

## Capitals Host Extreme Recess

The Capitals teamed with Dreams for Kids to give disabled youth a chance to experience hockey with the Caps.

By [Chris Walters](#) | [Email the author](#) | February 12, 2011



Matt Bradley takes a kid for a spin Credit [Chris Walters](#)  
Photos (38)

disabled youth charged out onto the ice of the Capitals' practice facility at the Kettler Iceplex to take part in what Dreams for Kids calls an Extreme Recess. Dreams for Kids started in Chicago in 1989 as an organization to help disabled youth find greater experiences. The organization is primarily run by volunteers, and more than 70 young adult volunteers were on hand to assist the kids. Andrew Horn, East Coast executive director for Dreams for Kids, calls the Extreme Recess program a “platform to engage isolated young people.”

Disabled children are often not given opportunities to show what they can do in sports, and Dreams for Kids aims to “show people what is possible.” Friday's event was the first partnering with the Capitals, but similar events have taken place in Chicago with the Blackhawks. Horn said that the Caps were very helpful and supportive and that they want to raise awareness for children with disabilities. The Caps donated the ice time and lunch to make this event possible.

The children were divided into three main groups—a sled group, primarily for kids with physical disabilities, and two special groups for kids with cognitive or other disabilities who were either beginning skaters or more advanced skaters. Caps forwards Matt Bradley and David Steckel, defenseman Tom Poti and coach Bruce Boudreau were on the ice, teaching skills, posing for pictures and signing autographs. Also present were players and coaches from NOVA Cool Cats, a local hockey team for disabled youth.

Ashley, 5, was there with other kids from her school, the Minds in Motion Academy, on a field trip. Ashley is autistic and wasn't willing to talk, but her mother said that she was very excited and she certainly had a big smile later as she was skating around the rink. Keziah, 8, was on skates for the first time in his life. He had started the day on a sled, but wanted to try skates and

really liked it. His father said that he will take Keziah to a nearby hockey team for try-outs. Keziah was all smiles and talked about keeping both hands on the stick before he hustled off for pizza.

Bradley said that it was fun being out on the ice with the kids, especially seeing the faces of kids who were out on the ice for the very first time in their lives. Boudreau said that an event like this means a lot to kids, as well as the players. For the players, it is not only a chance to do something good, but it really puts life in perspective, as well.

For more on Dreams for Kids see:

<http://dreamsforkids.org/>