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Hockey Nova Scotia Risk Management Bulletin (01/2015)

To: All Hockey Nova Scotia Members

From: Scott Kennedy, Chair of Risk Management and Senior / Adult Rec Hockey

Date: December 1, 2015

RE: HNS Promotes Helmet and Neck Guard Safety This December

At Hockey Nova Scotia, **player safety** is a top priority. Wearing appropriate and properly fitted equipment as per Hockey Canada and Hockey Nova Scotia regulations is essential when it comes to preventing injuries.

Accidents can happen to anyone at anytime and anywhere. This is especially true in sports, like hockey, that involve physical contact. Player safety is a shared responsibility.

This is where risk management becomes important. Risk management includes identifying, assessing and minimizing (or eliminating) risks. It requires all participants in organized hockey to play specific roles in order to prevent accidents and injuries before they happen.

During the month of December, I am introducing an education and awareness campaign directed at players, minor hockey associations, female hockey zones, all leagues, referee-in-chiefs, coaches, and bench officials. The focus will be on helmets, chin straps, and neck guards.

This month, ***Hockey Nova Scotia encourages coaches, officials and all team volunteers to ensure that all players are wearing their properly-fitted helmet and neck guard correctly at all times.*** Coaches and officials are also encouraged to set a good example for our young players by ensuring that their helmets are properly strapped on whenever they are on the ice.

During the month of January, our referee-in-chiefs will be working with our officials to ensure that these equipment guidelines are being met. Failure to comply will result in on-ice penalties.

I have included some helpful instructions from Hockey Canada with regard to the fitting and maintenance of player equipment. Please use this month as an opportunity to teach our young players about the importance of safety whenever they are on the ice.

Sincerely,

Scott Kennedy (*Risk Management and Senior / Adult Rec Chair, Hockey Nova Scotia*)

HELMETS

Fitting

Helmets must be Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certified. All CSA certified hockey helmets will have a sticker indicating this approval. These stickers must remain on the equipment and be visible during play.



Helmets are generally measured in junior or senior sizing and may be found in head sizes of 6 1/8" to 8 1/8". They may also be found in group sizes (XS, S, M, L, XL). Choose a size that fits snugly on the head, yet allows room for adjustments for final fitting.

Using the adjusting mechanisms, (which differ from model to model), adjust the helmet to fit so that when shaking the head from side to side and back and forth, the helmet does not move and does not cause discomfort.

The front of the helmet should fall just above the eyebrows. Select a size of helmet that provides these elements for a good fit.

Adjust the chin strap so that it is snug to the chin in order to provide proper protection. The chin strap is not properly fastened if it hangs down. If the chin strap is too loose it could cause the helmet to fall off on impact.



Protective Quality

Ear guards are a standard component on most helmets. The ear guards protect the ears from impact injuries. **If you purchase a helmet with ear guards, they must be left on to maintain CSA certification.**

Any helmet with a break or crack in the outer shell must be replaced.



Maintenance

Regularly check the helmet to ensure screws are in place and secure.

Only use manufacturers approved replacement parts on helmets.

Helmets should never be painted as this may weaken the structure and voids the CSA certification.

Any alterations such as: drilling extra holes, removing side straps, clamps or chin cup, will void the CSA certification.

Always air-dry the helmet after all on-ice sessions.



Helpful Hint

Occasionally, check the inside padding of the helmet by pressing the thumb into the padding. If the padding retains its original shape, the helmet maintains its protective quality. If the padding breaks or cracks, then it is time to replace the helmet. Occasionally check the front visor screws to ensure they have not rusted in place.

FACIAL PROTECTORS

Hockey Canada requires all minor and all female players to wear CSA certified full face protectors, properly attached to CSA certified hockey helmets. Full face protectors come in three (3) styles: wire cage, high impact polycarbonate shield or a combination of the two.

CSA certifies full-face protectors and eye protectors (visors). Below are protectors appropriate for use in ice hockey.

