



2026_27 PARENT HANDBOOK



**ALPINE
ONTARIO
ALPIN**

Provincial Governing Body for Alpine,
Para-Alpine & Ski Cross Racing





MACKENZIE

Investments

A message from Luke Gould, President & CEO Mackenzie Investments

Ski season is finally here! The temperatures have dipped and the hills are calling. Mackenzie is excited for another great year as we continue our partnership with Alpine Ontario.

By partnering with an incredible organization like Alpine Ontario, we are able to support, nurture and invest in current, as well as up-and-coming athletes as they compete on the local, national and even international stage.

At Mackenzie, we know skiing is an investment. It's an investment of your time, your energy, and your money. And if anyone knows how important it is to make the right investments, it's us.

That's why we want to empower residents of Ontario with the support they need to invest in what matters most to them - both on and off the hill.

Thanks to our partnership with Alpine Ontario, we're able to make smart investments, too. An investment to support you -the dedicated parents, coaches, clubs, and athletes - has no greater return as it allows us to invest directly in the communities where we also live, work, and play.

We can't wait to see you on the slopes and watch all the exciting races and events coming up this season, including the Mackenzie Top Peak competition in which clubs across the country can compete to win funds to support the growth of their communities.

Thanks for all that you do to advance the sport we love and have fun on the hill. - **Luke**



**Luke Gould, President & CEO
Mackenzie Investments**

**Be invested.
On and off the hill.
Ski + Mackenzie.**

Ski Season is back.

Let's get invested on and off the hill.

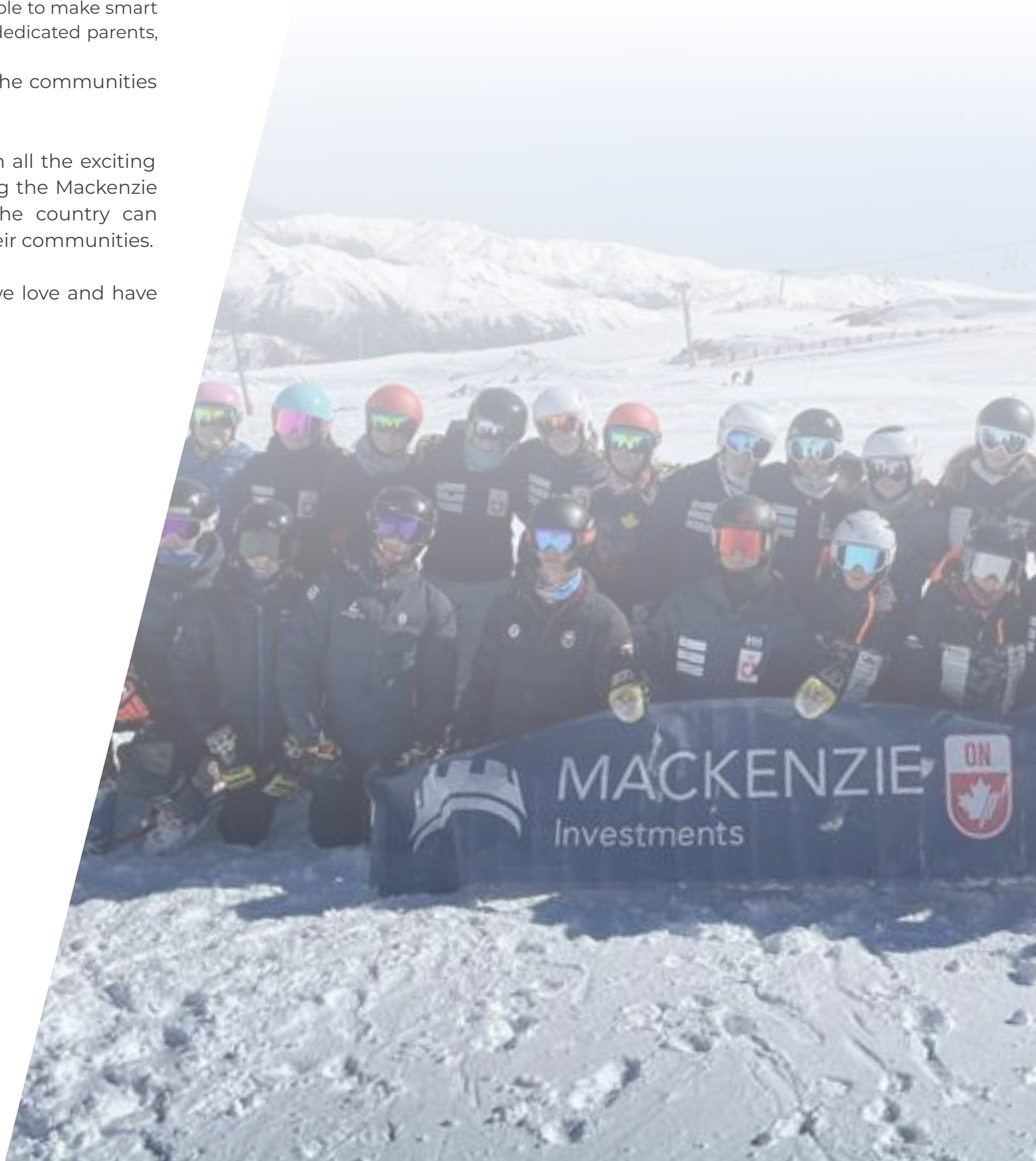


TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO SKI RACING

WHAT DOES AOA DO?.....4-5

WHO WE ARE.....6-7

DIVISIONS AND SKI CLUBS.....8

HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE.....9

CURRENT EXCELLENCE.....10

ALPINE RACING DISCIPLINES.....11

ALPINE - PARA - SX PATHWAY.....12

COACHING PATHWAY.....13

PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

WHAT WILL MY CHILD GAIN FROM ALPINE RACING.....14

HOW DO I BENEFIT.....15

NORMERICA PARENT INFO VIDEO SERIES.....16

WHAT KIDS WANT FROM THEIR PARENTS.....17

THINGS TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT.....18

LET’S TALK SAFETY

AOA’S COMPLAINTS TRIAGE.....19

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PARACHUTE.....20

PARACHUTE PDF GUIDE.....21-22

ROWAN’S LAW.....23

MORE

HOW DO I STAY INFORMED.....24

2026_27 IMPORTANT DATES.....25

QUOTES FROM PARENTS.....26

QUESTIONS.....27



WELCOME TO SKI RACING

As a parent, you go to great lengths to safeguard your children and give them the best opportunities. You enroll them in sport and activities so they can make friends and learn new skills. You provide equipment and help them organize it to and from the slopes. You watch them train and race so you can be there for the joyous moments, as well as the not so joyous ones.

While the thrill of the performance is exciting and winning results are alluring, the best reward is seeing the improved confidence, friendships, and overall growth your child gains through meaningful sport experiences.

This handbook is designed to help you ensure a safe, healthy, and meaningful alpine ski racing experience for your child that will support their competitive spirit, foster positive life skills and values, maximize their personal potential and most importantly - KEEP IT FUN!

WHAT DOES AOA DO?

Joining a new sport can be overwhelming, especially for those who are not already familiar with alpine ski racing. Thank you for taking the time to learn.

Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) is a not-for-profit provincial sport organization (PSO) responsible for compliance and regulations in Alpine ski racing, Para-alpine racing and Ski Cross racing as stipulated by its governing bodies: Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA) and The Fédération Internationale de Ski (FIS) based in Switzerland. AOA raises money through sponsorship, government funding, donations and membership fees. These monies are used to develop the following....next page.



WHAT DOES AOA DO? (continued)

- Organize and sanction the entire Ontario Race series and provincial championships (more than 300 races per year) from the U8 level up to U18/U21/FIS.
- Organize skills camps for racers between the ages of 8 to 15.
- Manage the U16 Athletic Development Program (U16ADP)
- Manage the Ontario Ski Team (OST), the Ontario Development Ski Team (ODST)
- Hosts coach education courses, seminars and on-hill learning.
- Oversees the organization and facilitation of coach education (Entry level, Development level and Performance level coaches' courses) and Officials courses as provided by Alpine Canada Alpin.
- Strives to keep race environments safe through policies and procedures, rules and regulations as stipulated by our governing bodies of Alpine Canada Alpin and FIS.
- Provide, administrate and pay for General Liability Insurance for all our members and affiliated clubs through Gallagher.
- Provide sport communications using promotional videos, newsletters and several websites.
- Implement provincial fundraisers that bring in over \$100K into the Alpine Ontario Ski Racing structure.
- Visit our website to learn more: <https://alpineontario.ca/>



WHO WE ARE

Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) provides leadership and support for the advancement of alpine, para alpine and ski cross racing in Ontario, from entry level to high performance. In collaboration with 40 race clubs and 30,000 members, partners and stakeholders, AOA supports over 5,000 active racers, 3,000 coaches and thousands of officials and volunteers. AOA is based in Collingwood with five full-time staff and a qualified coaching team operating the Ontario Ski Team. AOA is a member of Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA), recognized by the Government of Ontario, and governed by an elected, independent Board of Directors.

