



**Grand Prize Submission**

**Keswick Valley Minor Hockey**



**Proudly Assisting Canadian Communities**

# Grand Prize Submission



## Tell us about your hockey association.

Keswick Valley Minor Hockey is a community-driven association committed to creating a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment where every child has the opportunity to participate in hockey. We focus on developing not only strong athletes but confident, respectful individuals who value teamwork, perseverance, and community connection.

Inclusion is at the core of everything we do. We believe hockey should be accessible to all children, regardless of skill level, background, or financial circumstances. Our association works actively to reduce barriers so more kids can experience the game. Development extends beyond on-ice skills. We support growth in confidence, leadership, and teamwork through structured programming and community initiatives. This season, we hosted 3-on-3 tournaments and led fundraising efforts that raised over \$5,000 for the Brendon Oreto Foundation, helping support families facing financial hardship. Respect and sportsmanship are foundational values. We emphasize respect for teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents, helping create a safe and positive environment for all participants.

As a rural association, we play a vital role in bringing families together and providing opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach. Our goal is simple: every child who wants to play hockey has the chance to do so in a welcoming and supportive community.

## How would you describe your community?

Our community is a small, close-knit rural area where residents consistently come together to support one another. Community connection is a defining strength, with families, volunteers, and local organizations working together to create opportunities for youth.

The local arena serves as the heart of the community. It is a central gathering place where many families are connected through hockey, whether as players, coaches, volunteers, or supporters.

Keswick Valley Minor Hockey plays an important role in fostering this connection by hosting events such as Spotlight Games, Coaches Games, tournaments, and other initiatives that bring people together and build community pride. Families often face unique challenges, including travel distances, limited access to resources, and rising costs associated with sport. Despite these barriers, there is a strong commitment within the community to ensure that children have the opportunity to participate and feel included.

Hockey is more than a sport in our community. It provides a sense of belonging, supports youth development, and creates meaningful connections for families. The continued strength of the community is rooted in its willingness to support one another and ensure that opportunities remain accessible for all.

## What role does hockey play in your community?

Hockey plays a vital role in our community. It provides youth with opportunities to stay active while building confidence, resilience, and important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and respect.

The local arena is a central gathering place where young people experience a strong sense of belonging and connection. Through Keswick Valley Minor Hockey, players form lasting friendships and are supported by dedicated coaches, volunteers, and families who work together to create a positive and inclusive environment.

Hockey also strengthens the broader community by bringing families together and fostering a shared sense of pride. Events, games, and tournaments create opportunities for connection and engagement that extend beyond the ice.

One of the most meaningful impacts of hockey in our community is the lasting connection it creates. Many players continue to stay involved long after their playing years, returning as coaches and volunteers even without having children in the program. This ongoing involvement reflects the deep sense of pride, commitment, and belonging that hockey fosters in our community.



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## What challenges exist in your community that keep kids from playing hockey?

Like many rural communities, families in Keswick Valley face several barriers that can prevent children from participating in hockey. The most significant challenge is the rising cost of registration fees and equipment, which can be difficult for families already facing financial pressures. While external support programs exist, not all families qualify, leaving some children without access to the sport.

Travel is another key barrier. Families are often required to travel long distances for practices, games, and tournaments, resulting in additional costs such as fuel, time away from work, and scheduling challenges. These factors can make participation difficult, particularly for households with multiple children.

Access to equipment also remains a challenge. The upfront cost of properly fitting gear, especially for growing children, can be prohibitive and discouraging for families considering enrolling their child for the first time.

Limited exposure to introductory opportunities can make it difficult for new players, especially those without a family history in hockey, to get involved and feel comfortable entering the sport.

Together, these challenges can prevent children from accessing the many benefits hockey provides. Addressing these barriers is essential to ensuring that all kids in our community have the opportunity to participate, regardless of their circumstances.

