

## **NYHA's Locker Room Policy**

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to NYHA's goals. NYHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport 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. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, NYHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

NYHA regularly practices at the Nashoba Valley Olympia, Skate 3, the Groton School and Lawrence Academy. We have two locker rooms available for our use during these practices. During two-team practices, each team will have a single locker room for their use. During three-team or four-team practices, all teams must share two locker rooms. Teams in our program regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, rest rooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. At arenas with which you are unfamiliar, parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress, undress and shower if desired.

Some of our teams consist of both male and female players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration. When co-ed teams have a game and must share a locker room, all players must arrive at the rink wearing their hockey base layers or shorts, sweats or leggings 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 observe players of the opposite gender in a state of undress. In the event that a player arrives at a co-ed locker room without this minimum attire, that player should dress/undress in a separate supervised locker room or rest room and can rejoin the team once he/she is wearing appropriate attire.

In the event of both boys' and girls' teams, or co-ed teams, sharing a practice, the locker rooms should be segregated by gender when possible. If not possible, i.e. a multi-team skills practice where the boys outnumber the girls dramatically, every team should follow the co-ed team locker room policy and arrive partially dressed or in appropriate base layers. Coaches can determine at the beginning of the season if this is the case.

### **Locker Room Monitoring**

NYHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-45 minutes before and following practices and

games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk of unwarranted suspicion.

Team officials are responsible for locker room supervision. Team officials may include coaches, managers or voluntary locker room monitors (each of whom has submitted a CORI form and completed SafeSport training). When coaches are not in the locker room, either a coach or locker room monitor will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room. In the case of single-gender teams, locker room monitors must be of the same gender as the players, and coaches of the opposite gender will not enter a locker room until each player reaches an acceptable minimum level of dress.

### **Parents in Locker Rooms**

Except for players at the younger age groups (Mites, Squirts, U10), we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that

he or she will be helping the players. If the level of dress/undress makes it unacceptable for a coach or other team official to enter the locker room, then parents of the opposite gender are also prohibited.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. In the case of Mite, Squirt and U10 teams, we ask the players to adhere to the policy of our co-ed teams -- players should arrive at the rink in hockey base layers or shorts/leggings/t-shirt under their street clothes. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before and after the game or practice so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may at his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

### **Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices**

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room. Unauthorized recordings of any kind (including Snapchat, Instagram) may be grounds for suspension or expulsion from NYHA. Organized team photos/videos may be taken in locker rooms with the permission

of coaches and with the full knowledge of participants (example – photos with the trophy after a championship!). NYHA recognizes that players may want to listen to music in a locker room and may use a device to play music as long as it is placed on a bench (not hand-held) and is done with the full knowledge of the coach and players. NYHA reminds parents and players that locker rooms are not secure and NYHA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **Weapons**

NYHA has a zero tolerance policy regarding weapons. No weapons of any kind are permitted in the locker rooms, on the bench, or on the ice. Multi-use tools with blades (i.e., Swiss army knives) are also prohibited (team medical kits should be equipped with scissors and screwdrivers for player use).

## **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

NYHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, parents or volunteers in NYHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. To report any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at [SafeSport@usahockey.org](mailto:SafeSport@usahockey.org) or may call 1-800-888-4656.