



Let'S PLAY
Gym Ringette

Let's Play Gym Ringette Guide



LET'S PLAY GYM RINGETTE

WHAT IS GYM RINGETTE?

Gym Ringette is a refinement of gym floor sports that have been played since at least the 1950s, and probably before that. In its most elemental form, “floor hockey” was originally played with broomsticks, a felt and leather ring, and few, if any rules. In some respects, particularly the equipment, current Special Olympics Floor Hockey is a direct descendant of that original sport.

Ringette was imagined, invented and introduced in Canada in 1963 by Sam Jacks. Originally created as an alternative ice sport for girls and women, Ringette introduced new rules and team-play concepts that transfer particularly effectively to the gymnasium floor:

- Gym Ringette is an excellent co-ed activity, that requires both finesse and strategy
- Gym Ringette builds fitness. Players must rely on agility, speed and endurance.
- Gym Ringette helps players develop core physical literacy skills - strength, balance, flexibility, agility, and muscular co-ordination.
- Gym Ringette develops co-operation with team-mates, socialization, and healthy competition

WHY OFFER LET'S PLAY GYM RINGETTE TO SCHOOLS?

You may feel that your Association volunteers are already stretched to their limit. You may believe that schools and educators are so overloaded with activities and things to do that they will not respond positively to your offer.

So why bother introducing *Let's Play Gym Ringette?*

Because there are real and tangible benefits available to everyone involved:

- To the school
- To the students
- To your Association

BENEFITS TO THE SCHOOL

Gym Ringette provides the school with a highly active, participatory, low cost, structured physical education activity.

Physical Education instructors face certain common challenges in their activity programming, and a Gym Ringette program can help solve some of these.

- How do I get the girls to participate enthusiastically in a common activity with the boys?
 - Gym Ringette is structured to focus on co-operative team play, with an emphasis on agility, speed and strategy rather than strength and aggression.
- How do I get the girls to participate at all?
 - Gym Ringette appears to encourage less confident girls to get involved. - Gym Ringette is not perceived as a “guy” sport like Ball Hockey. Interestingly, it is not perceived as a “girl” sport by the males, either.
- Expense of equipment is a concern.
 - Virtually all schools have goal nets for the gym already

- No special floor markings are required. Most gyms have existing lines for other sports that will serve as “passing” lines.
- Equipment is reasonably priced, very durable, virtually unbreakable, extremely safe, and comes in a variety of sizes.
- Safety is a concern.
- The rules of Gym Ringette, appropriately enforced, promote safe play.
- Some school divisions already have mandatory protective equipment requirements (safety glasses, goalie helmets) and the necessary equipment.

Physical Education instructors are also looking for certain common outcomes from the activities they provide, and a Gym Ringette program accomplishes many of these goals.

- Foster personal fitness development through activities which stress agility, co-ordination, flexibility, and build strength and endurance.
- Develop basic progressive skills and movements which present a continuing challenge to the student.
- Facilitate the learning process by providing opportunities for experimentation, discovery and creativity.
- Foster a socialization process in students by providing suitable individual and group interaction in an environment that is both co-operative and competitive.
- Provide an opportunity for maximum active participation in both the instructional and play components.
- Familiarize students with the safety precautions necessary in a play environment.
- Provide a program that is readily adaptable to all ages and all skill levels.

BENEFITS FOR THE STUDENTS

- A co-ed activity that all can enjoy, regardless of age, size, strength.
- An activity that can be challenging and fun for every age and grade level

- An activity that does not require a lot of set-up and take-down time, Students can get the most possible activity from every gym class, lunch hour or after school session.
- An activity that offers the less physically skilled participant the opportunity to participate and contribute in a meaningful way.
- An activity that builds both fitness and physical literacy skills.
- An activity that teaches skills which translate directly into a number of other sports, including Ringette.
- Lots and lots of FUN.

BENEFITS FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION

Offering your local schools the *Let's Play Gym Ringette* program can be a key component of the growth strategy of your Association. Without doubt, the more young people you expose to Ringette, the more new players will want to join a team, and play our game.