35
RACE CLUBS

30,000
MEMBERS &
STAKEHOLDERS

5,000+
ACTIVE RACERS

3,000
COACHES

OUR AOA MISSION

To lead, support and promote the joys of ski racing while delivering a trusted pathway to podiums, community, competitions and careers.

ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES & MEMBER BENEFITS

ADMINISTRATION

Health + Safety Policy

- Concussion protocol
- Codes of Conduct
- Safe Sport

Government & Alpine Canada Relations

- Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture
- Sport hosting: NorAms, National Championships
- ACA governance, insurance & national calendar

AOA Member Services

- Registration
- Insurance: Liability + SAIP
- Club relations & affiliation

Provincial & Divisional Initiatives

- Board of Directors governance
- Regional programming oversight
- Integration of services

Revenue & Marketing Initiatives

- Government funding & sponsorship
- Fundraising & merchandise sales
- Sponsorship activation & member communications

ATHLETICS

Athletic Programming

- Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD)
- Provincial calendar of events
- OCup provincial race series & training opportunities
- U8 to U21 race series, including U12, U14 & U16
- Committees & divisional teams (SOD Ski Team)
- High performance programming, including U16, U19 & OST

EVENTS

Event Management

- NorAm bidding & delivery
- World Cup Ski Cross
- National Championships
- Grant writing

EDUCATION

Coaching

- Course delivery & annual licensing
- Webinars & conferences
- Mentorship opportunities for coaches & officials

SAFE SPORT

Keeping Athletes Safe

- Concussion awareness
- Rowan's Law
- Responsible coaching
- Abuse, bullying & harassment prevention



WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO JOIN ALPINE ONTARIO?

Similar to sports such as hockey, soccer and baseball, Alpine Ontario plays an important role in the sport system by developing ski racing across the province. Alpine Ontario provides a competitive pathway for athlete development, selects provincial teams, recruits and trains coaches, officials and volunteers, conducts provincial championships, and ensures member clubs operate within National Sport Organization (NSO) rules.

Your athlete membership fees make this possible.

HOW DOES THIS BENEFIT MY RACER?

Keeps your child safe by:



Safety Standards for training and racing, concussion awareness and injury prevention



Safe Sport programs protecting athletes from abuse, harassment and bullying



Coaches Equipped with the standards, tools and resources to inspire your child to excel



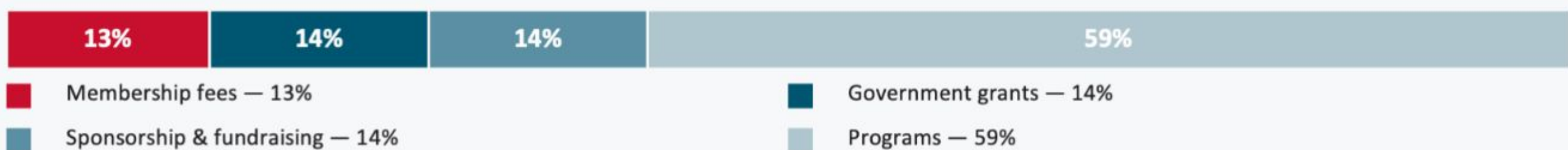
Liability insurance and certifications for coaches and officials



The chance to have fun, challenge themselves, and become tomorrow's leaders and skiers for life

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

REVENUE



INVESTMENTS & EXPENSES





DIVISIONS AND SKI CLUBS

AOA is made up of **four divisions, 35 ski clubs and over 5,000 registered members**, representing approximately 30,000 extended family members including parents, coaches, volunteers, officials and corporate partners.

FOUR AOA DIVISIONS

National Capital Division (NCD)
Northern Ontario Division (NOD)

Lake Superior Division Alpine (LSDA)
Southern Ontario Division (SOD)

ONTARIO DIVISIONS



SOD - SKI CLUBS

- Alpine Ski Club
- Batawa Ski Club
- Beaver Valley Ski Club
- Blue Mountain Racing Jozo Weider
- Brimacombe Ski Club
- Caledon Ski Club
- Chicopee Ski Club
- Craigleith Ski Club
- Devil's Glen Country Club
- Georgian Peaks Ski Club
- Glacier Ski Club
- Hockley Valley Resort
- London Ski Club
- Mansfield Ski Club
- Milton Heights Racing Club
- Muskoka Ski Club
- National Ski Academy
- North York Alpine Race Club
- Osler Bluff Ski Club
- Radius Ski Club
- Snow Valley Ski Club
- The Heights Ski & Country Club
- Toronto Ski Club

NOD - SKI CLUBS

- Adanac Ski Club
- Elliot Lake Ski Racers
- Elite Alpine Ski Cross North Bay
- North Bay Antoine Ski Racers Inc
- Searchmont Ski Runners
- Timmins Ski Club

NCD - SKI CLUBS

- Calabogie Ski Racing
- Camp Fortune Ski Club
- Ottawa Alpine Ski Sports

LSDA - SKI CLUB

- Nor'westers Alpine Ski Club
- Port Arthur Ski Club
- TBFast



**ALPINE
ONTARIO
ALPIN**

HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

Ontario is proud to have a talented group of athletes competing at skiing's highest level this season. Follow along, and let's rally behind them as they carry the Ontario flag on the world stage.



Dave Irwin

Loch Lomond Ski Area
1 WC DH Win, 2 WC Podiums
1976 & 80 Olympics



Kathy Kreiner

Timmins Ski Racers
1 WC Win, 7 WC Podiums
1972, 76 & 80 Olympics



Steve Podborski

Craigleith Ski Club
1st and only NA WC Season Title DH
8 WC DH WINS, 20 WC Podiums
1980 Olympics



Laurie Graham

Osler Bluff Ski Club
6 WC Victories
1980, 84, 88 Olympics



Todd Brooker

Toronto Ski Club
3 WC DH Wins, 7 WC Podiums
1984 Olympics



Kate Pace Lindsay

North Bay Ski Club
6 WC Podiums
1994, 98 Olympics



Brian Stemmler

Georgian Peaks Ski Club
3 WC Podiums
1992, 94, 98 Olympics



Larisa Yurkiw

Georgian Peaks Ski Club
4 WC Podiums



Kelly VanderBeek

Chicopee Ski Club
2 WC Podiums
2002, 06 Olympics



Erin Mielzinsky

Georgian Peaks Ski Club
1 WC Win, 2 WC Podiums



Mac Marcoux

Searchmont Ski Runners



Roni Remme

Alpine Ski Club



Kevin Drury

Georgian Peaks Ski Club
20 WC Podiums



Kris Mahler

Craigleith Ski Club
4 WC SX Podiums



Brian Rowland

Calabogie Peaks SC
1 WC Podium



Sierra Smith

2X Olympic Medalist
7 WC Podiums



**ALPINE
ONTARIO
ALPIN**

CURRENT EXCELLENCE

Ontario is proud to have a talented group of athletes competing at skiing's highest level this season.

Follow along, and let's rally behind them as they carry the Ontario flag on the world stage.



Ali Nullmeyer
Georgian Peaks Ski Club
@alinullmeyer



Katie Combaluzier
Craigleith Ski Club
@combokate



Kyle Blandford
Toronto Ski Club
@kyledblandford

James 'Jack' Crawford
Craigleith Ski Club
@james_a_crawford



Michaela Gosselin
Osler Bluff Ski Club
@michaelagosselin



James Budrow
Para Alpine Prospect
@james.nofoot





**ALPINE
ONTARIO
ALPIN**

RACING DISCIPLINES

Did you know that 55 Million people worldwide enjoy the sport of Alpine skiing?!

