

# ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION

400 Sheldon Drive, Unit 9  
Cambridge, ON N1T 2H9  
T: 226 533.9070 F: 519 620.7476  
www.ohf.on.ca



Attention: Minor Hockey Associations

Date: December 16, 2015

RE: Respect in Sport Roll Out

Over the past few seasons, the Ontario Hockey Federation has been considering an expansion of the reach and scope of Respect in Sport initiatives, not only from the perspective of education, but also awareness.

There has also been a recurring theme communicated at a number of OHF Council and Committee meetings: improving the minor hockey experience with 'Respect in Hockey'. Discussions have ensued about where opportunities to enhance education and awareness of the message (with all stakeholders) would lie.

One of the most common reasons coaches, managers and officials, of all ages, cite for leaving sport, not just hockey, is unacceptable parent behaviour. The Respect in Sport (RIS) Parent Program, Canada's only online training and certification program, complements the Respect in Sport Activity Leader/Coach Program that is already mandatory for all team officials (coaches, trainers and team managers) in the OHF. The RIS Parent Program helps define a model of behaviour for all parents and creates a more rewarding, safe and respectful environment for everyone involved.

The RIS Parent Program focuses on a number of key elements, among them:

Using guilt on your child	Misplaced enthusiasm	Making the "bigs"
Losing perspective	Handling winning & losing	Balance not burnout
Making the team	Injury management	Physical development
Establishing positive relationships officials, coaches, teammates, opponents & other parents		
Ensuring safe environments through better understanding of bullying, abuse & harassment		

Several Hockey Canada branches across the country have mandated the RIS Parent Program; including Alberta, which was the first fully integrated Respect Branch requiring Team Officials, Parents and On-Ice Officials to complete Respect training. Two OHF Member Partners have already mandated the program for parents, the Minor Hockey Alliance of Ontario (ALLIANCE Hockey) and the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA).

Anecdotal information from Alberta and other Hockey Canada branches, including ALLIANCE Hockey and the OMHA, has confirmed that the number of discipline hearings involving parents has significantly decreased since the implementation of the RIS Parent Program.

Accordingly, at its November 7, 2015 meeting, the OHF Minor Council approved the following resolution:

***That the Respect in Sport Parent Program be adopted by all OHF Minor Hockey Member Partners, effective September 1, 2016.***



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This means, starting next season, at least one parent or guardian of each player (under the age of 18) who is registered in minor hockey in the OHF will be required to complete the Respect in Sport Parent Program as a condition of participation. The one-hour online course is a proactive, educational program that empowers parents with the tools to ensure the game is enjoyable and respectful for themselves, their children and all other stakeholders in the game.

Additional resources and support to assist with implementation will be provided to OHF Member Partners. As the game of hockey continues to evolve it is the responsibility of us all to change with it – but more importantly, to be the agents for positive change. Ultimately, we seek to provide the very best programming, as well as a safe and enjoyable environment in which to enjoy all the positive opportunities hockey has to offer.

“This program encourages positive behaviour, effective communication, and provides parents with valuable tools, which can only enhance the enjoyment of our great game for all stakeholders,” commented OHF President, Tony Foresi. “Value-added programming, including Respect in Sport, is one component of the OHF’s ongoing commitment to its membership, to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all participants.”

The OHF supports its Member Partners encouraging all parents to take advantage of this online educational tool. Program completion will be automatically updated in the Hockey Canada Registry (HCR).

“It sets a standard of appropriate rules for everyone. And, it empowers good parents to be better,” said Wayne McNeil, co-founder of Respect in Sport.

## ***About Respect in Sport***

Respect in Sport is Canada’s only on-line bullying, abuse, harassment and neglect prevention program for coaches and community leaders. Founded in 2004 by partners Wayne McNeil and former NHL hockey player Sheldon Kennedy, Respect in Sport has been developed in consultation with the Canadian Red Cross to protect youth, inform leaders, and mitigate an organization's liability. Respect in Sport is an ideal solution for organizations looking for cost-effective, consistent and empowering programs which can easily be delivered to your entire membership.

[www.respectinsport.com](http://www.respectinsport.com)



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