Alberta North Conference

Setting Expectations on Behaviour for Coaches, Athletes, Parents and Officials

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Sport Law & Strategy Group
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Providing strategic insight to the Canadian sport community through professional services in these areas:

- Legal Solutions, Governance,
- Strategic Planning, Research, and Stakeholder Engagement
- Safe Sport Implementation, Risk Mgmt, and Financial Mgmt
- Leadership Development, Human Resource Management and Integral Coaching®
- Communications, Marketing and Event Mgmt
Our Team!
LJ Bartle

Areas of Expertise:
• Quality assurance
• Safe sport implementation
• Strategic planning
• Crisis management
• Investigations
• Healthy child development
• Engaging athletes

Experience
• CBC News Journalist
• HIGH FIVE National Director
• Certified Investigator
• Sport Volunteer
• Skier, Hockey Player, Hiker
• Parent

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Agenda

Safe Sport
- The New Normal
- Setting Expectations
- Communicating Expectations
• “What are those things that are normalized in your sport that would never be accepted elsewhere?”

Allison Forsyth
Former Olympian - Alpine Racing
Athlete Voice Advocate
The New Normal
“Old School Coaching” is on its way out

- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Humiliation
- Discrimination
- Military-style approach
- Negative feedback
- Win-at-all-costs mentality
- Toxic environments
The Test of Harassment

- It does not matter whether a person intended to offend someone.

- The Test – Whether they knew or should have reasonably known that their comments or conduct were unwelcome to the other person.
The bar is moving up

• #MeToo’s reckoning has hit sport

• Change is inevitable

• Will you be above or below the bar?
STANDARD OF CARE

Highest possible level of care
- risk is eliminated

Reasonable standard of care in the circumstances - risk is appropriately managed

Failure to exercise any care
- risk is ignored

Behaviour is not negligent

Behaviour is negligent
STANDARD OF CARE

- Written/published standards
  - Equipment standards
  - Organization policies & rules
  - Code of Conduct
  - Coaching/teaching/leadership manuals

- Unwritten/Unpublished Standards
  - New developments and trends
  - Network
  - Pursue and Participate in Professional Development.

- Case Law

- Common Sense
  - Intuition
  - Knowledge
  - Experience
  - Gut
Setting Expectations
Get everyone on board, including athletes

- Consensus
- Consensus
- Consensus

- On your Safe Sport Strategy
Your Safe Sport Strategy may include:

1. Policy
2. Training
3. Requirements (screening)
4. Resources
5. Communication and Engagement
Purpose of Rule of Two

To protect minor athletes in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present.

1 Coach
1 Athlete

1 Coach
2 Athletes

1 Trained Coach
1 Adult

2 Certified Coaches

Gold Standard
Rule of 2 Options

- Open and Observable Environments
- Transparent - parents or others are aware and/or involved
- Authorized – coach has written permission from parent
- Accountable – reporting procedures if Rule of 2 broken
What’s the age of consent in Canada?

• The **legal age of consent in Canada is 16 years old**.

• Individuals under **18 years old cannot consent to sex** when:
  – the other party is in a position of trust or authority
Relationships

• No dating between persons of authority and athletes

• No intimacy:
  – No regular contact outside of sport relationship
  – No exchange of gifts
  – No physical/intimate contact (no sexual activity)
  – No sharing of sensitive personal information

• If a relationship begins, report it and one person leaves their position
Communication

• Group chat

• Rule of 2 concepts apply

• Discussions only related to sport issues

• No discussion or pictures about drugs, alcohol or sexual activity

• Keep a record of your conversations!
Travel

• Hotel rooms – no sharing between Persons of Authority and athletes

• Roommates – same gender identity within 3 years of age

• Create buddy system with other clubs

• Bring a chaperone

• If you’re having a meeting in a hotel room, keep the door open - Rule of 2 applies
Grooming

• It’s all about the grey area

• A trusted adult builds a level comfort in order to take advantage of an individual

• Groomer often pretends to be a victim in order to gain sympathy and trust from an individual

• Conscious manipulation of emotions
Boundary Transgressions

➢ pushing boundaries further and further physically and emotionally until inappropriate behaviour seems normal
Boundary Transgressions

• In your group, discuss common ways coaches and other persons of authority could push boundaries.

• How can you prevent boundary transgressions?
Communicating Expectations -
to all stakeholders including athletes

• Create a Safe Sport Communications plan including:
  – What is your Safe Sport Strategy
  – How to communicate the strategy
  – When to communicate the strategy
  – Where to communicate the strategy

• Most importantly: communicate why you have a strategy and why it’s important to your stakeholders
Safe Sport Policy Suite

• Athlete Protection Policy
• Code of Conduct and Ethics
• Abuse Policy
• True Sport Policy
• Investigations Policy – Discrimination, Harassment, And Abuse
• Discipline and Complaints Policy
• Dispute Resolution Policy
• Appeal Policy
• Whistleblower Policy
• Event Discipline Policy
• Social Media Policy
• Risk Management Policy
Policy

• The only way policy works…is if people know about it and follow it

• The only way people follow it…is if leadership sets an example and imposes consequences on those who don’t

• Same for an organization’s vision, mission and values…they’re not just words on a website
Resources and Leading Practices

- Responsible Coaching Movement
- Respect in Sport
- Canadian Centre for Child Protection
- True Sport
- Canadian Sport Hotline
- Parachute Canada
- CAAWS
- HIGH FIVE
- Sport for Life
- What Not To Yell
- Aboriginal Sport Circle
Athlete Engagement

• Ask them:
  – Do you feel safe?
  – Use anonymous or 3rd party surveys
  – Follow-up with in-person group discussions about behaviour expectations for them and their coaches

• Involve them:
  – Create safe and welcoming environments
  – Encourage curiosity
  – Be flexible
  – Be authentic
DON'T LIKE THE REF'S CALL?
PUT YOUR SKATES ON AND TAKE THE COURSE

Yelling at Refs from the stands is an abuse of the officials. It is disrespectful and poor sportsmanship. It is unacceptable adult behaviour in front of your children and other minor players. Feedback on Referees is appropriate and encouraged through association website forms.

THIS COMMUNITY DOES NOT TOLERATE ABUSE OF OFFICIALS

IF YOU TOLERATE IT; YOU ARE CONDONING IT. PLAY YOUR PART TO ENCOURAGE SPORTSMANSHIP

Thank You for Your Cooperation

Sign Sponsored by THE RESTORATION NETWORK
A little reflection…
Thank you!

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