



KEEP IT SAFE

Hockey is a highly technical game that is designed to be played in a skillful, safe manner. While accidents do occur in sport, there are many things we as coaches, players, parents and umpires can do to ensure that these accidents are minimized. At all times during trainings and practices mouth guards, shin-pads and appropriate footwear should be worn. It is also strongly recommended that a protective glove be worn, particularly on the left hand. Safety is the number one priority. If a participant poses a threat to the safety of others they should be temporarily escorted from the field and showed how to make changes so as to play hockey in a skillful and safe way.

UMPIRES:

- Your first priority is to keep the game safe. If a player is demonstrating dangerous play be quick to notify the player of your concerns. If the dangerous play continues, the player needs to be removed from the game until their play is rectified.

COACHES:

- Your first priority is to keep the game safe. Encourage skills commensurate with participants age and developmental abilities. Novice hockey players should be encouraged to push pass as their main mode of passing. Hitting can be introduced, but short-handle application should be encouraged (hands further down the stick) and emphasis placed on the stick swing remaining below the shoulder – both on upswing and follow-through. If your participant cannot hit the ball safely they should be encouraged to push pass until their hitting has developed the necessary control. Tomahawk (reverse) hitting should be discouraged at the novice level.

- Remove players from the game/training if they are exhibiting a dangerous playing style and talk to them about how they can play the game in a safe manner.
- Face masks are highly recommended for all field players in a defensive penalty corner scenario.
- Encourage participants to use their skills to move around opposition players in congestion rather than hit/push the ball into a player in front of them.
- Teaching of the danger zone (see illustration below) and the safe zone. The danger zone is anywhere within the radius of a player's stick when in hitting motion. Players should remain out of the danger zone when an opposition player is hitting a ball.
- Teach how to tackle safely. Players should never enter into a tackle behind an opposition player with the ball.

