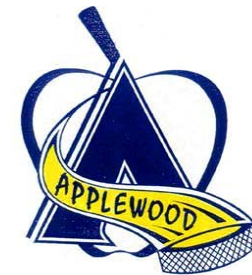


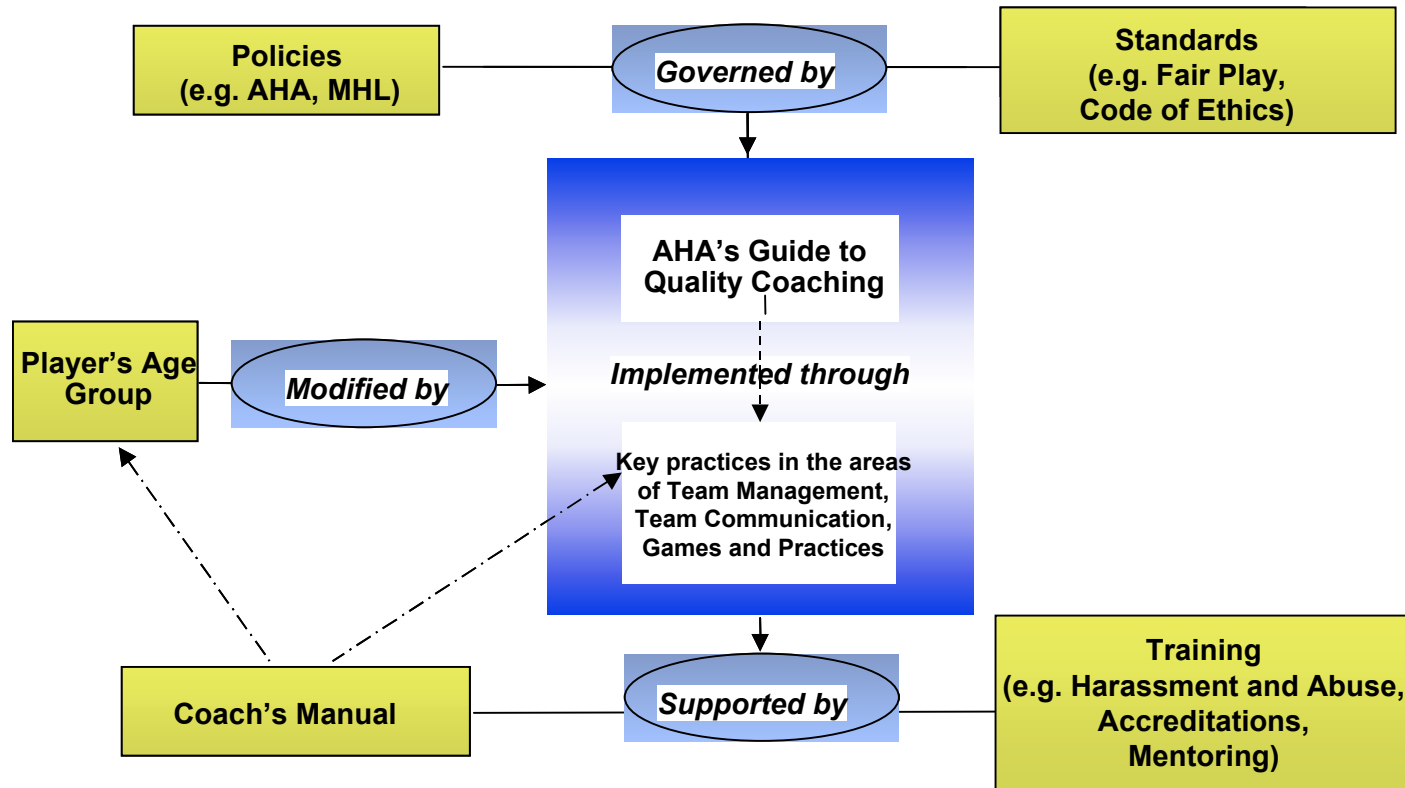


AHA Guide to Quality Coaching





AHA Coaching – Big Picture





Program

- ◆ Key practices for coaching
 - Tryouts and Convening
 - Demystifying “equal playing time”
 - Consensus decision-making



Key Practices for Coaching

- “Key” practices are:
 - Practices which the AHA deems important for effective coaching
 - Practices for which all coaching staff’s should strive towards
 - Grouped into Categories
 - All treated equally
 - no one practice is weighted as more important than others



Categories

- Team Management
 - Coaching practices associated with tryouts, team budgeting, convening, planning of tournaments, trips, fund raising, ice-duty, and year-end activities
 - e.g. Post season, close up activities
- Games and Practices
 - Coaching practices associated with the planning and conduct of games and practices



Categories

- Team Communication
 - Coaching practices associated with communication between coaches and parents, players, convenors, volunteers and the AHA board of directors (e.g. AHA Head Coach) involved in AHA activities and events



Team Management

- Is a head coach assigned to each team?
- Does the coaching staff prepare a plan for how they will conduct/slice up coaching duties?
- If this is an “A” hockey team, does the head coach and coaching staff develop a “budget” for the year?
 - Has the budget been arrived at through consensus?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff start off the year explaining their mission, vision, and expectations to parents and players?



