

S.K.A.T.E. stands for "Skaters Keep Achieving Through Education" and is a program that encourages, supports and rewards youth hockey players who commit themselves to their schoolwork while enjoying the sport of hockey.

## **Purpose**

Skaters Keep Achieving Through Education (S.K.A.T.E.) was established to encourage, support and reward youth hockey players who commit themselves to their schoolwork while enjoying the sport of hockey.

## **Goals**

It is the goal of the Skaters Keep Achieving Through Education (S.K.A.T.E.) program to significantly increase awareness among youth hockey players that performance in the classroom is more important in life than performance on the ice. It is also a stated goal of S.K.A.T.E. to generate a lasting, measurable impact on higher achievement in the classroom.

## **History**

In 1993, S.K.A.T.E. began in the Armstrong Youth Hockey Association to encourage academic performance among youth hockey players. Merilee Reilly and Lynn Leopold were among a group of "hockey moms" who championed the effort for Armstrong.

"So much emphasis in youth hockey and all of youth sports is placed upon performance on the field of play," said Leopold. "We wanted to create a program that placed greater emphasis on academic performance and recognized the sacrifices young student-athletes make to juggle schoolwork with an active sports lifestyle. We wanted to teach our kids better time management skills."

Jordan Leopold and his long-time buddy, Pat O'Leary, were exposed to the S.K.A.T.E. program at the squirt level. Multi-sport athletes growing up, Leopold and O'Leary became outstanding multi-sport, scholar athletes, graduating with honors from Robbinsdale Armstrong High School.

Impressed with the impact this program had on academic performance among youth hockey players, the folks at Minnesota Hockey Journal (MHJ), in cooperation with the statewide governing body for hockey in Minnesota (Minnesota Hockey), have made it available to every youth hockey organization under the Minnesota Hockey umbrella.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is S.K.A.T.E.?**

An academic achievement program, which stands for "Skaters Keep Achieving Through Education". It is designed to encourage student athletes to maintain good grades while participating in youth hockey and to reward their performance.

### **2. Who can participate in the program?**

All Minnesota Hockey youth players. S.K.A.T.E. is free to all Minnesota youth hockey associations. (Mite through Bantam for CLHA)

### **3. How can I get my son or daughter involved in S.K.A.T.E.?**

Individuals alone may not participate in S.K.A.T.E. They must be part of a team that belongs to an Association that has an Association S.K.A.T.E. coordinator.

### **4. What are the criteria for qualification?**

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above during the academic period(s) which coincides with the youth hockey season.

### **5. How can parents help?**

Most importantly, keep reminding players about the importance of school and how S.K.A.T.E. will recognize their performance. Teach them that the sport of hockey is not a destination in life, but a vehicle to learn how to better live life.