

# PELHAM MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION FAIR PLAY CODE 2005

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## **WHAT IS FAIR PLAY?**

Fair Play is a program introduced into minor hockey to enhance and promote SAFETY and RESPECT with all participants involved.

Fair Play has five basic principles:

1. Respect the rules.
2. Respect the opponents.
3. Respect the officials and their decisions.
4. Have everyone participate.
5. Maintain self-control at all times.

Fair Play DOES NOT CHANGE ANY RULES OF THE GAME.

Fair Play ENCOURAGES ALL PLAYERS ON ALL TEAMS TO BE AS COMPETITIVE AS POSSIBLE but within the rules.

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**Fair Play is introduced to promote SAFETY and RESPECT, and a positive environment in minor hockey for participants involved.** The four main participant groups are; the players, the coaches, the officials, and the parents. How these four groups interact at any game determines how positive, or how negative the event becomes.

There are an increasing number of concerns becoming more evident in minor hockey today. These concerns go against the principles of Fair Play, what minor hockey represents, and the objectives of recreational minor hockey organizations.

Some concerns in minor hockey are; the lack of respect for opponents, verbal abuse of officials, inappropriate spectator behavior in the stands, violence on the ice, the win-at-all-costs attitude, the increased pressure on young players to win, and the lack of FUN for many.

## **FAIR PLAY PROGRAM RATIONALE**

Why can a Fair Play program be useful to a minor hockey association?

- A Fair Play program will outline the rights and responsibilities to all participants involved in our minor hockey association.
- A Fair Play program makes all individuals aware that playing minor hockey is a PRIVILEGE, not a right.
- A Fair Play program will provide our Association with a visible commitment that promotes the concepts of SAFETY and RESPECT.
- A Fair Play program will outline a clear set of expectations and guidelines that all participants involved in our minor hockey program will follow.
- A Fair Play program will define a positive set of expectations that our minor hockey association will provide, as a recreational organization, to all our participants.
- A Fair Play program will be used to educate participants of the many positive contributions that minor hockey offers as a recreational activity in our community.
- A Fair Play program ensures that all participants are aware of our minor hockey association's philosophies and objectives.
- Fair Play will promote and develop a positive set of values to coaches, players, parents, and officials in the association. These values can further enhance the many positive aspects of the minor hockey program.
- A Fair Play program will develop a comprehensive guide by which this Association's executive body can run its programs, in addition to existing rules, regulations and objectives.

*Fair Play is a win-win program for our minor hockey association*

### **BENEFITS OF FAIR PLAY**

- Increased SAFETY and RESPECT on and off the ice by participants.
- Increased positive team unity.
- More appropriate spectator behavior.
- Decrease the win-at-all-cost attitude.
- Increase of on-ice positive behavior.
- Participants take more responsibility for their actions.
- Increase in sportsmanship.
- More parents become promoters of positive attitudes.
- Fair ice time for all players.
- New participants are drawn to the game of hockey by the positive aspects of Fair Play.
- Refocusing of the intent of minor hockey as a positive recreational program for many young players and other participants involved.

## **FAIR PLAY PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS**

Interventions are components introduced into a hockey program to enhance SAFETY and RESPECT, and the principles of Fair Play: Respect the rules. Respect the opponents. Respect the officials and their decisions. Have everyone participate. Maintain your self-control at all times.

The number and types of interventions adopted, developed and tailored to meet the needs of an association will be determined by the associations' budget, logistics, and volunteer resources.

Development of a Fair Play program is a long term project. Initiating interventions at the Tyke and or Novice level allows the Association to refine their program as it gradually expands with the same group of players into other divisions over a period of years.

A minor hockey association should have a formalized coaching selection process. The criteria for coach selection should include experience, and attitude towards the principles of Fair Play.

### ***Intervention No. 1 – Coach Selection***

Selection of coaches begins prior to the end of any current season. At this time distribution of coaching applications should be made available to all possible volunteers. Applicants who have little or no coaching experience, but who maintain positive attitudes towards the principles of Fair Play should be considered. Certification, if required, could be accommodated latter.

Experience alone should not be the criteria for coach selection. Fair Play can not accommodate 'win-at-all-cost' coaches. Attitude and experience are the two criteria to be considered.

- Maintain confidentiality during any coach selection procedures.
- A small group is formed to act as a 'Coach Selection Committee' for the association.
- A formalized process outlining the association's selection procedures should be developed and followed.
- Emphasize as one criteria for coach selection the Fair Play principles.
- Distribution of coach applications to all participants is made prior to the end of a season.
- Interview applicants using a set of standard questions to provide pertinent information for selection.
- Provide prospective coaches with an accurate description of responsibilities and expectations related to Fair Play.
- Applicants are notified as soon as possible once selections are made.