Team Management

- Does the coach have an adequate coaching staff?
 - Examples of a coaching staff may include a motivator, trainer, forwards coach, defense coach, goalie coach
- Does the coaching staff hold periodic meetings with parents (or supply handouts) to bring them up to date with upcoming events?
 - (e.g. fundraising, tournaments, coaches survey)



Team Management

- Does the head coach and/or coaching staff attend coaching meetings scheduled by the AHA board of directors, AHA Head Coach or Coaching Committee?
- Does the head coach and/or coaching staff provide periodic updates to the AHA Head Coach (or Coaching Committee) on how the team is doing and any challenges or problems that exist?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff follow the coaching guidelines set by the AHA board of directors?



Team Management

- Does the coaching staff solicit help from parents on the team?
 - (e.g. tournament preparation, snack duties)
- Does the coaching staff provide realistic expectations from parents?
 - (e.g. reasonable practice times)



Team Management

- If this is a house league team (not an “A” team), did the coaching staff refrain from making any advance commitments to player(s) in the off season?
- If this is a house league team (not an “A” team), does the coach not actively solicit players for the following year before the current year has been completed?



Team Games and Practices

- Do all coaches on the coaching staff have a good knowledge of hockey?
 - (e.g. do they participate on the ice during practices, can they skate)
- If this is Pre-Novice (i.e. 4, 5 and 6 year olds) does the coaching staff teach players the fundamentals of hockey?
 - (e.g. turns, balance, agility, gliding, proper use of edges of skates, bending the knees)



Team Games and Practices

- Does the coaching staff teach the “technical skills” required in playing hockey?
 - (e.g. shooting, skating, passing and receiving, checking - if applicable)
- Does the coaching staff teach “individual tactics”?
 - (e.g. fake, drive to the net, protecting the puck, 1/1’s, body contact - if applicable, pinning)
- If player is of Novice age or higher (i.e. 7 and up), does the coaching staff teach “team tactics”?
 - (e.g. Give and Go, Headman, pass to Open Ice, 2/1, 3/2, crossing and switching)



Team Games and Practices

- If the player is of Peewee age or higher player (i.e. 11 and up), does the coaching staff teach “team play systems”?
 - (e.g. defensive tactics, penalty killing, offensive tactics, powerplay, breakout drills)
- If the player is of Bantam age or higher (i.e. 13 and up), does the coaching staff teach “team strategies”?
 - (e.g. “styles” of play to combat the opposition, such as playing more offensive, more defensive – the trap, formations and rotations)



Team Games and Practices

- At practices, does the coaching staff explain (i.e. verbalize) their expectation for each drill?
- At practices, does the coaching staff demonstrate “new” drills before asking players to execute them?
- At practices, does the coaching staff give players adequate time for practicing drills?
- At practices, does the coaching staff tell players how they are doing with regards to the drills being performed?



Team Games and Practices

- Does each player receive equitable attention from the coaching staff during practices?
- Are the players being properly addressed by name by all coaches?
- Does the coaching staff appropriately assess each player in terms of their strengths and weaknesses?
- Are the hockey weaknesses that a player may have addressed appropriately by the coaching staff?



Team Games and Practices

- Are all hockey players invited to attend tournaments, practices and games?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff properly prepare for practices?
 - (e.g. a list of drills to be performed has been planned in advance)
- Does the coaching staff properly prepare for games?
 - (e.g. lineups are prepared)



Team Games and Practices

- Does the coaching staff conduct warm up exercises/stretchers before on-ice practices?
- Does the coaching staff conduct pre-game exercises/stretchers to loosen up players?
- Does the coaching staff encourage players to stretch following games and practices?
- Are players taught to play fairly and to respect the rules of hockey, officials and opponents?
 - (e.g. no checking from behind)



Team Games and Practices

- Does the coaching staff make good use of their Coach's Manual
- Does the head coach and coaching staff work in cooperation with the officials of a game?
 - (e.g. referees, time keeper)
- Are there ideally 3-4 coaching staff members behind the bench at each game?
 - (e.g. One to two to open doors, one forward coach, one defense coach)



Team Games and Practices

- Does the coaching staff make sure that the equipment and facilities are safe and match the players' ages and abilities?
- Do all players get equitable instruction and support time from the head coach and coaching staff?
- Does the coaching staff conduct suggested practice drills as requested by the AHA Head Coach/Coaching Committee?



