



**HOCKEY INDIA
GUIDELINES
FOR PROTECTION
OF CHILDREN
IN SPORTS**

GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN SPORTS

Hockey India is mandated for broad-basing, promoting and achieving excellence in the sports of Hockey from the grassroots level, which covers the length and breadth of the country. Large numbers of players in the 11 – 16 age groups are currently training under various Academies, Schools & Clubs. These institutions are fully committed to providing a safe, secure and healthy environment for an all-round development of children with prime focus on training in sports.

Accordingly, through an iterative process Hockey India has formulated guidelines for all stakeholders that are directly and indirectly involved in the training of athletes to be followed by all stakeholders.

The guidelines to be followed under various heads are as under:

- **Guidelines for Institutions:** It is paramount to take utmost care about and review periodically all aspects that might directly or indirectly affect the safety, security and healthy environment of children keeping in view their all-round development with prime focus on training in sports.
- **Guideline for Coaches:** Preparing ways and means to determine and fix screening and selection procedures as Coaches are the first line of defence in protecting the interests of athletes. Hence, it is mandatory for the Coaches to draw a line – who should be allowed and when – before giving permission for someone to interact with athletes.
- **Guidelines for athletes and sportspersons:** Athletes must always take precautions to safeguard their personal interests as well as that of the Member Unit / Institution they are training at. This will help them getting involved in any high-risk environment and protect from a possible misconduct.
- **Guidelines for female sportspersons:** Their vulnerability has often been the cause for physical and sexual abuse. They should always move in and out together, never alone, caring for each other to avoid a perilous environment.

A) GUIDELINES FOR INSTITUTIONS

1. SELECTION MECHANISM:

- 1.1 Institution has to design a selection procedure for sports persons in such a way that the authorities are able to assess their potential and the ability to withstand pressure.
- 1.2 The selection procedure should involve, among other things, physical and scientific tests, processes such as group discussion, individual assessment to help measure the Athletes game awareness.

2. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS:

- 2.1 It is important for the Coaches concerned to maintain a detailed record of sportspersons being trained.
- 2.2 Apart from physiological profile, psychosocial profile of each trainee should be created and updated regularly by Coaches with their observations of each sportsperson.

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- 2.3 The physiological profile should have details such as the personal and family background, past sports history, past and current physiological concerns, interaction of sportspersons with peers and Coaches etc.
- 2.4 Institutions like Civil Hospitals / Trauma Centers / SAI physiologists/ Psychology Departments in State Medical Colleges can provide technical support in preparing detailed profile and records of the athletes, if required.
- 2.5 Coaches are also expected to provide inputs on required facilities for sportspersons, besides monitoring and maintaining them on a regular basis.

3. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR INSTITUTIONS:

- 3.1 The minimum standards of amenities to the athletes should be ensured.
- 3.2 It's necessary to understand that the amenities provided will have considerable impact on a athletes performance and well-being. Hence, it is imperative for Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units to arrange all required facilities for its athletes. Cleanliness, hygiene and a balanced diet as per requirements of sportspersons should be given top priority.
- 3.3 It should be ensured that regular monitoring and evaluation of the facilities available and being provided to the athletes should be carried out by the competent authorities to maintain the minimum standards.
- 3.4 Hockey training at all Centers should be open for observation by parents.

4. MINIMUM STANDARDS (FOR INSTITUTIONS) INCLUDE:

- 4.1 Periodical counseling services for athletes with fixed schedule of visits by Coaches to be made known to sportspersons would help them in reaching out in times of need. Coaches should be able to provide individual as well as group counseling sessions at regular intervals
- 4.2 Adequate sports equipment and maintenance.
- 4.3 Adequate and sufficient food facilities.
- 4.4 Medical facilities in the Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units for investigations and so on. For Female athletes, provision of a lady doctor/ female nurse is mandatory. Tie-up with local reputed hospitals/ empaneled hospitals on the pattern of CGHS for catering to the medical emergencies of athletes.
- 4.5 Compulsory sex education for pre-pubertal and pubertal children separately for boys and girls. This may also be added with education on good health practices and conduct.

5. GRIEVANCES AND FEEDBACK MECHANISM:

- 5.1 A mechanism for athletes to report their grievances pertaining to any matter of concern, including sexual harassments, should be developed by Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units This should be maintained in complete confidentiality.
- 5.2 It is mandatory for institutions to deal with the grievances reported by the sportspersons immediately as per government guidelines on the subject matter.

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- 5.3 The grievances mechanisms should follow ethical guidelines such as maintaining strict confidentiality.
- 5.4 Hockey India Sexual Harassment Guidelines against sexual harassment at workplace could be used as reference.
- 5.5 Children to be made aware of their rights and remedial actions to be taken in case of any grievance.

6. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

- 6.1 System should be evolved by Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units to address all kinds of emergency in the premise of the organization/ institution.
- 6.2 Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units should ensure that there is no compromise on addressing emergencies such as medical, security etc. during the conduct of School/ University / State / National Tournaments.
- 6.3 The Coaches and staff of the Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units should take the responsibility to monitor the system set up to address emergency pertaining to sportspersons.
- 6.4 Coaches and other staff members should be trained on emergency management such as suicide attempt, conflicts among sportspersons, food poisoning, doping or any mishap.

7. ADDITIONAL ISSUES:

- 7.1 Security of players/ athletes at venue of the competitions at the grassroots level, that is, district and state championship are totally ignored. The hosts are to be made more accountable in providing mandatory arrangement in terms of board, lodging, hygiene, security, etc., apart from following their annual calendar of events strictly.
 - 7.1.1 Coaches and authorities concerned should ensure safe lodging of the athletes and providing good environment for practice for athletes / sportspersons/ participants during tournaments.
 - 7.1.2 Athletes should inform Coaches/ Team Managers about their whereabouts whenever they attend tournaments and make sure they are accompanied by their Coaches/ Team Managers or officials concerned.
 - 7.1.3 If athletes feel insecure in the company of a Coach/ Team Manager the athletes should be able to inform the higher authorities of Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units either by mail or telephone.
 - 7.1.4 Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units should arrange training seminars in State for all athletes on personal safety and educate them on procedure of reporting abuse incidence, contacting police and laws enforcing authorities for safeguarding their rights.
 - 7.1.5 In the event of any complaint on abuse of athletes, counselor/ designated desk for complaints should document the details of the complaint; take immediate action in terms of medical examination, medical treatment, and counseling, mandatorily reporting about the incident to the authorities and initiating action.

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- 7.2 Strict provisions for accountability against offenders should be made in the Interest of sportspersons.
- 7.3 Self-defence training for girls is a must. Drill exercises for protection against natural disasters like flood, earthquake etc., is a good idea.
- 7.4 Yoga training is to be mandatory for all children in all age groups.

B) GUIDELINES FOR COACHES

1. Screening of Coaches:

Coaches from the backbone of any training, be it sport or in any other field. If a country needs to leave an incredible mark on the world of sport with loads of medals in mega events, it can be done only through the help of good, competent Coaches.

Only a knowledgeable Coach with dedication and someone with an eye for spotting talent can help shape an athlete's career. If he adores his job with an approach of responsibility, like a Coach should always be without preference or prejudice, the day is not far when India becomes another superpower of the world of sport. Hence, it is very important that the selection of Coaches is put to a detailed scrutiny.

- 1.1 As the screening carried out for the sportspersons, Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units should carry out a complete screening of Coaches' resume, taking into consideration all aspects as cited above.
- 1.2 A detailed pro-forma for screening of Coaches should be prepared.
- 1.3 The screening should involve various methodologies, including his/her personal achievements, commitment, knowledge, attitude and aptitude in Coaching.
- 1.4 A set of selection standards for the Coaches should be prepared which would give them consideration for selection such as:
 - 1.4.1 Successful completion of training programmes. Training programmes to involve modules on understanding psychosocial concerns of sportspersons and dealing with them, adolescent education etc.
 - 1.4.2 Previous achievement records of Coaches.
 - 1.4.3 Completion of refresher courses or participation in programmes and workshops to enhance knowledge and skills.
- 1.5 Coaches should be updated with the latest development in sports and in recent researches in respect of Hockey discipline. These researches are available online.
- 1.6 Coaches should follow evidence-based practice for more accuracy and latest modifications in the rules of the sports.
- 1.7 Psychological screening of the Coaches needs to be performed on timely basis by each of the Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units

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2. Feedback mechanisms:

- 2.1 Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units needs to develop feedback mechanisms and implement between Coaches and sportspersons as well as with their parents.
- 2.2 Similarly, Coaches are expected to convey this feedback to their superiors such State / Member Units.
- 2.3 Coaches to ensure and address the critical feedback from sportspersons and work on it with the help of their superiors.
- 2.4 Any critical feedback which might have future implications needs to be informed to the Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units or other competent authority.
- 2.5 In the event of any complaint on abuse of athletes, of Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units Counselors/ Coach should register the complaint; take immediate necessary actions in terms of medical examination, medical treatment, counseling, mandatory reporting of the incident and initiating action.

