

## ABOUT THE BUNNYRABBIT PROGRAM... THE FIRST STEPS....



The Bunnyrabbit Program is a Cross Country Canada skill development program. It is designed to introduce children five years of age and younger to the sport of cross country skiing and the healthy lifestyle associated with it. A cross country ski experience will:

- help children develop a positive self-image;
- be fun;
- provide children an opportunity to make ski-friends;
- develop their skills; and
- help develop an awareness and appreciation of our natural environment.

The Bunnyrabbit Program is delivered by volunteers trained under Cross Country Canada's Community Coach Program. This is part of the National Coaching Certification Program used by all sports in Canada. See [www.coach.ca](http://www.coach.ca) for more information.

## Tips for Parents

Learning to cross-country ski should be accomplished through an organized mix of play and discovery in situations in which children learn to ski naturally with limited formal instruction.

Keep in mind that terrain can teach better than most people can.

The ideal setting to introduce children to cross country skiing is a terrain park which has been set up to provide a variety of skiing discoveries.

The focus should be on the development of basic movement skills such as balance, gliding, and diagonal stride without poles.

Children require appropriate clothing and equipment in order to have a positive ski experience.

Children should have had enough to eat, but not be too full, when they begin their ski. Encourage them to drink water before and during their session to keep hydrated.

Ensure your child has play-time on skis in addition to Bunnyrabbit sessions – as many ski playground experiences as possible!

## A Parent's Guide to Cross Country Ski Equipment

A child's first set of ski equipment should include a pair of no-wax skis with 'classic' length poles (with the pole tip in the snow, the pole height should reach the underarm).

Initial on-snow play does not require long skis. Skis should be approximately the same height as the skier.

It is better for the child to outgrow their ski poles than to grow into them.

Select a binding that is not difficult to operate, but is not prone to releasing either. If you select strap-type bindings used in conjunction with snow boots, ensure that all the straps are integrated into the binding construction. Loose straps have a way of getting lost.

Snow boots can be nice and warm, but unless they are laced up firmly, there is a risk of little feet coming right out of the boot. The boot will be securely fastened to the ski – and the young skier will be left standing in the snow wearing only socks.

If a child is on their second pair of skis, they may be ready to graduate to waxable skis.



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# Bunnyrabbit PROGRAM



Bunnyrabbit Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Active Start

## What I wear when I go skiing...

- ❄ I cover my face when it is windy and/or cold.
- ❄ I keep my toque on!
- ❄ I dress in thermal underwear.
- ❄ I dress with mitts, not gloves.
- ❄ I wear clothing that is not too bulky and allows me to move freely - if possible, I layer my clothing.
- ❄ If I wear wool, I wear it as a second layer away from my skin.
- ❄ My clothing and boots are not too tight.
- ❄ I keep metal zippers away from my skin.



## How I keep warm...

I hop up and down like a bunnyrabbit.  
I spin my arms in big circles like a windmill.  
I wiggle my toes and my nose.  
I laugh out loud,  
And ski all around.  
If I do these things, I will keep warm all day long!



# Color Me Fun



## First Steps

All skills should be practiced on packed terrain without poles. The reason poles are not used when these skills are introduced is that the skier may rely too much on the poles and not enough on their body position for balance.

### Falling and Rising

The child falls to the side and back in a sitting motion. They bring their skis together, side by side and under their body. Next they move onto their hands and knees and stand up (assistance is often required at this stage of development).



### Side Stepping

The child's arms and hands are forward and out to the side for balance. They place their weight on one ski and lift the other ski, placing it down 20-30 cm away from its original position. They then shift their weight to the second ski, and bring the first ski to it. The skis are kept parallel. Repeat in opposite direction.



### Star Turn

The child stands with skis parallel, and arms away from the body for balance. They place their weight on their left ski, lift their right knee, and move the tip of the ski apart 20-30 cm. Keeping the tails together, they place the right ski back down. The skis will form a "pizza slice". They then place their weight on the right ski and bring their left ski parallel to it. This continues until a full circle is completed. Repeat in the opposite direction.



## Movement on Skis - Diagonal Stride

Children learn to ski by doing what they already know – walking. They walk in place on the snow, alternately lifting their skis off the ground. Next they move forward in small steps, keeping their skis parallel. They should try this skill both in and out of ski tracks. This "walking step" is the first progression of the Diagonal Stride.



## Movement on Skis - Herringbone

The child moves forward lifting first one ski and then the other. The tails of the skis should be kept close together and the tips apart. This "duck walk" is the first progression of the Herringbone technique.



Coach's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

**Bunnyrabbit  
Skill Award**

*Place sticker here!*

# My Ski Playground

