



Come Try Ringette

A Player Recruitment System

How-to Manual



Player Recruitment System

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Introduction



Introduction

What is “Come Try Ringette”?

Come Try Ringette is a Player Recruitment System. This tested and proven system combines many different elements, carefully selected to work together, to create a complete, effective recruitment tool. Properly implemented, Come Try Ringette will help your local association maximize the volunteer time and resources you put into attracting new participants to the game of Ringette.

What is included in this system?

- A catalogue of proven ideas on how to effectively promote your event
- A “blueprint” that shows you step-by-step how to run the event itself, including:
 - a “scripted” event protocol,
 - content for the on-ice *and* off-ice portions of the event.
- Resources including: posters; brochures; parent cards; display unit; and more.
- A centralized website for:
 - easy communication with the general public and your target audience
 - easy management of Come Try Ringette event registration.

This manual, combined with a brief training session from your provincial / territorial Ringette association, will give you the tools you need to dramatically increase your player registration.

Does it work?

You bet it does!

Local associations typically see an average conversion rate of 70 percent using Come Try Ringette. This means for every ten youngsters you bring to your Come Try Ringette event, at minimum you should expect seven of them to sign up for Ringette.

The pilot phase of this system's development clearly showed that ***the more closely a local association followed the system the better their results.***

- More diligent associations were seeing conversion rates between 75 and 90 percent.
- Conversely, associations that insisted on only using "bits and pieces" of this system saw dramatically lower conversion rates; in some cases as low as 16 percent.
- In addition to a better conversion rate, associations that followed the system as closely as possible also saw a greater number of participants at their events. The result - they ended up recruiting more players per event.

For the local associations that truly want to increase their registration, Come Try Ringette has proven to be an invaluable asset.

Why does it work so well?

Come Try Ringette focuses on providing a "customer excellence" experience for the prospective athlete and their parents.

The fundamental techniques of Come Try Ringette aren't new. They've been used for years by highly successful sales organizations. And you want to be, *you need to be*, a sales excellence organization. Now you have all the essential tools.

Your participants will leave saying, "Wow, that was so much fun!" And their parents will leave saying, "That was so professional. I learned everything that I needed to know."

It works! Let's get started!

Timelines



Timelines

Planning is a critical part of successful recruiting.

The more lead-time you give yourself, the better your results will be, and the more enjoyable the experience will be for your volunteers.

Each local association is unique. Each association will have different events and different timelines.

Your association's timeline will depend on things like:

- The promotional plan that you develop. *Your provincial sport organization can help here, and should definitely be involved.*
- The number and type of events you have in your community that you can leverage for promotion, and when they occur:
 - tournaments,
 - NRL games,
 - women's shows,
 - community sports festivals,
 - provincial, regional and national championships,
 - community seasonal sport registrations
- The number of times you want to run a Come Try Ringette event.
- The number of volunteers you have.
- How far in advance your ice needs to be booked.
- How far in advance your on-ice instructors need to be booked.
- Different programs you already offer to new participants (e.g. learn-to-play versus traditional team formation).

Here is a general outline of what a local association time line may look like:

- 6 months or more before your event:
 - Book facilities. *You need at least 2 hours of facility time, with 1 hour of ice in the middle of your booking.*
- 6 months to 8 weeks before your event:
 - Initiate parent promotion of your event
- 4 months before your event:
 - Gather all information you will be distributing to parents at your event,
 - Collect testimonials for your printed material.
 - Reserve the display unit,
 - Reserve your on-ice instructors
 - Schedule your volunteers (cooperate with neighbouring associations). ***Please review the "How Many People Do We Need" checklist in the APPENDIX***
- 8 weeks before your event:
 - Initiate your formal promotion plan
- 6 weeks before your event:
 - Reconfirm your volunteers
 - Reconfirm your instructors
- Monitor your pre-event registration following your initial promotion efforts
- 10 – 7 days before your event:
 - Phone pre-registered participants to confirm attendance
 - Again, reconfirm your volunteers
- Conduct your event
- Immediately following your event (next day; not more than two days):
 - Mail/ deliver photo
- 72 hours after event (maximum):
 - conduct follow up call
- Thank your volunteers
- Repeat

Checklist



Checklist

As we said in the introduction, the more closely you follow the Come Try Ringette system the better your results will be. Use the following checklist in your planning phase, and again after your event as an evaluation tool to identify areas for improvement next time.

PLEASE NOTE - *no local association is required to participate in Come Try Ringette. However, associations that choose to take advantage of these tools agree to adhere to the mandatory items listed below as a minimum standard.*

(This checklist is provided in the Appendix as a photocopy master)

Mandatory Pre Event Promotion / Planning

- Attend an annual "Come Try Ringette" training/update session.
- Prepare, *with your provincial association's help*, an appropriate promotional plan for your event. Emphasize pre-registration through the website.*
- Book your facilities

You need a minimum of two hours (1/2 hour for participants to arrive, change, get ready; 1 hour on-ice; ½ hour to change, get refreshments, parent information and questions.) You may well want more. Remember, new parents know nothing – they may think this is a "drop-in anytime between." activity.

- Collect your testimonials.
- Custom print your brochures
**Include date, time, place, contact number(s), and testimonials.
(Your Provincial association can likely help with this.)**
- Distribute brochures to area schools (if schools permit.)
- Distribute brochures to key local association contacts.
- Communicate event details to everyone in your local association.
- Communicate event details to all neighbouring associations.
- Posters/Brochure display at event arena.
- Supply event information to the "Come Try Ringette" website.
- Arrange for sticks (and helmets if required) for the event.

- Arrange for qualified female on-ice leader.
- Arrange for additional sufficient on-ice personnel

You cannot have too many people. You will likely have more participants than you expect, - and the majority will be non skaters.

- Ensure that sufficient off-ice activities for the kids are planned and available for event.
- Ensure sufficient volunteers

For arena duty and all off-ice activities. You cannot have too many people. Please refer to “How Many People do We Need” in the APPENDIX

- Order refreshments for participants and parents.

Can you make arrangements with your arena’s canteen?

