

COLD WEATHER GUIDELINE

St. Albert Nordic Ski Club

Bunny and Jack Rabbit ski lessons will not be cancelled due to cold weather due to the short length of the ski season and the unpredictable nature of weather in Alberta. Coaches will modify activities to best accommodate their groups and promote a fun and educational cold weather learning experience. It is at the discretion of parents to decide whether their youth attend lessons, and to dress and prepare their youth appropriately in cold conditions.

Below is a list of suggestions and guidelines for coaches and parents to ensure safety and comfort when skiing in colder temperatures. For the purpose of this policy, cold weather conditions take affect when temperatures drop below -15C (including the wind chill).

Bunny and Jack Rabbit leaders should consider the following safety measures when conducting ski lessons during cold weather days:

- Each ski group will have a minimum of 2 assigned instructors (one may be a parent volunteer), to monitor skiers and attend to any cold skiers.
- Inappropriately dressed skiers will be excused from the session and their parent must be notified. "Inappropriately dressed" skiers will be determined by the trained instructor based on the weather conditions.
- Coaches may want to carry extra mitts and hot packs.
- All coaches will be trained to recognize the signs of frost bite and hypothermia.
- Skiers and parents will be informed that the following clothing is needed for cold weather days – a toque that covers their ears, warm mitts, buff/neck warmer to cover their faces, and long underwear.
- Coaches will always bring skiers inside when a skier says they are cold. Skiers will not be left to move indoors on their own; the 2nd coach will escort the skier indoors. The condition of the skier will be assessed by the coach once indoors; if it is deemed that the skier is too cold to continue, they will be left with their parent before the coach returns to the group.
- Coaches will attempt to choose areas that are protected from the wind and avoid activities in open areas.
- Ski lessons will be conducted close to lodge in the event that someone does get cold.
- Coaches will allow additional time to warm-up; it takes longer to get the body warmed-up for sport activity in cold weather.
- Skiers will not be permitted to race in cold temperature or conduct activities that promote heavy breathing. *Up to 30% of cross-country skiers suffer from exercise-induced asthma (EIA). Cold dry air exacerbates this condition. Parents will be informed that if their skier is susceptible to exercise induced asthma they will need to take extra precautions.*
- Where the head coaches (youth coordinators) feel that weather factors put our athletes at risk, they may pull the groups indoors for alternate activities. The head coaches are expected to use discretion in evaluating which age groups are pulled indoors.
- Coaches will have 4 x 1hr lesson plans for indoor instruction that could be conducted in the shed or Kingswood Shelter. These include waxing lessons, ski technique and other fun ski videos that could be shown in the loft of the shed.

Parents should consider the following safety measures when their youth are attending ski lessons during cold weather days:

- The following clothing is needed for cold weather days – a toque that covers their ears, warm mitts, buff/neck warmer to cover their faces, long underwear, layers on top and bottom, and wind proof layers for windy days.
- Please note that any skiers who are not appropriately dressed for the cold conditions, will be sent indoors by the coaches and parents will be notified.
- Avoid over layering socks, to the point of creating tight feet, which reduces circulation. Instead cut the toe out of old thick wool socks (Work World), and pull them on over the ski boots for cold days. Ensure that skiers are wearing dry, not damp, socks.
- Hand-warming and foot warming packets help to minimize risk of frostbite.
- Individuals have a different tolerance to cold weather. Children less than 10 years of age are not able to thermoregulate as well as older athletes. Make sure your skiers are dressed appropriately and know to tell their coaches if they are cold or uncomfortable. The coaches will bring them indoors.
- Make sure your skiers are properly hydrated and are not hungry.
- Up to 30% of cross-country skiers suffer from exercise-induced asthma (EIA). Cold dry air exacerbates this condition. If your skier is susceptible to exercise induced asthma you will need to take extra precautions and may want to avoid outdoor activities when temperatures are cold. This is at the discretion of parents.
- If your skier has any special conditions that you feel the coaches should be aware of (e.g. asthma or previous frost bite), please notify the coaches prior to the lesson.