



COHAESIA - PARENTS

COACH-PARENT-
ATHLETE
PARTNERSHIP:
OUR POWER PLAY

THREE-PERIOD ALTERNATIVE

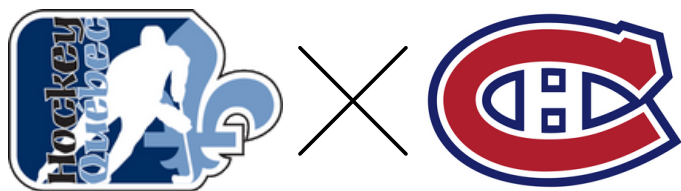
HOCKEY Edition

This document is intended for any parent or person responsible for a child playing hockey who wishes to support their child in a positive way in the practice of their sport.

This resource is part of:



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INTRODUCTION



01

Parental Involvement

Parental* involvement in a player's sports experience can have a positive or negative impact on their experience and that of the team.

- For many players, inappropriate parental behaviour is a source of stress, distraction, and embarrassment, sometimes even leading them to consider quitting the sport at a young age because they lose enjoyment.
- For coaches, managing dissatisfied, resistant, or even abusive parents throughout a season poses significant challenges. Some now view parents as obstacles to team success and try to avoid or keep them at a distance.

And yet ...

Parents who positively engage in their child's sports experience and support coaches in their work are assets to a team's success over a season.

*The term parents includes all persons who act as guardians for the child.



Figure - Parenting Practices, Player's Performance and Well-Being

Parental behaviours

- Having **excessive** or **unrealistic expectations** based on the child's age and abilities.
- Repeated **criticism** of their child.
- Focusing on **results** and **performance**.



- Provide **emotional support** to your child (e.g., listening, helping them overcome challenges).
- **Encourage** their child and show interest in their sports activities.
- Set **realistic expectations** that are appropriate for their child's age and abilities.
- Emphasize **effort** and **enjoyment**.



Impact on the child

- Increases stress and pressure to perform.
- Lowers motivation and desire to engage in their sport.
- Reduces feelings of competence, confidence, and self-esteem.
- Decreases satisfaction and enjoyment in participating in the sport.



- Enhances feelings of competence, confidence, and self-esteem.
- Strengthens the desire to succeed.
- Encourages perseverance and commitment in their sport, both in training and in competition.
- Leads to satisfaction and enjoyment in playing the sport.

Lowers performance



Improves performance

Parents who positively engage can ...

- **Boost their child's self-esteem** and **motivation**, enhancing performance and enjoyment in the sport (see the figure above).
- **Support their child** after a loss or through difficult times, encouraging perseverance in the face of adversity.
- **Help ease coaches' work** by supporting their decisions instead of constantly contradicting or questioning their expertise and knowledge of hockey.
- **Align their efforts** with coaches to send consistent messages to players, focusing on common and relevant goals.



Parents are an integral part of a child's sports experience and a key influence on their life and psychosocial development. It is therefore natural, and even desirable, for parents to be involved in their child's sports activities. **This is why it is recommended to engage them as partners in players development and team success** (e.g., Nerbun, 2023).

The Parent Partnership Approach

In this approach, parents are seen as assets, not as problems to be solved.

By redefining the coach-parent relationship, this approach not only reduces conflicts and time-draining situations but also strengthens relationships, creates positive experiences, and enhances the team's overall performance.

MAKE PARENTS ALLIES (NOT OBSTACLES!) IN THE TEAM'S SUCCESS.

Principles for Building a Parent Partnership

- **Foster connections** to create a relationship based on **mutual respect** and **support**.
- Ensure **open** and **transparent communication** to foster **trust** (especially from parents toward coaches) and facilitate **collaboration**.
- **Involve parents** in the team experience while setting healthy boundaries to foster unity and support within the team.


The Cohaesia Parents Approach

This is a set of activities to be carried out at the start of the season with coaches, players, and parents to support these principles.



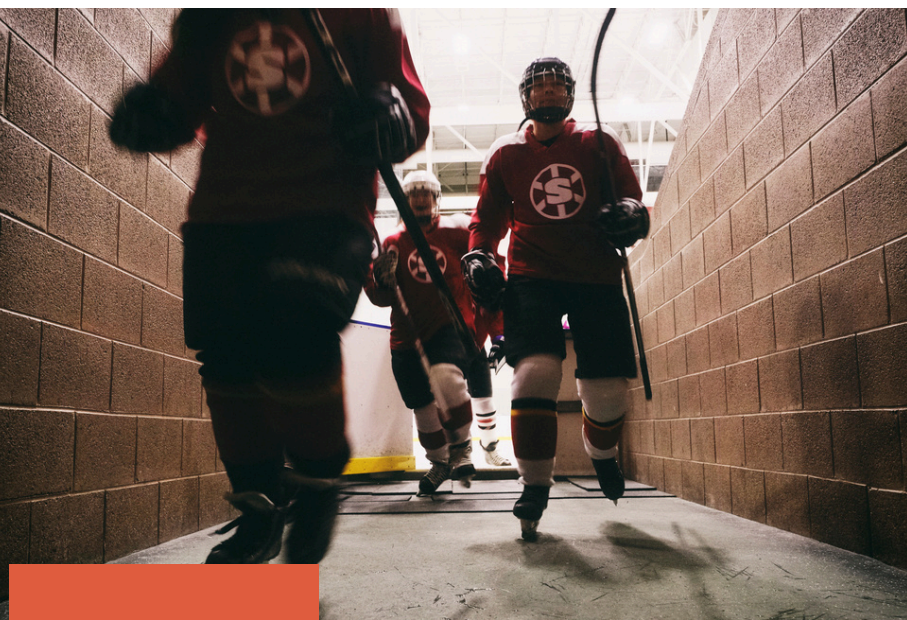
The Cohaesia Parents Approach (continued)

For your information!

