U9 Year End Report

The U9 age group experienced significant growth this year, expanding from eight teams to ten. This broke down as the following:

- 146 players
- 7 minor teams, 14 -15 players per team
- 3 major teams, 14 players per team

Successes:

The focus at U9 is fun and development. Our association made a significant investment in player development this past year by providing the opportunity for each player to access one development session per week, in addition to the regular scheduled practice and game, for the entire season.

Challenges:

There were two primary challenges within the U9 age group:

1. The lack of consistency across associations in following the PCAHA guidelines for U9 hockey, including:
    a. Number of minor/major teams
    b. In-game guidelines (two-minute timer, penalties, etc)
2. The ongoing challenge of how to engage and develop players when there is a large spread of abilities due to a player's exposure to the game and their own development.

Opportunities:

To better serve the U9 players, I think there is an opportunity for two feedback surveys this coming year:

1. The assessment process (mid-November). This coming season will be the second year with the U7/U9 policy in place through assessments and team formation, as such it is a good opportunity to gather feedback from coaches and parents to see if the policy needs further refinement.
2. Player experience (end of season). Questions could include tournament participation, value of team fees, development sessions, association communication, etc.