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Hockey Canada to promote
risk management



Hockey Canada

Safety Net


Third Edition

A Message from the Chair of the Hockey Canada Risk and Safety Management Committee

On behalf of the Risk and Safety Management Committee for Hockey Canada, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the countless volunteers from throughout the nation who have worked tirelessly to ensure that our participants are afforded the opportunity to play the game in a safe and enjoyable environment. Risk Management volunteers are developing programs, reviewing rules and regulations as well as the equipment that our players are wearing, addressing issues within their local Associations, and contributing to the development of policies that assist and protect our membership.

A number of Branches and local Associations have introduced screening policies to ensure that individuals who are placed in positions of trust and authority are reputable, credible, and there to uphold the high standards expected by Hockey Canada. Care should be taken when we introduce these policies that we not only complete criminal records checks and child abuse register checks, but also adhere to the additional recommendations of Volunteer Canada for the screening of volunteers. Understandably, adopting a screening policy requires a commitment of additional human and financial resources, but the benefits to the membership far exceed this investment. Our team officials have welcomed the introduction of these policies and fully understand their importance and the benefits to the membership.

In Branches across the country, playoffs are now well underway and the regular season for many players will be concluding for 2003-04. Many of our volunteers responsible for delivering programs and services take advantage of the off-season to participate in professional development programs offered by Hockey Canada. It is very important that we participate and attend training seminars, courses and programs that allow us not only to learn but also to share and exchange ideas with our colleagues. Our Hockey Canada volunteers are committed to providing quality and positive hockey experiences to our membership in a safe and enjoyable learning environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed articles to the third edition of Safety Net. We welcome input from our membership, so if you have special programs and events happening within your local Association and/or Branch that you would like to share with others, please contact Todd Jackson at Hockey Canada. 

H. Wayne MacPherson

Chair, Hockey Canada Risk and Safety Management Committee

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“Saving Brains” Through Concussion Awareness and Management

*Submitted by Lois Kalchman
Writer, Toronto Star*

The Greater Toronto Hockey League's decision not to allow players who have suffered a concussion to return to practice or play without a letter of permission signed by a physician has sparked intense interest in the issue.

"We have always recommended it, but no one has gone this far," said Todd Jackson, Manager of Risk and Safety Management with Hockey Canada. Although some individual teams and groups had adopted this rule, the Greater Toronto Hockey League was the first governing body to do so when it announced the policy last September.

"It will save brains," declared neurosurgeon Dr. Charles Tator, President of Think First Canada.

It was a bold step — one that physicians, trainers, coaches, therapists, players and even parents needed and wanted to know more about. Close to 500 people came to the Air Canada Centre in Toronto in December to attend a two-hour session called Concussion Management in Hockey: Diagnosis, Treatment, Return to Play. The session was sponsored by the Dr. Tom Pashby Sports Safety Fund.

Montreal neurosurgeon Dr. Karen Johnston stressed that contrary to some beliefs, you don't have to be unconscious to have suffered a concussion. In fact, every 'ding' matters. She explained that the ravages of concussions are cumulative. Dr. Johnston is a consultant on head injuries for the National Hockey League, the NHL Players Association, the International


Ice Hockey Federation, the Canadian Football League and the International Olympic Committee.

Dr. Paul Dennis, director of player personal for the Toronto Maple Leafs, talked of the pressures players feel to rejoin the team after suffering a concussion. Leafs trainer Chris Broadhurst explained how to recognize a concussion and how to interact with the players on the ice and in the dressing room.

Former NHLer Nick Kypreos, who suffered a career-ending concussion, shared his experiences and feelings. He compared the brain to an onion, with each hit or knock peeling its layers away, skin by skin.

The session also addressed medical legal issues and how these unseen injuries can have fallout on officials and hockey organizers.

Two sample letters were also presented. One was a draft of a return-to-play letter.

The other letter gave details of what a player and team official have to supply to the doctor to show that the player has completed provocative exercise testing (PET) symptom-free before rejoining the team for dry or on-ice activity. Hockey Canada's Concussion Card lists symptoms and explains the PET steps necessary before returning to play. Make sure at least one team official carries one at all times. 

EQUIPMENT

Did you know...

hockey pants should be fitted with your shin pads in place to ensure the pants are the proper length?



IIHF Medical Committee Uses Injury Trends to Make Hockey Safer

Submitted by Murray Costello 
IIHF Council Member

The Medical Committee of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) has been a proactive body since 1998, aimed at protecting and enhancing the health and well-being of players in all levels of the international game.

Before 1998, the Medical Committee was concerned primarily with its dope testing responsibilities at the various IIHF World Championship competitions. The shift away from being a reactive group, and towards taking more initiative, was made almost simultaneously with the naming of an all-new chief medical officer for the IIHF, Dr. Mark Aubry of Ottawa, Canada.

The rationale behind the move was sound, in that medical doctors involved in hockey work right on the bench with the team coaches, unlike most other sports, and are in constant direct contact with the players.