So some of the outcomes of offering the *Let's Play Gym Ringette* program will be:

- A much higher overall awareness of our sport among a broader public constituency
- The students who play Ringette in the gym at school will have been exposed to a new sport; and they may want to try it on ice, too.
- Students who transition to ice Ringette from Gym Ringette will already have a grasp of the principles and basic skills of Ringette
- Parents of children in the lower grades will hear excited talk of this new game “Ringette” when they ask “What did you do in school today?” They may then investigate further.
- Most Physical Education teachers had at least a brief exposure to Gym Ringette during their degree program, but many will not realize the size, scope and popularity of the ice sport
- Other school staff members will be exposed to a sport that may be new to many of them. Some may have played “back-in-the-day”, and are unaware of the huge growth in popularity of adult Ringette, and their opportunity to participate once again.

- Offering the Let's Play Gym Ringette program to local schools will position your Association as a pro-active organization working to add value to the local community.
- Your *Let's Play Gym Ringette* program can effectively promote your Association's *Come Try Ringette* event directly to your target audience. Brochure handouts will be more effective when they connect directly to a new, fun school activity
- Your Association's effort to provide a valuable addition to the schools' work in the community will certainly place any future promotional requests in a favourable light.
- Your Association could expand this outreach into other areas
 - Special Olympics Floor Hockey teams in most communities have few opportunities to *actually play*. High School age players from your Association could earn Community Service credits by working with Special Olympics Floor Hockey.
 - U19 Teams and adult teams could play Floor Hockey matches with Special Olympians. Great dry land cross-training, and a great contribution to the community
 - Establishing an on-going connection with Special Olympics would be an excellent public relations opportunity
 - Your Association could investigate an Outreach into Seniors Gym Ringette

Okay, our Association is ready to implement the Let's Play Gym Ringette program.

How do we begin?

WHO WILL LEAD THIS PROGRAM?

The first decision to be made is, "Who will do this?"

Your search for, and decision on who will lead your school outreach will be influenced by a number of factors.

I. First and foremost:

- Is this a short term “blitz” of your schools - to tie in with a CTR event, perhaps?
- Or, is this a long term continuing program.

If you elect to do a “blitz” you may need, *you probably will need*, several volunteers who can commit to being available for a series of whole days over a week, or longer.

If you elect to develop an on-going long term Outreach program, then your manpower requirement is much less demanding. Your volunteer(s) might run sessions in one or two schools a week, spending half a day in each. This allows you to make repeat visits to your schools over a span of time. Here are some benefits to this approach;

- Less demanding of volunteer time.
- The opportunity involve more (all) the students at every school over time.
- The opportunity to build a sustainable relationship with the school administration and staff.
- Reduces or even eliminates the need to rebuild those relationships at the start of each new school year
- The opportunity to reach the new students at the schools each year.
- Repeat visits will keep *Let's Play Gym Ringette* fresh and “top-of-the- mind” with students. They will be more likely to spontaneously choose to use the Gym Ringette equipment on lunch hours, or other free times.
- Repeat visits will keep *Let's Play Gym Ringette* “top-of-the-mind with the Physical Education staff as well. This will help to ensure that their Gym Ringette equipment doesn't gather dust in the back of the equipment locker

2. Second, you need someone

- who genuinely enjoys interacting with children *of all ages*
- who is flexible enough to create different approaches, ideas, and activities for children *of all ages*

3. Third you need someone who is available, and willing to commit to your program for the duration
 - A former Ringette volunteer from back-when, who is now retired, and has both the time and a continuing excitement about Ringette
 - A current Ringette volunteer who has a flexible work schedule – nurses, firefighters, part-time workers, anyone who can set their own work schedule, mothers of current players who could spend a morning or a couple of mornings a week in schools,
 - Open age players from your own Association who may be attending school or University. Depending on their class schedule, they could be available to help. Certainly, players of that age connect well with the students
 - In large urban centres your local University may have a team. That team may have a formal outreach policy, or some of the student athletes may be studying Physical Education and have class requirements for practical experience, or some team members may be interested in helping with Gym Ringette

Across the country we have encountered volunteers from all of these categories who are already out in their communities running some form of Let's Play Gym Ringette in their schools.

WHAT TRAINING DO OUR LEADERS NEED – AND WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

Just as Ringette Canada has standards and training programs for Come Try Ringette, we have standards and training programs for Let's Play Gym Ringette.

Provincial Ringette Associations have trained Instructors who are available to teach local Association volunteers how to conduct an effective Let's Play Gym Ringette program.

This training helps to ensure that we deliver consistent, excellent programs everywhere in Canada. This is important, because the quality of delivery of Let's Play Gym Ringette reflects the excellence of our whole sport, as well as of your Association.