3. Reporting and documentation:

- 3.1 Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units Coaches are expected to regularly maintain the records of the sportspersons.
- 3.2 The record should involve not only the performance of the Hockey athletes but also their relationship with Coaches, any emotional or behavioral disturbances observed by the Coaches, etc.
- 3.3 There must be record of any significant concerns observed among the sportspersons such as suicidal tendencies, psychological, emotional behavioral or interpersonal disturbances. These concerns further needs to be discussed and addressed with the competent authority in the State Member Units of Hockey India office immediately.
- 3.4 Coaches are expected to also maintain record of leave from training on medical/ health grounds. Unusual or a lengthy period of leave by sportspersons should be communicated to the authorities concerned as well as their parents.

4. Code of conduct:

- 4.1 Coaches are expected to follow the code of conduct as prescribed by the Hockey India.
 - 4.1.1 Coaches are expected to ensure that they are using appropriate language (no use of bad language, words and derogatory statements).
 - 4.1.2 Maintaining appropriate boundaries with sportspersons such as meeting them at designated areas, respecting their privacy etc.
 - 4.1.3 Coaches should not invite or take an athlete(s) to their place of residence without the permission of athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
 - 4.1.4 In case of personal touch, Coaches to explain the need for physical touch and seeking their consent for the same during training activities.

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- 4.1.5 Having a female sports Coach present during the training activities along with male Coaches while coaching female sportspersons is the most ideal thing.
- 4.1.6 Coaches are expected to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of female sportspersons. For addressing special concerns such as injuries to private parts or menstruations, etc., male Coaches should always take help from their female colleagues.
- 4.1.7 Awareness programmes to be carried out with focus on substance abuse.
- 4.1.8 Awareness to be created about psychological issues faced by sportspersons.
- 4.2 Training Institutes / Academies / Clubs / Member Units should sensitize the Coaches on the rights of the children ensuring that no physical or corporal punishment is given.
- 4.3 Hockey Coaches are expected to maintain objectivity and fairness in their Coaching for all the athletes:
 - 4.3.1 By providing equal time to all the sportspersons under them.
 - 4.3.2 By providing appropriate attention to individual needs of each Hockey Athletes.
 - 4.3.3 By providing similar inputs to all the sportspersons.
 - 4.3.4 By NOT discriminating against sportspersons based on their caste, class or gender.
 - 4.3.5 By discouraging favors from sportspersons or their families.
 - 4.3.6 By AVOIDING favoritism among sportspersons.
 - 4.3.7 By AVOIDING training of selected athletes one-on basis post-schedule training structure.
 - 4.3.8 Coaches should avoid frequent individual meetings with a particular player, especially of opposite sex. If required, the same should be in the designated area with intimation to the superiors.
- 4.4 Code of conduct with fellow Coaches.:
 - 4.4.1 Coaches are expected to respect fellow Coaches of other disciplines.
 - 4.4.2 Derogatory comments on other sports Coaches are strictly prohibited.
 - 4.4.3 Coaches are expected to assist other Coaches if and when required.

C) GUIDELINES FOR ATHLETES / SPORTS PERSONS

1. Discipline:

- 1.1 Athletes are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of Hockey India /FIH in the respective sports.
- 1.2 Discipline guidelines for the sportspersons to be provided by Hockey India.
- 1.3 If any sportsperson is found to be violating the rules and regulations of the Hockey India Code of Conduct, Hockey India can take disciplinary action as per regulations.

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- 1.4 Forming of Disciplinary Committee is important for each Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units to evaluate the behavior of the athletes.
- 2. Grievances reporting:**
 - 2.1 All the athletes have to be subjected to orientation on how and where to report their grievances.
 - 2.2 Athletes can use online grievance facility provided by the Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units or Hockey India.
 - 2.3 Sportspersons should be encouraged to give feedback about Coaching and system adopted by the Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units.
 - 2.4 sportspersons should report their grievances to Hockey India office, if Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units have not addressed the grievances adequately.
 - 2.5 All efforts should be made to improve on reporting mechanisms from time to time by monitoring the reporting practices.
- 3. Specific rights of sportspersons:**
 - 3.1 Athletes should be allowed to contact their family members and meet them at the designated time by the institutions.
 - 3.2 Athletes can provide feedback about lack of amenities to the institutions by maintaining confidentiality.
 - 3.3 Athletes to provide feedback on coaching practices to the competent authorities in the institutions for any course of action.
 - 3.4 Athletes should be provided with free medical treatment, including the cost of investigations.
 - 3.5 Regular workshop for sportspersons/ athletes focusing on personality enhancement, relationship management, coping-cum-resilience.
 - 3.6 Sportspersons/ athletes drop their complaint/ suggestion Hockey India email: hockeyindia@hockeyindia.org without disclosing their identity, if they otherwise can't do so.
- 4. General safety guidelines:**
 - 4.1 Athletes / sportspersons should be provided orientation on safety guidelines of the organization.
 - 4.2 Athletes should not ride in a Coach's vehicle without another adult, who is the same gender as the athlete, present or unless prior parental permission is obtained.
 - 4.3 Sportspersons are expected to follow safety guidelines of the institutions:
 - 4.3.1 Sportspersons should provide information about the fellow colleagues who are having psychological concerns and need help.
 - 4.3.2 Strictly prohibiting psychoactive substances or drugs.

