



YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION / OFFICIATING RELATIONSHIPS

Officials play a significant role in the environment that is created for our youth hockey participants. A strong working relationship with the local youth hockey and officiating leaders is important for the overall growth of the game and the ability to create a positive environment for kids to play. In a recent survey conducted of local youth hockey associations, it was discovered that over 2/3rds of local youth hockey organizations have no formal relationship or direct lines of communication with the officials group that works their games.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

The USA Hockey Officiating Program has experienced a significant reduction in the number of registered officials during the past few seasons. The concern is whether the number of current officials will be enough to meet officiating demands in the future based on an all-time high in the number of registered players in the 8-&-under age classification. In order to reduce this trend, a commitment to recruit new officials along with a greater commitment to retain those good officials that are currently in the program is a must. The Officiating Program is creating a new volunteer position within each District – District Officiating Development Coordinator – who will work with local areas to address these concerns and promote initiatives aimed at officiating development.

WHY IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH HOCKEY AND OFFICIALS NECESSARY?

- Partnership in the identification and recruitment of new officials.
- Ownership in initiatives designed to assist in developing officials.
- Ability to resolve officiating issues in a productive and efficient manner.
- Respectful dialogue on establishing game fees.
- Improved quality of local officiating.
- An overall better atmosphere and more positive environment for the game.

RECOMMENDATIONS - *Local Youth Hockey Associations*

- Identify an Officiating Liaison who serves as the conduit for communication.
- Support and encourage the Officiating development initiatives such as mentoring and evaluation.
- Develop an agreed upon mechanism/procedure to properly address officiating/coaching concerns.
- Forge a partnership that is designed to create a positive hockey environment for all.

Local Officiating Groups

- Identify a Youth Hockey Liaison to serve as a conduit for communication.
- The officials' assignor follows the USA Hockey Officiating Assignment Guidelines.
- The official's group follows the recommended USA Hockey officiating system guidelines.
- Take advantage of cross-ice officiating opportunities, shadowing and mentor programs.
- Establish an USA Hockey Officials Evaluation Program for all levels of play.
- Actively recruits, accepts and encourages new officials.
- Provide ongoing education for officials, parents and coaches.
- Provide opportunities for advancement and development of officials.
- Strongly enforce the USA Hockey "Points of Emphasis" and Standard of Play initiatives.
- Follow the USA Hockey officiating procedures and guidelines.
- Take a vested interest in the success of the local program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION - PLEASE GO TO USAHOCKEY.COM.