

Hi all -

Below are our compiled notes from our attendance at the USAH's Empowering Women in Leadership conference last month in Anaheim. Please let us know if you have any additional questions.

Thanks so much. Be well.

- Sue & Brad

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## Speaker Sessions

**Speaker:** *Maria Dennis*, Player Health and Safety & Associate Counsel at the NHLPA (as such Maria is a part of the NHL/NHLPA's newly formed Female Advisory Committee). This program recommends:

1. Build and identify women leaders and role models
  - a. Women hockey ambassador program - pairing NHL and National/Pro League women players.
2. Market effectively, communicating to women as a distinct audience.
3. Attract, engage, develop and retain women in the sport beyond the 13 yr old.

**Speaker:** *Dr. Lisa Hinkelman* ([ROX, Ruling our eXperiences](#)):

Website: [www.rulingourexperiences.org](http://www.rulingourexperiences.org) \*\*

The top issue facing girls (5th-12th grade) as reported by them? Drama. Formal definition of drama? "The inability to manage conflict." Provide education, support and practice on how to manage conflict.

Top themes from her research on girls.

1. Relationship. They matter. Skills of trust, communication and girl-to-girl support must be learned and practiced. "If I say what I think, you won't like me." Help girls cultivate opinions and express boundaries. This leads them to trust their voice.
2. Confidence. Body Image is the #1 influence on confidence and we reinforce this by commenting, constantly, on appearance. Confidence comes through experience, not compliments. Give them space to be vulnerable and practice; be aware that "successful" girls are equally untrained and insecure; be aware of language, culture and norms that contribute to body preoccupation and shaming.
3. Leadership. No one is a "born leader" - prepare the cultivation of skills so they can learn to lead, which is hard.
4. 61% of Female High School students with 4.0 or above GPA are student athletes. \*\*

**Speaker:** *Kendall Coyne Schofield*: To the USAH Girls/Women's Section, "These are the people who made my childhood dreams come true." Video that participating in sports gives you benefits for life. You must be the best version of yourself. Have confidence in your passion and surround yourself with people who support you. You can only control your attitude and effort - every day is a day to prepare. Multisport is key. What can each player do to improve her performance? "We can't set up the next generation for failure."

1. Go to rinks / training locations and encourage them to insure that they are providing equal facilities for male and female athletes. \*\*

2. As leaders in our communities, we are never going to make everyone happy. \*\*
3. Every day is a day to get better. \*\*

**Speaker:** *Celia Slater* ([Building Trust - TrueNorth Sports](#)) - Recommended books/materials:

- Ted Talk on Trust and Consequences by Simon Sinek “trust is a feeling, built by leaders who make us feel safe”
- The Speed of Trust by Stephen Covey “trust is equal parts character and competence.”
- Brene Brown’s [Dare to Lead](#) : Group worked through Brown’s BRAVING worksheet. Review Super Soul video on [Anatomy of Trust](#) (very powerful). BRAVING stands for Boundaries, Reliability, Accountability, Vault, Integrity, NonJudgement, Generosity.

**Speaker:** *Ashland Johnson* (Inclusion Playbook). Unique challenges for women in sport

- Visibility
- Representation
- Participation
- Compensation

Female athletes play 40% of all sports and get 4% of media coverage. We worked through scenarios to increase our awareness of challenges and potential solutions. Remember that access is key - when you get the space made for you at the table be sure to add another chair!

**Speaker:** *Dr. Tiffany Jones* (*Find your Voice*): Who you are is good enough - own it. We are always judging. And judging isn’t about who is being judged it is about who’s doing the judging. Stop letting it affect you since it’s all about them. Confidence comes from experience which comes from practice. Give them room to practice and understand their value. “Comparison is the thief to joy.” Make sure you correct them - it’s not “Coach makes me feel....” it’s “I felt this....” If a student uses social media more than 2 hours/day there is 80% uptick in suicidal thoughts. College students are on phones 13 hours/day - social media 6-9 hours. Need to be careful to train them that a fail does not equal being a failure. Did an exercise called Shitty First Draft where you write down all your insecurities, fears and worse case scenarios. Write it out. Own it. Then identify where all this silly stuff comes from so you can help yourself to change the inner voices. Don’t give you power away.