Following the lead of junior hockey leagues in Canada, the Medical Committee established a comprehensive injury reporting system for each game played. The system relies on team doctors, from their positions on the bench and very close to the action, to fill out injury reports for every game.

With more than five full seasons of reporting now on record, trends in the types of injuries and where those injuries occur on the ice in international competition have revealed some surprising and interesting information. These trends have been used to tighten up officiating in some areas of the game, and to adjust the rules slightly to make the game safer for the participants.

The IIHF has urged each of the national federations to name a chief medical officer. Since some 32 of the 42 active federations have done so, the IIHF now has a direct communications link to the right people in the national federations — people whose primary interest is to make the game safer for the players at all levels in the game.

The main focus of the Medical Committee this season is on the second Concussion Symposium for Team Sports, scheduled for the weekend of November 5, 2004, in Prague, Czech Republic. The IIHF will lead this event in partnership with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). It will bring together the world's leading medical experts and researchers on head injuries in team sports. For further information and registration details, please refer to the website www.iihf.com or inquire by email to office@iihf.com. 

EQUIPMENT

Did you know...

the protective caps of the shoulder pads should be positioned on the top of the shoulders and the arm pads should extend to meet the elbow pads?

News From the Canadian Recreation Facilities Council

Submitted by
Randy Kinnee, Chair- CRFC



The Canadian Recreation Facilities Council (CRFC) continues to work closely with Hockey Canada to make sure Canadian arenas are among the best in the world.

The CRFC is comprised of provincial and territorial facility associations across Canada. The Council's goals are:


- To encourage full representation from all provinces and territories
- To promote facility programs at the provincial/territorial and national levels
- To facilitate the exchange of information
- To identify and encourage the development of projects and programs of a national interest
- To develop and deliver a unified position on issues of a national interest
- To strive for financial self-sufficiency

The following is an update of activities over the last several months:

- The CRFC is in the process of becoming an incorporated non-profit organization. This provides protection for the board of directors, gives credibility and stability, and potentially allows the Council to search out different sources of funding as a non-profit organization. This is a very positive step for the CRFC.

- The Spectator Safety Guideline for Indoor Arenas was well received when it was presented jointly by the CRFC and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) to Hockey Canada at the Risk and Safety Management Committee meeting Nov. 21, 2003. This document has been reviewed by all parties who may have a stake in it — their input was requested to ensure it covers as much as possible in a format that is easy to understand. The guideline has gone through the CSA's final balloting and has been approved to become a CSA guideline in March 2004. There will be a press release when this document is complete.

- At the meeting in Yellowknife in June 2003, the CRFC reviewed new board designs from companies who are trying to get away from the traditional board systems now in place in most arenas in North America. Some of these board systems appear very interesting in their design but are still far away from becoming systems that will replace existing system designs.

- Currently the CRFC is developing a position paper on sustainable facilities in Canada. This paper will speak to problems faced in all sport and recreation facilities in Canada. Canada's aging infrastructure, in particular hockey arenas, is one of the major issues that will need to be addressed soon, both in terms of operating costs and of replacement or upgrade costs. There are over 2,500 arenas in Canada, and 40% to 50% of these are now 25 to 30 years old. The life expectancy of an arena is 32 years, based on a study done in Manitoba. Once the position paper is finished, it will be shared with CRFC members and partners, of which Hockey Canada is one of the most important. 



RCMP Salutes Speak Out! Partners and Facilitators

Submitted by SHA



When the Saskatchewan Hockey Association (SHA) set out to recruit volunteers for the Speak Out! program, it decided to approach the RCMP to solicit applicants from their organization who shared a passion for hockey and a belief in the program's values.

The result was an absolute success story, with six of the original fifteen Speak Out! facilitators drawn from the ranks of the RCMP. So began an enduring partnership with the RCMP in facilitating the Speak Out! program in Saskatchewan.

In September 2000, the SHA, in conjunction with the Canadian Red Cross, conducted the SHA's first-ever Speak Out! facilitator training seminar. At that time, the original fifteen volunteers took part in a four-day training seminar to begin their role as Speak Out! workshop facilitators.



SafetyNet


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TEST YOUR Knowledge!

1. The estimated number of arenas in Canada is:
 - a) 1,500
 - b) 6,000
 - c) 3,000
2. The estimated number of people involved in hockey in Canada as coaches, players, officials, administrators and direct volunteers is:
 - a) 4.5 million
 - b) 200,000
 - c) 700,000

See page 8 for answers.

Three years later, at the August 2003 SHA Course Conductors Seminar, the RCMP generously recognized the services of all the SHA's Speak Out! facilitators, with a presentation, to each facilitator in attendance, of a certificate of recognition. In addition, the RCMP recognized the contribution of the SHA Speak Out! program partners, Hockey Canada and the Canadian Red Cross.

The SHA was very proud to have on hand for the presentations Hockey Canada's Manager of Safety and Risk Management, Todd Jackson, Red Cross staff member Lisa Smith, and Inspector Orem from the RCMP. A special thank you goes out to Speak Out! facilitator Corporal Terry Stevely, of the Yorkton RCMP, who organized the presentations. 