- Buy an alphabetical accordion file folder.
- Print a supply of your Getting to Know You forms. (sample in Appendix)
- Create and print a supply of your Event Registration / Check-In form for Registration table
- Gather pre-registration information, and any other relevant material. Clip together with Getting to Know You form (See Paperwork section), association registration forms and put in alphabetical ordered files
- Gather & assemble your Take Home Packages. (See Paperwork section)

Good Ideas & Recommended Best Practices for Pre Event Promotion / Planning

- Shopping Malls:
 - Often have a community access booth available
 - Set up display
 - Print material & information
 - Ringette DVD running on a TV
 - Volunteers to answer questions
 - Net, rings, sticks, plastic panel – “Take your Best Shot”
 - Giveaways
- Local Arenas:
 - Event posters
 - Brochure rack/envelope

- Sporting goods stores:
 - Event Posters
 - Brochure rack/envelope
 - Work out some promotional discount – say, anyone pre-registering through the store is eligible for a discount on equipment if they do signup for Ringette
- Community centres or other high traffic locations in community
 - Event Posters
 - Brochure Rack/envelope
 - Display
- Supply brochures to existing players for distribution to promote “Bring-a-Buddy” approach
- Offer a contest for existing players participation in recruitment efforts.
- Distribute promotional material / set up a display at trade shows.
- Set up a display at seasonal sport sign-up events.
 - Display.
 - Print material & information
 - Net, rings, sticks, plastic panel - “Take Your Best Shot”
 - Ringette DVD playing on TV.
- Set up a display at community Summer Carnivals
 - Display.
 - Print material & information
 - Net, rings, sticks, plastic panel - “Take Your Best Shot”
 - Ringette DVD playing on TV.
- Distribute promotional material at local age group youth soccer and baseball games. Work the sideline crowd.
- Supply existing players’ parents with business cards for distribution to classmates’ parents.
- Display/classified ad in local community newspapers
- Public service announcements of event on local radio stations.

Mandatory Event Protocol

- Confirm pre-registered participants and parent/guardian attendance
- Set up Come Try Ringette display and information table in arena lobby / common area
- All volunteers wear name tags
- Sufficient volunteers on hand to greet, register and accompany participants to the dressing room
- Sufficient on-ice assistants
- Parents must sign in participant
- Leaders and assistants must be in the dressing room interacting with participants prior to the on ice session
- Host volunteers accompany parents to the viewing area, and are available for questions
- Instructors use supplied practice plans
- Instructors and assistants lead participants in fun off-ice activities
- Provide refreshments for participants
- Provide refreshments for parents
- Conduct off-ice parent information session including “getting to know your child” process

Good Ideas & Best Practices Recommended for Your Event

- Have a digital camera available
Take a picture of each participant with the instructors (See why you need to book more time than you thought?)
- Have “brag book” at the entrance table
- Ringette DVD playing on a television
- Visuals such as charts, videos, and photos, verbal and written testimonials.
- Have samples of all required equipment on display.
Have someone knowledgeable to talk/answer questions about equipment – new/used, good/bad, how to fit it, where to get it. (See why you need to book more time?)
- Volunteers wear matching shirts/jerseys to increase visibility
- Players and On Ice Instructors in lobby during sign in to greet participants
- Offer a door prize for new participants.

- Create a display board with Instructor biographies.
- Have a mascot, and tattoos or stickers for event.
- Have craft activities, or other games.

See why you need to book more time?

- Have a parent information question and answer session.

See why you need to book more time?

- Offer incentives to parents who register their child as a new participant that day.

Mandatory Post Event Protocol

- Make a personal follow-up call to all participants within **72 hours** of completion of event.

You must make contact; phone messages don't count

- Complete post event checklist (submitted on the web site to master database)
- Thank your volunteers

Recommended Post Event Ideas

- Send digital picture and personalized greeting from Instructor
- Send a handwritten "thank you" to parents.
- Ask for referrals – "Who do you know, or who does your child know, who might also enjoy this sport?"

Even if their child does not register, ASK ANYWAY. They may have a sister or brother who didn't/couldn't come, or a cousin, or a new neighbour, or...

**** Your Provincial Association wants to help you create an effective plan because they want you to succeed.***

Your Provincial Association reserves the right to deny use of the free resources and access to the web site as a consequence of inadequate planning. (i.e., limited or no promotion, too short a time line, lack of personnel or facilities etc.)

System Resources



System Resources

Samples of the Come Try Ringette resources are in the appendix.

These resources are available through your Provincial Ringette organization.

Some of these resources can be custom printed with the details of your event, and your testimonials.

- Brochure / Registration Form
- Poster
- Parent Card
- Event Kit
- Print advertising
 - Display ad
 - Classified ad
- Display Unit
- The Web Site – www.cometryringette.ca

How to Promote Your Event



How to Promote Your Event

1. Customize your brochures. Include date, time, place, and contact #s. Collect and include some testimonials from local players, coaches, and parents. Either take them to a printer or print them on your home computer. *Your Provincial Sport Organization should definitely help here. Involve them in your planning process.*
2. Approach the local school administration, teacher or phys-ed instructor to discuss the option of including a Ringette Day in the grade K – 3 programs, i.e., Reach for the Ring (Gym Ringette). Offer to have qualified instructors go into the gym, conduct Gym Ringette sessions and then introduce the on-ice sport of Ringette. If possible, show a video. After the gym game is played, distribute brochures advertising a preplanned *Come Try Ringette* event for the kids to take home. You may want to provide some Ringette tattoos. (Teachers will probably want to control the distribution of these.)
3. Coordinate a Come Try Ringette Day at school. Current players all wear their team jerseys to school, and have brochures to hand out to their friends
4. Another option is to simply contact school boards, or school Principals, and request that they distribute the *Come Try Ringette* brochures to all the K – 6 classes.
5. Some schools have school or classroom newsletters. Ask if Come Try Ringette information could be included
6. Ask the parents of current players to promote the Come Try Ringette event, using the Come Try Ringette business cards, to other parents at after-school pickup. Enthusiastic word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool.
7. Ask some of your techno-savvy teenage players how to use new technology to promote Ringette. Admit you know nothing and enlist their help.
8. Malls or other high traffic locations are ideal venues to capture the interest of new players and their parents. Many malls will provide you with free space because you are a non-profit community organization. Some malls have a designated community access booth – just ask! Book a time at least two weeks prior to your scheduled event. Set up:

- The display
- Brochures for Come Try Ringette
- Other literature
- Perhaps a small demonstration area (if permitted) – sticks, rings, net – “Take Your Best Shot”
- A draw prize for anyone who pre-registers for your event.
- A draw prize for anyone who expresses interest in finding out more.

