



Windsor Minor Hockey Association

WINDSOR MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION HARASSMENT AND ABUSE POLICY

The WMHA is a youth orientated hockey program dedicated to providing an organized environment to the residents of the Windsor area.

The WMHA must endeavour to provide a sports environment free from all forms of harassment and abuse. Our members will be treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate in a program that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discrimination.

By providing a harassment free environment, we will promote the growth of volunteerism and the development of our players. We are committed to the education of all our members so they can understand the harm, both physical and emotional, that can take place in an environment where harassment is allowed.

Each member of the WMHA will be aware of their responsibilities in eliminating harassment and abuse from our association. There will be zero tolerance for all forms of harassment.

When it does occur, it will be dealt with swiftly and fairly, taking the utmost care to protect the privacy of everyone involved in the incident. Together, we can make this possible, our members deserve no less.

PLAYERS

The players are our most important members. From their earliest involvement to the time they leave us, their growth as hockey players and young adults depends on our commitment to provide them with a harassment free environment in which to develop these skills. Their wellbeing must be protected not only in the arenas but whenever they are involved in WMHA sanctioned activities. We are legally and morally bound to protect them from all forms of harassment. Sports are meant to be a time to develop not only hockey skills, but also life skills.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers by definition are the backbone of our association. We depend on their dedication and unique skills and talents to fill the different positions needed to provide a hockey program. Volunteers run the WMHA. Their willingness to spend long hours away from their own families, providing opportunities for the sons and daughters of our members are at times under appreciated. All members of the WMHA owe these people a vote of confidence, our respect and our thanks. For these reasons and many others, we must provide rules, guidelines and a risk free environment allowing them to

continue providing the leadership that makes the WMHA successful.

PARENTS

Parents are also stakeholders in the Harassment and Abuse Policy. They must feel comfortable with our efforts to provide their sons and daughters with a safe and harassment free environment to play hockey. They must know we are doing everything possible to protect their children.

Parents must know our policy and their part in making the policy successful. The safety of their children should be their primary concern, wins and losses must take second place to safety.

CHILD ABUSE DEFINED

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional and/or sexual mistreatment or lack of care, which causes physical injury or emotional damage to a child. A common characteristic of all forms of abuse against children and youth is an abuse of power or authority and/or breach of trust.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child's self esteem; it is psychologically destructive behaviour by a person in a position of power, authority or trust. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing or ignoring the child's needs.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is when a person in a position of power or trust purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or youth. This may take the form of slapping, hitting, shaking, kicking, pulling the hair or ears, throwing, shoving, grabbing, hazing or excessive exercise as a form of punishment.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is when a young person is used by an older child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification. There are two categories:

1) Contact

- Touched or fondled in sexual areas
- Forced to touch another's sexual areas
- Kissed or held in a sexual manner
- Vaginal or anal intercourse
- Forced to perform oral sex

- Vaginal or anal penetration with a finger or object
- Sexual hazing

2) Non-contact

- Obscene phone calls
- Flashing
- Shown pornography
- Forced to watch sex acts
- Intrusive questions and comments
- Indecent exposure
- Forced to pose for sexual videos or photographs

NEGLECT

This may occur in hockey when injuries are not adequately treated or players are made to play with injuries, equipment is inadequate or unsafe, no one intervenes when team members are persistently harassing another player, or road trips are not properly supervised.

HARASSMENT

Behaviour including comments, conduct or gestures which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading, or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals or behaviour which creates an uncomfortable environment, or which might reasonably be expected to cause embarrassment, insecurity, discomfort, offence or humiliation to another person or group, including but not limited to:

- Written or verbal abuse or threats
- Physical assault
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or taunting about a person's body, sexual orientation, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or racial origin, religion, etc.
- Displaying of sexually explicit, racist or other offensive or derogatory material, sexual, racial, ethnic or religious graffiti
- Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endangering a person's safety or negatively affecting performance
- Hazing or initiation rites
- Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures
- Intimidation
- Condescension, paternalism, or patronizing behaviour which undermines self respect or adversely affects performance
- Comments, conduct gestures or contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence or humiliation or that might be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on selection or advancement

- False accusations or harassment motivated by malice or mischief and meant to cause harm, are considered to be harassment
- Acts of retaliation towards an individual making a harassment complaint

DISCIPLINE IN SPORT

Discipline is an indispensable part of hockey and should not be confused with discrimination or harassment. However, it is of vital importance that those in authority:

- Set and communicate performance and training standards to all participants
- Ensure that training involving touching or other physical contact occurs in an appropriate setting and only after informed consent has been sought and received
- Be consistent and non-harassing in taking a corrective or punitive action
- Use non-harassing terminology; address individuals by name and avoid the use of derogatory, slang or offensive terms.