Just as with Come Try Ringette, formal training in Let's Play Gym Ringette provides your Association the opportunity to access resources from Ringette Canada's and from your Provincial Ringette Organization.

Resources such as:

- How to Run a Let's Play Gym Ringette Session DVD
- Introduction to Ringette DVD for your use and as a "leave-behind" for the Phys Ed teacher
- Gym Ringette Manual for the Phys Ed teacher.

Even better, Associations who have been formally trained on Come Try Ringette and Let's Play Gym Ringette may be eligible for additional resources from the Heritage Outreach program.

Resources such as:

- A stick bag full of Gym Ringette supplies – sticks, rings, pylons, and pinneys for your Let's Play Gym Ringette school visits.
- Gym Ringette sets as either a Legacy Gift to the schools you visit, or available to your schools at a significantly subsidized price.
- Help from our Heritage Outreach Team Leaders.

HOW TO GET INTO YOUR SCHOOLS

I. WHOM DO WE CONTACT

Who to contact varies widely from School Division to School Division, as well as between individual schools. Consequently there is no single contact protocol.

As a general rule, whomever you are trying to connect with – make every effort to speak to them personally.

Educators are inundated with e-mails every day, and your request may be overlooked among the many others in your contact's in-box.

- If the School Division has a Director of Physical Education, or a Healthy Active Living Co-ordinator, or a Lead Teacher for Daily Physical Activity, or someone with a title that indicates involvement with Physical Education, contact that person first.

If your proposal is compelling, he or she will likely support it enthusiastically, and will expedite your contact with the correct person at the individual schools. Ideally, he or she will even help you book your visits.

- Protocol may require you to contact the Division Superintendent. If you speak to the Superintendent, and he/she supports your proposal, he/she may promise to email the Principals on your behalf. Thank him or her for their support. Once you have your program in the schools, be sure to keep the Superintendent informed on how much you've accomplished.
- Speaking directly to the Principal will usually result in a referral to the Physical Education teacher, particularly if you have received support from the Superintendent (Be sure to mention that.) Occasionally the Principal will simply say, "Great. Let's do it"
- A direct approach to the school Physical Education teacher is often most effective. After all, he or she is the person whose program will be directly impacted and the person most likely to benefit from your visit.

If the Physical Education teacher is keen on your offer, then he or she will move the idea through the necessary approvals, and arrange the times that are best for your visit(s).

Parents of current Ringette players in your Association are powerful agents for gaining access to the school their child attends. An enthusiastic word from them about this great FREE program quickly opens many doors.

Once you have established initial communication with the correct person, confirm the details of what you are offering to provide in a letter. This letter can be emailed. A sample letter is provided in the Appendix.

2. WHAT ARE WE OFFERING THE SCHOOL?

We need to be crystal clear that ***what we will provide is a well organized, tightly choreographed, highly active gym class that will "leave 'em sweating!"***.

Physical Education teachers get many offers from groups that want to come in and do "presentations" or "demonstrations". Both involve students sitting and listening, or sitting and watching. Either way, this is not what the Phys Ed teacher wants.

We need to emphasise that we do a minimum of talking, and the students spend a maximum amount of the class actually playing the game.

We need to emphasise that this is **FREE!** There is no cost to the school for our sessions

If your Association has been included in Ringette Canada's Heritage Outreach Program, you may be able to offer the school a set of Gym Ringette equipment as a Legacy Gift, along with a Teacher Resource Manual, and an introductory DVD. You may also have small giveaways provided for the students who participate. Of course, if you are co-ordinating with a Come Try Ringette event, you will have brochures for the students, and posters for the school.

HOW DO WE RUN A LET'S PLAY GYM RINGETTE SESSION? (WHAT TO DO WE ACTUALLY DO IN THE SCHOOL?)

Success!

We've been invited to come to the school and run our program for their students.

What do we do? Here we go, step by step.

ON ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL - TO DO

- Introduce yourself at the Office
 - Sign in, if required
 - Get guidance to the Gym if necessary
- Set up Come Try Ringette Display
- Organize handouts and gifts
- Set up TV and DVD player
 - Test them. Know how they operate *BEFORE* the kids arrive.
- Set up equipment
 - Your Supplies - Pylons, Rings, Sticks, Pinneys,
 - The school supplies - Nets (Ask Phys Ed teacher for nets). If no nets are available, use pylons to mark the goal.
- Ask if School (or Division) has a policy on safety equipment
 - If yes, what equipment? (Glasses? Goalie helmets?)
 - If yes, where is it? **Get it out and available.**
- Ask what School (or Division) policy is regarding photographs
- Confirm session length, start & stop times, and number of students per session
- Ensure that session plans are set up accordingly
 - What grade level? So, which activities?
 - What will time allow – REMEMBER - mostly *PLAYING THE GAME*
 - Do numbers allow full gym, or dictate cross court games?
- Evaluate facility -
 - How big? Given expected class sizes, how does this affect session plan?