In Ontario, alpine racing includes three distinct streams:

- Traditional Alpine Ski Racing (able-bodied)
- Para-Alpine Ski Racing
- Ski Cross Racing (SX)



Alpine



Para Alpine



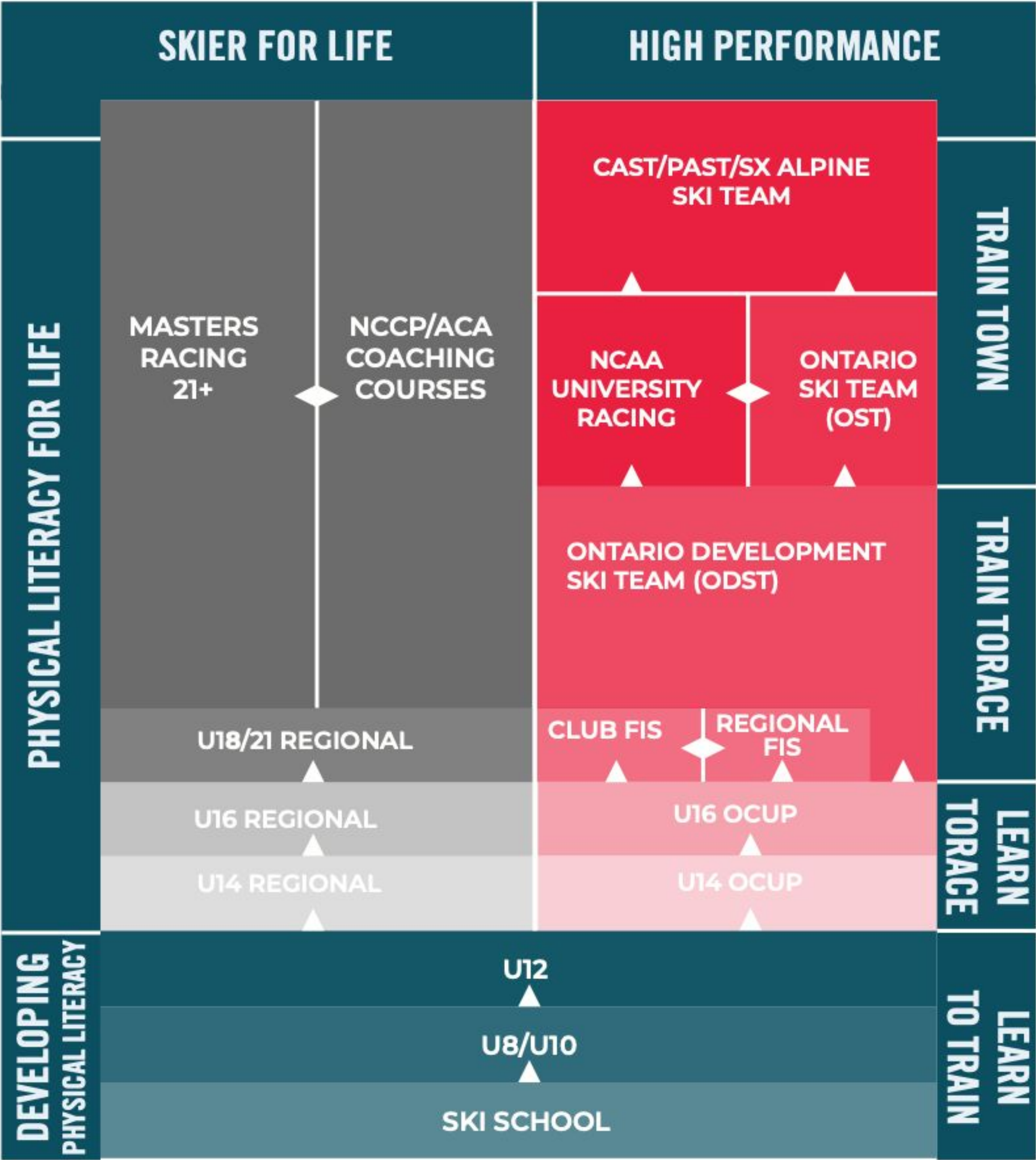
Ski Cross

ALPINE follows the defined sport rules as outlined by FIS. FIS oversees the FIS World Cup, the World Championships, and the Winter Olympics. Alpine competitive skiing is comprised of parallel slalom, slalom, giant slalom, super giant slalom, combined, and downhill. At most of the AOA ski clubs, racing is introduced at the U8 or U10 level once skiers have a strong foundation either from free-skiing or from ski school programs. For more information on ALPINE, please visit alpineontario.ca/alpine

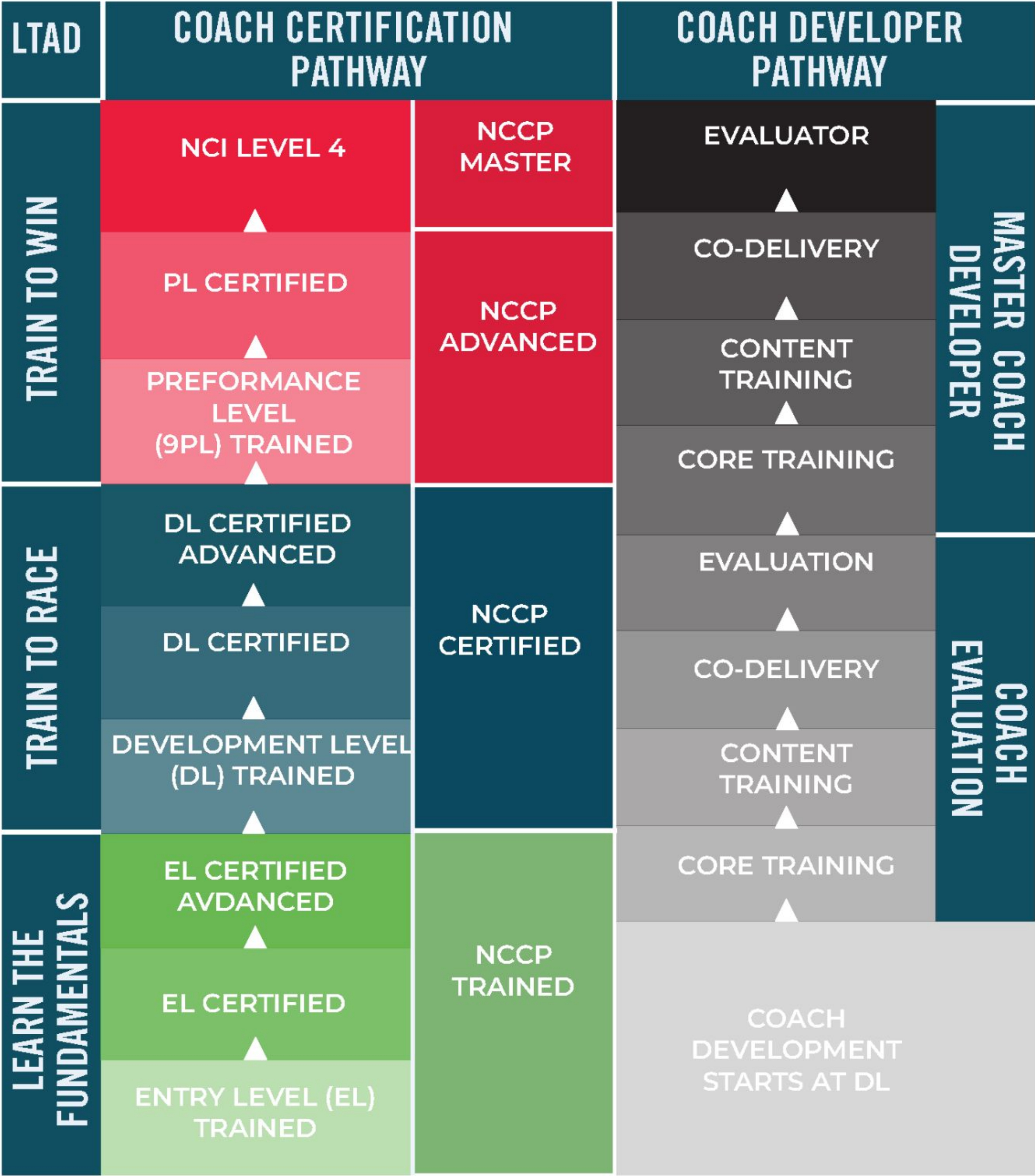
PARA-ALPINE skiing competition is open to athletes in Ontario with physical disabilities such as amputation, blindness/visual impairment, spinal cord injury/wheelchair-users and cerebral palsy/brain injury/stroke. Para-alpine athletes compete in the following disciplines: sit-ski, standing, blind/visually impaired in the following events downhill (DH), super-combined (SC), super giant slalom (SG), giant slalom (GS), slalom (SL), dual and team. For more information on PARA-ALPINE, please visit alpineontario.ca/para

SKI CROSS (SX) is a discipline of ACA nationally and FIS freestyle, internationally. Despite being a timed racing event, it is often considered part of freestyle skiing because it incorporates terrain features traditionally found in freestyle. Ski cross courses have both naturally occurring terrain, and artificial features including, big-air jumps and high-banked turns. What sets ski cross apart from other alpine skiing disciplines is that there's more than one skier racing down the course. Any intentional contact with other competitors leads to disqualification. For more information on SKI-CROSS, please visit alpineontario.ca/skicross

ALPINE - PARA - SKI CROSS - PATHWAYS



COACHING - PATHWAYS



PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

Aside from getting outside and exercising, parents love alpine ski racing as it teaches kids teamwork, social skills, responsibility, respect, leadership, and the joy of winning and losing.

The following pages will give you strategies to support your child, their coaches, the officials and yourself in order to build and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours on the slopes this winter. At AOA, we believe alpine racing is a great tool for developing confident, courageous, resilient and caring people.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD GAIN FROM ALPINE RACING?

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

- Improve the ABCs - agility, balance and coordination - develop fitness, strength and flexibility.
- Improve general health and weight management.
- Establish healthy behaviours that they will carry throughout their lives - sport and non-sport related.
- Develop FUNdamental movement skills.

