



# ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN 2022 PARENT HANDBOOK

*Premiere Partner*



**MACKENZIE**  
Investments



# Ski season is back.

## Let's get **invested** on and off the hill

### A message from Luke Gould, President & CEO of Mackenzie Investments

Ski season is finally here! The temperatures have dipped and the hills are calling. Mackenzie is excited for another great year as we continue our partnership with Alpine Ontario.

By partnering with an incredible organization like Alpine Ontario, we are able to support, nurture and invest in current, as well as up-and-coming athletes as they compete on the local, national and even international stage.

At Mackenzie, we know skiing is an investment. It's an investment of your time, your energy, and your money. And if anyone knows how important it is to make the right investments, it's us. That's why we want to empower residents of Ontario with the support they need to invest in what matters most to them – both on and off the hill.

Thanks to our partnership with Alpine Ontario, we're able to make smart investments, too. An investment to support you – the dedicated parents, coaches, clubs, and athletes – has no

greater return as it allows us to invest directly in the communities where we also live, work, and play.

We can't wait to see you on the slopes and watch all the exciting races and events coming up this season, including the Mackenzie Top Peak competition in which clubs across the country can compete to win funds to support the growth of their communities. We are also giving away several \$500 RESPs to top athletes this season – so start training!

Thanks for all that you do to advance the sport we love and have fun on the hill.

- Luke



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# WELCOME TO SKI RACING IN ONTARIO

As a parent, you go to great lengths to safeguard your children and give them the best opportunities. You enroll them in sport and activities so they can make friends and learn new skills. You provide equipment and help them organize it to and from the slopes. You watch them train and race so you can be there for the joyous moments, as well as the not-so joyous ones.

While the thrill of the performance is exciting and winning results are alluring, the best reward is seeing the improved confidence, friendships, and overall growth your child gains through meaningful sport experiences.

This handbook is designed to help you ensure a safe, healthy, and meaningful alpine ski racing experience for your child that will support their competitive spirit, foster positive life skills and values, maximize their personal potential and most importantly - KEEP IT FUN!





# WHO MANAGES AOA?

The organization as a whole is governed by an elected independent **BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

- Linsey Ferguson, Chair of the Board
- Brian Silveira, Vice Chair, (from NCD)
- Andrew Fortier, Treasurer
- Stephanie Warner
- Peter Bier (from SOD)
- Doug Milne
- John Prosperi (from NOD)
- Dave Bradley (from LSDA)
- David Wasserman

Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) employs a variety of professionals from administrative to coaching staff.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

- Patrick Biggs, Executive Director
- Angela Hobbs, Accounting Manager
- Duncan Gibson-Maclean, High Performance Manager
- Suki Chapman, Program Manager
- Heather Vita, Communications and Member Services Manager
- Sarah Edwards, Manager, Coach Education and Delivery
- Shawn Letton, Club Development Manager

## COACHING STAFF

- Kip Harrington, High-Performance Director
- Cam McKenzie, Ontario Ski Team, Men's Head Coach
- Cam Stephen, Ontario Ski Team, Women's Head Coach
- Thomas Trusler, ODST Head Coach
- Rachel Topping, ODST Assistant Coach
- Curtis Eades, SOD Ski Team Head Coach

## SUPPORT STAFF

- Melissa Lacroix, Sports Physiologist, Canadian Sport Institute of Ontario
- Dana Sinclair, Sports Psychologist, Human Performance International

# WHAT DOES AOA DO?

Joining a new sport can be overwhelming, especially for those who are not already familiar with alpine ski racing. We hope the following information gives you a starting point.

Thank you for taking the time to learn.

## What is AOA?

Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) is a not-for-profit provincial sport organization (PSO) responsible for compliance and regulations in Alpine ski racing, Para-alpine racing and Ski Cross racing as stipulated by its governing bodies: Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA) and The Fédération Internationale de Ski (FIS) based in Switzerland.

AOA raises money through sponsorship, government funding, donations and membership fees. These monies are used to develop the following:

- Organize and sanction the entire Ontario race series and provincial championships (more than 300 races per year) from the U8 level up to U19/FIS.
- Organize skills camps for racers between the ages of 8 to 16.
- Manage the U16 High Performance Program (U16HPP) & U19 High Performance Program (U19HPP)
- Manage the Ontario Ski Team (OST), the Ontario Development Ski Team (ODST) and the regional Southern Ontario Division Ski Team (SODST).
- Hosts coach education courses, seminars and on-hill learning.
- Oversees the organization and facilitation of coach education (entry level and development level coaches' courses) and Officials courses as provided by Alpine Canada Alpin.
- Strives to keep race environments safe through policies and procedures, rules and regulations as stipulated by our governing bodies of Alpine Canada Alpin and FIS.
- Provide, administrate and pay for General Liability Insurance for all our members and affiliated clubs through Gallagher.
- Provide sport communications using promotional videos, newsletters and several websites.
- Implement provincial fundraisers that bring in over \$100K into the Alpine Ontario Ski Racing structure.
- And much, much more!
- Visit our website to learn more: [alpineontario.ca](http://alpineontario.ca)



# ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN



## ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN

Provincial Governing Body for Alpine,  
Para-Alpine & Ski Cross Racing

## WHO WE ARE

**ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN (AOA)** provides leadership and support for the advancement of alpine, para alpine and ski cross racing in the province of Ontario by providing exceptional and sustainable programs and services from entry level to high performance. In collaboration with the 40 race clubs and their 30,000 members, partners and stakeholders, we support over 5,000 active racers, 3,000 coaches and thousands of officials and volunteers throughout the province.

AOA is a proud member of Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA) and recognized by the Canadian Snowsports Association, Ontario Winter Games, Canada Winter Games and the Government of Ontario under the umbrella of the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

The AOA offices are based in Collingwood with five full-time office staff dedicated to administration, communications, athlete development, coach education, sport safety and event management as well as a staff of highly qualified coaches operating the Ontario Ski Team. The organization is governed by an elected independent Board of Directors.

## OUR MISSION

To provide leadership and structure for high quality, sustainable and affordable programming, and communicate the competitive, recreational and lifestyle benefits of ski racing to the community.

## ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES & MEMBER BENEFITS:

ADMINISTRATION			
<b>Health + Safety Policy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Concussion protocol</li><li>Codes of Conduct</li><li>Safe Sport</li></ul>	<b>Alpine Canada Relations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Governance</li><li>Insurance Coverage</li><li>National Calendar</li></ul>	<b>AOA Member Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registration</li><li>Insurance: Liability + SAIP</li><li>Club Relations – Club Affiliation</li></ul>	<b>Revenue Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Government Funding</li><li>Sponsorship + Fundraising</li><li>Merchandise Sales</li></ul>
<b>Government Relations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism &amp; Culture Industries</li><li>Sport Hosting - NorAM's, Nat'l Champs</li></ul>	<b>Marketing Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sponsorship Activation</li><li>Marketing</li><li>Member Communications</li></ul>	<b>Provincial &amp; Divisional Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Board of Directors Governance</li><li>Regional Programming Oversight</li><li>Integration of Services</li></ul>	
ATHLETICS	EVENTS	EDUCATION	SAFE SPORT
<b>Athletic Programming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD)</li><li>Provincial Calendar of Events</li><li>OCup Provincial Race Series &amp; Training Opportunities</li><li>U8 to U21 Race Series, including U12, U14 &amp; U16 Committees</li><li>Divisional Teams (SOD Ski Team)</li><li>High Performance Programming, including U16, U19 &amp; OST</li></ul>	<b>Event Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>NorAm Bidding &amp; Delivery</li><li>World Cup Ski Cross</li><li>National Championships</li><li>Grant Writing</li></ul>	<b>Coaching</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Course Delivery</li><li>Annual Licensing Credits</li><li>Webinars, Conferences</li><li>Mentorship Opportunities</li></ul> <b>Officials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Course Delivery</li><li>Annual Licensing Credits</li><li>Webinars, Conferences</li><li>Mentorship Opportunities</li></ul>	<b>Keeping Athletes Safe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Concussion Awareness</li><li>Rowan's Law</li><li>Responsible Coaching</li><li>Abuse, Bullying &amp; Harassment</li></ul>

# ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN



## ALPINE ONTARIO ALPIN

Provincial Governing Body for Alpine,  
Para-Alpine & Ski Cross Racing

## WHO WE ARE

### WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO JOIN ALPINE ONTARIO?

Similar to sports like Hockey, Soccer and Baseball, Alpine Ontario plays an important role in the sport system by developing the sport of ski racing across Ontario and encouraging participation in recreational and competitive programs. Alpine Ontario provides a competitive pathway for athlete development; selecting provincial teams; recruiting and training coaches, officials and volunteers; conducting provincial championships; and ensuring they operate within their National Sport Organization (NSO) rules.

Your athlete membership fees make this possible!

### HOW DOES THIS BENEFIT MY RACER?

#### Keeps your child safe by:

- Providing safety standards for training and racing environments. Providing policy for concussion awareness and injury prevention. Providing Safe Sport programs to keep your child safe from abuse, harassment and bullying.
- Provides Coaches with the tools to inspire your child to excel. Provides Liability Insurance in the unfortunate case of an incident. Provides Liability Insurance for Coaches and Officials
- Provides your child the opportunity to have fun, challenge themselves, to pursue ski racing to the highest level and become tomorrow's leaders and skiers for life!

## WHERE DOES AOA GET ITS MONEY FROM?



35% of AOA Revenue comes from Membership Fees



6% from the Government of Ontario's Amateur Sports Fund



17% from Sponsorship and Fundraising



The remaining 42% comes from Team Fees, Alpine Ontario Events, Camps and Coach Education Courses

## WHERE DOES AOA SPEND ITS MONEY?



66% is spent on Athletic Development  
40% is spent on Coach Education, Skills Camps and Events  
26% is spent on the Ontario Ski Team



18% is spent on Administrative expense: salaries, rent and office related costs



11% supports Alpine Canada



5% is spent on Liability and Directors and Operators insurance



# DIVISIONS AND SKI CLUBS

AOA is made up of four divisions, 35 ski clubs and has over 5,000 registered members which represent approximately 30,000 extended families including parents, coaches, volunteers, officials, and corporate partners.

The four AOA divisions are:

National Capital Division (NCD)

Northern Ontario Division (NOD)

Lake Superior Division Alpine (LSDA)

Southern Ontario Division (SOD)

## SKI CLUBS - SOD

Alpine Ski Club

Batawa Racing Club

Beaver Valley Ski Club

Brimacombe Ski Club

Caledon Ski Club

Catalyst Racing Club

Chicopee Ski Club

Craigleith Ski Club

Devil's Glen Country Club

Fenninger Racing

Georgian Peaks Ski Club

Glacier Ski Club

The Heights Ski & Country Club

Hockley Valley

Jozo Weider Racing Club

London Ski Club

Mansfield Ski Club

Milton Heights Racing Club

Muskoka Ski Club

National Ski Academy

North York Alpine Race Club

Osler Bluff Ski Club

Snow Valley Ski Club

Toronto Ski Club

## SKI CLUBS – NOD

Adanac Ski Club

Elliot Lake Ski Racers

Elite Alpine Ski Cross

North Bay Antoine Ski Racers Inc

Searchmont Ski Runners

Timmins Ski Racers

## SKI CLUBS – NCD

Calabogie Peaks

Camp Fortune Ski Club

National Capital Outaouais  
Ski Team

## SKI CLUBS - LSDA

Nor'westers Alpine Club

Port Arthur Ski Club

TBFast

# HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

## Members of the Crazy Canucks



**Todd Brooker**

Toronto Ski Club

3 World Cup DH wins,  
7 World Cup podiums,  
1984 Olympics



**Steve Podborski**

Craigleith Ski Club

1st (and only) North American to  
win World Cup season title in DH,  
8 World Cup DH wins,  
20 World Cup podiums,  
1980 Olympics



**Dave Irwin**

Loch Lomond Ski Area

1 World Cup DH win,  
2 World Cup podiums,  
1976, 1980 Olympics



# HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE



**Kathy Kreiner**  
Timmins Ski Racers  
1 World Cup GS win  
7 World Cup podiums  
1972, 1976 & 1980 Olympics



**Lauri Graham**  
Osler Bluff Ski Club  
Six World Cup victories,  
1980, 1994 & 1988 Olympics



**Kate Pace Lindsay**  
North Bay Ski Club  
Six World Cup medals,  
1994 & 1998 Olympics



**Brian Stemmler**  
Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
Three World Cup podiums,  
1988, 1992, 1994 & 1998 Olympics

# HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE



Kelly VanderBeek  
Chicopee Ski Club  
Two world cup podiums,  
2002 & 2006 Olympics



Larisa Yurkiw  
Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
Six seasons on World Cup,  
4 Downhill podiums



Erin Mielzinsky  
Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
1 World Cup SL win,  
2 World Cup podiums,  
2010, 2014, 2018 & 2022 Olympics



# CURRENT EXCELLENCE

There are many incredible Ontario athletes on the world stage.

