

## Clarity of Double Team vs. Help Defense and Full Court Press

General Reminders: We give more leniency around traveling in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade when the dribbler is above the top of the circle. If the player gains an obvious advantage by running past the defender before dribbling the ball, then we of course will make the travel call. Also, we use words of instruction (and then our whistles if necessary) to remind the defensive players to “fall back” once their opponent has secured a rebound or loose ball. Finally, we noticed this past weekend that your help is needed to teach your defenders to not start playing the ballhandler until they’ve achieved front court status (both feet and the ball have crossed over the division line). Thanks!

On to the main topic - we are not out here to penalize teams on this “style” since the “no double team” isn’t actually a rule in the NFHS Basketball book. This same “style” of defense is used locally in the BDL in 5<sup>th</sup> grade too. The purpose/spirit of the rule is to create a more open court flow of the ball from the back court and to the more successful start of your offensive plays in the front court.

**Help defense** IS allowed anywhere in the front court as long as there aren’t two or more defenders on the ball handler for more than a moment, and there is an effort to recover to the person they were originally guarding. Man-to-man defense ONLY is allowed at 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade levels UNLESS applying help defense or the ball handler has now entered the lane. One Coach asked me why we don’t just say the rule it is “man-to-man only EXCEPT in the lane”. Very true, you can have as many defenders on the ball once it is in the lane.

Screens - teach your players as you wish with regards to dealing with screens. If the ball goes out on the wing to a player on a pass, and a screen is set/occurs outside the lane, you have two options. You can either teach them to call a switch or have the defender fight around the screen to guard his man (no switch). In that situation, the defender guarding the screener should be able to step out on the screen and guard the ball until the ball handlers man fights through the screen to guard their person again. At that time, there needs to be an immediate recovery from the helper to their original person. As long as both players are not actively guarding the same player/ball handler, there is NO actual double team.

The illegal defense should be called by our officials if the momentary double team results in a turnover OR it lasts more than a moment. If the ball is already loose prior to a double team/help defense anywhere on the court due to a bad pass or a dribble off the foot, it is fair game for all players.

**Full court press** in a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade game is ONLY allowed during the last minute of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter or any Over-time period. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade is allowed to full court press without double-teaming throughout the game when the lead is 15 points or less. No zone or trapping is allowed anywhere on the court. So again, no trapping/zone is allowed in the backcourt. One clear way to see a violation of this rule is if more defenders are in the backcourt than the number of offensive players.