



SOOKE & DISTRICT MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 383

SOOKE, BC V0S 1N0

www.sookeminorhockey.com

RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION OF ABUSE POLICY

This policy sets out the principles and practices of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association with regards to abusive behaviour towards its members.

Relationship to Harassment Policy

Some behaviours that are defined as abuse when directed toward a child or youth may constitute harassment when directed towards a peer or when perpetrated between adults. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association Harassment Policy covers such behaviours. Together, the two policies will address the entire spectrum of abusive and harassing behaviours.

Sooke Minor Hockey Association Mission

The mission of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association is to ensure its participants are provided meaningful opportunities and enjoyable experiences in a safe, sportsmanlike manner. This includes, among other things, a shared responsibility with parents to nurture the physical and emotional well being of all participants. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association's primary interest is in the well being of its participants.

Statement of Purpose

The Sooke Minor Hockey Association is a part of the sporting community in our country that is committed to seeking better ways to keep our youth safe. Protecting participants from all forms of abuse and neglect, whether emotional, physical or sexual, is an important element of safety. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association considers any form of abuse or neglect to be unacceptable and will do all it can to prevent this intolerable social problem. To this end, Sooke Minor Hockey Association will promote awareness of all forms of abuse and neglect by providing educational materials and programs for participants, parents, volunteers and staff members. Through the use of these strategies, we will send a clear message to all potential abusers and sexual predators that hockey participants are not easy targets. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association is committed to the highest possible standards of care of its participants.

Policy

It is the policy of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association that there shall be no abuse or neglect, whether physical, emotional or sexual of a participant in any of its programs. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association expects every parent, volunteer and staff member to take reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of its participants and to protect them from any kind of maltreatment.



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Duty to Report

Abuse and neglect are community problems requiring urgent attention. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association is committed to help reduce and prevent the abuse and neglect of participants. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association realizes that persons working closely with children and youths have a special awareness of abusive situations. Therefore these people have a particular reporting responsibility to ensure that safety of Canada's young, by knowing their provincial protection acts and following through as required.

The Province of British Columbia has mandatory reporting laws regarding the abuse and neglect of children and youth. Consequently it is the policy of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association that any Sooke Minor Hockey Association member (volunteer, participant, team official, on ice official or staff member) who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a participant is or may be 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 detachment. The local child protection agency and/or the local police detachment may request the local association to deal with the matter reported.

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

By education all personnel the Sooke Minor Hockey Association is weaving a tighter safety web around our most precious resources – our players.

Definitions

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 youths is an abuse of power or authority and/or a breach of trust. Within British Columbia a person is considered a child up to the age of nineteen years of age.

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.



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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 hair or ears, throwing, shoving, grabbing hazing or excessive exercise.

Neglect

Neglect is the chronic inattention to the necessities of life such as clothing, shelter, nutritious diets, education, good hygiene, supervision, medical and dental care, adequate rest, safe environment, moral guidance and discipline, exercise and fresh air. This may occur in hockey when injuries are not adequately treated or players are made to play with injuries, equipment is inadequate or unsafe, non-intervention when team members are persistently harassing another player, or road trips that are not properly supervised.

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:

Contact

- Touched or fondled sexual areas
- Forced to touch another person's sexual areas
- Kissed or held in a sexual manner
- Forced to perform oral sex
- Vaginal or anal intercourse
- Vaginal or anal penetration with an object or finger
- Sexually oriented hazing

Non-contact

- Obscene remarks on phone, computer or in notes
- Voyeurism
- Shown pornography
- Forced to watch sexual acts
- Sexually intrusive questions and comments
- Forced to pose for sexual photographs or videos
- Forced to self masturbate or forced to watch others masturbate



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HARASSMENT POLICY

This policy sets out the principles and practices of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association regarding harassment.

Relationship to Recognition and Prevention of Abuse Policy

Some behaviours, which are described as harassment when directed toward an adult, may constitute abuse when directed towards a child or youth by any person with power or authority over the one being harassed. The Sooke Minor Hockey Association's Recognition and Prevention of Abuse Policy covers such behaviours. Together the two policies will address the entire spectrum of abusive and harassing behaviours.