You must follow-up with all these entrants. Otherwise you look unprofessional, uncaring and you wasted your time - and money!

9. Tradeshows –

- Women’s Shows
- Farm fairs in rural areas
- Farmers Markets
- Expositions
- Sport Expos
- Parades
 - Players in uniform on floats
 - Players on rollerblades, handing out candy, temporary tattoos and brochures

Some of these venues are ideal to set up the CTR display unit, and perhaps a small demonstration area, depending on the cost.

10. Community Sports Registration Days

Ensure that you are a part of these events...especially in areas currently not offering Ringette programs. Siblings often come along when older/younger siblings are registering for other programs.

Parents will never know about the possibility of Ringette unless someone shows them.

Set up:

- The CTR display units
- balloons
- Brochures for Come Try Ringette
- Other literature
- Perhaps a small demonstration area (if permitted) – sticks, rings, net – “Take Your Best Shot”
- Registration forms
- A contact sheet for anyone who expresses interest in finding out more.

You must follow-up with these all these contacts. Otherwise you look unprofessional, uncaring, and you wasted your time.

11. Your Current Players & Parents

Tell your players about the event and supply them with brochures. Consider running a contest for the player that brings the most guests:

- movie passes,
- autographed stuff from NRL,
- donated prize from a sponsor,
- Ringette branded gear.

Kids love contests.

Announce the contest to the parents of existing players with a letter like this:

"Dear (Parent/Guardian):

We are excited to announce an upcoming Come Try Ringette event to introduce our great sport to potential new players and their parents.

(Your child) (Suzy) is invited to participate and bring along friends who don't play our sport yet. To reward (your child) (Suzy) for her effort, we are running a contest.

(Select an option, or create your own)

Option 1 - There will be prizes for the child who brings the most friends. First prize is ____, 2nd prize is ____, and 3rd prize is __.

Option 2 - For every guest your child brings, they will receive one entry form for a chance to win ____.

Option 3 – If your child's guest(s) register to play, your child's registration will be discounted by \$xx (Dollar discounts have more appeal than percentage discounts.)

*To attend this fun-filled event, (your child) (Suzy) **must bring at least one friend who doesn't play Ringette.***

*Five brochures promoting this event are enclosed. (Your child) (Suzy) can use these brochures to invite her friends. Please note – **participants must pre-register.** Should you require additional brochures, please contact me.*

***This is important.** Please email me at ____ or phone me at ____ by (date) to let me know your child is coming, and whom they are bringing.*

I look forward to seeing you all at the Come Try Ringette event on day + date + time + location."

Yours for Ringette fun,

John Doe

(Coach/Convenor/Director/President/Event Chair)

(Local Association)

12. Encourage parents to carry event posters with envelope holders filled with brochures, and a supply of pushpins. Everywhere they see a pin board is an opportunity to promote Ringette.

In this one instance it is not recommended to promote a specific Come Try Ringette event. It is difficult to keep the brochures current. Leave the back of the registration form generic with just the website.

Track where these are placed. Someone has to be tasked to keep the brochures stocked. No brochure equals no marketing.

13. Parents should always carry *Come Try Ringette* business cards to invite prospects to upcoming events.

14. Every local arena should have a poster and a brochure envelope.

Someone has to be tasked to keep the brochures stocked. No brochure equals no marketing.

15. Create a tie-in with a local sporting goods store – especially a local independent. What kind of cross promotion can you create?

- Store agrees to display an event poster and brochures
- Pre-register at the store and receive a voucher for a defined percent discount or a dollar amount discount on any Ringette equipment purchased later.
- Everyone who registers for Ringette in your local association receives promotional material for the retailer.
- The local association buys a supply of sticks and rings for Come Try Ringette at cost, (or, better, less than cost), in return for promotional recognition.

16. Local Tournaments

- Host a Come Try Ringette event during a Tournament weekend. The logistics would be challenging, but the excitement and buzz of the tournament crowd could be infectious.

17. Use the media

- Radio – interviews about Come Try Ringette; a Live-On-Location promo.
- Community Newspapers – articles and photos; letters to the editor.
- Breakfast TV shows – the kids love to be involved in these.

18. Try to organize a one period demonstration game between two high calibre teams (NRL, AA, Open 1). Then, involve those players in the Come Try Ringette on-ice portion immediately following.

19. What businesses do your present players' parents work for/own? (*What do you mean, you don't know?*) How can you use these skills or resources to help you with your promotional efforts? Maybe someone owns a printing shop...

Keys To Professionalism

Look Professional

When promoting Ringette at a public event, volunteers should wear matching tops or jerseys and name tags.

Name tags



Staples is a good place to order name tags – they cost approximately \$4 each

*Stick-on nametags (Hello! My name is ...) are **not** professional.*

Option – order name tags that say:



Signage

Professionally developed signs are required for these events. Image is everything, therefore ***USE THE COME TRY RINGETTE DISPLAY UNIT.***

Your Provincial Sport Organization may have access to either an in-house printer that all provincial sports use, or a contract printer with better rates than you can negotiate. Or, you may have a player whose parent owns a print shop.

Boothmanship

Anytime you are working at a booth, the way you present yourself is crucial to your success.