We are proud to celebrate them. Follow along on their journeys and let's encourage and support them as they fly the Ontario flag at skiing's highest level of competition!

**Ali Nullmeyer**

Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
Instagram [@alinullmeyer](#)

**Katie Combaluzier**

Craigleith Ski Club  
Instagram [@combokate](#)

**James (Jack) Crawford**

Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
Instagram [@james\\_a\\_crawford](#)

**Mac Marcoux**

Searchmont Ski Runners  
Instagram [@macmarcoux](#)

**Kevin Drury**

Georgian Peaks Ski Club  
Instagram [@drury.kc](#)

**Michaela Gosselin**

Osler Bluff Ski Club  
Instagram [@michaelagosselin](#)

**Brian Rowland**

Calabogie Peaks Ski Racing Club  
Instagram [@brirowly](#)

**Kris Mahler**

Craigleith Ski Club  
Instagram [@krismahler](#)

**Roni Remmy**

Alpine Ski Club  
Instagram [@roniremme](#)

# ALPINE RACING DISCIPLINES

Did you know that 55 million people worldwide enjoy the sport of Alpine skiing?! In Ontario, alpine racing includes three distinct streams:

- Traditional Alpine Ski Racing (able-bodied)
- Para-Alpine Ski Racing
- Ski Cross Racing (SX)

Alpine follows the defined sport rules as outlined by FIS. FIS oversees the FIS World Cup, the World Championships, and the Winter Olympics. Alpine competitive skiing is comprised of parallel slalom, slalom, giant slalom, super giant slalom, combined, and downhill. At most of the AOA ski clubs, racing is introduced at the U8 or U10 level once skiers have a strong foundation either from free-skiing or from ski school programs.

Para-alpine skiing competition is open to athletes in Ontario with physical disabilities such as amputation, blindness/visual impairment, spinal cord injury/wheelchair-users and cerebral palsy/brain injury/stroke. Para-alpine athletes compete in the following disciplines: sit-ski, standing, blind/visually impaired in the following events downhill (DH), super-combined (SC), super giant slalom (SG), giant slalom (GS), slalom (SL), dual and team.

Ski cross (SX) is a discipline of ACA nationally and FIS freestyle, internationally. Despite being a timed racing event, it is often considered part of freestyle skiing because it incorporates terrain features traditionally found in freestyle. Ski cross courses have both naturally occurring terrain, and artificial features including, big-air jumps and high-banked turns. What sets ski cross apart from other alpine skiing disciplines is that there's more than one skier racing down the course. Any intentional contact with other competitors leads to disqualification.



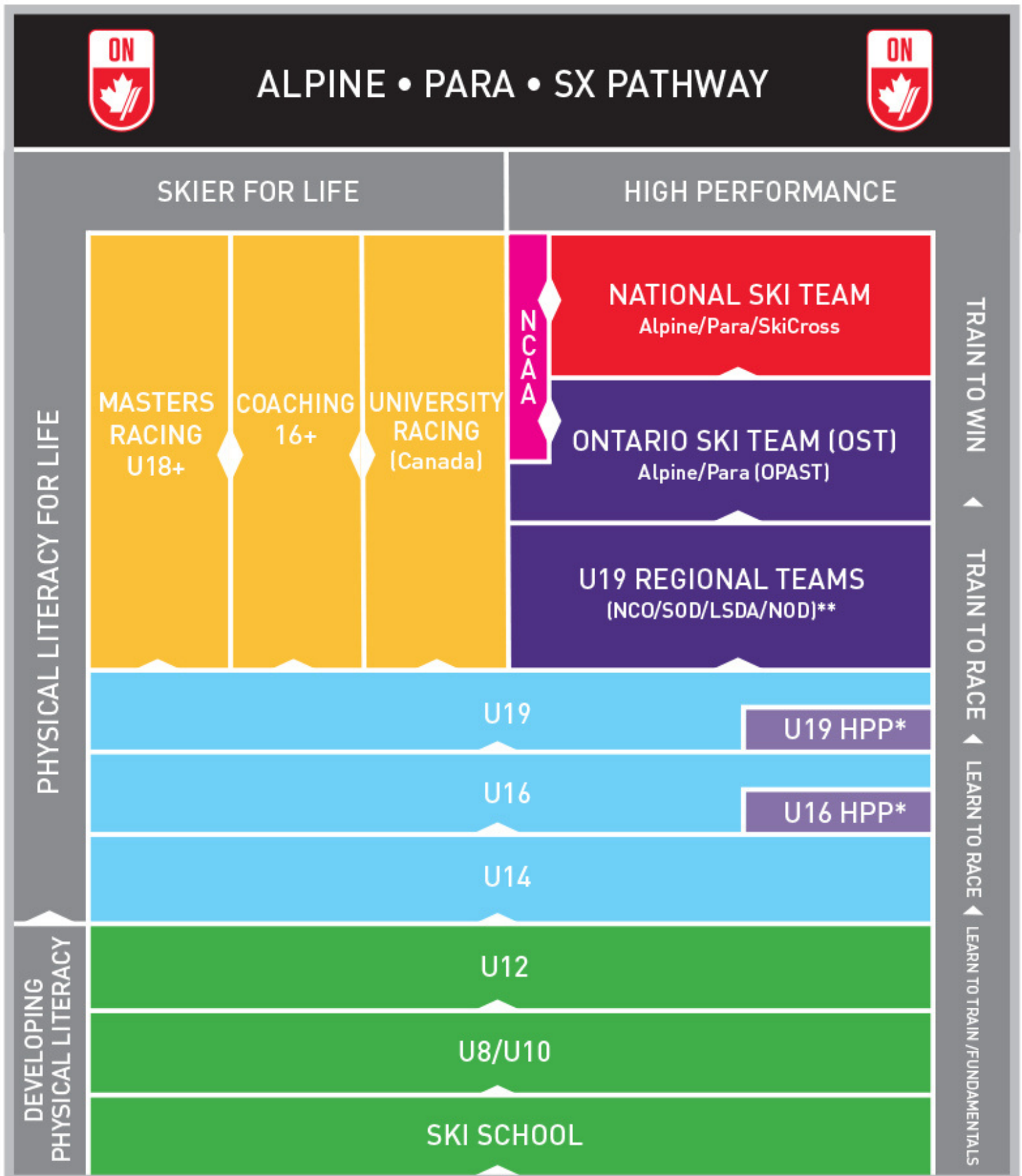
For more information on Para-Alpine, please visit [alpineontario.ca/para](https://alpineontario.ca/para)