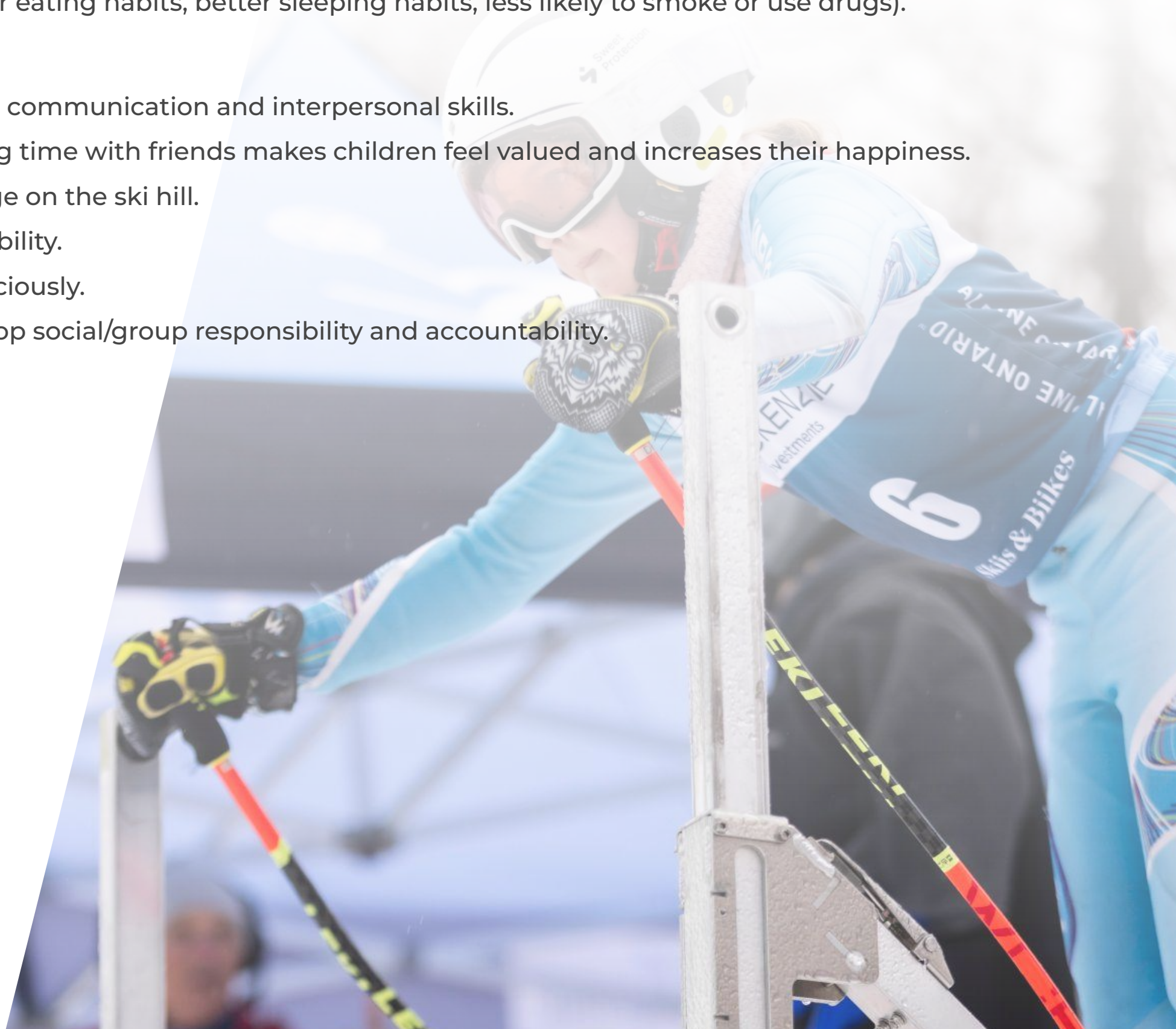
PERSONAL BENEFITS

- Have fun!! – this should be #1!!!
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Make friends with diverse backgrounds and skill levels.
- Improve ability to concentrate, facilitating better performance at school.
- Learn self-discipline, motivation, cooperation, commitment and personal responsibility.
- Learn how to deal with pressure and stress.
- Encourage healthy behaviours (i.e. better eating habits, better sleeping habits, less likely to smoke or use drugs).

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Development of leadership, co-operation, communication and interpersonal skills.

- Create long-lasting friendships; spending time with friends makes children feel valued and increases their happiness.
- Increase self-confidence by taking charge on the ski hill.
- Taking an interest in accepting responsibility.
- Learn how to accept defeat and win graciously.
- Determine how to take risks - and develop social/group responsibility and accountability.
- Promote sportsmanship.



HOW DO I BENEFIT

The alpine racing journey can be tremendously beneficial for parents including benefits such as: forming new friendships, a closer relationship with your kids and the joy of watching them grow by learning and failing.

PARENTS ALSO BENEFIT

You get to play a bigger role in your child's life by sharing more of their experiences.

- You can appreciate that your child is having fun, making friends, being active and healthy.
- You know where your children are- they are being supervised and having fun.
- You may be motivated to engage in a more active lifestyle and become an official or a coach, which leads to professional development and lifelong learning. By getting involved you can also help your child with the inevitable challenges, such as, pressure, insecurity, uncertainty and even fear this can be a very real aspect of the alpine racing experience and a very authentic part of the journey.

How you - as a parent - navigate these challenges will help define the kind of alpine experience your child will have.

PARENTS WHO VOLUNTEER HAVE MORE FUN!

When you volunteer, you often get the best place to watch a race! Get started by taking your Level I Officials Course! Ask your club or visit alpineontario.ca to sign up.

WHAT KIDS WANT FROM THEIR PARENTS

To support and encourage them.

- To let them know they are proud of them.
- To watch them play.
- To praise them for their efforts.
- To understand their sport and show an interest in being involved.
- To have realistic expectations of their capabilities.

WHY KIDS SKI RACE?

- To have FUN.
- To learn, be challenged and improve.
- To be with their friends.



PARENT INFO VIDEO SERIES

ALL VIDEOS AVAILABLE ON ALPINE ONTARIO YOUTUBE

ATHLETE PATHWAY Learn how to find a program that supports both athletes and parents, promotes well-rounded athleticism, and ensures a fun, positive experience for your child. Enjoy the journey of ski racing together. [LINK](#)