## What is your hockey association currently doing to overcome these challenges?

Keswick Valley Minor Hockey is committed to reducing barriers and ensuring all children have the opportunity to participate in hockey. Through ongoing fundraising efforts, we work to keep registration fees as low as possible for our families. These efforts help offset rising costs such as ice time, equipment, and general operations.

We also actively connect families with external support programs when available, helping them access financial assistance for registration and equipment. However, not all families qualify for these programs, and gaps in support still exist.

Our association relies heavily on volunteers to operate programs and host community events, allowing us to keep costs down while maintaining a positive and inclusive environment. Initiatives such as tournaments and community fundraisers not only support our operations but also help build a strong sense of connection and shared responsibility within the community.

Despite these efforts, increasing costs continue to present challenges, particularly for families facing financial hardship. We remain committed to finding ways to reduce these barriers and expand access, ensuring that every child who wants to play hockey has the opportunity to do so.



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**Please share the association's vision for using the \$75,000 Grand Prize to encourage more kids to play hockey by developing solutions that look to remove barriers in the game of hockey and make the game more accessible, inclusive and equitable for everyone?**

Keswick Valley Minor Hockey believes every child should have the opportunity to play, no matter their circumstances. In our community, hockey is where kids build confidence, friendships, and a sense of belonging. However, for many families, the cost of the game continues to make participation difficult.

If selected for the \$75,000 Grand Prize, this funding would allow us to remove those barriers in a meaningful and immediate way.

We would begin by eliminating financial stress at the start of the season. Registration and insurance support would be provided for families in need so that children can step on the ice right away without delay. We would also clear any outstanding balances, giving families a fresh start and ensuring that no player is left behind due to past financial challenges.

Access to equipment is one of the biggest hurdles for new and returning players. Funding would allow us to provide full gear for youth and older players, maintain goalie equipment, and supply helmets and sticks for introductory and public skate programs. This ensures that any child who wants to try hockey has the opportunity to do so safely and confidently.

We would also expand development opportunities for all players at no cost to families. This includes skill sessions across all age groups, goalie development, and dedicated programming to support the continued growth of girls in hockey. Creating these opportunities helps players feel included, supported, and excited to return each season.

Living in a rural community brings additional challenges, especially when it comes to travel. Providing gas cards and skate sharpening support would help reduce the ongoing costs that families face throughout the season and make it easier to stay involved.

Beyond the financial impact, this funding would strengthen our entire program. It would allow us to invest in coaching resources and simple tools that improve how we teach and support our community.



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## Kruger Big Assist Grand Prize Proposal

	Sept 2026	Dec 2026	Month 13 - 18	Total
<b>Subsidized Registration Fees</b>				
50 Players	\$31250			\$31250
<b>Player Equipment – 20 PLAYERS</b>				
Full gear youth - \$400+ea (10 PLAYERS)	\$4000			\$4000
Full gear senior - \$800+ea (10 PLAYERS)	\$8000			\$8000
Goalie Gear - (we spend about \$5000 per year currently)	\$7000			\$7000
<b>Development</b>				
Goalie Development – 3 sessions @ 265 each	\$795			\$795
Speed Skating Development – 3 sessions @ 300 each	\$900			\$900
Female Development – 5 sessions @ 265 each	\$1325			\$1325
U7-U9 Development – 3 sessions @ 265 each	\$795			\$795
U11-U13 Development – 3 sessions @ 265 each	\$795			\$795
U15-U18 Development – 3 sessions @ 265 each	\$795			\$795
Development supplies – TV with stand for video demonstration (\$650). Whiteboards for changerooms x4 (\$828)	\$1480			\$1480
Hockey Helmets and Sticks to help with public skate and intro to hockey x 30 each	\$3960			\$3960
<b>Player Financial Support</b>				
Gas cards for 25 families for travelling to games/tournaments \$150 each	\$7500			\$7500
Skate Sharpening Gift Cards for 50 families \$100 each	\$5000			\$5000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$73595</b>			<b>\$73595</b>



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