For more information on Ski-Cross, please visit [alpineontario.ca/skicross](https://alpineontario.ca/skicross)



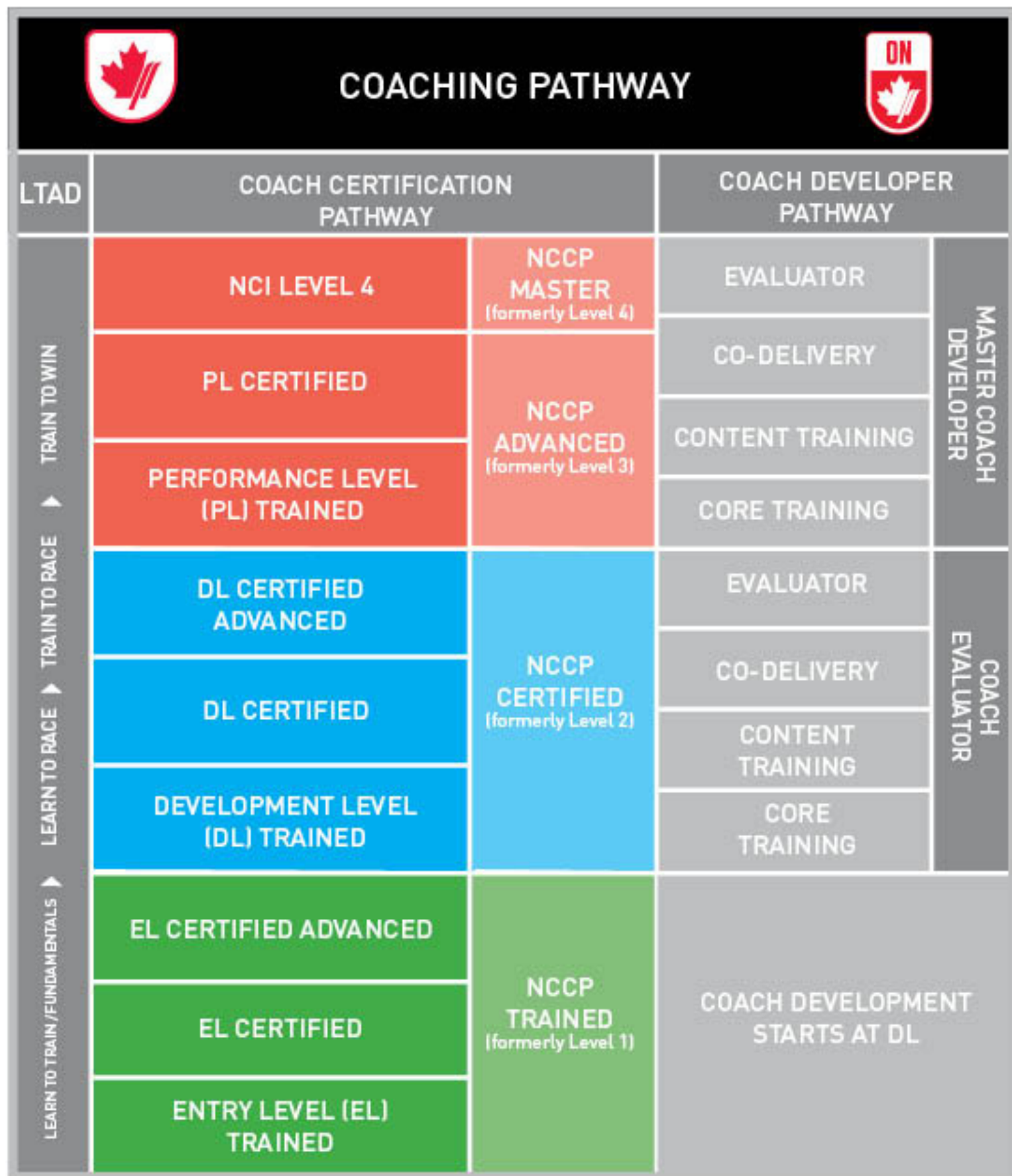


# Athletic Pathway



\*HPP= High Performance Program \*\* SOD=Southern Ontario Division NOD = Northern Ontario Division ...NCO=National Capital Outaouais Team, LSDA=Lake Superior Division

# Coaching Pathway



# PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

Aside from getting outside and exercising, parents love alpine ski racing as it teaches kids teamwork, social skills, responsibility, respect, leadership, and the joy of winning and losing.

The following pages will give you strategies to support your child, their coaches, the officials and yourself in order to build and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours on the slopes this winter.

At AOA, we believe alpine racing is a great tool for developing confident, courageous, resilient and caring people.





# WHAT WILL MY CHILD GAIN FROM ALPINE RACING?

## PHYSICAL BENEFITS

- Improve the ABCs - agility, balance and coordination - along with developing fitness, strength and flexibility.
- Improve general health and weight management.
- Establish healthy behaviours that they will carry throughout their lives - sport and non-sport related.
- Develop FUNdamental Movement Skills.

## SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Development of leadership, co-operation, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Create long-lasting friendships; spending time with friends makes children feel valued and increases their happiness.
- Increase self-confidence by taking charge on the ski hill.
- Taking an interest in accepting responsibility.
- Learn how to accept defeat and win graciously.
- Determine how to take risks - and develop social/group responsibility and accountability.
- Promote sportsmanship.

## PERSONAL BENEFITS

- Have fun!! – this should be #1!!!
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Learn how to make friends with diverse backgrounds and skill levels.
- Improve ability to concentrate, facilitating better performance at school.
- Learn self-discipline, motivation, cooperation, commitment and personal responsibility.
- Learn organizational skills and how to share.
- Learn how to deal with pressure and stress.
- Encourage healthy behaviours (i.e. better eating habits, better sleeping habits, less likely to smoke or use drugs).



