

# PREPARING FOR ENTRY-LEVEL COMPETITION

As your young skaters progress, their coach will discuss the right time to start entering competitions. There are competitive opportunities almost every weekend across the nation offering a full range of figure skating events, including all levels and age groups, from the grassroots to the senior level in varying disciplines.

When registering your child for a competition, take a moment to look at the event announcement and explore all of the events offered. Skaters can enter multiple events to make the weekend and the dollars spent more worthwhile. Typical events include free skate levels, compulsory moves, showcase events, solo dance events and more. The competition announcement breaks down each event with program length guidelines and required elements.

When you, your skater and the coach have decided on which events to enter, you will register your child based on the competition's instructions. Application deadlines are strict, so be sure to enter early. Tentative event schedules are sent out to competitors about two weeks prior to the event.

## PREPARATION

Preparation for the competition is mostly up to the skater and coach. They need to make sure the program is at the right time length and contains the correct elements. Running a program in practice is important as well, because any time a skater performs in front of a panel of judges and an audience, nerves are bound to interfere.

With proper preparation and confidence, a good result is bound to happen. Regardless of final placements, skaters need to feel that they skated their best and gave 100 percent.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARRIVE

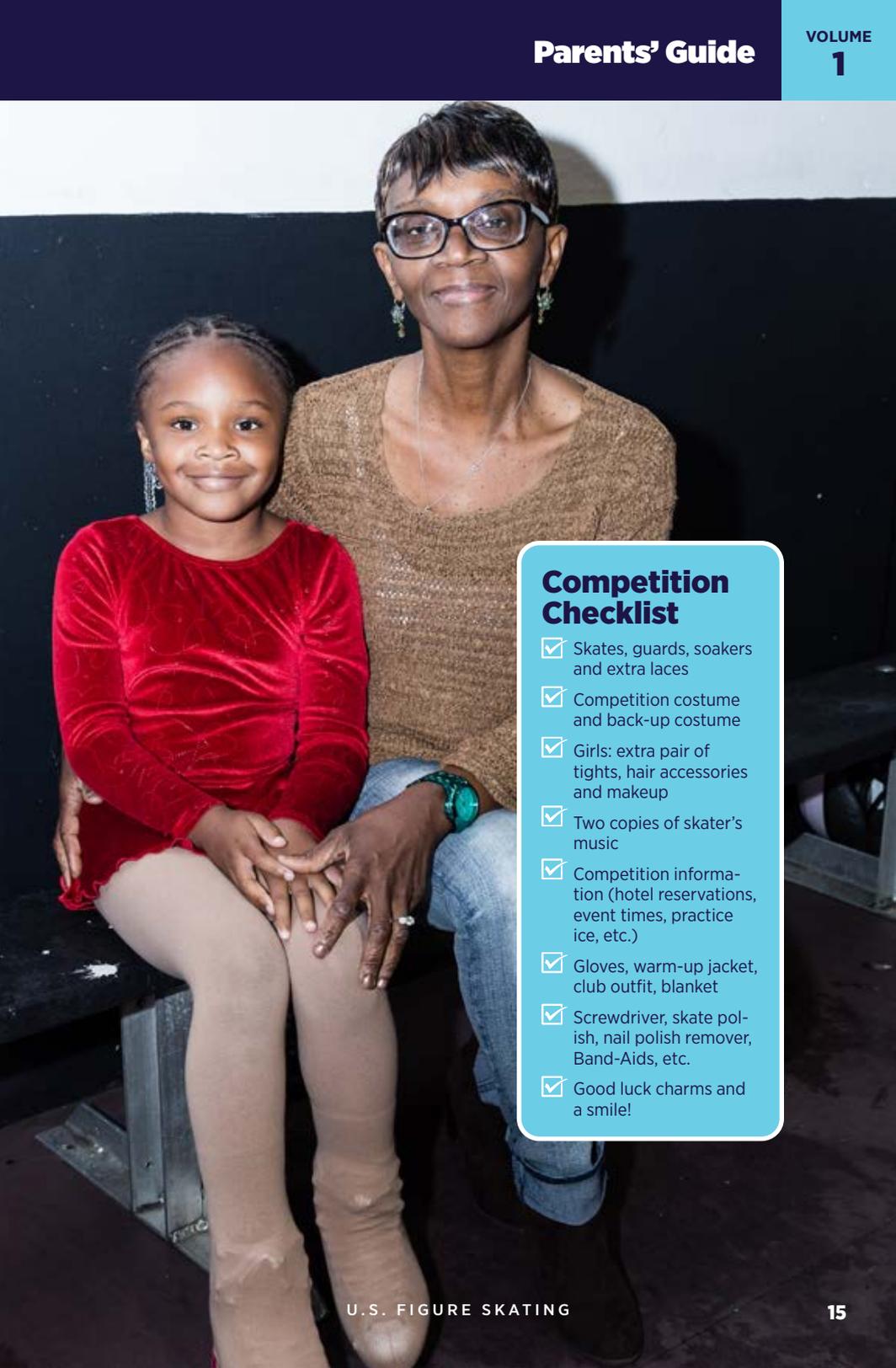
Plan to arrive at least one hour before your skater's scheduled event, especially because events sometimes run early. This will give you time to check in, turn in a copy of the music, and let the coach know you've arrived. Skaters should be fully dressed in costume and ready to warm up off the ice at least 30 minutes prior to taking the ice.

While your skater is preparing to take the ice, find a seat in the stands to cheer on your child. After skates are on and the skater is checked in, it's the coach's job to put the skater on the ice and calm any nerves from that point on.

## POST-PERFORMANCE

After competing, your child's coach will give feedback on the performance and a game plan post-competition. Meanwhile, the accountant will tally the judges' scores, and the final standings will be posted in a designated area.

Awards typically happen shortly after the event, so keep your child in costume. Congratulate the winner and others for good efforts, and encourage your child to do the same. There is only one winner per event, and everyone will have their good days and could-be-better days. Always be proud of your skater's performance and learn from each experience.



## Competition Checklist

- Skates, guards, soakers and extra laces
- Competition costume and back-up costume
- Girls: extra pair of tights, hair accessories and makeup
- Two copies of skater's music
- Competition information (hotel reservations, event times, practice ice, etc.)
- Gloves, warm-up jacket, club outfit, blanket
- Screwdriver, skate polish, nail polish remover, Band-Aids, etc.
- Good luck charms and a smile!