- Stand, don't sit
- Don't stand behind a table. If you are supplied a table, move it to one side.
- No arms crossed, nor hands in pockets. Body Language Talks!
- No gum, please. Keep a bottle of water handy to refresh your mouth.
- Make eye contact
- Smile, say, "Hello, thanks for stopping by."
- If there is a child, say hello to the child specifically. *"Hi there. May I ask what your name is?"* (In this day and age, don't be surprised if Mom says, "No". Asking permission to ask is the safe tactic.)
- Ask, "What questions do you have?"
- Consider doing a draw for a gift certificate supplied by your local sports retailer, or some other prize.
- Say, "Please take a moment to enter to win a _____? It's FREE!"
- Offer a *Come Try Ringette* brochure
- Be prepared to do immediate sign ups for the next *Come Try Ringette* event

- Have general information printed and available about your local association
 - Key dates
 - Where to register
 - What does it cost
 - Key contacts
- If possible, play the Ringette DVD on a TV.
- Display trophies or medals.
- Have a Brag Book.
- Have photos showing players having lots of fun, on *and off* the ice displayed in the Brag book or framed and standing up on your table. Collages are a good idea.
- Display sample game equipment. Be prepared to talk about equipment.
- Always say, *"Thanks for stopping to chat."* And ***be sure to thank the youngster, as well.***

How to Run Your Event



How to Run Your Event

Here's Your Formula for Success!

- You have actively promoted your event.
- You have phoned your pre-registered participants and confirmed their attendance.
- You have reminded them of the time and place.
- You have reminded them that they need to remain along with their child throughout the entire event.
- *You are prepared for more participants than you expect*
- **Show Time!**

Arrival

Professionalism is everything!

- 1) In the lobby, set up an information table & the three banner Come Try Ringette display from your Provincial Sport Organization (unless you bought your own)
- 2) Apply "best practices" –
 - no sitting,
 - no crossed arms
 - no hands in pockets
 - everyone wears a nametag & matching shirts.
 - **Big Smile** – if you're not having fun, why are you doing this?

This creates a professional image plus your people are easily identifiable to visitors. If you don't have matching tops, an excellent alternative is to borrow local association team jerseys.

- 3) A volunteer welcomes participants **at the arena door**. Remember, these guests may never have been in your arena – *they may never have been in any arena before*. They don't know where they're going.
 - Welcome the guest first, welcome and thank the sponsoring player (if there is one) & then shake hands of parents/guardians.
- 4) Escort the family to the sign-in table. The sign-in table has a Brag Book, memorabilia, *and a registrar with a Big Smile*.
 - Parents must sign their child in, or, if they pre-registered, record their attendance. *Make sure you get a phone number and an e-mail address.*

OPTIONAL – In a small community ensure you invite enough current players that are approximately the same age and skill as the guests.

- These players should be in the lobby waiting for arrivals.

OPTIONAL – create a board with today's instructors, their bio and their photo for display purposes.

Dressing room

- 5) The same volunteer who greeted the family escorts the parent & child (& sponsoring player) to the dressing room & introduces them to the instructor. *Remember, introduce the child first.*
- 6) On-ice instructors must introduce themselves & welcome individual participants and parents. This builds trust.
- 7) Players and guests get ready.

On-ice instructors and other volunteers must be available to help with equipment, tie skates, whatever. *Remember, these parents may have no idea how to put on equipment.*

 - Somebody must help fitting loaner equipment
 - Have tools on hand to adjust equipment.

OPTIONAL – If you can work a sponsorship deal, or if your association resources permit, you could provide each new participant a “keeper” jersey, and each sponsoring player a “keeper T-shirt”.

Room should be relaxed & fun, not too loud or chaotic.

You may want to teach a **simple** cheer before you go onto the ice.

- 8) As the children head out to the ice, volunteers escort the parents to the information/viewing area to watch the session.

On-Ice Program

Please do not deviate from the prescribed program

On-Ice Leaders

- Provincial Association skill instructor

Provincial Skill Instructors are upbeat, enthusiastic people. They love what they do, and they are a vital component to your sales success! They must clearly understand the importance of their role.

A sullen, disinterested, I-had-a-bad-date-last-night instructor will instantly undo all your hard work

On-Ice Assistants

- Open players, Belles and mature Juniors. (See the comment above)
- *These players must receive instruction about what their job is, and what you expect of them.* This is **not** a “skate-around”. They are here to **work** at helping out anyone who needs them. (And lots will)
- *These players must be dressed and ready to go on the ice before the event participants*
- If you feel you need to have an adult present on-ice, it must be a qualified, certified, confident mom.

Bench Staff

- *Have at least one qualified, competent, bench mom for every ten participants.* Forty participants will keep three people very busy, or four people well occupied. Their job is to re-adjust equipment, to reassure the timid, to console the wounded.

Parents

- Parents will want to watch, so usher them to the viewing area.
- Reserve an area for them to watch from in order to keep them close together.
- Offer refreshments, if possible. e.g. coffee, hot chocolate.
- Have volunteers up in the stands with the parents to answer questions if the parents have any.
- **Let them watch their kids.** Save your formal information session for **after** the session.

Post-Ice Program

Participants

- Have juice boxes and healthy snacks for the kids to enjoy in an activity area after the ice session is over.
- Digital Camera
 - Take a happy picture with the new player and their instructors. Record the photo # and child's name for ease of later identification.
 - Have someone with an upbeat personality get the kids laughing and smiling for the picture.
 - Make this a formal part of the activity. Don't leave it to chance.
- Bring your mascot if you have one, & tattoos.
- Volunteers keep the kids busy doing activities, teaching cheers, face painting and games, etc. so their parents have time to discuss registration. ***(This is a great opportunity to involve your older Tweens, and your Junior players)***

Parents

The post-ice time is **The Golden Opportunity** to:

- Engage the parent(s) in conversation and answer questions
- Passionately present all the great attributes of Ringette:
 - Fun,
 - Friends,
 - Fitness,
 - Skating skills,
 - Coordination,
 - Teamwork,
 - Confidence,
 - Recreation/competition,
 - Travel,
 - Communication skills,
 - Scholarships, etc.
- Use visuals such as:
 - video,
 - equipment,
 - * Have a volunteer who can discuss equipment knowledgeably
 - how to fit it, where to get it, new vs. used, what to look for, etc.
 - photos, verbal testimonials, & written testimonials (Brag Book)
- End this session with this statement (**memorize this word for word**) -
"We'd like to get to know a little more about your child. We'd appreciate it if you would spend a moment or two with one of our volunteers."