# HOW DO I BENEFIT?

The alpine racing journey can be tremendously beneficial for parents including benefits such as: forming new friendships, a closer relationship with your kids and the joy of watching them grow by learning and failing.

## Parents also Benefit from Sport!

- You get to play a bigger role in your child's life by sharing more of their experiences.
- You can appreciate that your child is having fun, making friends, being active and healthy.
- You know where your children are - they are being supervised and having fun.
- You may be motivated to engage in a more active lifestyle and become an official or a coach, which leads to professional development and lifelong learning.

By getting involved you can also help your child with the inevitable challenges, such as, pressure, insecurity, uncertainty and even fear. This can be a very real aspect of the alpine racing experience and a very authentic part of the journey. How you - as a parent - navigate these challenges will help define the kind of alpine experience your child will have.





# PARENTS WHO VOLUNTEER HAVE MORE FUN!



When you volunteer, you often get the best place to watch a race!

Get started by taking your Level I Officials Course!  
Ask your club or visit [alpineontario.ca](http://alpineontario.ca) to sign up.

# WHAT KIDS WANT...

This is What Kids Have Told us They Want From Their Parents:

- To support and encourage them.
- To let them know they are proud of them.
- To watch them play.
- To praise them for their efforts.
- To understand their sport and show an interest in being involved.
- To have realistic expectations of their capabilities.

What Kids Don't Want From Their Parents:

- To yell at them during or after the race, or on the car ride home.
- Swearing or disturbing at the races (including coming inside the start or finish huts).
- Abusing the officials, coach or other spectators.
- Being pushy and/or critical.
- Misplaced enthusiasm.
- Using guilt on your child.

What Kids Do Want From Alpine Racing:

- To have FUN.
- To learn, be challenged and improve.
- To be with their friends.

# YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

Create a rewarding, safe and respectful environment by:

- Encouraging your child's participation - don't force it.
- Praising their efforts.
- Being proud of them.
- Children love to have adults at their races. If you can't be there, let them know why.
- Talking to your child about what they want from racing.
- Ensuring the first question you ask is NOT "did you win?" Instead ask, "did you have fun?".
- Volunteering to help with the program, team, races.
- Getting to know the coach and his/her coaching philosophy – be sure to ask if they don't tell you!
- Offering children support in different ways:
- Free ski with them if you can.
- Organize equipment with them and support the time it takes to tune skis as they get older.
- Encouraging your child to ski in their free time away from their ski clubs, or try a family ski vacation.
- Not using guilt on your child to make them "perform better" i.e. do not use guilt as a 'motivator' for your child.
- Not living your athletic dreams through your child.
- Not losing perspective - not every child will be an Olympian nor will talent necessarily mean they love what they are doing.
- Watch your child closely to gauge what makes them happiest.



# ON THE CAR RIDE HOME...

- Point out something good that your child did and good behaviour they exhibited in training or in the race.
- Avoid criticizing or correcting mistakes.
- Ask questions like:
  - Did you have fun?
  - Did you give it your best effort?
  - What did you learn from the training or race?
  - What was your best moment and how did it make you feel?

Remember it is more important to be a good person than to be a good athlete

# 70%

## of kids QUIT SPORT

by the age of 13 because they stop having fun!

The most common reason why -

## PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR

*Source: Respect in Sport for Parents*

# 5 THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

## 1. Motivate Them to Try New Things.

- Talk to your kids about the **BENEFITS** of ski racing, as well as, other sports.
- Help them see that playing a new sport can make them **STRONGER** and **BETTER**.
- Discuss how the skills they learn through sports can help them reach their **GOALS** in the future.
- Discuss with your child why they may be **AFRAID** to try a specific sport or activity.

## 2. Encourage Persistence

- Remind them about the **COMMITMENT** they made to their sport, their coaches and their ski team.
- Discuss how **PERSISTENCE** leads to success.
- Discuss examples of **FAMOUS** athletes who have struggled or experienced failure.

## 3. Reframe Losing

- Emphasize personal **MASTERY** and **IMPROVEMENT**.
- Teach your child to focus on the **POSITIVE** and celebrate improvement and progress.
- Help them **REFLECT** on what they/their team could do better next time.
- Point out how famous athletes **RESPOND** to losses.
- Help your child embrace the **FUN** of sports.

#### 4. Reframe Winning

- Emphasize their EFFORT, FOCUS and DISCIPLINE.
- Help them understand the connection between winning and their ACTIONS.
- If your child wins without effort, ensure that they always display good SPORTSMANSHIP to the losing team teach them to handle constructive criticism.

#### 5. Teach Kids About Constructive Criticism

- Teach your child to view criticism as a price of ADVICE.
- Give your child the opportunity to SELF ASSESS by asking “Did that go how you expected it to go?”

REMEMBER: Do not give constructive criticism to your child in front of others.  
Speak **THOUGHTFULLY** and **GENTLY**