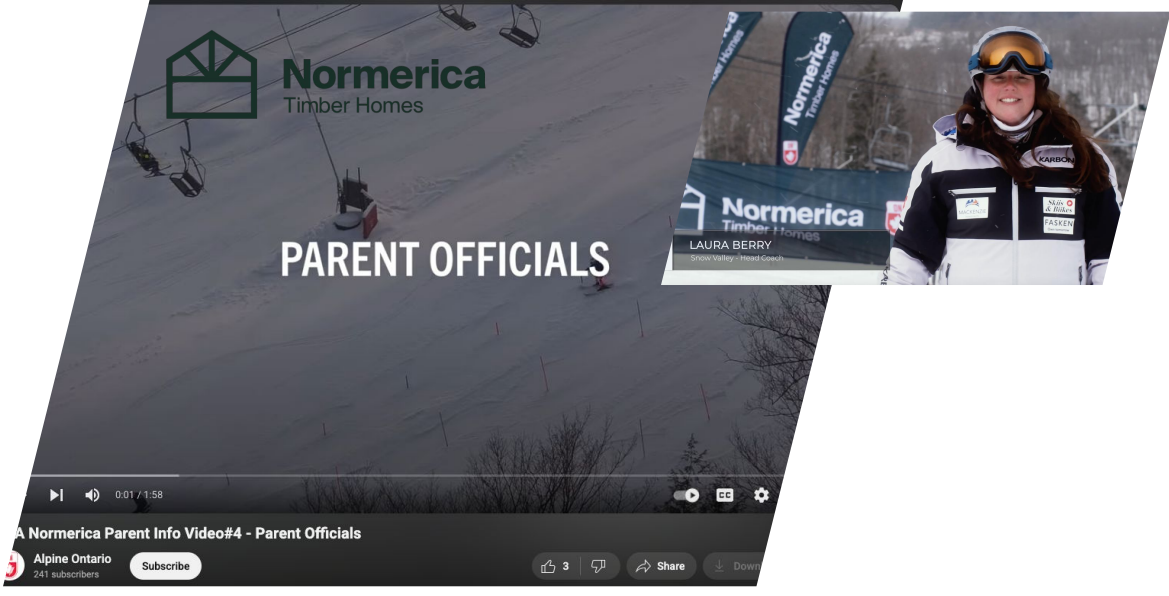
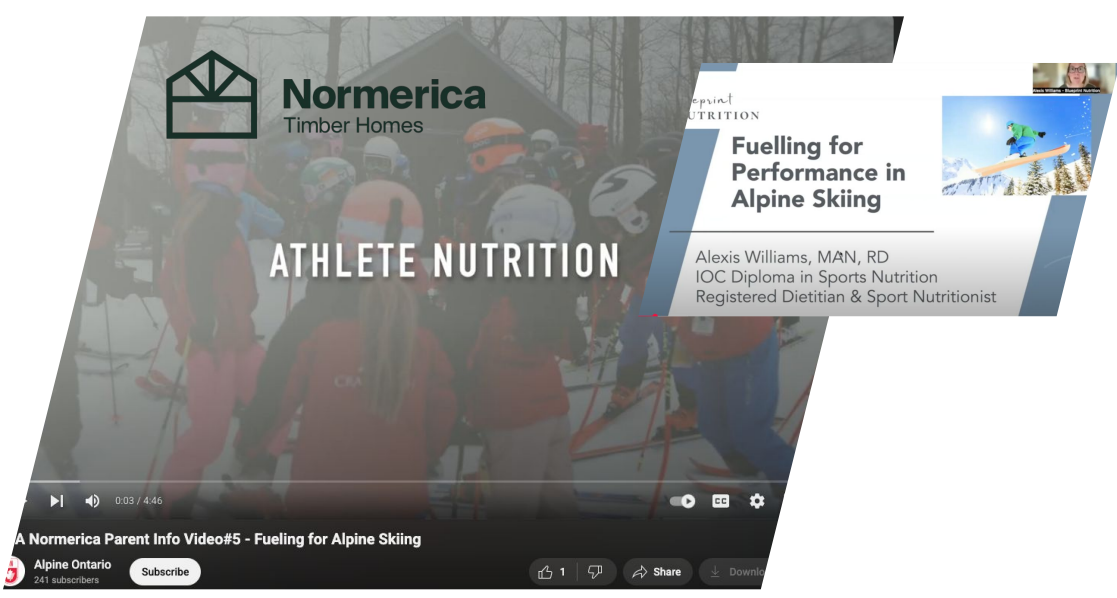
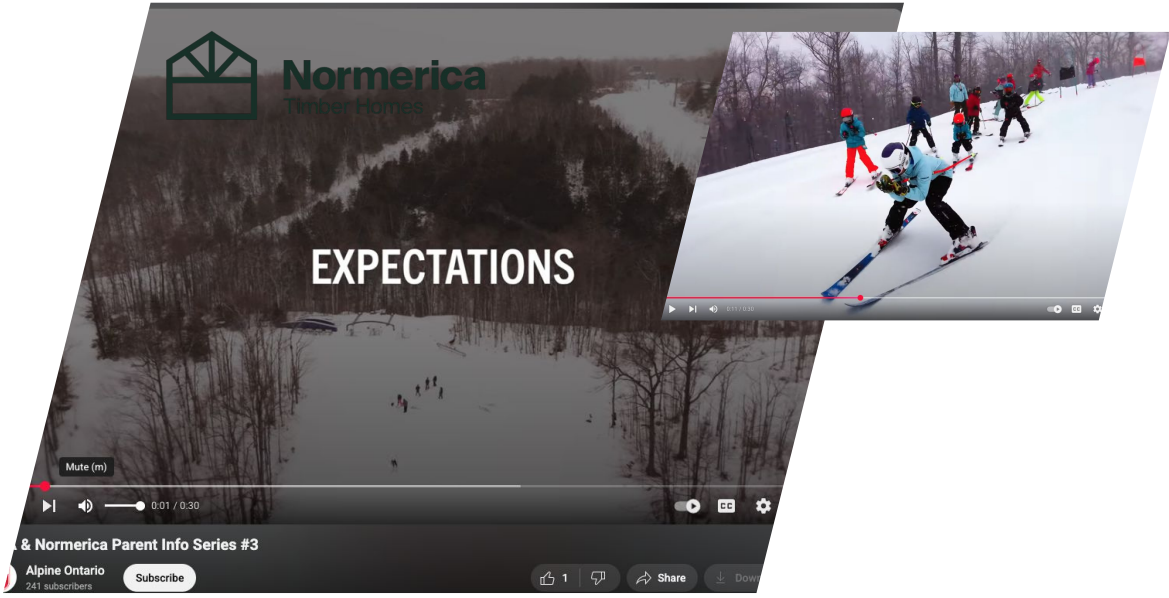
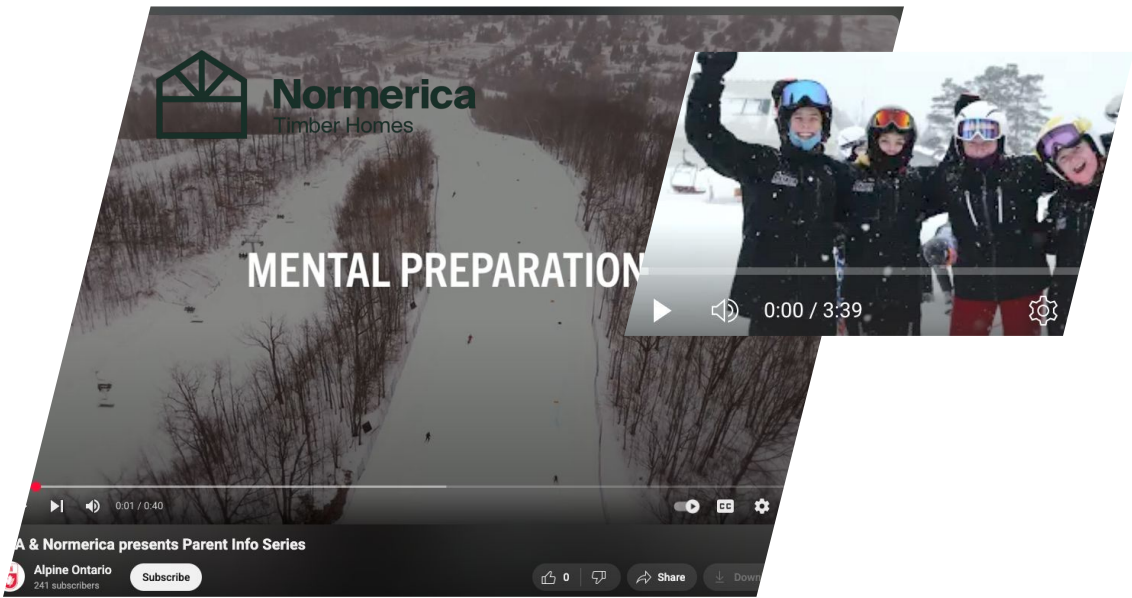
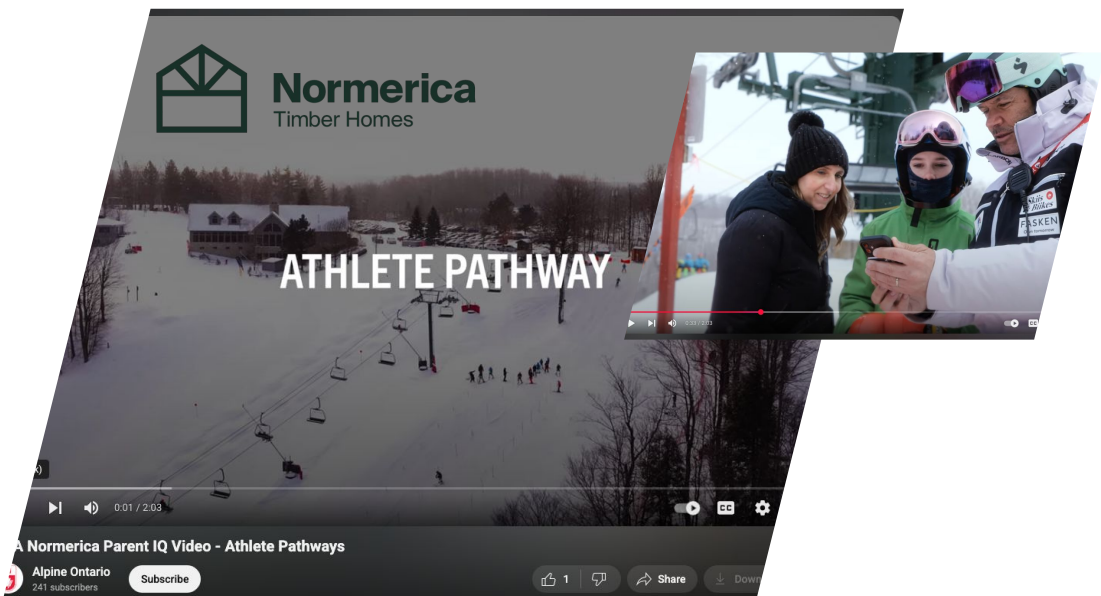
GROWTH MINDSET There are three key expectations for parents: ensuring the child's environment is both physically and emotionally safe, fostering fun through engagement and friendships in the sport, and emphasizing the importance of learning by doing as kids progress in their skills. [LINK](#)

MENTAL PREPARATION As parents, our role goes beyond just cheering from the sidelines. It's about providing the right support and guidance, especially on the drive home after a race or training day. Focus on three simple things. [LINK](#)

EXPECTATIONS As your children embark on their ski racing journey, for another year, there are numerous ways to support them along the way. Your active involvement at races can significantly boost confidence and morale, benefiting not only your child but the entire team. [LINK](#)

ATHLETE NUTRITION Sports Dietitian Alexis Williams from Blueprint Nutrition shares essential nutrition tips to fuel your alpine skiing training and performance. Learn how to balance your meals, choose the right snacks, and time your fueling for both moderate and intense training days. [LINK](#)

PARENT OFFICIALS Volunteering also offers parents a chance to be part of their child's race experience and deepen their understanding of the sport. Alpine Ontario provides flexible, online Level 1 officials training - Join the Alpine Ontario community —visit alpineontario.ca to learn more! [LINK](#)



WHAT KIDS DON'T WANT FROM THEIR PARENTS

- To raise your voice at them during or after the race, or on the car ride home.
- Swearing or disturbing at the races (including coming inside the start or finish huts).
- Abusing the officials, coach or other spectators. Being pushy and/or critical. Misplaced enthusiasm.
- Using guilt on your child.