- Any safety issues?
- Tape out creases for Gym games

OK, here come the students. What do we do?

LET'S PLAY GYM RINGETTE SESSION PLAN

FIRST INTRODUCTION TO RINGETTE

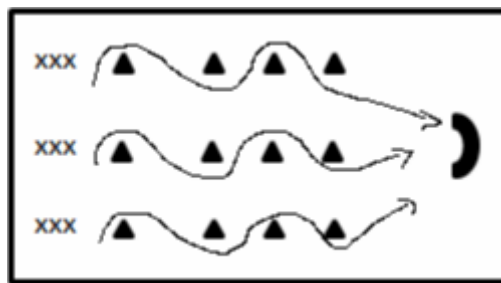
- Introduce the Instructors
- Ask students if they know why we're there
- Ask students if any of them play Ringette, or have watched the sport
- Show 'What is Ringette video'
 - While the video plays
 - Count numbers
 - Divide by 3 or 4 as numbers dictate (try for teams of 6)
 - Hand out equal numbers of pinney colours, (try to balance boys and girls in each team).
- Ask the participants what they learned about Ringette from the video
- Ask the participants to state some special rules of Ringette from the video.

INTRODUCTION TO GYM RINGETTE

- Review *Safety Rules*
 - *Sticks down always. Never above the waist*
 - *Don't bang stick on floor*
 - *No one allowed in goal crease, ever! Show the goal creases.*
 - **Have Fun!**

ACTIVITY - RELAY RACE

- Instruct participants - "Line up behind your colour pylon"
- Lay out pylons as shown. Each team member must
 - run through the obstacle course with a ring on his/her stick,
 - take a shot on net,
 - pick up their ring and run back through the obstacles to hand off the ring to the next participant.

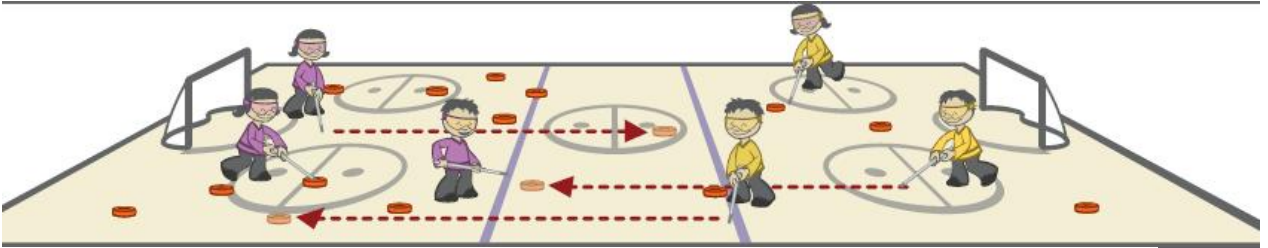


- Depending on age, you can add variations such as "Start from lying on your tummy", or, at a designated point (floor marking) stop and pass back to next team-mate.
- Ask what pylons represent. Depending on response, explain - "*They are opponents - you must keep the ring away*"
- Instructors can replace random pylons as "checkers"
- *Encourage Teachers to participate as "checkers"*

ACTIVITY - CLEAN YOUR ROOM (GRADE 2 AND UNDER)

- p70-71 of Gym Ringette Instructor Guide

- Your half of the floor is your “room”. Rings are “garbage”. Make sure you clean as much “garbage” out of your room before the whistle blows. (By passing it into the other team’s room)
- Depending on number of students and size of the gym you can set up more than one game at a time.



LET'S PLAY GYM RINGETTE!

- Send teams (usually 4, depending on class size. You're trying for teams of 6) to corners of gym;
- Assign an Instructor to each as "Coach"
- Quickly review 4 rules
 - *Must pass over the centre line,*
 - *only the goalie in the crease,*
 - *sticks must stay below the waist,*
 - *No body contact.*
- Depending on class size and grade level, in most standard gyms, play two games cross-gym
- To maximize playing time for all participants, Team A plays Team B, and Team C plays Team D (No fancy round-robin formats)
- No line changes in either game if you were able to make teams of 6. Everyone is playing
- Depending on amount of time, you can have the Instructors challenge one of the teams, or a set group of students.