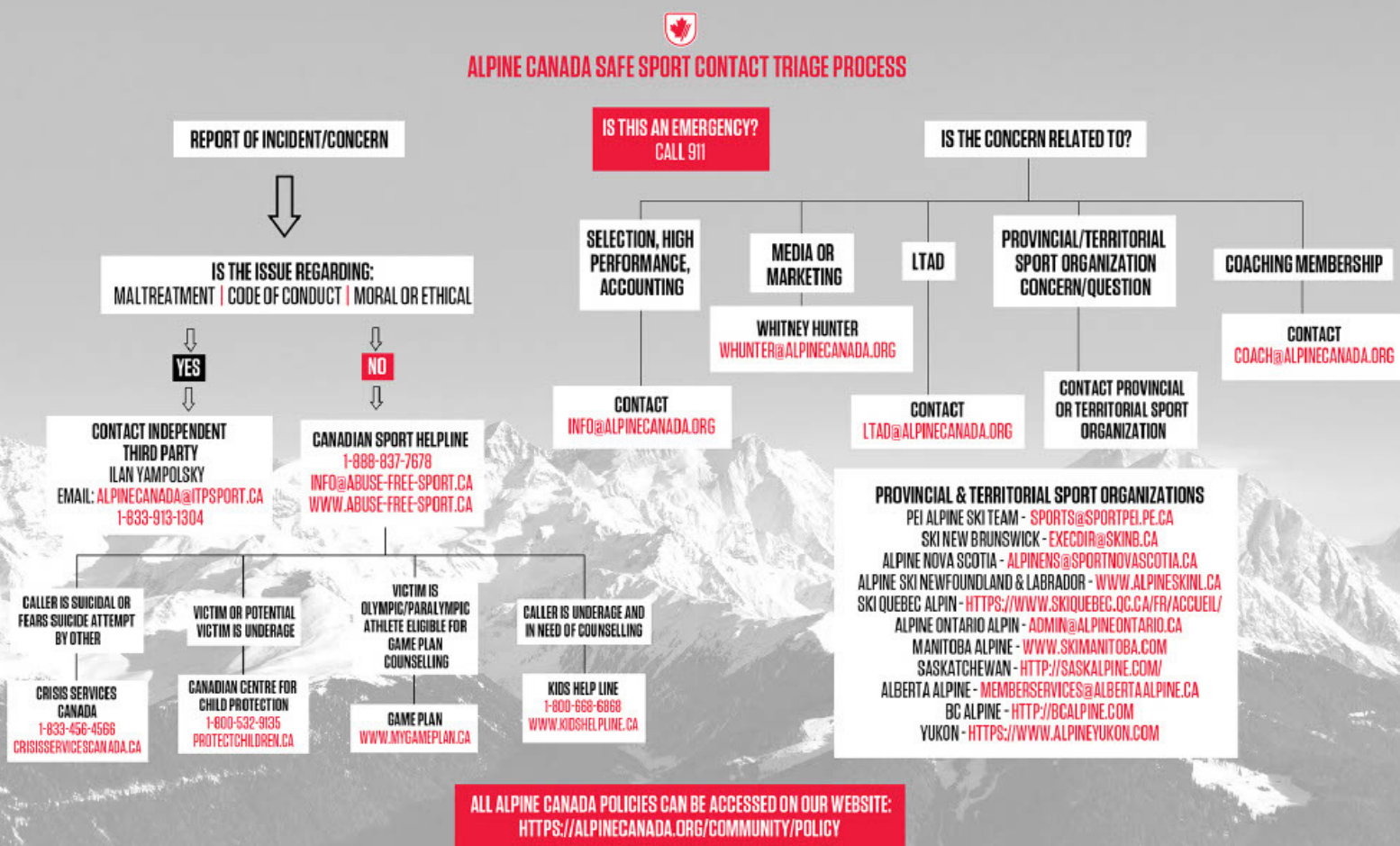
# LET'S TALK SAFETY

AOA is committed to its Core Values which include “Excellence, Passion, Competition, Fun, Sportsmanship, Fair Play and Safety.”

Safety in particular is paramount to many of the AOA policies and procedures. AOA will continue to work closely with its governing body Alpine Canada to ensure athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers in our programs are safe.

Please visit our website for all details: <https://www.alpineontario.ca/safesport/>

## ALPINE CANADA'S SAFE SPORT TRIAGE PROCESS



# OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PARACHUTE

Alpine Ontario and Alpine Canada are guided by the Canadian organization PARACHUTE. Parachute is a national Canadian charity founded in 2012, which promotes researched, evidence-based and expert-advised resources and tools that can help to prevent serious harm or death from preventable injuries. Parachute, led by President and CEO Steve Podborski, “wants Canadians, from coast to coast in this great nation, to safely work, play, and enjoy their families and friends to the fullest throughout a long and healthy life.”

## Parachute’s Mission Statement

Creating a safer Canada by preventing serious and fatal injuries through evidence-based solutions that advocate and educate.

The following pages contain information to help coaches recognize a concussion, information on ‘return to sport’ post-concussion and information on the ConcussionEd Mobile APP. Please also visit [AOA Resources/Policies for the most up-to-date Concussion protocols.](#)





## What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way an athlete may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

## What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

**An athlete does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion.** The athlete might experience one or more of the following:

Thinking Problems	Athlete's Complaints	Other Problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not know time, date, place, period of game, opposing team, score of game</li> <li>General confusion</li> <li>Cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury</li> <li>Knocked out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache</li> <li>Dizziness</li> <li>Feeling dazed</li> <li>Feeling "dinged" or stunned; "having my bell rung"</li> <li>Seeing stars, flashing lights</li> <li>Ringing in the ears</li> <li>Sleepiness</li> <li>Loss of vision</li> <li>Seeing double or blurry vision</li> <li>Stomachache, stomach pain, nausea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor co-ordination or balance</li> <li>Blank stare/glassy-eyed</li> <li>Vomiting</li> <li>Slurred speech</li> <li>Slow to answer questions or follow directions</li> <li>Easily distracted</li> <li>Poor concentration</li> <li>Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e., laughing, crying, getting mad easily)</li> <li>Not playing as well</li> </ul>

**Get medical help immediately if an athlete has any "red flag" symptoms** such as neck pain, repeated vomiting, growing confusion, seizures, and weakness or tingling in their arms or legs. These may be signs of a more serious injury.





## What causes a concussion?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion (e.g., a ball to the head, being checked into the boards).

## What should I do if I think an athlete might have a concussion?

**In all suspected cases of concussion, the athlete should stop playing right away.** Continuing to play increases their risk of more severe, longer-lasting concussion symptoms, as well as increases their risk of other injury.

The Concussion Recognition Tool 5 (CRT5) can be used by anyone to help recognize the signs and symptoms of a possible concussion.

The athlete should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day. They should not drive.

If the athlete loses consciousness, call an ambulance to take them to the hospital right away. Do not move them or remove any equipment such as a helmet.

The athlete should not return to play the same day.

## How long will it take for the athlete to get better?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion usually last for one to four weeks, but may last longer. In some cases, it may take many weeks or months to heal. If the athlete has had a previous concussion, they may take longer to heal.

If the athlete's symptoms are persistent (i.e., last longer than two weeks in adults or longer than four

weeks in youth under 18 years old) they should be referred to a healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

## How is concussion treated?

After an initial short period of rest (24 to 48 hours), light cognitive and physical activity can begin, as long as these don't worsen symptoms.