Asking

- Volunteer fills in the *Getting to Know You* form with the parent's help.
- Have the parent sign the form.
- If you are able to take registrations on the spot say,
"Let's get (Suzy) registered right now. How would you prefer to pay the fees? "
 - Know if you have any reduced fee programs
 - Know what assistance programs your community has available.
 - Know what payment options are available –
 - All in one (Is there a discount for this? How much?)
 - Two halves (Second half due when?)
 - Cash? Cheque? Credit Card? Invoice?

Be prepared to accommodate them.

- Offer an incentive for the parent to sign up today.
"We have a special offer for new players. Anyone registering today will receive -
 - . a \$(**xx**) gift certificate from (Neighbourhood Sport Supply) with a minimum purchase of \$(**xx**)." (Note: Anything under \$20 off isn't enough of an incentive. Also, \$ off are stronger than % off.)

and /or

- . *an Early Registration discount of \$ (**xx**)."*
- Complete the registration paperwork.
- If the parent doesn't register or sign the commitment form, discreetly record their objection on the form so we know what direction the follow up call should take. At this point, you may want to offer your alternatives e.g. Learn to Play, or Drop-In Ringette.
- *In every case* **thank them**, and give them the program Take Home Package

Take Home Package

- Before they leave, give each family your Take Home Package information envelopes

Follow Up

These are the crucial final steps! Do not neglect these!

Within **24 hours** of your event

- Mail photo to each participant.
- The instructor should add this message to the photo folder – “Hi _____, Had a great time with you on the ice at the *Come Try Ringette* event. I sure hope you’re going to join our ringette family!” And sign it.
- You could include a freebie: skate sharpening gift certificate provided by your local sports store, temporary tattoos, or stickers.

Within **72 hours** of your event:

- Make a follow up call to the parents who registered their child to say:
 - Thank you
 - Confirm that someone will be in touch for “next steps”. Leave your own phone number and/or e-mail as a backup.
 - Ask for feedback on the event:
 - What did your child like?
 - What did you like?
 - What could we do better next time? **Record this info.**
- Make a follow up call to parents who did not commit, but did not close the door, to say:
 - Thank you
 - What further information might you need?
 - When would you like me to check back with you? **Diarize this.**
 - Ask for feedback on the event:
 - What did your child like?
 - What did you like?
 - What could we do better next time? **Record this info.**

- Make a follow up call to parents who did not commit at all, to say:
 - Thank you
 - What further information might you need?
 - When would you like me to check back with you? **Diarize this.**
 - Ask for feedback on the event:
 - What did your child like?
 - What did you like?
 - What could we do better next time? **Record this info.**

Ideally, the person who makes the call should be the volunteer who completed the *Get to Know You* form.

You must talk to a real person. Strive to talk to the parent who accompanied the child, and shared their excitement.

Leaving a message on an answering machine is a cop-out, and doesn't count. The only acceptable message is, "Hi, this is Lucille from SouthSide Ringette. Sorry I missed you. I'll call again." Then make sure you call again

Finally,

- Collect all the feedback notes you took on the question "What could we do better next time?" Do not edit this. Copy it verbatim. Have a quality-control session with your organizing group, later.
- Note all the promises and call-backs that you diarized
- Act on those.

Paperwork



Paperwork

- Use a A-Z accordion file
- Paperclip the following forms together:
 - Come Try Ringette pre-registration form
 - Getting to Know You form (Printable copy in Appendix)
 - Commitment form(s) (Printable copy in Appendix/ Print as back of Getting to Know You form)
 - Local association registration form if available
- Gather and assemble your Take Home Packages (Appendix)
- Create and print your Event Registration/ Check-In form for your Registration table

On-Ice Program



Come and Try Ringette – Ages 8 – 12

On Ice Plan

Introduce the Sport of Ringette – To be done before going on the ice

- Ask the kids if any of them play or have watched the sport
- Briefly describe the sport
 - . Mention the similarities between Ringette and hockey, soccer, lacrosse and basketball
 - . Show students the stick and ring and explain the *Safety Rules* for them

On Ice Introduction (5 minutes)

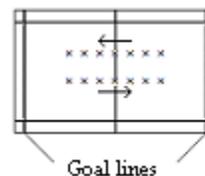
- Introduce Instructors
- Review *Safety Rules*

Warm Up (10 minutes)

- Have the kids skate a few laps around the rink to warm up
- The kids should be instructed to then make a big circle for stretching of the large muscles
- At this point review all *Safety Rules* once again while stretching and ask the kids to repeat them back to you
- After stretching demonstrate the *Ready Position* and *Listening Position*
- Have the kids skate to the goal line at one end of the rink and line up across the line in their *Listening Position*
- Play *Red Light, Green Light*
- Play *Ship Shape*

Passing (15 minutes)

- Have the kids find a partner and stand beside their partner on the goal line
- Demonstrate a *Forehand* and *Backhand Pass*
- Have the kids spread out down the length of the ice, lining up across from their partner approximately two – three stick lengths apart (instruct them to wait for further instruction and have one side put their rings behind them)
- Start the kids with only doing a *Forehand Pass*, and circulate to make sure the students are doing the skill properly
- After a few minutes instruct the kids to practice a *Backhand Pass*
- Play *Fire Pass* (play two or three times) – to easily divide students send students of one line to one end of the rink and the other line to the other end. That way you will separate best friends and hopefully reduce the talking.
- Play *Follow Your Pass*



Relay (10 minutes)

- Do the *Three Ring Relay* (Repeat twice)
- Do *Agility Relay* (Repeat twice)
- Optional: Play *Musical Rings*

Cool Down (5 minutes)

- Stretch out
- Collect sticks and rings

Safety Rules

- 1) Sticks are to be kept below the waist
 - Remind players that the sticks are not swords, guns, batons, etc.
 - Remind players we are not golfing so they need to keep their follow through in front of their body (they never know who may be standing behind them)
 - Use the bellybutton rule
- 2) Unless told, rings are to stay on the ground. The only time rings should be off the ground is when the player is taking a shot on net.
 - The rings are hard and can do damage to players not wearing goggles, helmets or other protective equipment
- 3) At all times while participating in drills and activities children should have TWO HANDS on their stick.
 - Children will have better control over their stick and ring, which will help prevent injuries.

