

HOCKEY CANADA

Action Bulletin

Bulletin No.: A0753

To: Officers

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Date: April 10th, 2007

File:

From: Rene Marcil, Hockey Canada

SUBJECT: DRESSING ROOM VIOLENCE / LOCKER BOXING

A new type of violence has found its way in to amateur hockey and is cause for great concern within the minor hockey system in Canada. Locker boxing is an activity that takes place when players put their hockey helmets and hockey gloves on with the intention of punching each other in a vicious manner - often in the head area.

Hockey Canada does not condone this type of behaviour or any other type of fighting between players either on or off the ice. With increased awareness and education concerning concussions in sport, it is becoming more apparent that any type of blow to the head area has the potential of causing severe injury regardless of whether or not a player is wearing a helmet. Concussion injuries can cause lengthy loss of playing time, end player's careers, and recent evidence suggests that the cumulative effects of multiple concussions can have a detrimental effect on the lives of young athletes' long term.

Coaches and team leaders are asked to work to eliminate this type of behaviour both in the dressing room and in areas where this behaviour can potentially occur by implementing prevention plans and team rules against locker boxing and fighting and by clearly defining these to all coaches, team managers, safety people and parents throughout the season. This combined with player and parent education with respect to concussions will help to eliminate this type of behaviour.

Another significant component of preventing this type of behaviour in the dressing room, or during any team function is proper team supervision. Hockey Canada stresses the importance of players being supervised at all times during team activities to help to ensure a safe environment. The Speak Out Program outlines in detail important steps that must be taken to ensure adequate supervision of players.

Hockey Canada asks all involved with the game in leadership roles to assist in ensuring that these types of behaviours are eliminated and hockey continues to offer a safe, fun, and positive experience for all involved.

In an effort to provide Hockey Canada Branches, Minor Hockey Associations and leadership personnel responsible for the supervisor of Minor Hockey Teams, with appropriate direction in dealing with this issue, you are reminded that there are excellent resources available in the Speak Out program curriculum.

Minor Hockey personnel are encouraged to visit the Minor Hockey section of the Hockey Canada website at www.hockeycanada.ca for more information on Bullying, Harassment and abuse.

During the July 2007 summer training seminar for Coach, Safety, and Speakout Master Facilitators, Hockey Canada will lead sessions on this topic, with the goal of raising awareness through Branch clinic programs in the fall of 2007-2008. A second area of focus at the seminar will be the impact of concussions in sport. Branches are encouraged to insure a wide spread distribution of information on this topic when providing updated resources to Branch course conductors for the fall and winter clinic season.

Sincerely,

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