

Central Vermont Youth Hockey Coaching Code of Conduct

The Central Vermont Youth Hockey program is dedicated to creating an environment where players can grow, learn, and enjoy the game of hockey. Coaches play a vital role in this mission by fostering a positive, safe, and development-focused atmosphere for all participants. The following Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all Black Bears coaches.

1. Prioritize Fun and Player Well-Being

- Winning is **a consideration**, but it is **not the primary goal**. Our program prioritizes the **child's growth, well-being, and enjoyment** over the outcome of any single game or season. Our approach emphasizes skill development, teamwork, and love of the game—ensuring a positive experience for all players, regardless of age or skill level.
 - **Age and Tier Expectations:**
 - **Younger teams (U6–U10, all tiers):** Focus is on fun, basic skill development, and building confidence. Winning is not always a priority; we encourage exploration, creativity, and learning the game in a supportive environment.
 - **Middle-age teams (U12–U14, all tiers):** Continue skill development with increased focus on teamwork, game sense, and positive habits. While competition increases, personal and team growth remain the focus.
 - **Older teams (U16–U18, Tier II–III):** We prepare players for more advanced competition by fostering resilience, discipline, and a love of the game. While striving to win is important, our commitment to player development, mental well-being, and enjoyment remains central.

2. Be a Positive Role Model

- Exhibit emotional maturity and remain calm under pressure.
- Demonstrate behavior that reflects respect for players, officials, parents, and the game itself.
- Ensure the physical and emotional safety of every player under your care.

3. Provide Encouragement and Constructive Feedback

- Praise players generously when deserved, fostering confidence and motivation.
- Avoid public criticism of players; instead, offer constructive feedback privately and respectfully.
- Strive to be a fair, consistent, and honest communicator and coach.

4. Adapt to Player Needs

- Adjust to the individual needs, challenges, and personal situations of your players.
- Actively listen to players, creating a supportive environment.
- Never verbally or physically abuse players, parents, or officials.

5. Promote Skill Development and Teamwork

- Organize practices that are engaging, fun, and challenging for all players.
- Teach the fundamentals of hockey, encouraging players to improve their skills and grow as team members.
- Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques, and strategies of the game to provide effective coaching.

6. Foster Communication with Parents

- Maintain open and transparent communication with parents, ensuring alignment on goals and expectations.
- Share the objectives of the program and how they align with the growth and enjoyment of the players.

7. Emphasize Overall Development

- Focus on the overall development of players, including fostering confidence, self-esteem, and sportsmanship.
- Encourage healthy habits and promote a lifestyle of physical fitness and clean living.
- Reinforce the value of loving the game of hockey, not just playing it.

8. Respect for the Spirit of the Game

- To play the game is great; to love the game is greater. Instill this philosophy in your players through your actions and coaching approach.

Acknowledgment of Code of Conduct

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the Black Bears (CVYH) Coaching Code of Conduct. I understand that any violations may result in disciplinary action.

This Code of Conduct serves as a guiding document for all coaches, ensuring that the Black Bears Youth Hockey program remains a positive and enriching experience for every participant.