DUTY TO REPORT

The Canadian Hockey Association realizes that persons working closely with children and youth have a special awareness of abusive situations. Therefore, these people have a particular responsibility to ensure the safety of Canada's young, by knowing their provincial protection acts and following through as required.

Every province and territory in Canada, except the Yukon, has mandatory reporting laws regarding the abuse and neglect of children and youth. Consequently, it is the policy of the CHA that any CHA personnel (part-time and full-time staff, volunteer, participant, team official, on-ice official) or CHA partner (parent or guardian) who has Reasonable grounds to suspect that a participant is or may be suffering, or may have suffered from emotional, physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the local child protection agency and/or the local Police Service. In Ontario, a person is considered a child up to the age of 16 years.

Those involved with the CHA in providing hockey opportunities for participants understand and agree that abuse or neglect, as defined above, may be the subject of a criminal investigation and/or disciplinary procedures. Failure to report an offence and thereby, to provide safety for participants may render the adult who keeps silent legally liable for conviction under provincial legislation.

Through education our National body, Branch Representatives and local hockey association personnel, the CHA is weaving a tighter safety web around our most precious resource... THE PLAYERS!

CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct identifies the standard of behaviour, which is expected of all WMHA members and participants, which for the purposes of this policy shall include all players, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, committee

members, convenors, team managers, trainers and administrators involved in WMHA activities and events.

The WMHA is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. Members and participants of the WMHA shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of the WMHA, which include fairness, integrity and mutual respect.

During the course of all WMHA activities and events, members shall avoid behaviour which brings the WMHA or the sport of hockey into disrepute, including and not limited to abusive use of alcohol, the use of non-medical drugs and the use of alcohol by minors.

The WMHA members and participants shall at all times adhere to the WMHA operational policies and procedures, to rules and regulations governing WMHA events and activities, and to the rules and regulations governing any competitions in which the member participates on behalf of the WMHA.

Members and participants of the WMHA shall not engage in any activity or behaviour which interferes with a competition or with any player or teams' preparation for a competition, or which endangers the safety of others.

Members of the WMHA shall refrain from comments or behaviour, which is disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. In particular, behaviour which constitutes harassment or abuse, will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with under the WMHA Harassment and Abuse Policy.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary policy of the WMHA, OMHA and the Hockey Alliance of Ontario. Such action may result in a member losing the privileges which come with membership in the WMHA, including the opportunity to participate in WMHA activities and events, both present and future.

GAME OFFICIALS

Referees, linesmen, timekeepers, official scorers are an integral part of the game of hockey. In many instances, they are older and more experienced. Regardless, they have an important role to play to ensure that play is safe, fair and enjoyable - that teams strive to win. Play is still conducted "In the spirit of the game".

The onus on officials is to be fair to both teams in the enforcement of the rules. Officials must treat the players, coaches and other game officials such as convenors, and spectators with respect, and in return, should be treated with respect before, during and after games. Officials must handle games and players in a manner that promotes fair play and good sportsmanship.

Officials should not have to tolerate harassment from spectators, parents, players or coaches. They have the full support of the WMHA. Those who are responsible for subjecting officials to harassment may be removed from the arena and subject to further disciplinary measures as determined by the Board of the WMHA.

RATE YOUR RESPECT OF THE GAME

How much do you respect the game of hockey and all its participants? Take this simple test to see how you rate. Check off the statements that apply to you:

- The safety of the participants in the game is more important than the final score.
- I value the contribution of the coach in developing the player's talents, even though I may not always agree with his or her methods.
- I understand that officials do not make the hockey rules, they only apply them.
- I understand that children learn from adults, and my behaviour reflects what I want children to learn.
- I understand that officials are responsible for ensuring that the game is played in a safe and fair manner for all participants.
- I understand that players, coaches and officials are learning the game, and mistakes will be made in the learning process.
- I may not cheer for the opposition team, but I will also not cheer against or verbally abuse them.
- I understand that the bigger reason for players and officials quitting the game is abuse.

POLICE RECORD CHECK CRITERIA

Who should get a police record check?