ON THE CARE RIDE HOME...

Point out something good that your child did and good behaviour they exhibited in training or in the race. Avoid criticizing or correcting mistakes.

Ask questions like:

- Did you have fun?
- Did you give it your best effort?
- What did you learn from the training or race?
- What was your best moment, how did it make you feel?

YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

- Encouraging your child's participation - don't force it.
- Praising their efforts.
- Being proud of them.
- Children love to have adults at their races. If you can't be there, let them know why.
- Talking to your child about what they want from racing.
- Ensuring the first question you ask is NOT "did you win?" Instead ask, "did you have fun?"
- Volunteering to help with the program, team, races.
- Getting to know the coach and his/her coaching philosophy – be sure to ask if they don't tell you!
- Offering children support in different ways: Free ski with them if you can.
- Organize equipment with them and support the time it takes to tune skis as they get older.
- Encouraging your child to ski in their free time away from their ski clubs, or try a family ski vacation.
- Not using guilt on your child to make them "perform better" i.e. don't use guilt as a 'motivator'
- Not living your athletic dreams through your child.
- Not losing perspective, not every child will be an Olympian
- Talent doesn't guarantee a love of the sport.
- Watch your child to gauge what makes them happiest

WHY KIDS SKI RACE?

To have **FUN**. To learn, be **CHALLENGED** and **IMPROVE**. To be with their **FRIENDS**.

70%

of kids **QUIT SPORT** of kids **QUIT SPORT** by the age of 13 because they stop having fun!
The most common reason why -**PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR**

Source: Respect in Sport for Parent



5 THINGS TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT

1. Motivate them to TRY NEW things

Talk to your kids about the BENEFITS of ski racing, as well as, other sports. Help them see that playing a new sport can make them STRONGER and BETTER. Discuss how the skills they learn through sports can help them reach their GOALS in the future. Discuss with your child why they may be AFRAID to try a specific sport or activity.

2. Encourage Persistence

Remind them about the COMMITMENT they made to their sport, their coaches and their ski team. Discuss how PERSISTENCE leads to success. Discuss examples of FAMOUS athletes who have struggled or experienced failure.

3. Reframe Losing

Emphasize personal MASTERY and IMPROVEMENT. Teach your child to focus on the POSITIVE and celebrate improvement and progress. Help them REFLECT on what they/their team could do better next time. Point out how famous athletes RESPOND to losses. Help your child embrace the FUN of sports.

4. Reframe Winning

Emphasize their EFFORT, FOCUS and DISCIPLINE. Help them understand The connection between winning and their ACTIONS. If your child wins without effort, ensure that they always display good SPORTSMANSHIP to the losing team teach them to handle constructive criticism.

5. Teach Kids about Constructive Criticism

Teach your child to view criticism as a piece of ADVICE. Give your child the opportunity to SELF ASSESS by asking “Did it go how you expected it to go?” REMEMBER: Do not give constructive criticism to your child in front of others. Speak THOUGHTFULLY and GENTLY.



LET'S TALK SAFETY

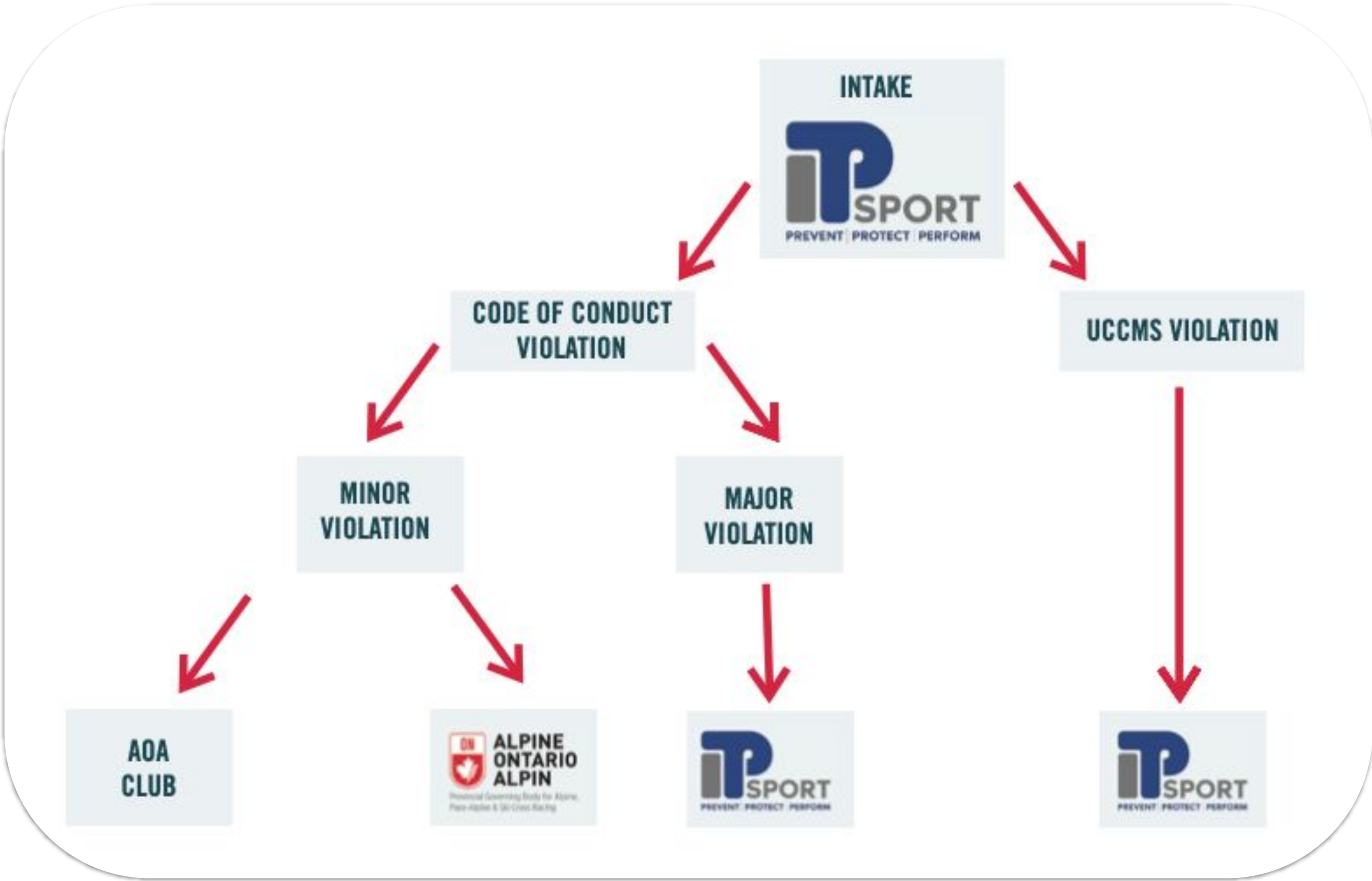
AOA is committed to its Core Values - Respect, Integrity, Passion, Accountability, Inclusivity and Safety.

Safety in particular is paramount to many of the AOA policies and procedures. AOA will continue to work closely with its governing body Alpine Canada to ensure athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers in our programs are safe.

Please refer to website <https://www.alpineontario.ca/safesport/>

AOA'S COMPLAINTS TRIAGE

All complaints should be directed to AOA's independent Third Party provider. When respondent is club member, and clubs has adequate discipline and complaint policy to manage.