**Speaker:** *Katie Homgren* (*Growing the Game*): Groups did an exercise in diagramming their programs. How do you explain your offerings to non-hockey families/players? Focus on:

1. Retention
2. Acquisition
3. Conversion

**Speaker:** *Linda Low/Sarah McQuade* (*Communications*): handouts on how to ask more successful questions and prepare for strong discussions. Question yourself - are you listening or just waiting to speak? Be purposeful and prepared. Good questions can start with: What..How...When..Tell me...Talk me through...We practiced some tough conversations with new skills and a worksheet for support.

**Speaker:** *Annie Camins* (*Connecting with the Community*), Senior Exec Director, Fan Development at the Chicago Blackhawks. Excellent presentation of what the Blackhawks are doing to invest in their

communities and their girls. Annie estimated the programs cost them 1.5-3 million. Discussion about cost share on grants (Hockey related revenue designation for each team).

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### **Wrap Up Session**

All attendees were given the following assignments:

1. Present to your board to tell them what you learned and how it could be implemented
2. Propose one initiative or event to support female leadership or grow girls hockey
3. Host a session on leadership topic of your choice for your affiliate
4. Identify and mentor 2 females in your affiliate
5. Connect with local professional/collegiate team (NHL, AHL, NCAA, ACHA, etc).

### **For Discussion at the MAHA Girls'/Women's Committee**

#### **1. How do we want to engage with the Red Wings?**

- a. We all have a number of former contacts with the RW
- b. New contacts, such as Maria Denis, Annie Camins, Alyssa Gagliardi and Lyndsey Frye, are supportive and allies in encouraging better rapport with RW's and growing girls' hockey. Note Maria has a past engagement with MI hockey. Annie was very encouraging and her club is also working in a large urban environment. Alyssa & Lyndsey are part of a growing group of women hired specifically by NHL clubs to develop and support programming.
- c. Would like to schedule a meeting with Phil Pierce (Fan Development,/Youth Hockey Manager at the Detroit Red Wings) - goal to better understand the RW perspective on how their organization supports/grows/is interested in both girls hockey and the female market.

Context for a conversation with the Wings:

Alyssa Gagliardi, Girls and Women's Youth & Amateur Hockey Specialist at the Carolina Hurricanes

- Alyssa was a fellow attendee. She pursued the Canes directly and basically told them that they weren't doing enough and convinced them to create a position for community engagement on the Girls/Women's side. They created the position, posted it, she interviewed for it and they hired her. She is willing to let us pick her brain more on how she went about things. There has been a lot recently about NHL clubs investing directly in the growth of Girls/Women's hockey. Wings should be able to see that growing Girls/Women's hockey can only grow their fanbase and help them sell tickets/merchandise. A legitimate women's professional league is coming...they won't want to be behind everyone else when that happens.
- Lyndsey Frye was not able to attend the conference. Brad was able to meet her during the Coaching Education Training in Denver last summer and she is always open to assisting in the area of more engagement on the Girls/Women's side.
- Other programs:
  - St. Louis Blues: <https://www.nhl.com/blues/news/nhl-blues-make-investment-to-grow-womens-hockey-in-st-louis-at-all-star-weekend/c-314246852?tid=313250308>

- NY Islanders:  
[https://www.usahockey.com/news\\_article/show/1037333?fbclid=IwAR0DbWRGDjr7EIGvjJ5l\\_ZzMsKvXdwGH9oKUwmkpMknISmCemFyiloNjYJl](https://www.usahockey.com/news_article/show/1037333?fbclid=IwAR0DbWRGDjr7EIGvjJ5l_ZzMsKvXdwGH9oKUwmkpMknISmCemFyiloNjYJl)
- NY Islanders: [www.nhl.com/islanders/northwell/girlselite](http://www.nhl.com/islanders/northwell/girlselite)

2. **How do we incorporate materials and skills from the conference in CEP programming?**  
Do we do a separate program at each level? Do we request that each clinic has female programming contact available?
3. **Additional professional assistance?** Many of the speakers are willing to travel to do educational programming with groups/clubs/teams. Do we invest in some strategic sessions with these speakers? Or partner with them to do train-the-trainer with mentees we identify?
4. **What other opportunities are there for improving the girls game in MI?**