

How to Run Your Event



RINGETTE | RINGUETTE
CANADA

The Formula for Success

Here's your formula for success!

- You have actively promoted your event
- You have contacted your pre-registered participants and confirmed their attendance
- You have reminded them of the time and place
- For events directed at children, you have reminded parents/guardians that they need to remain with their child throughout the entire event
- You are prepared for more participants than you expect

How Many Volunteers Do We Need?

The number of volunteers that you will need will depend on the number of participants that you are expecting at your event as well as the age of the participants. For events directed at women, you will likely require fewer volunteers to support the program.

Below we have highlighted the estimated number of volunteers needed for an event with 40 youth participants.

- Greeters - Minimum 6 volunteers to help direct participants to the registration table.
- Registration table - Minimum 2 volunteers. One to register participants and one to hand out sticks and loaner equipment. If the registration table is very busy, have one or two volunteers (for example, greeters) on stand-by who can jump in to support.
- Dressing room - Minimum 1 volunteer per dressing room (more if dressing rooms are large). The lead instructor should also be going to room to room to help participants feel more comfortable.
- In the stands - Minimum 2 volunteers. The volunteers are responsible for answering any questions that the parents have and for promoting your associations programs. For women specific events, you may not need volunteers for this role.
- On the benches - Minimum 3 volunteers. These volunteers can help athletes get on and off of the ice, help athletes during water breaks and can be on stand-by if athletes need any help with their equipment during the event.
- On the ice - Minimum 5 capable assistants plus Lead Instructor(s). All on ice volunteers should be sent the on-ice activity plan in advance of the session so that they feel prepared.
- After ice: Drinks / snacks - Minimum 1 volunteer per dressing room to help athletes take off their equipment and to collect the borrowed equipment.
- Children's activities – Minimum 3 volunteers to help run these activities.
- Parent activities/Questions/and Registrations – Minimum 5 volunteers to support parents after the event.





Because volunteers can serve multiple roles (e.g., greeter, then on the bench, then after ice sign-up), you can expect to need a minimum of 8 adult volunteers and 5 capable youth volunteers to handle a registration of 40 participants. However, the more help you have, the easier the event will be.

A note on volunteers

Your volunteers are crucial to the success of your event. With that in mind, the more training and information that you can give your volunteers in advance of the event the better. We encourage you to send an email out to volunteers at least one week in advance of the event to walk them through their role on the day of the event in more detail. Clearly outlining their roles and your expectations of them (for example, the clothing you want them to wear, when you want them to arrive) can help make sure that everyone is on the same page and has a positive experience.

Communicating with volunteers

- Before your event: Ask your volunteers if there are specific roles that they may be more comfortable with. Having volunteers choose their own roles can help them bring the energy and enthusiasm on the day of their event.
- During your event: Be sure to recognize the contributions of your volunteers and to make them feel valued.
- After your event: Talk to your volunteers about their experiences (what worked well and what can be improved). This will not only help you as you work on your next event, but will also allow your volunteers to feel that their voices are heard and are being used to support the program. After the event, you should also send a thank you email to all volunteers to let them know how much you appreciated their support. In that email, you may consider asking them if they would be willing to volunteer in the future, so that you can start a volunteer list.

Your Event: Arrival

- Set up an information table in the lobby.
- Use the Come Try Ringette display unit. Make sure volunteers are readily identifiable and wear matching tops, or team jerseys.
- A volunteer should welcome participants at the arena door and escort them to the sign-in table:
 - Guests may be unfamiliar with the arena and need direction. Remember, these guests may have never been in an arena before.
 - The volunteer should welcome the guest first, then welcome and thank the sponsoring athlete (if there is one).
 - The athlete must sign in (with support of a parent as needed), or, if they pre-registered, record their attendance. Make sure you get a phone number and an e-mail address so that you can send them a post-event note!



Dressing Room

The same volunteer who greeted the participant escorts them to the dressing room and introduces them to the instructor. The volunteer should introduce the participant first.

On-ice instructors must introduce themselves and welcome individual participants (and parents) – this builds trust. On-ice instructors and other volunteers must be available to help athletes get ready and help fit loaned equipment. Have tools on hand to make adjustments.

Optional – If you have a sponsor, or available association resources, you could provide new participants with “keeper” jerseys and sponsoring athletes with “keeper” t-shirts.

The dressing room should be a relaxed, fun environment – not too loud or chaotic. For events directed at children, you may want to teach a simple cheer before children head out to the ice, and volunteers escort parents to the information/viewing area to watch the session.

On-Ice Program

During the on-ice program, everyone should know their role and what is expected of them.