ROWAN'S LAW

ROWAN STRINGER'S STORY

Ontario 

[NEW FOR 2026! Concussion Management Tracking Tool & Resources HERE](#)

 ROWAN'S
LAW DAY



- Ensure that athletes **UNDER 26 YEARS OF AGE,*** parents of athletes **UNDER 18,** **COACH,** team trainers and officials confirm every year that they have reviewed Ontario's **CONCUSSION AWARENESS RESOURCES**
- Establish a Concussion Code of Conduct that sets out rules of behaviour to **SUPPORT CONCUSSION PREVENTION**
- Establish a **REMOVAL-from-Sport** and **RETURN-to-Sport** protocol

Rowan's Law was named for Rowan Stringer, a high school rugby player from Ottawa, who died in the spring of 2013 from a condition known as second impact syndrome (swelling of the brain caused by a subsequent injury that occurred before a previous injury healed). Rowan is believed to have experienced three concussions over six days while playing rugby. She had a concussion but didn't know her brain needed time to heal. Neither did her parents, teachers or coaches. Ontario is a national leader in concussion management and prevention. Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 makes it mandatory for sports organizations to:

Special Rule: A sport organization that is a university, college of applied arts and technology or other post-secondary institution must not register any athlete regardless of age unless the same requirements are met.

The new rules requiring the review of Concussion Awareness Resources and Concussion Codes of Conduct came into effect on July 1, 2019. The rules for removal-from- sport and return-to-sport protocols came into effect on January 1, 2022.

Rowan's Law and Rowan's Law Day were established to honour her memory and bring awareness to concussions and concussion safety.

As of July 1st, 2019 all AOA members cannot complete their registration process without reviewing the AOA Concussion Protocol.

AOA is committed to following Rowan's Law. Visit <https://www.alpineontario.ca/safesport/>

Rowan's Law

**HIT.
STOP.
SIT.**
 **ROWAN'S
LAW**

Rowan's Law and Rowan's Law Day were established to honour her memory and bring awareness to concussions and concussion safety.



PARTNERSHIP WITH PARACHUTE

Aside from getting outside and exercising, parents love alpine ski racing as it teaches kids teamwork, social skills, responsibility, respect, leadership, and the joy of winning and losing.

The following pages will give you strategies to support your child, their coaches, the officials and yourself in order to build and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours on the slopes this winter. At AOA, we believe alpine racing is a great tool for developing confident, courageous, resilient and caring people.

Parachute’s Mission Statement

Creating a safer Canada by preventing serious and fatal injuries through evidence- based solutions that advocate and educate.

The following pages contain information to help coaches recognize a concussion, information on ‘return to sport’ post-concussion and information on the ConcussionEd Mobile APP. Please also visit AOA Resources/Policies for the most up-to-date Concussion protocols.



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way a child may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Your child does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Your child might experience one or more of the following. When watching for signs or symptoms of a potential concussion, consider how your child typically feels and behaves.

Cognitive (thinking)	Physical	Emotional/ behavioural
• Does not know time, date, place, details about a recent activity • Difficulty remembering things that happened before and after the injury • Difficulty concentrating • Not thinking clearly • Feeling like “in a fog”	• Headache or head pressure • Dizziness • Stomachache, nausea, vomiting • Blank or vacant stare • Blurred or fuzzy vision • Sensitive to light or sound • Sees stars, flashing lights • Ringing in the ears • Problems with balance or co-ordination • Feels tired or no energy • “Don’t feel right”	• Nervousness or anxiety • Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e., laughing, crying, getting mad easily) • Slow to answer questions or follow directions • Easily distracted • Not participating well • Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping more or less than usual)

It is more difficult for infants, toddlers and preschoolers to communicate how they are feeling. If you have a young child, you might notice any of the following: crying more than usual; unsteady walking; lack of interest in favourite toys; changes in nursing, eating or sleeping patterns; or loss of new skills, such as toilet training.

Get medical help immediately if your child has any “red flag” symptoms such as neck pain, repeated vomiting, growing confusion, seizures, and weakness or tingling in their arms or legs. These may be signs of a more serious injury.



PARACHUTE CONCUSSION

Concussion guide for parents and caregivers



What causes a concussion?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head, may cause a concussion (e.g., a ball to the head, colliding with another person).

What should I do if I suspect my child has a concussion?

In all suspected cases of concussion, your child should stop the activity right away. Continuing increases their risk of more severe, longer-lasting concussion symptoms, as well as increases their risk of other injury.

The Concussion Recognition Tool 6 (CRT6) can be used by anyone to help recognize the signs and symptoms of a possible concussion.

Your child should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible.

If your child loses consciousness, call an ambulance to take them to the hospital right away. Do not move your child or remove any equipment such as a helmet.

Your child should not return to play the same day.

How long before my child gets better?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion often last for up to four weeks but may last longer. In some cases, children may take many weeks or months to heal. If your child has had a concussion before, they may take longer to heal.

If your child's symptoms are not improving or last longer than four weeks, they should be referred to a licensed healthcare professional who is an expert in the management of concussion.

How is concussion treated?

For the first 24 to 48 hours after the injury, your child can do activities of daily living, such as moving around the home, bathing, light walking and social

interactions at home. For the first 48 hours, they should spend less time with screens, such as phones, TVs and computers. Then, school and sport activities can be introduced and increased gradually.

As your child is returning to activities, their symptoms may feel a little worse. This is common and OK as long as it is mild and brief. "Brief" means their symptoms should settle back down within an hour. If activities make their symptoms worsen more than this, they should take a break and adapt activities.

Recovering from concussion is a process that takes patience. If your child goes back to activities before they are ready, it is likely to make their symptoms worse, and their recovery might take longer.

When should my child go to the doctor?

Anyone with a possible head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible. If your child is diagnosed with a concussion, the doctor should schedule a follow-up visit within the next one to two weeks.

Take your child back to the doctor immediately if, after being told they have a concussion, they have worsening symptoms, such as:

- being more confused
- headache that is getting worse
- vomiting more than twice
- not waking up
- having any trouble walking
- having a seizure
- strange behaviour

When can my child return to school?

A child with a concussion may miss one or more days of school. Generally, more than one week of complete absence from the school environment is not recommended. Medical clearance is not required to return to school.

Your child may find it hard to concentrate in class, get a worse headache or feel sick to their

PARACHUTE CONCUSSION

Concussion guide for parents and caregivers



stomach. They may need to begin with partial days at school and may need accommodations to help them tolerate their workload and the school environment. Examples include access to breaks, extra time to complete work, permission to wear sunglasses in class or a quiet place to eat lunch.

Each concussion is unique, so your child may progress at a different rate than others. They should not be rushed through their return to activities. At the same time, if your child can tolerate being at school, they should not be restricted from attending.

The Return-to-School Strategy provides information on the stages of returning to the classroom. **Return to school should be completed before your child seeks medical clearance for full return to unrestricted sport activities.**

When can my child return to sport and physical activity?

Return to sport and physical activity must follow a step-wise approach.

In this approach:

- Each stage is at least 24 hours.
- Your child moves on to the next stage when they can tolerate activities.
- If any of your child's symptoms worsen more than mildly and briefly, they should stop and try again the next day at the same step.

Step 1: Activities of daily living and relative rest (first 24 to 48 hours). Your child can start with daily living activities such as moving around the house, light walking and social interactions (e.g., talking with friends or family). Minimize screen time.

Step 2: Light to moderate effort aerobic exercise

2A: Start with light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling at a slow to medium pace. May begin light resistance training that does not result in more than mild and brief worsening of symptoms.

2B: Gradually increase the intensity of aerobic exercise to moderate effort, such as stationary cycling or walking at a brisk pace. Moderate effort means the activity may cause faster breathing and heart rate, but not enough to prevent you from being able to talk comfortably.

Step 3: Individual sport-specific activities, without risk of inadvertent head impact. Add sport-specific activities, such as running, skating or throwing drills, that can be done individually (away from other participants) in a low-risk environment. Activities should be supervised by a coach, trainer, teacher or parent/caregiver. Continue progressing at this step until symptom-free, even when exercising.

Medical clearance is required before step 4.

Step 4: Training drills and activities with no contact (e.g., no checking, no heading the ball). Progress to usual intensity exercise and add in more challenging drills such as passing drills. Participate in multi-athlete training (if applicable) and non-contact practices.

Step 5: Return to non-competitive activities, full-contact practice and physical education activities. Progress to typical physical activities, except for competitive gameplay. Restore confidence and skills.

Step 6: Return to sport and physical activity without restriction.

Your child should not return to activities with risk of contact until cleared by a doctor!

Returning too soon before full recovery from concussion puts your child at higher risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be more severe and last longer.

Additional resources

Scan the QR code or visit parachute.ca/concussion



HOW DO I STAY INFORMED?

This handbook is just a starting point to a sport that is both complex and ever-evolving. we suggest parents become familiar with the following communication tools:

1 – THE AOA WEBSITE – www.alpineontario.ca

- Find programs details under "ATHLETE"
- Find events listed on the "CALENDAR"

2 – RACELINE is the official AOA e-newsletter sent out year round. It includes need-to-know information plus additional tips on how to be a great SPORT PARENT. The learning in sport never stops so please continue to stay engaged to help your children succeed on and off snow! Subscribe at alpineontario.ca

3 – SOCIAL MEDIA

We love our social media at AOA! Find us, like us, share us and comment!