## ***Intervention No. 2 – Contracts and Guidelines***

Contracts/Guidelines are developed to clarify the rights, responsibilities and privileges of players, parents, coaches and officials in the association. Contracts/Guidelines reflect the Fair Play principles and the association's expectations of all participants.

The basic Contract/Guidelines are established prior to each season in conjunction with selected coaches and association executive. These are distributed to participants before team selection.

Each Contract/Guideline provides a consistent rule base focused upon the goals and principles of Fair Play.

- Newly selected coach's input into the development of this intervention to ensure the requirements of their teams are accommodated. Teams at different levels may have varying, specific needs. A Beginner hockey team's specific Contract/Guideline requirements may vary from those of a Pee Wee team's.
- All coaches should be made aware that the Contracts/Guidelines may be referred to throughout the season to assist in resolving some team problems.
- Players, coaches and parents have their own specific Contract/Guidelines.

Participants are requested to sign their Contract/Guidelines to ensure they have read, understood and abide by the Fair Play program and association rules.

There are three contracts/guidelines:

- the coaching staff commitments
- the parent commitments
- the player commitments

The coaches contract/guidelines are signed by the coaching staff and given to the parents and players.

The parent contract/guidelines are signed by the parents and the signature portion handed back to the manager.

The player contract/guidelines are signed by the players and the signature portion returned to the manager.

Signing the contracts/guidelines indicates participants will abide by the Fair Play principles and team rules.

The association provides the Fair Play principles and philosophy. The coaches provide specific team requirements.

### ***Intervention No. 3 – Team Selection***

Procedures for selection of competitive and recreational teams vary with associations. In player selection, 'ability' and 'attitude' should be criteria. All participants have to be made aware of these two criteria prior to selections.

Players exhibiting poor sportsmanship, lack of honesty, and lack of safety and respect for others, should be made aware that attitudes such as these are not tolerated in Fair Play. Selection criteria for any team should not solely be based upon skill level. Attitude is important.

Coaches should be allowed to select some players on a probationary basis giving these players an opportunity to improve their attitudes.

### ***Intervention No. 4 – Coaches/Managers Meetings***

This is an early season meeting with all coaches and team managers. The purpose is to explain the Fair Play program to everyone. Information is distributed outlining the program, the interventions and their purposes, and the roles and responsibilities team staff has in the Fair Play program.

Association executive runs the coaches/managers meeting. This meeting allows coaches and managers to ask questions, get clarification regarding any of their concerns, and allows input from team staff.

All team staff should attend to clarify their roles in the Fair Play program.

### ***Intervention No. 5 – First Team Meeting***

Once any team is formed, a meeting is held with all parents and team staff, and another meeting with coaching staff and players is also held.

The objective of these two meetings is to clarify the Contract/Guidelines with the parents, players and coaches.

The coach gives his/her Fair Play Contract/Guidelines to the parents and to the players. The parents and players Contracts/Guidelines are signed. The signed portions are returned to the team manager. The player and parent keep the rules portion.

The first team meeting also allows for parent and player input into the team Contract/Guidelines.

## **OMHA CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code for Conduct identifies the standard of behavior which is expected of all OMHA members and participants, which for the purpose of this policy shall include all players, guardians, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, committee members, conveners, team managers, trainers, administrators and employees involved in OMHA activities and events.

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

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

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

Members and participants of OMHA shall not engage in any activity or behavior which interferes with a competition or with any player or team's preparation for a competition, or which endangers the safety of others.

Members of OMHA shall refrain from comments or behaviors, which are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. In particular, behavior, which constitutes harassment or abuse, will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with under OMHA's Harassment policy.

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

## **FAIR PLAY CODE FOR PLAYERS**

1. I will play hockey because I want to, not just because others or coaches want me to.
2. I will play by the rules of hockey, and in the spirit of the game.
3. I will control my temper – fighting and “mouthing off” can spoil the activity for everybody.
4. I will respect my opponents.
5. I will do my best to be a true team player.
6. I will remember that winning isn’t everything – that having fun and improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
7. I will acknowledge all good plays/performances – those of my team and of my opponents.
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.

## **FAIR PLAY CODE FOR SPECTATORS**

1. I will remember that participants play hockey for their enjoyment. They are not playing to entertain me.
2. I will not have unrealistic expectations. I will remember that players are not professionals and cannot be judged by professional standards.
3. I will respect the officials' decisions and I will encourage participants to do the same.
4. I will never ridicule a player for making a mistake during a game. I will give positive comments that motivate and encourage continued effort.
5. I will condemn the use of violence in any form and will express my disapproval in an appropriate manner to coaches and league officials.
6. I will show respect for my team's opponents because without them, there would be no game.
7. I will not use bad language, nor will I harass players, coaches, officials or other spectators.