As the athlete is recovering from concussion, they should not do any activities that may make their symptoms worse. This might mean limiting activities such as exercising, driving, and screen time on their phone or other devices.

Recovering from concussion is a process that takes patience. Going back to activities before the athlete is ready is likely to make their symptoms worse, and their recovery may take longer.

## When should the athlete go to the doctor?

Anyone with a possible head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible.

The athlete should go back to the doctor immediately if, after being told they have a concussion, they have worsening symptoms, such as:

- being more confused
- headache that is getting worse
- vomiting more than twice
- not waking up
- having any trouble walking
- having a seizure
- strange behaviour

## When can the athlete return to school?

On average, students with concussion miss one to four days of school. Each concussion is unique, so the athlete may progress at a different rate than others.

The Return-to-School Strategy provides information on the stages of returning to the classroom. **Return to school must come before full return to sport.**

## When can the athlete return to sport?

It is very important that an athlete not go back to full participation in sport if they have any concussion signs or symptoms. Return to sport and physical activity must follow a step-wise approach.

In this approach:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.
- The athlete moves on to the next stage when they can tolerate activities without new or worsening symptoms.
- If any symptoms worsen, the athlete should stop and go back to the previous stage for at least 24 hours.

**Stage 1: After an initial 24 to 48 hours of rest, light cognitive and physical activity** can begin, as long as these don't worsen symptoms. The athlete can start with daily activities such as moving around the home and simple chores, such as making their bed.

**Stage 2: Light aerobic activity** such as walking or stationary cycling, for 10 to 15 minutes. The athlete shouldn't do any resistance training or other heavy lifting.

**Stage 3: Individual sport-specific exercise** with no contact for 20 to 30 minutes (e.g., running, throwing). The athlete shouldn't do any resistance training.

**Stage 4: Begin practising with no contact** (no checking, no heading the ball, etc.). Add in more challenging drills. Start to add in resistance training.

**Stage 5: Participate in practice with contact**, once cleared by a doctor.

**Stage 6: Full game play or competition.**

The Return-to-Sport Strategy provides more information on the stages of returning to sport.

## An athlete should never return to sport until cleared by a doctor!

Returning before full recovery from concussion puts athletes at higher risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be more severe and last longer.

## Additional Resources

Available at [parachute.ca/concussion](https://parachute.ca/concussion):

- Return-to-School Strategy
- Return-to-Sport Strategy
- Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport
- Concussion: Baseline Testing
- Making Headway eLearning (Coaching Association of Canada)



Get the Concussion Ed App -  
free on the App store

# WHAT IS ROWAN'S LAW?

## ROWAN STRINGER'S STORY

Rowan's Law was named for Rowan Stringer, a high school rugby player from Ottawa, who died in the spring of 2013 from a condition known as second impact syndrome (swelling of the brain caused by a subsequent injury that occurred before a previous injury healed). Rowan is believed to have experienced three concussions over six days while playing rugby. She had a concussion but didn't know her brain needed time to heal. Neither did her parents, teachers or coaches.



Rowan's Law and Rowan's Law Day were established to honour her memory and bring awareness to concussions and concussion safety.





## Requirements for Sport Organizations

Ontario is a national leader in concussion management and prevention. Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 makes it mandatory for sports organizations to:

- ensure that athletes under 26 years of age,\* parents of athletes under 18, coaches, team trainers and officials confirm every year that they have reviewed Ontario's Concussion Awareness Resources
- establish a Concussion Code of Conduct that sets out rules of behaviour to support concussion prevention
- establish a Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocol

\* Special Rule: A sport organization that is a university, college of applied arts and technology or other post-secondary institution must not register any athlete regardless of age unless the same requirements are met.

The new rules requiring the review of Concussion Awareness Resources and Concussion Codes of Conduct came into effect on July 1, 2019.

The rules for removal-from-sport and return-to-sport protocols came into effect on January 1, 2022.

As of July 1st, 2019 all AOA members cannot complete their registration process without reviewing the AOA Concussion Protocol.

AOA is committed to following Rowan's Law. Visit [alpineontario.ca/safesport](http://alpineontario.ca/safesport)

# HOW DO I STAY INFORMED?

This handbook is just a starting point to a sport that is both complex and ever-evolving. We suggest parents become familiar with the following communication tools:

## 1 – THE AOA WEBSITE – [www.alpineontario.ca](http://www.alpineontario.ca)

- Find program details under 'ATHLETE'
- Find events listed on the 'CALENDAR'.
- Learn about Coaching and Officials.
- Find the full site map at the bottom of each page.

2 – **RACELINE** is the official AOA e-newsletter sent out year round. It includes need-to-know information plus additional tips on how to be a great SPORT PARENT. The learning in sport never stops so please continue to stay engaged to help your children succeed on and off snow! Subscribe at [alpineontario.ca](http://alpineontario.ca)

3 – **SOCIAL MEDIA** – We love our social media at AOA! Find us, like us, share us and comment!

Instagram [@alpineontario](https://www.instagram.com/alpineontario)

Twitter [@alpineontario](https://twitter.com/alpineontario)

Facebook [facebook.com/alpineontarioalpin](https://www.facebook.com/alpineontarioalpin)

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/alpine-ontario-alpin/>

## 4 – ASK FOR HELP!

Please call or email us

Tel: 705-444-5111

Email: [memberservices@alpineontario.ca](mailto:memberservices@alpineontario.ca)

# IMPORTANT DATES

## FALL

- Register with AOA! Your child cannot race until this step is completed and paid for. Visit [www.alpineontario.ca](http://www.alpineontario.ca) and look for the LOG IN button, top right corner.
- OCUP Draft Schedule (U14, U16, U19, SX, FIS) is posted on the AOA website.
- Coach Education continues. Visit the AOA 'Coach' section of the website for details on upcoming training.
- Fall Fitness Testing (check with each Division). Note: Fall testing is mandatory if your child wishes to race in the U14/U16 OCUP series. Please ask your coaches for more information.
- RACE SCHEDULES are finalized and posted on each Division website.
- Ontario Ski Team (OST) and Ont. Para Alpine Ski Team (OPAST) official team announcement.

## EARLY WINTER

- Many clubs hold pre-season camps - typically in Quebec, Alberta or B.C. Check with your local club for details about Fall camps
- Racing begins! Race programs typically start across Ontario by the end of December.
- AOA 2023-24 High-Performance Program criteria/details (U16HPP, SODST, ODST, OST, Para) released.



