

Mutual Support



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Explanation for Athletes

What is Mutual Support?

Mutual support means being able to help someone in need. It's about supporting fellow teammates by encouraging one another, sharing advice, practising together, and helping each other through tough times.



"It's always being willing to listen. You can tell when a teammate shows up at the arena feeling down. It's not being afraid to talk to them and tell them you're there for them."

Samuel Montembeault, goalie for the Montreal Canadiens

Why Support Each Other?

Hockey is a team sport. We win, we lose, but above all, we improve as a team. Strong team spirit thrives in an environment where everyone feels comfortable asking for help or offering their support. Mutual support strengthens the bonds, respect and trust within the group. It helps everyone improve, which in turn, benefits the team's overall performance.

How can we Support Each Other?

1 Recognize when someone needs help.

For instance, if you see someone struggling (e.g., with a skill) or feeling unpleasant emotions, such as:

- Sadness: When you lose something important or feel isolated.
- Fear: When you sense a threat or danger.
- Anger: When you face an obstacle, problem or conflict.



How can we Support Each Other? (continued)

2 Here are some good ways to offer your help:

Offer your help but don't force it

Don't pass judgment

Encourage the person

Listen carefully to the person's concerns or needs

Celebrate their progress

Act like you're happy to help and not annoyed

Turn to an adult if you don't know how to help the person



Feedback and Discussions

Reinforce: When a player offers to help you or a teammate, thank them and explain how their support makes a difference. Encourage another player to offer their help to someone in need.



Peer teaching is a great way to practise mutual support skills. Players receive the individual support they need, and those doing the teaching gain a better understanding of the material. Just be sure they're offering to help in the right way.

Reteach: If a player judges someone for their mistakes, ignores their needs, seems unwilling to help or forces their help on others, remind them that mutual support is important and ask them how they can do better next time.

Is your player very emotional? Try to help them manage their emotions before focusing on mutual support (see the *Managing Your Emotions* life skill).

Award the Mutual Support sticker to a player who has shown outstanding mutual support. You can use them as an example to encourage or strengthen mutual support within the team.