Police record checks are an essential part of this association's ongoing management of volunteers. Police checks will be required every three years with the 2000/2001 hockey year as the base year. Record checks will be required for the following individuals:

- WMHA Hockey Board Members
- WMHA Hockey Convenors
- Coaches and Assistant Coaches
- Trainers, Team Managers and Parent Liaisons
- All other volunteers who: come in direct contact with players on a consistent basis, and those who are responsible for handling funds either for a team, division, or other association related functions.

Divisional Requirements are as follows:

Travel:

There will be six positions per team which will be subject to record checks in accordance with the above listed requirements: Head Coach, Manager, Trainer, Assistant Coaches, On-Ice Helpers.

Criteria for Acceptance as a Volunteer with the WMHA

Those individuals whose police check show conviction or pending charges for Physical or Sexual assault, and indictable criminal offences for child abuse, during any point in their lifetime are not acceptable candidates for a volunteer position with the WMHA. These applicants will not be permitted to participate in any way, or in any capacity with this association.

Those individuals with outstanding Criminal Code convictions (other than physical or sexual assault, and child abuse) 5 years old or more recent, or have charges pending for certain offences will not be accepted for a direct service position with this association. These offences include, but are not limited to:

- Current prohibitions or probation orders forbidding the individual to have contact with children under the age of 14
- Outstanding convictions or charges pending for any violent offence, whether or not it involved weapons
- Outstanding convictions or charges pending for criminal driving offences, including but not limited to impaired driving.
- Individuals with outstanding convictions (5 years older or more recent), for provincial offences related to a bona fide occupational requirement or qualification, may be excluded from a position of trust, depending on the circumstances
- Applicants may be rejected as a result of other information gained during the police records check process or through the screening process as a whole, or as a consequence of other factors. The applicant has the right to know why he or she is being refused, and may appeal to the Board of Directors in writing.

It should be noted that every volunteer, once accepted, is obliged to inform the appropriate association executive if he or she is charged, tried or convicted of any offence under the criminal code or under other provincial or federal statutes. That is if the offence is relative to a position of trust held by the individual. If charges are pending while volunteering for WMHA Hockey, that individual will be suspended pending resolution, or that individual can resign and return when then situation has been resolved. (In accordance with WMHA Police check policy).

PARENTS BEHAVIOUR

It's natural for parents to be concerned about how their child is being coached and the methods utilized. If you have serious concerns, bring the issue to the attention of the Team Manager or Parent Liaison to arrange a meeting with the coach. By discussing your concerns calmly and rationally, you should be able to resolve the problem. If you are unable to reach an understanding, contact the Convenor or Vice President of the division.

Confrontations between coaches and parents that are driven by emotion usually end with a bad result. These confrontations have on occasion escalated from verbal to physical exchanges and there have been cases where coaches have been seriously injured.

Coach Attacked

A father who was unhappy with his son's playing time, attacked the coach with his son's hockey stick, causing serious facial injuries. The father was arrested and the son removed from hockey. Did the father get his point across? At what cost?

Father Banned From Rink

Recently, a father from a local hockey association has been banned from attending any of his son's regular season home games for verbally abusing a referee after his son's game.

As hockey fans, we've watched countless games, both professional and amateur. What they both have in common is referees missing calls. It is a fact of life that no one is perfect. Mistakes will be made. Screaming obscenities and other forms of abuse directed at the referees will not undue bad calls. They only embarrass yourself and your son or daughter. WMHAs' policy has been to report poor performing referees to their association. This usually results in monitoring the referee's future performance. This is not a perfect system, but it's the only one we have.

Remember, confronting referees during or after a game will only lead to suspensions for you and possible removal from this association.

Father Killed Outside Arena

An argument between parents over each of their son's conduct during a practice led to a fight outside of the arena. The aggressor in the fight ended up killing the other father in front of his son and other team members.

Could this happen at one of our arenas? What makes one parent kill another? Every time you yell at the opposing team's players or parents, you light a fuse. What can happen next is very unpredictable. It could be a shouting match, a fistfight, an injury or even a death.

What about your child's team. Do you criticize the players and scream at them when they make mistakes? Remember, their families are watching the game and can hear what you are saying. How do you think they feel? Will they sit quietly, or will they jump up to defend their son or daughter? Whose fault is it if a fight starts? Is the fault with the parent who is shouting at a player or the parent who is defending their child? Who loses in the end? Your son or daughters lose because you have embarrassed them in front of their teammates and you lose because you've lost the respect of your child.