@alpineontario



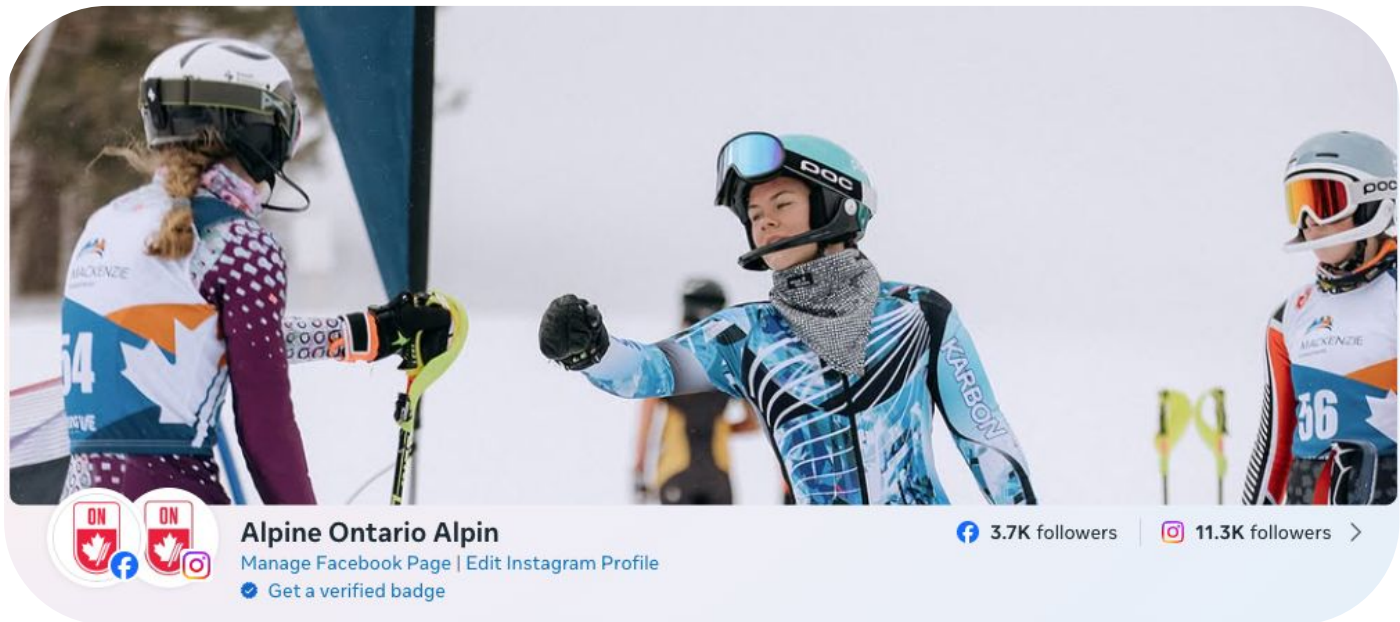
@alpineontario



[Facebook.com/alpineontarioalpin](https://www.facebook.com/alpineontarioalpin)



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/alpine-ontario-alpin/>



4 – ASK FOR HELP!



Please call or email us



705-444-5111

memberservices@alpineontario.ca



2026_27 IMPORTANT DATES



FALL

Fall testing is mandatory if your child wishes to race in the U14/U16 OCUP series. Please ask your coaches for more information. RACE SCHEDULES are finalized and posted on each Division website. Ontario Ski Team (OST) and Ont. Para Alpine Ski Team (OPAST) official team announcement.

WINTER

Many clubs hold pre-season camps - typically in Quebec, Alberta or B.C. Check with your local club for details about Fall camps Racing begins! Race programs typically start across Ontario by the end of December. AOA 2027-28 High- Performance Program criteria/details (U16ADP, ODST, OST, Para) released.



FEBRUARY

AOA Ontario Ski Racing Awards (OSRA) nomination process opens

MARCH

- OCUP Finals U16 Mar 10-15 Thunder Bay
- OCUP Finals U14 Mar 17-20 Alpine, Georgian Peaks & Osler Bluff
- U16 Eastern Regional Finals Mar 20-24 Stoneham, QUE
- U14 CANAMS Mar 30-Apr 3 Sugarloaf, Maine, USA
- World Cup Ski Cross Mar 19-22 Craigleith
- AOA SX Provincials Mar TBA



APRIL

- U14 & U16 Whistler Cup April 9-12
- Spring Fitness Testing (check with your Division/Club).
- Invitational Ontario Ski Team and Ontario Development Ski Team spring on-snow training camp U16 High Performance Program application opens.

MAY

Spring Fitness Testing (check with your Division/Club). Ontario Ski Team & Ontario Development Ski Team selections, dryland program starts CSIO.

JUNE/JULY/AUGUST/SEPT Ontario Ski Team will be on snow 2-3 times during these months. U16ADP, program starts with dryland plan followed by two summer/fall ski camps. Visit www.alpineontario.ca/calendar for AOA events and summer camp opportunities.



QUOTES FROM PARENTS

Hard work

"The time management skills that kids develop and use in order to maintain an academic average is a very valuable tool. Linking hard work with training and skill set development again is a transferable skill. 99% of the work is outside the 'race'."

// Letting go...

This is not really specific to ski racing, though the sport offers parents some great opportunities to learn how. It starts with letting them learn to wax their own skis (even though it involves hot sharp things and makes the worst mess), take responsibility for their gear (and learn to problem solve when they forget their shin guards at home). Stand back and outside of the finish when they race- if they have a good run, wait for them to come to you to say congrats. If they have a bad run- let them work it out with the support of their coach and their fellow racers. Stay quiet in the car after the race and let them initiate the conversation about the day. Don't take any of it personally (even though you are the #1 sponsor, have stood in sub-zero temperatures for hours and have driven through a snowstorm to get there). It's hard, but it's where they grow from sport and learn the most about themselves- which is the whole point. //

// Be patient...

Size does matter in the developing U14 and U16 ages. Smaller athletes tend to not succeed in competition as much but have some great skills that they do not get rewarded with. Stay patient as your time will come. Eventually all kids grow and mature and the athletes that have fought through the hard times often come out on top of the early developers. Most challenging part is reminding children to stick with the process.

Knowing what to say...

"I find it really hard to know the right thing to say/do when things are not going well - too often athletes' self-esteem and confidence is directly related to their outcomes and when things don't go well - it's hard."

Keep busy...

"It's important to keep other things in their life that make them happy and maintain balance."

It's a community...

"An amazing community of coaches, mentors & friends and a determination and work ethic that they will take forward with them in everything that they do."

Friends...

"Ski racing is a great camaraderie for both the kids up in the starting pen and the parents at the bottom - each group sharing the ups and downs together."

It's a journey...

"I didn't realize my daughter felt that as parents, we were only happy when she won or got hardware. Of course we were happy for her achievements but now we are more cognizant of the progressions she makes as she moves along on in her OCUP career. It's important to recognize 'improvement' over 'podiums'."

// Memories and friendships will last a lifetime...

The smiles both on and off of the hill are priceless. The networking of us all on race day as we are sitting in different cities across Ontario, and sometimes the country, on live timing is amazing." "Friends from all across the escarpment and provinces. Competitive with each other on the race hill but then linked arms and hugs afterwards! //

QUESTIONS

GENERAL INQUIRIES

Alpine Ontario Alpin

Phone : (705) 444-5111
Email : memberservices@alpineontario.ca

PATRICK BIGGS

Executive Director
Tel (437) 245-6217
E-mail: pbiggs@alpineontario.ca
Contact for Board of Directors, leadership of AOA, strategic vision

MARIA BURTON

Director Partnerships & Marketing
Tel (705) 539 0679
E-mail: mburton@alpineontario.ca
or communications@alpineontario.ca
Contact for Partnerships, Marketing & Communication

SUKI CHAPMAN

Programs & Membership Manager
Tel (705) 444-5111 ext 206
E-mail: memberservices@alpineontario.ca
Contact for program or registration questions

SARAH EDWARDS

Manager, Coach Education & Delivery
E-mail: sedwards@alpineontario.ca
Contact for inquiries related to coach education for Entry Level or Development and Performance Level

LARISSA PITCHER

Accounting Manager
Tel (705) 444-5111 ext 206
E-mail: accounting@alpineontario.ca
Contact for budget, accounting, invoices, payments, human resources or office management

TORI JOHNSTON

Competitions & Programs Manager
Tel (705) 444-5111
E-mail: tjohnston@alpineontario.ca
Contact for coordination, logistics and programming for AOA programs and competitions

JOEY LAVIGNE

High Performance Director
Tel (705) 444-5111
E-mail: jlavigne@alpineontario.ca
Contact for High Performance plan and/or staff. Oversees OST, SOD Ski Team, U16 ADP and Para-Alpine development

JACQUES REID

Coach Development Manager
E-mail: jski@alpineontario.ca
Phone: (705) 888-5544
Contact for coach education courses and initiatives.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

PREMIER PARTNERS



PLATINUM PARTNERS



PROUD PARTNERS



PARENT HANDBOOK