



CHAPTER SIX

Conducting a Parent Meeting

WHY SHOULD I CONDUCT A PARENT'S MEETING?

Failure to actively engage the parent's on your team is one of those big issues that is often overlooked by a coach, which can create an environment where the ability of the coach to be effective with the players is greatly reduced and sometimes can lead to the dismissal or resignation of the coach. It is essential, therefore, that the coach address the parents directly, early and often to assure that the communication between them is open and that the parents clearly understand what the coaches objectives are for the team, the players, himself and the parents. Many "coaching failures" are attributable, ultimately, not to their ability to coach but to their inability to effectively manage the relationship between themselves and the parents. Given that, the best way to start the relationship is to conduct a parents meeting at the beginning of the season.

This parents meeting is designed to provide the coach the forum to review the key topics for the team for the season both on and off the ice. It is the opportunity for the coach to discuss candidly with the parents about their role and responsibilities as part of the team. The parents need to be reminded or educated on the importance balance of sports and home life, the responsibilities and acceptance of discipline, the manner in which they can effectively interface with the coach in the course of his or her role as the coach and the responsibilities of the players to the team and their teammates.

It provides the coach the opportunity to discuss the philosophies and objectives he or she has on hockey and for the team and what the expectations and outcomes should be for the player and the team for the year. Additionally, it is the opportunity to let the parent know how to measure progress and success and what accountabilities the coach has in that definition of success. Finally, it gives the coach the time to let the parents know that he or she will be a good steward and role model in their childs development, enjoyment and safety. This is a game, a child's game that when managed correctly can be a tremendous life experience development tool for the player. The coach wants both him or herself and the parents with the same agenda concerning the welfare of the player. The only way to do that is to communicate and the only way to communicate is to meet. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT PARENT'S MEETINGS ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THE SEASON AS ON-ICE DRILLS ARE.**

OUTLINE FOR CONDUCTING A PARENT'S MEETING

AGENDA

- Introduction 5 minutes
- Philosophy 10 minutes
- The Coach 5 minutes
- Parents in Hockey 20 minutes
- Skill Development Program 2 minutes
- Coaching Education Program 2 minutes
- Parents Awareness Code 4 minutes
- Other Issues 10 minutes
- Closing Remarks 2 minutes

PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH HOCKEY

- Growth and Development
- Increase Participation
- Skill Development
- Safe Environment
- Fun and Enjoyment

COACHING

- Goals of the program with respect to:
 - Fun
 - Skill development
 - Developing friendships
 - Athlete success
 - Winning
 - Participation
 - Fitness
- Policies
 - Cuts
 - Missed practices
 - Awards

PARENTS IN HOCKEY

- In the Stands
- Car and Home
- At Practice
- At the Rink

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

- Fun and Skills
- Basic Hockey Skills
- Curriculum
- Positive, Non-Competitive Atmosphere
- Self-Respect and Self-Discipline

COACHING PROGRAM

- Comprehensive
- Education Levels
- High Performance Workshops
- Skill Workshops
- ACE Directors

PARENTS AWARENESS

- Parents Code of Conduct

OTHER ISSUES

- Parents Expectations
- Values of Youth Hockey
- Proper Equipment
- Safety
- Parents and Officials
- Expense of the Game
- Drug Awareness
- Parent/Spectator Zero Tolerance Policy