



INTERVAL HOUSE OF HAMILTON

Football Ontario Coaches Commit to Building Respectful Relationships Through CBIM/CLEAR Training

New partnership between Interval House of Hamilton and Football Ontario strengthens prevention education and respectful culture across Ontario football

Hamilton, ON – As November marks **Woman Abuse Prevention and Domestic Violence Awareness Month**, the partnership between Interval House of Hamilton, Football Ontario, and Ontario's three CFL teams - the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, Ottawa REDBLACKS, and Toronto Argonauts - serves as a timely reminder that ending gender-based violence and building respect requires action in every arena — including sport.

Interval House of Hamilton's *Coaching Boys Into Men* (CBIM) and *Coaching Leadership and Respect* (CLEAR) programs continue to expand their reach, with growing support from both provincial and professional football organizations.

This violence prevention education initiative has grown into a province-wide campaign, enabling new partnerships and training opportunities across sport, schools, and communities.

After learning about the violence prevention education partnership between Ontario's three CFL teams and Interval House of Hamilton's provincial program, Football Ontario knew they had found exactly what they were looking for. Without delay, the organization initiated its first rollout, beginning with approximately 35 Team Ontario coaches completing CBIM/CLEAR training. The goal: to ensure every Football Ontario coach is equipped to promote healthy, respectful relationships both on and off the field.

It was at a Toronto Argonauts home game in September that Football Ontario members first noticed CBIM messaging displayed on the field – The Real Win: RESPECT. That moment — and the conversations that followed — created a direct pathway between the Argos and Football Ontario, sparking the connection and first-hand engagement that would soon evolve into a province-wide partnership.

During the early introduction of the program CBIM, one Football Ontario coach shared that Ottawa REDBLACKS player ambassadors had recently visited his team's locker room — an experience that showed firsthand the positive impact of respect-based conversations in sport.

"Football is built on leadership, teamwork, and respect," said Adrian Sciarra, President, Ottawa REDBLACKS. "When our players visit schools and locker rooms, they lead conversations about how those values can shape character both on and off the field."

"Football has always been about more than the game. It's about teamwork, discipline, and respect,"

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said JT Tsui, Director of Culture & Sport, Football Ontario. “By integrating CBIM/CLEAR training, we’re empowering coaches to model and teach these values in ways that extend far beyond the field. We’re proud to take this step toward building a stronger and more respectful sport culture in Ontario.”

Football Ontario is the provincial sport governing body for Canadian football in Ontario, committed to athlete development, coach education, and fostering safe, inclusive, and high-quality programming across all levels of play — from grassroots to high performance. The organization supports more than 300 coaches and thousands of athletes province-wide, working to grow the sport through integrity, teamwork, and community connection.

Professional football leaders have also voiced strong support for the initiative. Michael “Pinball” Clemons, General Manager, Toronto Argonauts, shared: “Football is more than a sport — it’s a bridge that connects communities and builds character. By working with Interval House of Hamilton and Football Ontario, we’re helping coaches and athletes make the connection between respect on the field and respect in life. That’s where real impact happens.”

Matt Afinec, President & COO, Hamilton Sports Group (Hamilton Tiger-Cats), added: “We’re proud to stand with Football Ontario and Interval House of Hamilton in championing education that strengthens our game and our communities. Programs like CBIM and CLEAR help ensure that football continues to be a force for good — on the field, in the locker room, and in everyday life.”

Neil Lumsden, Minister of Sport added “I want to thank Interval House of Hamilton for their tireless work to prevent gender-based violence. This will drive meaningful change across the province, while serving as a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when community organizations and sports leaders work together for a common goal.”

Sue Taylor, Executive Director, Interval House of Hamilton, issued a call to action to the broader sport community: “What Football Ontario is doing is leadership in action. This is a call to all sports — at every level — to follow their example. When coaches use their influence to teach respect and empathy, we don’t just change sports culture; we change lives.”

About Interval House of Hamilton and MentorAction’s Prevention Education Programs

Interval House of Hamilton (IHOH) provides shelter, safety, and support for women and children experiencing violence. Its prevention education arm, MentorAction, implements CBIM and CLEAR — both evidence-based programs developed by the globally recognized organization Futures Without Violence.

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