Materials Needed

- 2 – 4 Instructors
- Several on-ice assistants
- Equipment:
 - Sticks and rings
 - Have a few pairs of skates and helmets on hand for those who come unprepared
 - Music system (CD preferred) – hooked to arena sound system

Ringette Skills Instruction Tips

Ready Position

- 1) Players Standing with feet shoulder width apart
 - 2) Knees bent
 - 3) Head up
 - 4) Two hands on the stick (like holding a hockey stick)
 - i. Make sure the kids have their thumbs pointed down towards the ground
 - ii. Hands should be spaced: from the child's top hand one of their forearms apart
 - iii. The one of the thinner sides of the stick should be facing up
 - 5) Arms should be slightly bent
 - 6) Stick should be in front of the player slightly to one side
- **Players will need to know this stance because most skills originate from it.*
- **When skating or in the stationary position with the ring, it should always be kept out in front of the body to prevent being checked from behind.*

Listening Position

- Players stand with both of their hands on the top of their stick out in front of them.



Forehand Sweep Pass

1. Begin in the ready position facing desired target (head up, feet/body facing target)
2. Players may have the ring slightly off to one side of the body but still in front of the body
3. Bring the ring back approximately to the heel of closest foot and forward releasing the ring
4. Follow through with extension of the arms and having the stick tip pointing at the target

Backhand Sweep Pass

- 1) Begin in ready position facing desired target (head up, feet/body facing target)
- 2) Players need to cross top hand in and under bottom hand bringing the ring to the backhand side of the body
- 3) Bring ring back approximately to the head of back stick and forward releasing the ring
- 4) Follow through with extension of arms and stick tip pointing at the target

Games and Activities

Red Light, Green Light

- 1) Participants should be spread out on one goal line at the end of the rink.
- 2) To stay in the game participants will need to (*at all times) have two hands on their stick, keep the ring on the stick and remain stationary when red light is called.
- 3) The first player to reach the previously indicated 'goal' line will be the next caller.

Skills Used:

Starts and Stops

Forward Stride

Ring Handling

Ship Shape

- Bow – one end of the rink (front of the boat) participants skate to the bow
- Stern – other end of the rink (back of the boat) participants skate to the stern
- Port – left side of the rink (facing the bow) participants skate to the port
- Starboard – right side of the rink (facing the bow) participants skate to the starboard
- Man Overboard – lie down on the ice and get back up as fast as possible
- Captain Overboard – Salute the captain (instructor)

- Swab the Deck – Move the ring with their stick in a circular motion on the ice to simulate mopping
- Mutiny – chase the instructor
- Instructor calls out the instructions and participants carry them out

Skills Used:

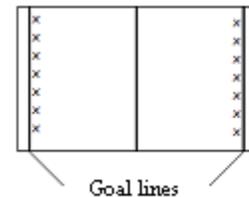
Starts and Stops
Forward Stride
Tight Turns
Ring Handling

Demonstrate Passing and Receiving the ring

- 1) Have players line up approximately two stick lengths apart.
- 2) They should be alternating passing and receiving the ring on both their forehand and backhand sides.
- 3) Partners should be passing the ring in a nice manner, not firing it at their partner

Fire Pass

1. Divide the rink into two halves using the centerline.
2. Divide the students into two teams and have them line up on the goal line of their half of the rink
3. Objective: try to get all the rings into the other teams half of the rink
4. Rules:
 - Players **HAVE** to stay on their half of the rink
 - Safety Rules applied
 - Game can be played 2-5 minutes, when stopping the game the instructor should blow a whistle and participants should immediately take the listening position and leave the rings alone. Emphasize that if they continue to pass the rings over after the whistle their team will automatically lose.



Skills Used:

Starts and Stops
Forward Stride
Backward Stride
Forehand and Backhand Passing
Ring Reception

Follow Your Pass

1. Divide the students into two equal groups. The groups should now separate into two single file lines facing each other.
2. There should be one ring per group.
3. After passing the ring they skate to the back of the line they passed it to, following their pass.
 - This activity can be done as a relay once the kids have each completed the activity once or twice. You can have the two groups compete against each other.



Skills Used:

- Starts and Stops
- Forward Stride
- Forehand and Backhand Passing
- Ring Reception

Three Ring Relay

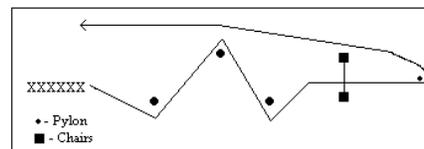
1. Separate players into equal groups and line up single file with three rings placed in front of each line.
2. The first player in each line is to take all three rings, one at a time, to a previously designated line.
3. The second player in line is to take all three rings, one at a time, back to the start and so on.

Skills Used:

- Starts and Stops
- Forward Stride
- Ring Handling

Agility

1. Typical agility courses.
2. It is important to make sure participants are skating with two hands on their stick at all times.
3. Example: For the course have four pylons and two chairs with a stick over top. The kids are to skate around the pylons, dive underneath the stick and go around the last pylon then skate back to the beginning of the course.



Skills Used:

Starts and Stops
Forward Stride
Backward Stride (optional)
Tight Turns
Cross Overs
Ring Handling

Musical Rings

- Each player, except one, has a ring.
- Start the music and the player without the ring tries to get one from others by checking their stick.
- When the music stops any player without a ring is joins the group of checkers

Skills Used:

Starts and Stops
Forward Stride
Ring Handling
Protecting the Ring
Checking

Miscellaneous



Miscellaneous

Collecting Testimonials

Testimonials are a powerful marketing tool. The most effective testimonials are those provided by local people of influence – from your association, your town, your province.

