

# Sky Kid's Instruction Manual

Thank you for having your kids in our program and being willing to teach!!! It's a good idea for instructors to carry some tissues, snacks, or stickers for rewards. Kids should always make a potty stop before leaving the lodge (hopefully parents will have this taken care of this before lessons start!). Kids usually respond best to being shown rather than being told. Use more demonstrations with "Follow me and do what I do" requests. Fewer words and more action keep the kids interested and moving.

Explanation of level requirements to pass:

## **Level I:**

Key skill is balance here by learning a balanced, athletic stance

Walk on skis, side step up

French fries straight run (skis parallel)

Pizza straight run and stop (skis in a wedge)

Turn left and right

*Moving around, gliding being able to stop on skis without falling and starting turns is what we are looking for.*

## **Level II:** Rope tow

Turning to a stop (j turn) is a key skill: it helps the kids feel that they can stop by just turning and give them a way to control where they are going and at what speed.

Skis stay in a pizza throughout the turns. Make small turns where it's not too steep, big turns where it is steeper. Make as many turns as you can. Turn to a stop. (2P are the kids that are almost ready for the poma lift (Rocco) and just need a little more time using turn shape for speed control – A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level).

*Comfortable linked turns is what we are looking for.*

## **Level III:** poma lift - Rocco (3 hill)

Sideslip is the skill that should be introduced at this level. It gives the kids another way to control their speed.

Wedge Christie: turns have a smaller pizza at the beginning and the skis are parallel (french fries) at the end, with a little skid before the next turn. Extension at the beginning of the turn when opening the skis into a pizza will make it easier. (3P can go on chair lift so we want to make sure that they are making turns correctly at this point to pass level - A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level)

*Linked wedge christie turns (ideally with extension at the beginning of the turn) is what we are looking for.*

## **Level III P:** Chair Lift (Chicken Shoot and back trail)

This is basically the same as a Level 3 **BUT** you need to be able to ski the "Chicken Shoot" and know chair lift safety. A Certified Instructor has to pass you to this level.

**Level IV:** Chair Lift (4 Hill)

Level 4 is the same as 3 only performed on the 4 hill. A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

**Level IV P:** Chair Lift (4 Hill) Introduction of Poles!

Performed on the 4 hill, learning how to use your poles. A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

**Level V:** Chair Lift (5 Hill) Pole Touch Turns

Level 5 the kids start learning pole touches during turns! A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

**Level VI:** Chair Lift (6 Hill)

Level 6 is on the 6 hill no wedge, parallel skidded turns with speed control. Some of our SkyKids will reach these levels!! A Certified Instructor needs to pass you to this level.

**SkyKids Playground:**

The central idea is to create an area for the SkyKids that is their own, where they can discover the fun of skiing. While playing, they will be able to develop the skills they need to enjoy the sport. They will learn to balance on skis, walk up the hill, side step up the hill, side slipping down. They will learn flexion (crouching down), extension (pulling their body up). These are the things you do when you ski, sometimes in a very unconscious way. These help you negotiate your way down safely, sideslip, traverse, and skid to control your speed, flex and extend to manage the forces in the turn. With these they will be able to go take the ski lifts and explore more of the mountain.

We will start with a basic layout and basic skills that will allow them to get to their first turns, control their speed and where they want to go.

## Ideas for the instructors to teach the kids.

### Walking on skis:

We want to create success by starting with actions the kids can already do. Working from the known to the unknown creates instant winners. Walk in ski boots - When ready: add one ski, walk around. Then switch sides and repeat the process. Once confident, put both skis on and “slide” around and work on balancing.

Have the kids draw shapes in the snow.



Have them draw flowers by walking with the skis pointed outside. Don't forget the stalk!

### Sliding:

Have the kids slide straight towards an instructor helper and give them a high five. Ask them...How far can you slide on two skis? On one ski? That's the fun of it, let them experience it.

### Turns:

Tell the kids to look for squirrels, leprechauns, fairies, bunnies etc... in the trees on the side of the hill/trail... they will turn the direction they are looking. If it's a foggy day, you can turn on your headlights on your boots and search right and left...“flashlights on knees monsters in trees”. The kids will follow you, have them play follow the leader you can make airplane arms, or pretend to be a bus driver, these things prepare their arms for poles. Children this age tend to keep their arms close to their bodies so we need to encourage them to put their arms out. You can have them pretend to catch a ball (some of the kids might not know their right and left but you can tell them!).

Ask the kids what their favorite movie is... play on the character theme. For example: At the beginning of the turn Spiderman can get tall and shoot spider webs from their hands in the direction of the turn. Or the Fairy Godmother can use her magic wand to do the same. You can tell the kids that they have head lights or laser beams on their knees that they need to shoot at the tree or you or whatever is in the direction you want them to turn.

Ask the kids if they feel how you slow down by turning. "Hey we are not moving anymore...we stopped!"

Side slipping: spread the icing. Have the instructor stand slightly below and behind the skier. Have him or her pick up the snow and throw it on the path of the skier so it doesn't look so smooth...the kids then need to smooth it out.

You want them to learn two key points: control their speed and direction = turns and stay safe. Turns to a stop (a J turn) will allow them to control their speed, so will side slipping. They can sideslip their way out of a steeper section, gain control and confidence.

**There should be no pressure, just encouragement, to move on. Always keep the kids excited and engaged in the lesson and take breaks when needed. If the child is struggling or frustrated, try a different task or approach to that task. By learning to link one success to the next, you should be able to gently push them to the next necessary step in the progression.**