Only you can ensure that it doesn't happen in our arenas.

WHEN CHEERS TURN INTO JEERS (AND TEARS)

Moms and Dads as Spoilsports and Hoodlums

by: Mary Lord

In nine years as president of the Subdivision Sports youth baseball league, the low-pressure alternative to Little League he founded, Mike Finneran of Naperville, Illinois, has had many memorable moments. Like the time one coach in a second-grade game began choking the other. Or the numerous encounters with parents who hurled the "F" word faster than Randy Johnson's fastball, berated their kids from the sidelines, and disputed every umpire's call. "We were the laid-back league," says Finneran, 50, who cancelled this spring's baseball season for third-through eighth-grade boys.

"I've had three heart attacks, triple-bypass surgery, and a stroke. I don't need the stress of these guys fighting."

Subdivision Sports isn't the only league stressed out by parent spoilsports these days. Across America, along with the idyllic scenes of kids scrambling after line drives or booting soccer balls around the park, there are the heckling hubbub and ferocious temper tantrums from adults taking child's play far too seriously.

Hardly a game goes by without an ugly example - or two or three. Last fall, a "midget league" football game in Pennsylvania ended in a melee involving nearly 100 players, coaches, parents, and fans. A Maryland father, disappointed that his son had been left off the all-star team, knocked down and kicked a coach, while an Oklahoma coach had to be restrained after choking the teenager umpire during a T-ball game for 5 and 6 year olds.

In fact, attacks on umpires have grown so common that the National Association of Sports Officials recently began offering a new benefit to its 19,000 members: assault insurance.

But they're not the hardest hit, says Fred Engh, president of the National Alliance for Youth Sports and author of *Why Johnny Hates Sports*. The players are. He cites a recent survey by the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission in which almost half the young athletes said they had been yelled at or insulted, 17.5 percent reported being hit, kicked, or slapped, and 8.2 percent were pressured into harming others.

No wonder 7 in 10 kids quit organized sports before their 13th birthday. "You'd never hear this at a child's piano recital: 'Erin, you bum, you can never do anything right!'" notes Engh, who likens the unrealistic expectations adults place on young athletes to child abuse.

Alternatives:

Alarmed by the escalating epidemic of aggression, thousands of communities are

embracing measures to quash the "win at all costs" mind-set and restore a sense of recreation to childhood's fields of dreams. West Des Moines's youth baseball league recently adopted a zero-tolerance policy toward obnoxious adults; cuss or brawl, and the kid leaves the team.

"We're going to stand tall on this," vows league president Mike Linn, who hopes to stave off violence before it occurs with other measures, such as giving every young player a turn at bat and running coaching clinics. Albuquerque fines abusive spectators \$5, while soccer leagues nationwide now observe "Silent Saturdays" sometimes with duct tape or lollipops to muzzle sideline shouters.

In Florida, the Jupiter-Tequesta Athletic Association is really playing hardball: It just became the first in the nation to require that parents attend an ethics class and sign a code of conduct if they want their kids to play.

So far, such measures have scored big with co-operative parents who make up the vast majority of coaches and spectators. Jupiter-Tequesta didn't lose one of its 2,000 players because a parent shunned the sportsmanship class, for example. And while incidents still arise, they quickly get resolved - often by the parents themselves. "It's eerie how quiet it's been because the parents are trying to figure out where to draw the line," says JTAA President Jeff Leslie, who calls the overall effect "a blessing for our league."

But sports historian Gerald Gems, chairman of the health and physical education department at North Central College in Illinois, considers these temporary palliatives at best. He says that efforts to bring civility to youth sports ultimately will strike out unless they also attack America's win-at-all-costs mentality. What's also needed, he suggests, are programs to teach coaches child psychology and strategies for dealing with parents.

Jim Thompson, founder and director of the Positive Coaching Alliance in Stanford, California, which has launched a 10-year campaign to boost sportsmanship, agrees. "We don't want parents just to learn not to be jerks," he says. "We want them to learn to be positive motivators."

Parent/Guardian Grievance Procedure

If a parent or guardian has a concern and would like to speak to the coach, he or she must first contact the team's parent liaison.

After a twenty-four hour waiting period, the parent liaison will arrange a meeting between the parent/guardian, coach and parent liaison. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, it may be referred to the WMHA Conflict Resolution Advisor via the WMHA Incident Report Form.

It should be noted that incident forms will not be accepted once 30 days have passed after the incident. This does not apply to sexual/physical abuse.