Phone someone you know, whose testimonial you believe would have impact. Read him or her these sample ideas, and ask them to restate these ideas in their own words. Recap it. Send it back via e-mail and ask them to confirm by return e-mail that what you have written is accurate, and that they agree to allow you to use their full name, position and city in your marketing material.

Include your testimonials on your customized brochure in the section **“What People Are Saying About Ringette”**.

Sample Ideas

Player – “I started at 4 – 5years old. I have developed lifelong friendships, traveled, had new experiences and had a ton of fun. I’m still playing, or coaching, or officiating”

Parent – “My child learned self-esteem, confidence, self-discipline, better social skills and friendships, connected with peers. My child had fun every season. I know who my kids’ friends are, and what they are doing.

Teacher – Children who play Ringette demonstrate problem solving, focus, higher academic achievement, time management skills, better attention.

Doctor, child psychologist, social worker – Ringette promotes positive body image, promotes fitness without focusing on weight, social interaction skills.

Permission Form – child’s image

I (adult’s name) am the parent/guardian of (child’s name). I give my permission to Ringette (province) to use (child’s name)’s image in their marketing material.

Signature: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Ringette (province) Representative: _____

Permission Form – child’s testimonial

I (adult’s name) am the parent/guardian of (child’s name). I give my permission to Ringette (province) to use (child’s name)’s following testimonial in their marketing material.

Signature: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Ringette (province) Representative: _____

Permission Form – parent’s testimonial

I (adult’s name) give my permission to Ringette (province) to use my image and the following testimonial in their marketing material.

Signature: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Ringette (province) Representative: _____

APPENDIX



Display Unit

Ringette
Fun & Friendships
Happen on Ice!

ComeTryRingette.com

RINGETTE CANADA

A vertical banner featuring a cartoon illustration of a female ringette player in a red and black uniform, wearing a helmet and holding a ringette stick. The background is blue with a subtle pattern of white circles. The Ringette Canada logo is at the bottom.

**Ringette is not
"hockey for girls"**
... different rules
... different equipment
... different skills
... different game!

A vertical banner with a blue background. At the top, two girls are hugging. In the center, a yellow circle contains text. At the bottom, a ringette player is shown in action. The Ringette Canada logo is at the bottom.

ComeTryRingette.com

- Builds strong, fit & confident girls
- Start as young as 5 years old
- Learn to skate
- Non-contact sport with full protective equipment
- An hour filled with fast play
- Maximum participation, a true team sport
- Play recreationally or competitively

Ringette
Fun & Friendships
Happen on Ice!

ComeTryRingette.com

RINGETTE CANADA

A vertical banner with a blue background. It features a list of benefits of ringette, small circular portraits of girls, and a cartoon illustration of a girl holding a ringette stick. The Ringette Canada logo is at the bottom.

Ad



Come Try Ringette
A FREE Event for girls age 5-12

Date:
Time:
Place:

Ringette
Fun & Friendships
Happen on Ice!

Pre-registration is required
Register early at:
ComeTryRingette.com



Come Try Ringette
A FREE Event for girls age 5-12

Date:
Time:
Place:

Ringette
Fun & Friendships
Happen on Ice!

Pre-registration is required
Register early at:
ComeTryRingette.com

Poster



Ringette
Fun & Friendships
Happen on Ice!

**Come Try
Ringette**
A FREE Event

- Play & learn with kids your own age
- Planned program led by qualified instructors
- Safe environment

PLUS Fun off-ice activities & refreshments

Pre-registration is required
Visit our website for dates and locations:
ComeTryRingette.com

RINGETTE CANADA RINGETTE CANADA

Business Card



Front (folded)



Inside



Outside

Brochure

Ringette

- Builds strong, fit & confident girls
- Start as young as 5 years old
- Learn to skate
- Non-contact sport with full protective equipment
- An hour filled with fast play
- Maximum participation, a true **team** sport
- Play recreationally or competitively

PLUS Fun off-ice activities & refreshments

All you need to bring is:

- Skates
- Winter mitts or Gloves
- Warm clothing – layers are best
- Ringette / hockey helmet – if you don't have one, let us know and we will provide one for you
- Your parent or guardian – for the entire event
- Your **enthusiasm!**

Ringette is not "hockey for girls"

- ...different rules
- ...different equipment
- ...different skills
- ...different game!

Come Try Ringette
A FREE Event

Pre-Registration is required

Child's name: _____

Age: _____

Skating Experience?: Yes No

Do you have a helmet? Yes No

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Day Phone: _____

Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Which Come Try Ringette event are you attending? _____

Register EARLY
Space is limited!



Ask your Provincial Association about custom printing these materials for your event.

Make arrangements to borrow the Display Unit, if your Association does not have one of their own.

Take Home Package Contents

Have information envelopes pre-stuffed with your Ringette program information, which should include:

- Registration dates and locations
- Registration fee amounts
 - Any registration incentive your Association offers e.g., reduced/no fee for first time players, reduced fees for Bunnies, etc.
- Information on your association's once-a-week, drop in, and "learn to play" Ringette programs, if you offer them.
- League information –
 - team formation policies,
 - key contacts, phone numbers, emails
- Uniform information
- Equipment information
 - Where to buy new equipment
 - Tips on fitting equipment
 - Where to buy used equipment
 - Date(s) of local association used equipment sales
 - Tips on selecting used equipment
- Games & practices information
- Game basics
- Opportunities – Tournaments, Provincial Championships, Provincial Winter Games, Canada Winter Games, Canadian Ringette Championships, National Ringette League, Scholarships, etc.
- A local sporting goods discount offer

- Information on Ringette camps
 - Beginner Camps
 - Skills Camps
 - Summer Camps
- Information on Sport Central (located in Edmonton, it provides support to families across Western Canada)
- Information on KidSport
- Information on TrueSport
- Information on JumpStart
 - Canadian Tire program to assist families who cannot afford sports
 - www.canadiantire.ca/jumpstart

Getting to Know You and Your Child & Commitment Form

On the following pages are the Getting to Know You and Your Child, and Commitment Form. They can be photocopied from these masters.

These forms are key parts of the Post Ice session with the parents. Here is where we ask them to sign up, or at least commit to signing up.