Team Games and Practices

- Does the head coach and coaching staff make good use of full ice/half ice practice allocation?
 - Kids are not inappropriately left doing nothing
 - Duties have been split amongst on-ice coaches
- Does the coaching staff indicate their objectives for games, practices, regular season play as well as playoff season play?
- Does the coaching staff praise players in the course of a game and at practices?



Team Games and Practices

- Does the coaching staff provide realistic expectations from kids?
- Does the coaching staff encourage the players to have confidence in themselves?
- Does the coaching staff set a good example?
 - (e.g. they do not use foul language)
- Does the head coach and coaching staff obtain proper training and/or continue to upgrade their coaching skills?



Team Games and Practices

- If some parents are unfamiliar with the game of hockey, does the coaching staff educate/inform parents on the game of hockey, as appropriate?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff making adequate use of chalkboards before practices and games, when necessary?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff use opportunities to educate players during a game?



Team Communication

- Does the head coach and coaching staff meet up with players and parents at the beginning of the year to present their expectations for the year?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff demonstrate open lines of communication with players?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff demonstrate positive feedback with players?
 - If feedback is negative, does the head coach or coaching staff refrain from making it overly negative, and degrading in nature to the player?



Team Communication

- Does the head coach and/or coaching staff attend coaches meetings scheduled by the AHA Head Coach?
- Has the head coach requested a parent (or an assistant coach) to be used as a point of contact for any parent grievances?
- Does the coaching staff periodically solicit feedback and suggestions from parents?



Team Communication

- Does the coaching staff hold periodic team meetings to discuss issues pertaining to player and/or team development?
- Does the head coach and coaching staff promote "consistent" hockey values to the players and parents? (are "non-conflicting" values coming from all coaches on the coaching staff)
- Does the head coach and coaching staff display a good rapport with their AHA convener and ice coaches during tryouts and convening period? (no friction is revealed)



Team Communication

- Does the head coach and coaching staff display a good rapport with the AHA Head Coach/Coaching Committee and other members of the AHA board of directors for which they interact with? (no friction is revealed)
- Does the coaching staff act as good ambassadors to the game of hockey?
 - (e.g. encourage players to watch important NHL games, conduct hockey trivia)
- Does the head coach adequately take on his/her role as leader of the team?



Program

Key practices for coaching

- ◆ Tryouts and Convening

Demystifying “equal playing time”

Consensus decision-making



Challenges

- Tryouts and convening periods are very demanding on coaches and convenors
 - Lots of teams, short period for tryouts & convening
 - Strong players (or parents of) wanting to play at lower levels
 - Weak players (or parents of) wanting to play at higher levels
 - Too many “good players” (or poor players) to choose from
 - Having a weak team in a strong division



“The best interests of the child come first”

- At times, strong players are found at lower levels because of
 - A family’s financial situation (e.g. three kids playing hockey)
 - Education – son/daughter needing to spend more time in studies
 - Mobility constraints on the part of parents (e.g. one family car)
 - Challenges at home (e.g. separated/divorced parents)
 - Parental concerns (e.g. fear of body checking)
 - A coach wanting their child on their team
 - Negative experience(s) from previous years
 - Other activities/sports conflicting with hockey (e.g. religion)
- Conversely
 - A player that would normally be better suited for a lower level may be asked to play at a higher level because of player shortages



Fair Play

- Like it or not, some influencing and persuasion techniques may be used during tryouts and convening (by parents and coaches alike)
- Coaches should never be seen as “forcing” their points of views onto players or their parents
 - This is counter productive and not to be tolerated



Convening period realities

- Tryouts and convening are never fully under the control of coaches
 - Ultimately up to the parent and player to sign
- Allocation of players is never “perfect”.
Consequently,
 - Strong players may at times be placed on weak teams
 - Weak players may at times be placed on strong teams
 - A team at the house league level may become a powerhouse
 - (e.g. a red team possibly as strong as an “A” team)



Program

Key practices for coaching

Tryouts and Convening

◆ Demystifying “equal playing time”

Consensus decision-making



Demystifying “equal playing time”

- “Equal playing time” is fundamentally flawed
 - Coaches can not stop-clock players’ ice times
 - Coaches can not reward players with equal ice time if
 - players haven’t regularly attended practices
 - players have destructive attitudes/disciplining issues
 - Some players/parents have other interests and obligations, often conflicting with hockey
 - Some players are extremely sensitive
 - coaches are not psychologists or baby sitters

Equal playing time is good in “Theory” but nearly impossible to achieve in “Practice”



Demystifying “equal playing time”

- Playoff hockey is not the same as regular season play and a majority of parents understand this
- Playoff hockey is competitive by nature
 - some organizations have removed playoffs series altogether, don't count goals, and in this instance “equal playing time” can be a legitimate goal
- There are increased pressures during playoffs
 - sometimes keeping a player out from a tight situation is a good decision - a player may fear that they may be blamed by their team mates or parents if they make a costly mistake