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- 4.3.3 Institutions can supply safety guidelines to sportspersons at the beginning of the programme.
- 4.3.4 Safety guidelines in case of tournament outside the country or within the country.
- 4.3.5 Safety guidelines for female sportspersons.
- 4.3.6 Safety guidelines for sportspersons having psychological, emotional or behavioral concerns.

5. Safety Guidelines for athletes / sportspersons on substance abuse:

- 5.1 Sportsperson's life may lead to drugs abuse for a number of reasons, including performance enhancement, self-treat or otherwise untreated mental illness, and deal with stressors, such as pressure to perform, injuries, physical pain, and retirement from sports.
- 5.2 The commonly used substances are alcohol, tobacco, opioids, performance enhancing drugs etc.
 - 5.2.1 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Unit is expected to look into the issues related to substance abuse among sports persons.
 - 5.2.2 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Unit should carry out regular screening for substance abuse among sportspersons and through blood investigations, if necessary.
 - 5.2.3 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Unit should issue clear instructions on detection of substance abuse to supervising staff.
 - 5.2.4 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Unit should conduct regular preventive health programmes for its athletes to educate them about the harmful effects of substance abuse and treatment.
 - 5.2.5 If Hockey India finds its athletes using substances, appropriate psychological interventions should be made available in terms of counseling, mental health assessment, treatment & recovery.
 - 5.2.6 Hockey India should be documenting substance abuse among sportspersons and take appropriate actions, if regular psychological treatments are not working.

6. Safety Guidelines for athletes / sportspersons in case of psychological, emotional or behavioral concerns:

- 6.1 Stressful environment in sports, difficulties of physical and challenges of developmental task, can lead to concerns. If these concerns are not addressed with appropriate preventive and curative interventions, sportspersons/ athletes are likely to end up with serious mental health problems such as depression anxiety disorders, self-harm or suicidal behaviors.
 - 6.1.1 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units in collaboration with mental health institutions should sensitize its Coaches and other administrative staff on stages of development, detection of emotional or behavioral problems among the adolescent athletes and its management.

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- 6.1.2 Training Institutes should conduct regular mental health promotion programmes for sportspersons in collaboration with mental health institutions (Like WADA / NADA)
- 6.1.3 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should conduct periodical screening of sportspersons for emotional or behavioral disturbances by the mental health professionals.
- 6.1.4 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should educate Coaches in detection of emotional and behavioral disturbances among athletes and making appropriate referrals for Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units staff/ management.
- 6.1.5 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should institutionalize counseling services at its centers.
- 6.1.6 Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should pursue effective documentation of emotional and behavioral disturbances among athletes and its regular evaluation.
- 6.1.7 Appropriate sports referral of athletes should be followed by Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units who are having serious mental health concerns such as suicidal ideas/ wishes, depression, disoriented behaviors, etc.
- 6.1.8 Guidelines for the Coaches, Support Staff to be prepared by Hockey India in case of emergency such as suicide attempt or aggressive behavior by athletes.
- 6.1.9 Family members or guardians of athletes should always be informed about the emotional and behavioral concerns of athletes.

D) PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR FEMALE SPORTSPERSONS

Female athletes are more vulnerable for sexual abuse either in the centers or when they attend tournaments outside the centers. Female athletes / sportspersons should particularly be wary of their Coaches, administrative staff or fellow sportspersons. In an eventuality, it is important for female athletes / sportspersons to equip with personal safety skills to protect themselves.

The personal safety of female athletes / sportspersons, following suggestions are made:

1. Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should carry out personal safety programmes for the athletes on a regular basis.
2. In case of an incidence, the authorities concerned should mandatorily report the matter to the appropriate law enforcing authorities such as police for adults or special juvenile police units and child welfare committee in case of minors (below the age of 18) as per the Protection of Children from sexual offences.
3. Coaches to be informed about code of conduct (as per guidelines of Coaches) and the remedial measures which all female children are entitled to under the Prevention of Sexual Offences Act.
4. Training Institute / Academy / Club / Member Units should make all female athletes aware of this Act and also put in place remedial measures including contacting the State Cell for Protection of Child Rights.