Skills Development Programs. The Rental Shop at the Nordic Club also has Rental options available for your young skiers.

Kids stay warmer and happier with layered clothing, a warm hat, and dry, **waterproof mitts.**

**Coach and Program Coordinator Responsibilities:**

* Ensure the best possible class placement for each child.
* Provide a fun, learn-to-ski program that helps each child to develop his/her own skills.
* Ensure the safety of each child during the session.

**Parent Responsibilities:**

* Please do not force an unwilling child to participate.
* Please be on time for Jackrabbits. If your child arrives late and the class has left the stadium our child may not be able to locate his/her group. You will need to stay with your child until they are placed.
* Please contact your child’s leader if he/she will be absent.
* Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather: dry socks, **waterproof mitts**, warm hat, etc.
* Please ensure your child has had an appropriate meal (or a large, healthy snack), a drink and a bathroom stop **prior** to the session.
* Please have your child’s skis waxed and ready to go in order to save time. If you are unsure of the wax for the evening, arrive early to find out which wax is recommended and then wax skis. Coaches can help parents who are not comfortable with waxing.

**NOTE:** If your child requires more individual attention with his/her skiing needs than the Coach and parent helper can provide, you may be asked to ski with the group or find someone that can. We ask this because we cannot allow one child’s needs to compromise the coach’s ability to lead the rest of the group.

**Please be on time to pick up your child after each session!**

**Jackrabbit Responsibilities:**

* Please do not carry skis through the Day Lodge when entering the stadium area.
* Respect your leader, parent helper and other members of your group.
* Have a healthy snack or dinner early and a bathroom break before Jackrabbits begins.

**Skier Learning and Support:**

* It is ideal for your skier to ski outside of program sessions. Skiers should be playing and learning on skis as often as possible with friends and family. It is great to have them come to the terrain parks, or ski their favourite trails (Parents not your favourite trails ;) Even for 30-60 min 1-2 times above CNSC programs will really increase your skiers abilities. Keep it fun, bring snacks, water, dress well, and do it together. Parents ask your skiers for ski tips, what they are learning, and try to encourage them to explore Otway on skis!
* Please come out to Club Chocolate Races, or other fun events on skis, take a waxing clinic to help you support your skier, and find like minded families to adventure together! The kids and the adults will benefit from these relationships and community building!

**Refund Policy:**

* CNSC will refund the program fee if withdrawal is prior to start date of the program, and we are able to fill the spot, less a $30 administration fee. No refunds after the first class, except for medical reasons, in which case program fees will be pro-rated. A doctor’s note must be provided
* If your child requires more individual attention with his/her skiing needs or is disruptive to the group, you may be asked to ski with the group or find someone that can. We ask this because we cannot allow one child’s needs to compromise the coach’s ability to lead the rest of the group. If you are unable to commit to this weekly assistance your child will be asked to withdraw from the program and a pro-rated refund will be given.

**Volunteering:**

The skills development program is completely run by volunteers, including Coaches. All volunteer positions are listed on the Jackrabbit registration form. While Coaches and assistants are a weekly commitment, there are many other opportunities to volunteer on a less frequent basis, including off-snow opportunities.

**Coaches:**

While our coaches are volunteers, they are experienced skiers who have all the tools necessary to lead your child in cross country skiing. All of our coaches have received their Introduction to Community Coaching (ICC) certificate and the Community Coaching Level 1. We also have some ex-National and Provincial racers as Leaders!

**Coach’s Assistant(s):**

Your child’s group will need to have at least one parent assistant. The coach relies on parent assistants to:

* Help keep the group together
* Help the Leader with games and drills
* Take kids to the Day Lodge if required

If you have volunteered to be an assistant, it is important to attend all sessions. Your leader will likely ask those who have volunteer as leader’s assistants to sign up on a schedule for the season.

*If you must miss a session, please find another parent in the group to replace you. The group cannot leave the stadium without a parent helper.*

**Communication:**

All general program communication will be displayed on our website, [www.caledonianordic.com](http://www.caledonianordic.com). You can also expect periodic email communications from either the program coordinator and your child’s group leader. We also rely on our SDP calendar to get out further information on schedules

Your Program leader will communicate your child’s session updates and messages directly with you.

For more information on programs, please feel free to contact our Program Coordinator, Jen Nesset, via email at [programadmin@caledonianordic.com](mailto:programadmin@caledonianordic.com)

Parents, please remember that you are more than welcome to ski with the kids anytime. Your kids will love it!

Enjoy the season!