The Police Records Check

Submitted by:
Volunteer Canada

Quite often when local Minor Hockey Associations begin to consider the screening process the question is asked as to what a Police Records Check is and how it fits into the screening process.

What is screening?

Screening is a process, performed by an organization, to ensure that the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. The screening process includes steps such as job design, recruitment and orientation. The steps that are most important in determining the suitability of a candidate are interviews, reference checks and, when dealing with vulnerable participants, a Police Records Check (PRC).

What is a Police Records Check (PRC)?

A Police Records Check (PRC) is a Criminal Records Check, as well as a search of the records held in the information database of a local police agency. The Police Records Check is one of the steps in Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps screening program.

How is a Police Records Check carried out?

To conduct a Police Records Check, the local police do several things. First, they query the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database, operated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), to search for relevant criminal record information and/or the existence of a CPIC record. Second, they

search their own database for information about the individual. Lastly, they may contact other police detachments for information about the person.

The CPIC database is a compilation of police information and court decisions. Information collected in the CPIC database includes individuals who:

- have a criminal record for any Criminal Code or other Federal Statute offence and/or
- have been judged not criminally responsible for an offence because of mental disorder and/or
- have federal and/or provincial charges pending and/or
- are on probation or subject to a Prohibition Order.

In addition, local police agencies compile information, in their own databases, about every complaint they receive. Examples of complaints include:

- local disturbances
- offences contrary to provincial statutes (such as traffic violations or liquor-related violations)
- abuse of children
- allegations of offences where charges were not laid.

The voluntary organization must have your written permission to request a PRC.

INSURANCE

Did you know...

associations should have Directors and Officers liability insurance as it is not part of the Hockey Canada Insurance Program?



Since 2001, as a result of amendments to the Criminal Records Act, criminal records of pardoned sex offenders can be made available to organizations that work with vulnerable people.

Your written consent is required to search the CPIC database for pardoned sexual offences.

What if you have a criminal record?


If the information obtained by the police indicates that you have a criminal record, does that mean you cannot volunteer?

Not necessarily; organizations may look at the following factors when considering your application:

- the nature of the organization and its work
- the nature of the offence
- the relevance of the criminal record to the position you are applying for.

If the CPIC query produces a name and date of birth similar to yours, you can provide your fingerprints to confirm your identity.

As fingerprints are the best personal identifier, your fingerprints will determine whether or not the information in the CPIC database pertains to you.

For more information on the Safe Steps process, visit www.volunteer.ca or contact Volunteer Canada at 1-800-670-0401. 

INSURANCE

Did you know...

exhibition games are only covered if approved by your Branch office?

Hockey Newfoundland & Labrador Introduces New Risk Management Initiatives


By Murray Roberts
Vice President Hockey Operations,
Hockey Newfoundland & Labrador



Implementation of a four-phase screening protocol will highlight Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador's (HNL's) risk and safety initiatives for the 2004 season. Phase I will require certificates of conduct from all sectors of the volunteer base. Over the course of the next two seasons, the Branch will complete a database using forms from all four phases. Phases 2-4 involve a series of information request forms outlined by the Risk and Safety Committee with support from the board and from legal council. Consistency and confidentiality will be of the utmost importance to both the completion and success of this important initiative.

Further HNL initiatives for 2004 include the mandatory use of intra-oral mouth guards for all minor hockey players. This will be phased in over the entire season, with completion by early April. The Branch received a strong recommendation from the Newfoundland and Labrador Dental Association this past June that we consider mandating this important safety measure. The minor hockey associations across the province thought this was a step in the right direction and voted in favor of the recommendation in September. We hope this initiative will reduce the number of concussions in minor hockey.

Mandatory use of helmets with chin straps approved by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) for all coaches and volunteers during on-ice activities is also of great value for the safety of our Branch.

Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador wishes all Branches and Branch members a successful and safe hockey season. 

Speak Out! Program Nears 10,000 Mark

By Brent Dick
Director of Risk and Safety
Management/Abuse
and Harassment Officer, ODHA




Almost 10,000 people in the Ottawa and District Hockey Association



have completed the Speak Out! Program. Together, this group of coaches, assistant coaches, initiation instructors, trainers, managers and other front-line volunteers are helping the Association reach this important milestone.

Although people initially expressed some doubt about the Speak Out! Program, it has steadily gained recognition since its inception in 1997. Now this popular program is seen as an essential resource for anyone involved with children and youth in amateur hockey. The program is now popular within our Branch. It's recognized for instilling healthy attitudes, encouraging positive communication and promoting better understanding of our roles and responsibilities in the prevention of abuse and harassment.

Testimonials have described Speak Out! as "empowering," "an eye-opener" and "the key to good coaching and parenting." Most importantly, Speak Out! has helped us all to chip away at the walls of silence and denial around abuse and harassment. 



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ANSWERS TO TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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Our Partners in Risk Management