Print these two documents back to back on a single page – less paper to fumble with, more important, *less paper to lose*. And less paper to print.



Come Try Ringette Getting to Know You & Your Child

What are your expectations of Ringette for your child?

Now that you have heard about what Ringette has to offer, what do you think will most excite your child?

What might make your child apprehensive?

Does your child have any physical limitations or other challenges?

How did you hear about our event? Please circle **all** that apply –

Tradeshow	School program	Friend
Sport Expo	Newspaper Display Ad	Newspaper Classified Ad
Poster	Parade	Parent
Radio	TV	Come Try Ringette Brochure?
		Other _____



Yes! I want my daughter to join the exciting world of Ringette!

Child's Name _____

Signature _____

Name (Print) _____



I'm sure I want my daughter to join the exciting world of Ringette, but we want to think about it.

Child's Name _____

Signature _____

Name (Print) _____

Contact Information:

Home Phone:

Business Phone:

Cell Phone:

E-Mail:

Come Try Ringette Checklist

Mandatory Pre Event Promotion / Planning

- Attend an annual "Come Try Ringette" training/update session.
- Prepare, *with your Provincial Association's help*, an appropriate promotional plan for your event. Emphasize pre-registration. *
- Book your facilities.
- Collect your testimonials
- Customize the brochures including time, place, contact number(s), and testimonials. (*Your Provincial Association can help with this.*)
- Distribute brochures to area schools if schools permit.
- Distribute brochures to key local association contacts.
- Communicate event details to everyone in your local association.
- Communicate event details to all neighboring associations.
- Posters/Brochures at event arena.
- Supplying event information for the "Come Try Ringette" website.
- Arrange for sticks (and helmets if required) for the event.
- Arrange for qualified female on-ice leader.
- Arrange for additional sufficient on-ice personnel.
- Ensure that sufficient off-ice activities for the kids are planned and available for event.
- Ensure sufficient volunteers. **See "How Many People Do We Need" checklist in APPENDIX**
- Order refreshments for participants and parents.
- Buy an alphabetical accordion file folder.
Print a supply of your Getting to Know You/Commitment forms. (see Appendix)
- Create, and print a supply of your Event Registration /Check-In forms for your Registration table.
- Gather pre-registration information, and any other relevant material. Clip together with Getting to Know You form (See Paperwork section), association registration forms and put in alphabetical ordered files
- Gather & assemble your Take Home Packages. (See Paperwork section)

Good Ideas & Recommended Best Practices for Pre Event Promotion / Planning

- Shopping Malls:
- Local Arenas:
- Sporting goods stores:
 - Work out some promotional discount
- Community centres or other high traffic locations in community
- Supply brochures to existing players for distribution to promote “Bring-a-Buddy” approach
- Offer a contest for existing player participation/recruitment efforts.
- Distribute promotional material at trade shows.
- Set up a display at seasonal sport sign-up events.
- Set up a display at community Summer Carnivals
- Distribute promotional material at local age group youth soccer and baseball games. Work the sideline crowd.
- Supply existing players’ parents with business cards for distribution to classmates parents.
- Display/classified ad in local community newspapers
- Public service announcements of event on local radio stations.

Mandatory Event Protocol

- Confirm pre-registered participants and parent/guardian attendance
- Set up Come Try Ringette display and information table in arena lobby / common area
- Volunteers wear name tags
- Sufficient volunteers available for greeting and accompanying participants to the dressing room
- Sufficient on-ice assistants
- Parents must sign in participant
- Leaders and assistants must be in the dressing room interacting with participants prior to the on ice session
- Host volunteers accompany parents to the viewing area, and are available for questions.
- Instructors use supplied practice plans.
- Instructors and assistants along with volunteers lead participants in fun off-ice activities.
- Provide refreshments for participants.
- Provide refreshments for parents.
- Conduct off-ice parent information session including "Getting to Know Your Child" process

Good Ideas & Best Practices Recommended for Your Event

- Have a digital camera available to take picture of each participant with the instructors
- Have "brag book" at the entrance table
- Ringette DVD playing on a television
- Visuals such as charts, videos, and photos, verbal and written testimonials.
- Have samples of all required equipment on display.
- Have someone knowledgeable to talk/answer questions about equipment
- Volunteers wear matching shirts/jerseys to increase visibility
- Players and On Ice Instructors in lobby during sign in to greet participants

- Offer a door prize for new participants.
- Create a display board with Instructor biographies.
- Have a mascot, and tattoos or stickers for event.
- Have craft activities, or other games.
- Have a parent information question and answer session.
- Offer incentives to parents who register their child that day.

Mandatory Post Event Protocol

- Make a personal follow-up call to all participants within **72 hours** of completion of event. (You must make contact; phone messages don't count)
- Complete the post event checklist (submitted on the web site to master database)
- Thank your volunteers

Recommended Post Event Ideas

- Send digital picture and personalized greeting from Instructor
- Send a handwritten "thank you" to parents.
- Ask for referrals – *"Who do you know, or who does your child know, who might also enjoy this sport?"*

How Many People Do We Need?

Experience has shown that to successfully run an event with 40 participants, the following jobs need to be filled:

- Greeters – minimum of 6 volunteers
- Registration table – minimum of 2 volunteers
 - One to register participants
 - One to hand out sticks and loaner equipment
- Dressing rooms – minimum of one volunteer per dressing room, plus Lead Instructor. How many dressing rooms you have, and their size are factors.
- In the stands – minimum of 2 volunteers
- On the benches – minimum of 3 volunteers
- On the ice – minimum of 5 capable assistants, plus Lead Instructor(s)
- After ice drinks and snacks – minimum 1 volunteer per dressing room.
- After ice children's activities – minimum of 3 volunteers (your on-ice assistants can do double duty here.
- After ice parents activities / questions/ registration sign-up – minimum of 5 volunteers.

Because your volunteers can serve multiple functions (e.g.: greeter, then bench mom, then after ice sign-up), you can expect to need *a minimum of 8 adult volunteers, and 5 capable youth volunteers to handle a registration of 40 participants*

Obviously, the more help you've got, the easier and the more smoothly your event will run.