NOTE: It is important for Instructors to participate in the games. One leader can officiate the game, while other can sit with the students on the side lines and explain the game, answer questions etc. If numbers permit, and all is running smoothly, or if one team is significantly undermanned, JUMP IN AND PLAY.

It is important to chat with the teachers and explain about the game.

ENCOURAGE TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE, TOO!

CLASS WRAP UP

- Take a few minutes at the end of the session to have all student gather
- Ask them a few questions about Ringette
 - Did you enjoy it
 - Name 5 rules
 - Would you like to try in on the ice?

If you are having a Come Try Ringette event soon –

- Promote the FREE CTR event that will take place in their community
 - Hand out promotional flyer
 - Invite them all to join you

Alternatively –

- Hand out information about where and when your Association teams practice. Offer them a free session or two. If they are not sure, invite them to come and watch
- Hand out gift to each student as they leave.
- Set up for next group

AT THE END OF THE SESSION(S)

- Pack your equipment
- Clean the masking tape from the gym floor
- Survey the area for garbage, and items the students may have left/forgotten
- Survey the area for items you may have left/forgotten
- Ensure the Gym Teacher has the manual and Intro DVD.
- If it is part of this visit, make sure the Gym Teacher has the Legacy Gym Ringette set.
- Thank the Gym Teacher
- Confirm the next visit, if this is an ongoing program.
- Stop by the School Office and thank the Principal.

AT THE END OF THE PROGRAM – OR, PERIODICALLY

- Let the School Division Superintendent know the successes, or the on-going progress of Let's Play Gym Ringette.
- Keep the School Division Physical Education Director / Healthy Active Living Coordinator up to date on your activities, successes, and/or on-going progress.

APPENDIX

Dear (Superintendent /Principal),

Anytown Ringette Association would like to introduce *Let's Play Gym Ringette* to Anytown School Division schools.

The Government of Canada recently declared Ringette an Heritage Sport. This designation recognizes the unique nature of Ringette within Canadian sport, and the Government has committed special funding “to help heritage sports flourish so that they will continue to contribute to Canada's national identity and culture...to encourage participation by young people, and to further develop these sports.”

Ringette Canada is using that funding to support Community Outreach activities across Canada, and this year Anytown Ringette Association is a beneficiary of that support.

We are able to offer ***Let's Play Gym Ringette*** sessions to our schools FREE!

Let's Play Gym Ringette sessions are focused on high-energy activity, not talking. We do a very brief introduction of the sport of Ringette, lay out some basic safety rules, *and then we get the students out on the floor playing Gym Ringette for the rest of the class time.*

Our goal is to introduce and encourage Gym Ringette as an activity in our schools. Gym Ringette provides significant benefits to the physical, social and mental development of our students. Gym Ringette is:

- A co-ed activity that all can enjoy, regardless of age, size, strength.
- An activity that can be challenging and fun for every age and every grade level
- An activity that does not require a lot of set-up and take-down time, Students can get the most possible activity from every gym class, lunch hour or after school session.
- An activity that offers the less physically skilled participant the opportunity to participate and contribute in a meaningful way.
- An activity that builds both fitness and physical literacy skills.
- An activity that enhances decision making, strategic thinking and team play concepts
- An activity that teaches skills which translate directly into a variety of other sports, including the on-ice game of Ringette.
- An activity that is lots and lots of FUN.

Our program typically visits schools (*Insert day of the week or your Association's schedule*)
Our objective is to have as many schools as possible from our region participate in our program.

At each school we leave behind:

- ***.An introductory DVD about Ringette***
- ***A comprehensive Teacher Resource Manual.***
- ***An appropriate "thank you" gift to each participating student.***
- ***(optional)the Gym Ringette equipment as a legacy gift to the school***
- ***An invitation to the students to Come Try Ringette on the ice, with us.***

Our target audience at each school are students in Grades (*insert grade level here*)– but, again, we want to reach as many students as possible

I will call your office to follow up this message. Please give some thought as to the most effective schedule for us to visit your schools.

I am looking forward to chatting with you

Contact person's NAME
TITLE
NAME of Ringette Association
Email address
Contact numbers