Discipline in Children's Hockey

Discipline in sport should always be positive in focus, providing the structure and rules that allow participants to learn to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage young people to become more responsible for themselves and therefore more independent.

Children should be helped to become responsible about the decisions and choices they make within sport, particularly when they are likely to make a difference between playing fairly and unfairly. There should be no place for fighting, over-aggressive or dangerous behaviour in sport.

<u>The Use of Sanctions</u>

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into consideration when using sanctions.

Sanctions should be fair and consistent and in the case of a persistent offence, should be progressively applied. They should never be used to retaliate or to make a Sports Leader feel better. The following steps are suggested and should always be used in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for young people:

. • Rules should be stated clearly and agreed.

. • A warning should be given if a rule is broken.

• A sanction (for example, use of time out) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time. The use of green, yellow and red cards is encouraged, irrespective of the sport.

• If a rule is broken for the third time the child should be spoken to, and if necessary, the parents/guardians may be involved.

• Sanctions should not be applied if a Sports Leader is not comfortable with them. If an appropriate action cannot be devised right away, the child should be told that the matter will be dealt with later, at a specified time and as soon as possible.

. • A child should not be sanctioned for making errors when s/he is playing.

• Physical activity (e.g. running laps or doing push-ups) should not be used as a sanction. To do so only causes a child to resent physical activity, something that s/he should learn to enjoy throughout his/her life.

• Sanctions should be used sparingly. Constant sanctioning and criticism can cause a child to turn away from sport.

• Once sanctions have been imposed, it is important to make the young person feel s/he is a valued member of the group again

• Where relevant some sanctions may need to be recorded and parents informed.