

# Central Vermont Youth Hockey

## Locker Room Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport, Central Vermont Youth Hockey (CVYH) has created the following policy for members to follow. The safety and protection of our participants is of utmost importance to the Board of Directors, so that we create and maintain a safe, clean and enjoyable environment for all CVYH members and participants. CVYH adheres to the USA Hockey's Safe Sport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. CVYH has zero-tolerance to any of the above. This policy covers any CVYH events, including games, practices and fundraising events.

To help prevent abuse and misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, CVYH has adopted a policy that incorporates locker room supervision, clothes-changing rules for mixed gender teams and overall proper behavior of players.

### Supervision in Locker Room

It is the policy of CVYH to have at least two responsible adults present and directly monitoring the locker room during all team events and at all times while participants are present. A responsible adult must be a background checked and safe sport trained coach, team parent, and/or CVYH volunteer as approved by the Safe Sport Coordinator of CVYH. It is the responsibility of the two adult supervisors to assure that only participants (*coaches and players*) are in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. Designated Team Parents and coaches are responsible for conducting a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before and as players arrive. Only adults approved by the Safe Sport Coordinator of CVYH are permitted in the locker rooms for ages 10U and up.

Any meetings with a CVYH participant in a non-public area (e.g. locker rooms, vehicles, or other enclosed/private meeting areas) shall require another adult approved by the Safe Sport Coordinator of CVYH to be present in the meeting with the coach/parent coordinator/or other adult at all times.

### Parents in Locker Room

Except for players at the younger age groups (8U and under) we discourage parents from entering the locker room unless it is truly necessary. If a player needs assistance with their uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask parents to let the coach(es) or designated Team Parent know beforehand that they will be helping their player.

With our youngest age groups, it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches may ask that the parents leave for a short time before or after the game so that coaches may address the players without distraction.

## Mixed Gender Teams and Locker Room Use

As a team sport in which youth teams can often include players of different genders, special circumstances may exist that can increase the chance of abuse or misconduct. If the team consists of players of different genders, the privacy rights of all players must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. It is not acceptable under USA Hockey's Sexual Misconduct Policy for persons to be observing the opposite gender while they dress or undress. There are a variety of ways to comply with the above tenets, and what works may depend on the locker rooms that are available at a particular facility. Although there are likely other acceptable ways to accommodate teams of different genders, below are some other options for compliance with USA Hockey's Coed Locker Room Policy:

1) Minimum Attire. All players should be required to arrive at the rink wearing their hockey base layers or shorts and t-shirts (in good condition - no holes or tears in clothing) under their street clothes. All members of the team must have this minimum attire before entering a co-ed locker room so that no player of one gender has the opportunity to see players of the opposite gender in a state of dress/undress. If a player is not wearing the required minimum attire, that player can be directed to a restroom or private area to change into his/her minimum attire before entering the locker room.

2) Separate Locker Rooms. A second option is for the program to have players of different genders change/dress in separate, supervised locker rooms. Then approximately ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes before each game/practice everyone is to be ready in gear in one designated locker room so the coach can address the entire team. If a player (whether boy or girl) is not fully dressed by the time the coach arrives, then that player must go to a separate locker room or bathroom to finish dressing. The onus is on the players being properly dressed when the coaches begin preparing the team for the practice or game.

3) Alternate Use of One Locker Room. Another option is the alternate use of a single locker room. Players of one gender dress in the locker room while players of the opposite gender wait outside. When the one group is ready (this may mean dressed in gear but not skates and helmets), then the players switch places and the players in gear wait for players of opposite gender to get dressed. No coaching is to be done until all the players are together in the locker room. Taking turns is a means of reasonable accommodation; neither gender group should be favored, nor should one group be the group who always has to wait to change. Where possible, when players of different genders are together in the locker room, there should be at least two adults in the locker room that have been properly screened in compliance with USA Hockey Screening Policy. USA Hockey would consider it acceptable to have one locker room monitor immediately outside the locker room and regularly checking in on the locker room, but two locker room monitors is always preferable. If there are two monitors, then they can monitor from inside the locker room. Having only one person inside a locker room can expose that person to allegations, so a second person can help protect one another from allegations.

## Cell Phones and Other Technology Devices

Use of a cell phone and/or other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are ***not permitted*** in the locker rooms. The use of cell phones can be distracting for players and interfere with coaching and player conversations. In addition, the opportunity for inappropriate locker room photos exists, and may cause harm to those that were not prepared for photos to be taken and/or shared. The supervising parent or coach will ask that cell phones be kept out of the locker room.

CVYH requests that video games are not used in the locker room at practices and games. Please keep these games in the snack area, viewing area or in the car. It may be permissible to have the Team Manager collect phones before entering the locker room.

### **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

CVYH follows a zero tolerance policy and prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers of CVYH may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct that violates the USA Hockey Safe Sport Policies.

### **Food and Drink in the Locker Room**

At times players, coaches and their families will have food or drink in the locker room prior or post games and practices. CVYH would like to continue a positive relationship with our home and away rinks and encourages respect for all rink properties. Therefore, CVYH asks that members be sure to leave their locker room area clean and bring all food and waste out of the locker room when they leave. Adult supervisors monitoring the locker room are encouraged to help players leave their locker room area clean.

The implementation of these above stated policies require and deserve the assistance of all players, coaches, parents and volunteers. Thank you for supporting the safety and well-being of all players and their families.