## **FAIR PLAY CODE FOR PARENTS**

1. I will not force my child to participate in hockey.
2. I will remember that my child plays hockey for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
3. I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
4. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game.
5. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.



6. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
7. I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good plays/performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
8. I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public.

## **FAIR PLAY FOR COACHES & TEAM OFFICIALS**

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices, remember that players have other interests and obligations.
2. I will teach my players to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials and opponents.
3. I will ensure that all players get equal instruction, support and playing time.
4. I will not ridicule or yell at my players for making mistakes or for performing poorly. I will remember that players play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
5. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the players' ages and abilities.
6. I will remember that participants need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
7. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.
8. I will work in cooperation with officials for the benefit of the game.

## **THE HOCKEY PARENT CONCERNS**

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- **Some parents may say their association doesn't need a Fair Play program.** Fair Play says we wouldn't need programs such as Fair Play if more participants respected the rules, the opponents, the officials, having everyone participate and everyone maintaining self-control at games. However, the basic principles of Fair Play are lacking in minor hockey to some degree. As a result, many associations are confronted with spectators abusing their officials, their coaches, their players and other

volunteers. The win-at-all-cost attitude is still evident when players only play a couple of shifts a game. Fair Play is necessary in any association to curb such negative incidents.

- **Some parents may say that Fair Play will interfere with their child's hockey career.** Fair Play, if anything, will enhance anyone's hockey career. Fair Play does not change the rules of the game. Fair Play encourages every player to be as competitive as possible, and to win as many games as possible, but within the rules. Fair Play teaches the players those aspects that will enhance hockey ability and team play.
- **Some parents may say they don't agree with Fair Play.** The first question to ask of such parents is which one of the five Fair Play principles do they not agree with? If parents don't agree with the Fair Play principles, they do not agree with SAFETY and RESPECT in the game. Such parent's participation and purpose in becoming involved in minor hockey should be re-examined.
- **Some parents may say they don't have to sign any association and/or team Contract/Guidelines.** Fair Play says that every participant has the right to join a minor hockey association. That is a right. However, once a participant joins, they must abide by the rules of that association. If participants don't wish to abide by the rules, they give up their right to belong to that association. This is consistent with other clubs, organizations, businesses, or other public facilities such as public pools and public libraries.

Participants must be informed of their rights and privileges. This is the purpose of the Contracts/Guidelines.

- **Some parents may say that they have always yelled at referees, that this is a tradition, and they won't stop yelling.** Fair Play says that verbally abusing a referee may have been done in the past. Abusing referees in a Fair Play program will not be tolerated. Using profanity or other forms of verbal abuse can result in that participant being ejected and/or barred from the arena under local Municipal By-Laws, or the facility rules and regulation.

Fair Play says that spectators can yell and cheer as loud as they want during games, as long as it is positive and supportive towards the participants.

- **Some parents may say they don't agree with equal, or fair ice time for all players, especially at competitive levels of minor hockey.** Fair Play says that everyone who joins a minor hockey association pays a certain registration fee. If everyone pays the same amount, everyone should play the same amount. If a competitive team coach selects his/her team, all players should receive the same and fair amount of ice during the season.

In games, due to various situations such as penalties, injuries, illness and other factors, equal ice time for all players is very difficult to maintain on a game-to-game basis. Fair ice time based on everyone participating does accommodate the many factors that occur during games. Fair ice time is based on everyone participating, regardless of abilities, or level.

In the over-all season however, each player should have equal ice time.

- **Some parents may say the association shouldn't have volunteers spending their time on programs like Fair Play when issues such as raising funds and the day-to-day running of the association are more important.** Fair Play says that including a Fair Play program into a minor hockey association reinforces the objectives of any association's program. All the goals and objectives of a Fair Play program are positive and for the benefit of all participants, especially the players. Fund raising is important. SAFETY and RESPECT however, should not take a back seat to fundraising. Fair Play can also contribute to fund raising by bringing new sponsors to the minor hockey association.

Every association has volunteers who may want to become involved in some way with their children's hockey. Fair Play provides other opportunities for volunteers who don't have much time to offer. Fair Play program does not take away from an existing volunteer base.

Fair Play enhances the positive aspects of minor hockey. Volunteers spending time on Fair Play promote the mandate of their association.

The mandate of any minor hockey association is to provide a recreational opportunity for the young people of a community. These opportunities should exist in a positive, safe, respectful and fun environment.

Young people play hockey because they enjoy the game. Young people do not play hockey to entertain the parent group in the stands. An association has to focus upon the program for the players. A Fair Play program encourages this.