

## Discussing Anti-Discrimination Policies Related to Gender Identity and Gender Expression

### Pre-Season Chat Checklist

Coaches, Assistant Coaches and training staff are responsible for making sure that players understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to Hockey Canada's Ontario Branch policies. This resource offers a checklist of information that should be communicated to players about the Ontario Branch anti-discrimination policies that pertain to gender identity and gender expression during their pre-season talks with their teams. Staff may shape these conversations in consideration of the age group, social dynamics, and prior knowledge of the team they are coaching. Conversations about discrimination should not end with the pre-season chat but should be reinforced as needed throughout the season.

#### **Introductory Pronoun Check-Ins**

- Pre-season chats are a great opportunity for everyone on your team, including coaches, assistant coaches and volunteers to share the name and gender pronoun by which they wish to be called.
- Explain to your team that referring to someone by the pronouns they've requested is a way to show someone that you respect who they are.
- Explain that it is important to ask for and share gender pronouns, just like names, because it is not something you can always tell just by looking at someone. Tell players that it is okay to make mistakes but that it is important to show that they are trying to remember by simply apologizing and correcting themselves if they do slip up.
- Start by introducing yourself and your gender pronouns to your team. You can say, "I'm [name] and I go by the pronouns [insert pronouns]."
- By including pronoun check-ins during introductions as a routine practice, regardless of whether there are trans or gender diverse people on your team that you are aware of, you will proactively create an inclusive and affirming environment that positively acknowledges the possibility of gender diversity.

## Discuss Players' Rights/Responsibilities as per Hockey Canada's Ontario Branches Anti-Discrimination Policies Pertaining to Gender Identity/Gender Expression

- Explain that the standard of respect in Hockey means that it is everyone's right to be respected and treated equally and to enjoy an environment at hockey that is free from discrimination and harassment. Explain that rights and responsibilities go hand in hand and therefore it is also everyone's responsibility to do their part to help create a discrimination and harassment free environment. This means treating everyone with respect. You may wish to go over the general definitions of discrimination and harassment with your players. (see Glossary in Resource Downloads for this training for a refresher on these definitions.)
- State that this standard is outlined in Hockey Canada's Ontario Branches Policies and Ontario Human Rights Law and that it explicitly protects people from being discriminated against or harassed because of their *gender identity* and/or *gender expression*, in addition to numerous other "protected grounds" (For the definition and list of protected grounds, as well as the definitions of gender identity and expression, see Glossary, included in Resources Downloads for this training).
- Elaborate on the meaning of discrimination and harassment based on gender identity and/or gender expression. To do this you may wish to reference the pronoun check-in as an entry point into this conversation. Explain that it is everyone's right to define and express their gender without fear of being discriminated against or harassed. State that this means that everyone has the right to be referred to by the name and gender pronoun they request and the right to use the washroom or dressing room (or any other gender-specific space) where they feel most comfortable. Explain that failing to respect someone's gender pronouns repeatedly, bullying or making inappropriate comments about the way someone identifies or expresses gender, or doing anything to make gendered washrooms or dressing rooms unsafe, inaccessible spaces, are all examples of discrimination because of gender identity and/or expression. (for more specific examples, see Resource Downloads, "What Counts as Discrimination Based on Gender Identity and/or Gender Expression"). Stress that everyone is responsible for holding themselves and one another accountable to this standard of respect and that it works in all directions, which means staff and volunteers also have these rights and responsibilities.
- Review the process for reporting incidents of discrimination/harassment that players witness or experience first hand. Communicate that it is everyone's right

and responsibility to ask for support/ assistance from the MHA if they experience discrimination to the best of their ability.

## **Define “Accommodations” and Discuss Related Rights/ Responsibilities**

- Explain to players, that despite positive efforts to make all aspects of hockey safe, equitable and accessible for everyone regardless of gender identity or expression or any of the protected grounds discussed earlier, sometimes people continue to face barriers to participating fully and equally in hockey.
- Convey to players that if they face any unresolved barriers to participating fully and equally in hockey because of one of those protected grounds mentioned earlier, that they have the right to be provided with a special arrangement that will help them participate more fully. Explain that these special arrangements are called “accommodations”. Give a few general and hockey-related examples of accommodations to help explain the concept. Being provided with a sign language interpreter is an example of an accommodation that may help a person who is deaf do a part of their job. In hockey, a person may have a need for extra privacy when changing before or after playing. This need may be related to gender identity or to other protected grounds such as disability or religion. The special arrangements that are made to resolve these needs are also called accommodations.
- Explain that the right to be accommodated also comes with responsibility. Communicate to players that if they experience an unresolved obstacle that prevents them from participating fully in hockey because of one of those protected grounds, that they have the responsibility to send a written accommodation request to the MHA and to work together with the MHA in coming up with an appropriate and reasonable accommodation that resolves their need.

## **Stress Importance of Respecting the Confidentiality of Others**

- Make it clear to players that if someone has confided in them with personal or sensitive information about gender identity, whether they are seeking support about a struggle they are having or sharing their plans to come out, that it is important to make sure they know exactly what that person wants to keep private, to whom and what they do want others to know. Outing (sharing

information about someone's gender identity) without their consent is also an example of discrimination.

- Emphasize the importance of respecting confidentiality as an important part of honouring the standard of respect discussed earlier.