Suggestions for coaches

- Head coaches and coaching staff should never use the term “equal playing time” with parents or players.
 - The term “equitable playing time” is more appropriate
- Coaches may be wise in setting separate objectives in regards to ice time in the course of season
 - Coaches should strive for as much balanced playing time in the course of regular season play
 - Coaches should strive for equitable time in playoffs but must set an absolute minimum playing time per period (e.g. 2 minutes)



Suggestions for coaches

- The coaching staff should inform parents and players upfront at the beginning of the season of their ice time philosophy
- Coaches should not abuse the term “equitable playing time”



Program

Key practices for coaching

Tryouts and Convening

Demystifying “equal playing time”

◆ Consensus decision-making



What does Consensus mean?

- Consensus decision-making
 - Is a method of decision-making that allows participants (e.g. parents, coaches) to feel genuine ownership of the recommended solution
 - General characteristics of consensus are:
 - Common base of understanding
 - General agreement. There is a clear alternative to which most participants subscribe
 - No strong minority dissension. Participants understand the decision clearly and are prepared to support it
 - For example, a participant may not fully agree with the recommended solution but is willing to “live with it” and support it



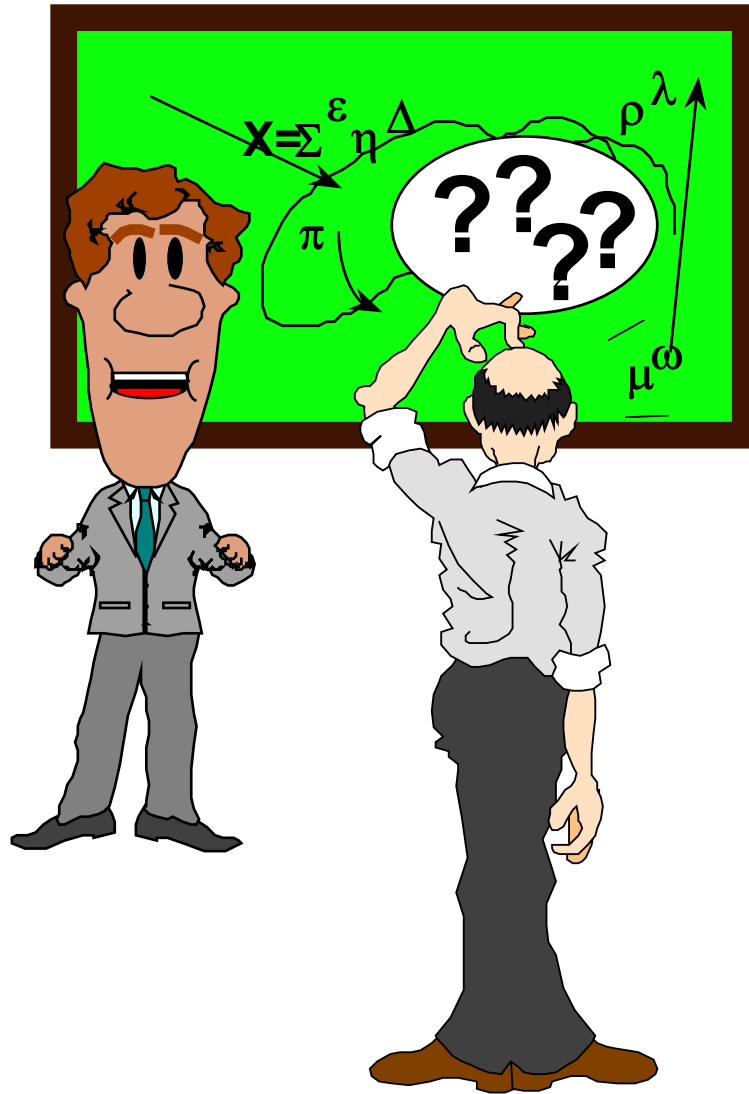
When should consensus be applied?

- In short, use consensus when making decisions of “material” importance to the team
 - Arriving at a team budget
 - Arriving at any disciplinary procedures specific to the team that are above and beyond those recommended by the AHA Bylaws and Constitution, its Board of Directors, Coaching Committee and this Guide to Quality Coaching
 - A team’s disciplinary procedures must first be reviewed and approved by the AHA Board of Directors before being distributed



What one must do ...

- In general, to achieve consensus, it is important that participants
 - Share viewpoints and actively participate
 - Listen carefully, identify issues, and rank issues. Time should be spent discussing, listening to each position, and identifying limitations for an adequate solution
 - Group consensus is helped by communication which is goal oriented, objective, informed and relevant



Questions