

Taking Ownership of the Dressing Room – a guide to managing risk

Risk Management is an ongoing process to identify, eliminate or minimize risks involved with your teams activities; this includes the dressing room. As a member of the team you are an active participant in providing a safe, risk free environment for the players, this includes the Dressing Room. The following guidelines are reminders of potential concerns for your Dressing Room!

- ↪ **SUPERVISION (2D)** Never place yourself in a dressing room alone with a team player, always have another adult present, also referred to as “two deep”.

Always provide continuous supervision of the Dressing Room(s) following the 2D rule.
- ↪ **OCCUPANTS** Limit the number of people in the dressing room. Only the players, team staff and parents (player age dependant) should be in the dressing room. If there are siblings, arrange for one of the other team parents to watch them outside the dressing room while you attend your player.

Dressing rooms become very crowded very quickly with a team. Consider an average team of 15 players and 5 staff (coach; 2 assistant coaches, a trainer and a manager). This is already 20 people and depending on the age group there could be another 15 or more parents in the room which makes up to 35 people in the room, now add in siblings, equipment bags all over the floor; players in various states of dress (lack of protective gear) and probably a goalie laying on the floor putting on the pads. This becomes a recipe for disaster if caution is not taken to limit the number of people in the dressing room. If you don't need to be in the room, stay out!
- ↪ **ROOM RULES** Ensure that all players and team members know what type of behaviour is expected from them when at a team function and especially at the arena in the Dressing Room.
- ↪ **HORSEPLAY** No horseplay anywhere in the arena and especially in the change room. Remember those skates are weapons that can cut fingers, arms, etc. or the sticks become spears.
- ↪ **EQUIPMENT BAGS** Keep the equipment bags pushed under the bench when not in use, to give as much room as possible in the dressing room for people to move. Hockey bags in the middle of the floor become a tripping hazard to everyone.
- ↪ **HOCKEY STICKS** Keep the hockey sticks in a designated area by the door, preferably outside the dressing or in a designated area away from the players. Note with the cost of sticks it would be a good idea to have a parent watch over the sticks if they are kept outside the dressing room. Sticks are another item that clutters the floor and something else to trip over, or be used to poke other players (horseplay).
- ↪ **MALE & FEMALE PLAYERS** Separate dressing rooms should be provided at the appropriate age group and ensure that the same level of supervision is provided to both areas.
- ↪ **ROOM CHECK** Before the team goes into a change room it is good practice to have an adult verify the condition of the room and if there is anything wrong (garbage all over, anything trashed, etc) notify the arena attendants. Similarly when the team leaves the room, an adult should make sure the room is left in good condition.
- ↪ **SECURITY** When the team is not in the room, it is a good idea to lock the room. Unfortunately, there are those individuals who do not respect others property and are willing to steal, damage or destroy property. Lock the Dressing Room(s) with the key provided by the facility or in some cases with you own lock.