

COACHES CONDUCT

The AHG has set a very high standard when it comes to the conduct of its coaches and managers. A **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy will be strictly enforced by its on-ice official and on-site supervisors. Our staff will be held accountable for any unacceptable behavior.

As a coach, I know that the officiating is not always at the level we expect from the Atlantic Hockey Group. Understanding that we are very passionate about the game of hockey we must always guard against allowing our emotions and frustration levels getting the best of us. As coaches we must demonstrate leadership qualities that show our players and parents a high degree of composure under adverse conditions. Remember we are teaching our kids life skills through hockey. Yelling and screaming at an official is not the example we want to demonstrate.

As well I understand that as coaches we want to make sure our players are protected. I can assure you that the Atlantic Hockey Group takes the responsibility of offering a safe and secure program for our players very seriously. We are committed to providing our spring hockey program with the best officials available as we have set a very high standard for officiating in our program. Yes officials will make mistakes however I have learned that if a coach overreacts to the officiating the following could occur;

- Players getting upset and loosing focus (possibly taking bad penalties);
- Coaching staff loosing focus on the game and the teaching component;
- Coaching staff loosing respect from certain players and parents;
- Parents following the example of the coaching staff and becoming abusive towards the officials;
- The on ice officials taking the attitude that if I get the opportunity I will stick it to this team (after all they are human.) How would your co-workers react to being talked down to? Do we really think this will make the situation better and get the best out of people?

Remember your players, therefore team, will take on the characteristics of the coach.

In closing, I hope that, as coaches, we continually look for ways to improve our skills. A great deal can be said for the importance of experience. I know that when I first began my coaching career, I was much too emotional and many times not being objective towards the officiating. I felt that every call should be going our way. I have since learned that the best coaches are extremely good at controlling their emotions. You simply need only to watch an NHL game to witness the conduct of those coaches.

Please do not interpret this message as you are not to talk or communicate with the on-ice officials. We simply ask that you do it in a professional manner, which includes having your captain ask for the official to come to the bench for discussion. This should not be done for every call you think is wrong. As well, a coach should never talk to a coach while he is standing on the player's bench. It is standard practice to come down to ice level (player's door) and converse with the official in a calm manner.

Good Luck!!