## FEBRUARY

- Men and Women's Nor-Am Cup, Feb 23rd - 24th, Camp Fortune Ski Club
- Women's Nor-Am Cup, Feb. 27th - Mar 2nd, Georgian Peaks Ski Club
- Women's Nor-Am Cup, Mar 1st - Mar 2nd, Osler Bluff Ski Club
- Canada Winter Games (formerly U16 Nationals), Feb 27th - Mar 5th, Various ski areas
- AOA Ontario Ski Racing Awards (OSRA) nomination process opens.
- OCUP Finals. The U14 & U16 Finals rotate throughout the four AOA Divisions. In 2023 the U14s are in Thunder Bay (Loch Lomond Ski Area/Mount Baldy Ski Area) and the U16 Finals are in Sault Ste. Marie (Searchmont Ski Resort).

## MARCH

- Sr. Nationals (U19/FIS) hosted by Alpine Canada. March 13-17th, Kimberly, BC.
- U16 High Performance Program applications open for 2023-24 season. Visit [alpineontario.ca/u16hpp](http://alpineontario.ca/u16hpp)
- Ski-Cross Provincials from Mar 10-12, Beaver Valley
- U14 CanAms for Team Ontario qualifying athletes, Mar 29th - Apr 2nd
- U16 Eastern Finals for Team Ontario qualifying athletes, Mont Saint Anne, Mar 29th - Apr 2nd
- FIS Ski Cross World Cup, Mar 17th - Mar 19th, Craigleith Ski Club

## APRIL

- U19 High Performance Program, OST, ODST and SODST Selections.
- AOA Spring Athletic Meetings (tbc).

## MAY

- Spring Fitness Testing (check with each Division).
- Ontario Ski Team Training Squad announced, dryland program starts with CSIO.
- U16HPP announced, program starts with dryland plan followed by two summer ski camps.
- U19HPP is announced, program starts with dryland plan at the CSIO.
- SODST is announced, off-season dryland program commencing.

## JUNE/JULY/AUGUST

- Ontario Ski Team will be on snow 3-4 times during these months (tbc).
- U16HPP, U19HPP, SODST on snow, summer ski camps (tbc).
- [www.alpineontario.ca/calendar](http://www.alpineontario.ca/calendar) for full summer camp listings.

# QUOTES FROM PARENTS

## Letting go...

"This is not really specific to ski racing, though the sport offers parents some great opportunities to learn how. It starts with letting them learn to wax their own skis (even though it involves hot sharp things and makes the worst mess), take responsibility for their gear (and learn to problem solve when they forget their shin guards at home). Stand back and outside of the finish when they race- if they have a good run, wait for them to come to you to say congrats. If they have a bad run- let them work it out with the support of their coach and their fellow racers. Stay quiet in the car after the race and let them initiate the conversation about the day. Don't take any of it personally (even though you are the #1 sponsor, have stood in sub-zero temperatures for hours and have driven through a snowstorm to get there). It's hard, but it's where they grow from sport and learn the most about themselves- which is the whole point. "

## Keep busy...

"It's important to keep other things in their life that make them happy and maintain balance."

## Friends...

"Ski racing is a great camaraderie for both the kids up in the starting pen and the parents at the bottom - each group sharing the ups and downs together."

"Memories and friendships will last a lifetime..."

"The smiles both on and off of the hill are priceless. The networking of us all on race day as we are sitting in different cities across Ontario, and sometimes the country, on live timing is amazing."

"Friends from all across the escarpment and provinces. Competitive with each other on the race hill but then linked arms and hugs afterwards!"



# QUOTES FROM PARENTS

## Hard work

"The time management skills that kids develop and use in order to maintain an academic average is a very valuable tool. Linking hard work with training and skill set development again is a transferable skill. 99% of the work is outside the 'race'."

## Be patient...

"Size does matter in the developing U14 and U16 ages. Smaller athletes tend to not succeed in competition as much but have some great skills that they do not get rewarded with. Stay patient as your time will come. Eventually all kids grow and mature and the athletes that have fought through the hard times often come out on top of the early developers. Most challenging part is reminding children to stick with the process."

## Knowing what to say...

"I find it really hard to know the right thing to say/do when things are not going well - too often athletes' self-esteem and confidence is directly related to their outcomes and when things don't go well - it's hard."

## It's a community...

"An amazing community of coaches, mentors & friends and a determination and work ethic that they will take forward with them in everything that they do."

## It's a journey...

"I didn't realize my daughter felt that as parents, we were only happy when she won or got hardware. Of course we were happy for her achievements but now we are more cognizant of the progressions she makes as she moves along on in her OCUP career. It's important to recognize 'improvement' over 'podiums'."

# QUOTES FROM PARENTS

## It's a tough sport...

"It is a tough, unforgiving sport where hundredths of a second can mean the difference between winning and losing. For me, the hardest challenge as a parent of ski racers, is helping my kids manage and navigate tough race days. When they want success so badly and they do everything they know to do and it just doesn't come together for them, it can be so frustrating and disappointing for them and there isn't anything you can do to make it better for them. It can be such a helpless feeling when you can't fix it for them and there is nothing you can say to take the sting away. But having been with them on this journey for many years now, I now realize that racers gain so much from the struggle. Ski racing teaches resiliency, mental toughness, determination and perseverance and these skills translate into everything that they do. You can't be a ski racer and a quitter - the two are not compatible. Ski racers are the toughest people I know!"

## Passion...

"I love that my daughter has a passion, that she focuses and set goals for herself. She has learned to balance her life with schoolwork, friends and sport. She has learned about winning and not being an arrogant winner. She has learned about set-backs and there is always something to learn from them. These are skills and experiences that will serve her well in life."

## Spending time with your kids...

"On a selfish note: I love the time that I get to spend with my daughter one on one. I am the one that does the hill runs, the camps and the hotels. We get car rides, dinners out, and hotel stays just the two of us and we get to chat and stay on top of each other's lives. My favourite moment was when she said, "I just like spending time with you."

# QUESTIONS?

## For General Inquiries:

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## Suki Chapman

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## Angela Hobbs

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# QUESTIONS?

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Development and Performance Level

**Patrick Biggs**

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Contact for Board of Directors, leadership of AOA, strategic vision

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