APPROPRIATE FOR USE IN ICE HOCKEY

Category	Description	Type	CSA Sticker Color
Full facial protector	Intended for use by a person of any age who is not a goalkeeper	B1 or 1	White
Full Facial Protector	Intended for use by a person 10 years old or younger who is not a goalkeeper	B2 or 2	Orange
Full Facial Protector	Head and Face Protector intended for a goalkeeper of any age	D1 or 3	Blue
Eye Protectors (Visors)	A partial face protector (e.g. visor) that shields only the eyes, intended for use by a person 18 years old or older	C or 4	Yellow

APPROPRIATE FOR USE IN ICE HOCKEY AND RINGETTE

Category	Description	Type	CSA Sticker Color
Full Facial Protector	Intended for use by a person of any age who is not a goalkeeper	B1 or A	Green
Full Facial Protector	Intended for use by a person 10 years old or younger who is not a goalkeeper	B2 or B	Red
Full Facial Protector	Head and Face Protector intended for a goalkeeper of any age	D1 C	Blue Purple

Fitting

The facial shield or cage must be compatible with the helmet. Not all masks fit every helmet. The facial protector should fit to allow one finger to be placed snugly between the bottom of the chin and the chin cup of the protector.

Protective Quality

Any facial protector with a break or crack should be replaced immediately. Never cut or alter wire masks as this weakens the structure and voids the CSA certification. Removal of the chin cup not only voids the CSA certification, it may expose the chin area to undue risk of injury.

Although the facemask does prevent dental injuries, it is still recommended that all players who play hockey wear an internal mouth guard. Dental injuries still occur despite the use of a facemask. The mouth guard should ideally be molded to an athlete's teeth by a dentist.



Maintenance

Periodically tighten the adjusting screws on the helmet and those that attach the facial shield. Any helmet with a clear visor should be protected between uses with the shield bag that generally accompanies the product.

THROAT PROTECTORS

Fitting

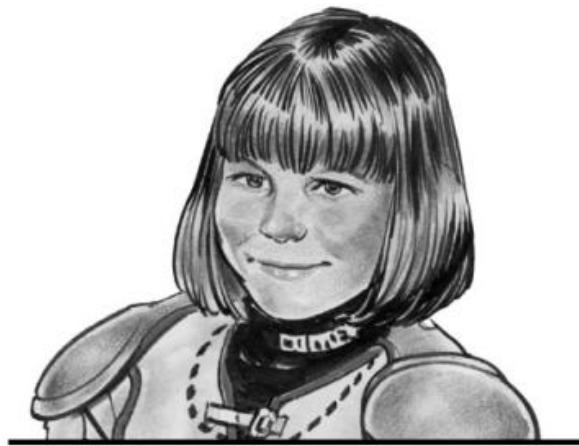
The throat protector should be snug but not uncomfortably tight.

Bib style protectors are worn beneath the shoulder pads and offer increased protection.

The throat protector should completely cover the throat and with bib styles, the upper chest area.

Protective Quality

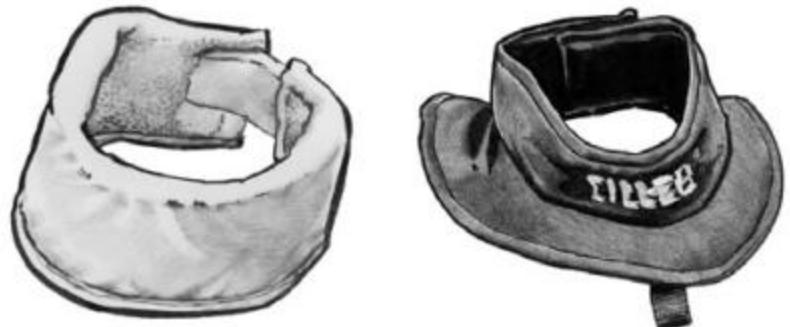
There are two common types of throat protectors: bib style or collar style. The bib style provides more protection to the chest area. Each are generally made of ballistic nylon or similar material. Throat protectors are designed to protect the throat area from lacerations and cuts. They are NOT designed to protect against spinal injuries or impact to the neck region. All throat protectors must bear the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) logo. If the throat protector is altered the BNQ Certification is void.



Maintenance

Dry after each session in a well ventilated area. The throat protector should be washed regularly in cold water and hung to dry, away from direct heat sources.

Helpful Hints Keep all Velcro fasteners in good shape and replace if necessary



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Keep all Velcro fasteners in good shape and replace if necessary.