Statement of Purpose

Sooke Minor Hockey Association (SMHA) is committed to providing a sport and work environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices.

Harassment is a form of discrimination that is prohibited by human rights legislation in Canada. In its most extreme forms, harassment can be an offence under Canada's Criminal Code. Sooke Minor Hockey Association supports the right of all its members, whether athletes, volunteers or employees to participate in all SMHA activities free from any form or harassment.

Further, the Sooke Minor Hockey Association emphasizes the importance of eliminating harassment in hockey as a key element in ensuring the safety of young participants. A sports environment that actively discourages harassment and builds relationships based on trust and mutual respect, is an environment which discourages the abuse of children and youth and encourages the overall development of the individual.

In order to further these aims, the Sooke Minor Hockey Association will make every reasonable effort to promote awareness of the problem of harassment among all its members and to respond swiftly and efficiently to complaints or disclosures of harassment.

Policy

It is the policy of Sooke Minor Hockey Association that harassment in all its forms will not be tolerated during the course of any SMHA activity or program. Accordingly, all SMHA personnel (staff, volunteers, team and on ice officials) and partners (parents, guardians) are responsible for making every reasonable effort to uphold this commitment. Specifically, this includes refraining from harassing behaviour, responding promptly and informally to minor incidents of harassment and following local and national policy guidelines for reporting or responding to more serious complaints of harassment. Players and other participants are



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expected to refrain from harassing behaviour and are encouraged to report incidents of harassment.

This policy shall not prevent a person in authority from taking immediate, informal, corrective and disciplinary action in response to behaviour that, in their view, constitutes a minor incident of harassment.

Definition

Harassment is defined as conduct, gestures or comments that are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Types of behaviour which constitute harassment and abuse include, but are not limited to:

1. Unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation
2. Condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions which undermine self esteem or diminish performance
3. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance
4. Any form of hazing
5. Behaviours such as those described above which are not directed towards individuals or groups but which have the effect of creating a negative or hostile environment
6. Unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting or pinching
7. Unwelcome flirtation, sexual advances, requests or invitations
8. Any form of physical assault
9. Any sexual offence including sexual assault

It is important to note that the behaviours described in items 6 to 9, when directed to a child or youth, constitute abuse under child protection legislation. This may also be true of other behaviours, for example certain hazing practices. When any member has reasonable belief that a minor is being abused or neglected, the duty to report provisions of the RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION OF ABUSE POLICY will come into affect.

Response and Remedies

Harassment of all kinds has been tolerated for too long in hockey, being tacitly accepted as part of the culture of the game and used by individuals who would not condone such conduct outside of the hockey environment. It is the position of the Sooke Minor Hockey Association that harassment can no longer be tolerated. Harassment is unacceptable and harmful. SMHA recognizes the serious negative impact of all types of harassment on personal dignity, individual and group development and performance, enjoyment of the game and in some cases personal safety.



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At the same time SMHA recognizes that not all incidents of harassment are equally serious in their consequences. Harassment covers a wide spectrum of behaviours and the response to harassment must be equally broad in range, appropriate to the behaviour in question and capable of providing a constructive remedy. There must be no summary justice or hasty punishment. The process of investigation and settlement of any complaint of harassment must be fair to all parties, allowing adequate opportunity for the presentation of a defense to the charges.

Minor incidents of harassment (e.g.: inappropriate jokes) should be corrected promptly and informally, taking a constructive approach with the aim of bringing about a change in negative attitudes and behaviours.

More serious incidents (e.g.: repeated taunting, any form of physical assault) should be dealt with according to SMHA Complaint Procedure. Complaints should be handled in a timely, sensitive, responsible and confidential manner. There is to be no tolerance for any reprisals taken against any party to a complaint. The names of the parties and the circumstances of the complaint should be kept confidential except where the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigation or taking disciplinary measures.

Anyone making a complaint, which is found to be clearly unfounded, false, malicious or frivolous, will be subject to discipline.