On-Ice Leaders

Lead Instructors are upbeat, enthusiastic people. They love what they do and are vital to your success! They must clearly understand the importance of their role.

On-Ice Assistants

On-Ice Assistants are often 18 or older, U19 and mature U16 athletes. These athletes must receive instructions about their job and what you expect of them. This is not a “skatearound”. They are here to work to help out anyone who needs them. These athletes **MUST** be dressed and ready to go on the ice before event participants.

Bench Attendants

Bench Attendants are there to re-adjust equipment, reassure the timid, and console the wounded. Try to have at least one helpful, reliable person on the bench for every 10 participants. 40 participants will keep three people very busy or four well-occupied.

Parents

Parents will want to watch, so usher them to the viewing area. Reserve an area for them so that you can keep them close together. Offer refreshments, if possible (e.g., coffee, hot chocolate) and have volunteers in the stands to answer parent questions if they arise. Let parents enjoy watching their kids. Save your formal information session for after the session.



Tip: Many parents and guardians may want to try ringette after seeing how much fun their child had at your event. Consider having information on hand about adult ringette options (including Come Try Events for women) to help facilitate their participation!

Post-Ice Activity Participants

For Kids' Programs

Have juice boxes and healthy snacks for participants to enjoy in an activity area after the ice session is over. Bring your mascot, if you have one, and tattoos for the kids.

Volunteers keep the kids busy doing activities, teaching cheers, face painting, playing games, etc., so that parents have time to discuss registration. This is a great opportunity to involve your older U14 or U16 athletes.

For Women's Program

After the on-ice session, refreshments, such as pops or hot chocolate, will be provided for the participants to enjoy. Encourage the women to stick around and get to know each other, and showcase that ringette can be so much more than great exercise—it can also be a way to socialize with other women!

As women are talking, tell them about opportunities to continue playing ringette in your association. For women who are new to skating you can also point them to women-specific skating programs to help them feel more confident on the ice.

Post-Ice Activity Participants

The post-ice time is the golden opportunity to engage parents in conversation, answer questions, and passionately present all the great attributes of ringette, like having fun, making new friends and being active!

Provide verbal and written testimonials (Brag Book), and visuals like videos, photos and equipment displays to get parents excited. Have a knowledgeable volunteer discuss equipment: how to fit it, where to get it, new versus used, what to look for, etc. This is the time to ASK parents to register their children. Ideally, you should be able to sign them up on the spot, but recognize some families will need to think on it.

Tip: Like many sports, ringette can be costly, so many families will have to take some time to consider whether it is something that they can afford. With that in mind, be sure to provide families with information regarding support opportunities (for example, JumpStart) in these discussions and the thank you email you send out in the days following the event.



The Ask

If you are able to take registrations on the spot say something like: “Let’s get _____ registered right now. How would you prefer to pay for the fees?”

Be prepared to answer questions regarding any payment options and terms (for example, is there a discount? How much? If they pay in two payments, when is the second payment due? Cash? Cheque? Credit Card? Invoice? E-Transfer?).

Be prepared to accommodate the athlete. Offer an incentive to sign up today (for example, gift certificate from Sporting Goods store). Note: Anything under \$20 off isn’t enough of an incentive. And dollars off, is a stronger incentive than a percentage off.

If the parent doesn’t register or sign the commitment form, discreetly record their objection on the form so the association knows what direction the follow-up call should take. You may want to offer them program alternatives (e.g. Learn to Play, or Drop-In Ringette).

In every case thank them and give them the program Take Home Package.

Follow Up

Follow up is crucial!

Email a photo to each participant within 2 days of the event. Thank your volunteers and complete the post-event report, as required by your provincial organization.

Within 72 HOURS of your event, conduct a follow-up call or email with each family/participant – including those who signed up AND those who did not. This communication should thank them for attending the event.

For families/participants who signed up, confirm that someone will be in touch for the next steps and provide your contact information as a backup. For families/participants that did not sign up, ask what further information they might need and when they would like you to check back with them. Record this.

EVERY family/participant should be asked to provide feedback about the event. Specifically, you may consider questions such as:

- What did your child like about the event?
- What did you like about the event?
- What could we do better next time?
- Is there anything that you would like to see more of next time?
- Do you have any questions for us?

For families/participants that decide not to sign up, you may consider an additional question to help understand why they chose not to sign up. This information may help you with recruitment in the future.



Dealing With Feedback

Collect all the feedback responses and review them (alongside your program supporters) to learn about how you can continue to improve your Come Try Ringette events. It is very important that the feedback that you receive gets used.