There is a basic version of the early season event that organizes activities into a half-day. If this option is more suitable, refer to the **“Coach-Parent-Player Partnership: Our Power Play” Guide** on the Sport’Aide website. 

The alternative proposed in this guide aims to spread the activities over three different times, including the first two tournaments of the season. The goal is to avoid taking up additional parent time on weekends and to use free time during tournaments to carry out activities.

- The activities are suggested in a logical order to be done **in three stages**: during an initial official meeting and the first two tournaments of the season.
- These activities are incorporated into the usual early season meeting with parents, with time set aside to share key information for the season (e.g., season schedule, communication plan).



You need an individualized support to prepare the meeting or implement the activities?

Contact [Sport’Aide!](#)



How to Use This Guide

- 1 Read through the guide to become familiar with the suggested activities and consider how to adapt the Cohaesia Parents approach to your context if needed.
- 2 Refer to the “To Do” sections in the chosen activities to complete any necessary preparation for your early season meeting.

CORE ACTIVITIES

Core activities are arranged in a logical sequence to help parents, coaches, and players **get to know each other** and gradually **build a relationship of trust, mutual respect, and transparent communication.**

It is recommended to complete all activities as outlined, though adaptations are also suggested to consider the unique context of each team.



Happy planning !

ACTIVITIES



02

Season Kickoff Team Event: Core Activities

Alternative Including Pre-Season Tournaments

GENERAL INFORMATION

First period

Duration: 2 hours

- We suggest scheduling this meeting before or after a practice, depending on their timing.

Meeting Plan

- Welcome and Opening Remarks **(15 min)**
- Group Discussion: Sharing Philosophies **(45-60 min)**
- Season Highlights Discussion **(45 min)**

Second Period – First Tournament of the Season

Duration : 2 hours

- As soon as you have access to the game schedule for the first tournament of the season, select a good time to bring together players, parents, and coaches (e.g., between your first two games).

Meeting Plan

- Icebreaker: Team-Building Exercise **(30-45 min)**
- Discussion and Collaborative Session **(total: 75 min)** – two discussion groups simultaneously.
 - Players and Head Coach – **Part 1: Roadmap for a Successful Season (30 min)**
 - Players and a Coach – **Part 2: Roadmap for a Successful Season (30 min)**
 - Parents and Coaches: Co-creation of the Parental Code of Conduct **(60 min)**
 - Whole Group Recap **(15 min)**

Third Period – Second Tournament of the Season

Duration : 1 hour and 15 minutes

- Once you have the game schedule for the second tournament of the season, choose a good time to bring together players, parents, and coaches (e.g., between your first two games).

Meeting Plan

- Discussion and Team Activity **(total: 75 min)** – group discussion with parents and team activity with players, held simultaneously.
 - Parents and Coaches: Discussion on Healthy Parenting in Sports **(60 min)**
 - Players and Coaches (including the Head Coach): Team Cohesion Activity "Our Brand" **(60 min)**
 - Whole Group Recap **(15 min)**

PLANNING

- **Involve your coaching team in organizing the event. This shows parents and athletes the importance you place on establishing a positive environment for the season.**
- **Be creative and trust your experience! Adapt activities to make them relevant to your context and needs.**



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Pens and paper for taking notes
- [Additional Cohaesia Parents materials based on chosen activities \(available on the Sport'Aide website\)](#)
- A whiteboard or projector with a computer (optional)
- Meals or snacks and drinks (optional)



Inviting Parents and Players

Send the invitation email for the early season day to the parents and players of your team.

We recommend making this meeting mandatory for all (with at least one parent present) to meet the intended goals.



A sample email is available in the [additional material on the Sport'Aide website.](#)



TIPS


- Send the invitation **at least two weeks** in advance to give everyone time to plan accordingly.
- **A parent is unavailable?** Suggest inviting someone close to the player who plays a key role in their development, like a grandparent, aunt, or uncle.

FIRST PERIOD - FIRST MEETING

Detailed Description of Activities

15 MIN

Welcome and Opening Message

- Briefly introduce the coaching and administrative team members present – name, role, academic and sports background. Parents and players will get to know each team member better during the activities.
- **To motivate parents, including those who primarily value performance**, explain the link between parental behaviours, their child’s enjoyment in sports, their well-being, and their performance. You may refer to the figure at the beginning of this document.
- Take a few minutes to explain the event’s schedule and the goal of the Cohoesia Parents approach. You can refer to the “[Parent Partnership Approach](#)” section for a summary. Be sure to explain why this approach matters to you. 



Thank you for being here!



Group Discussion

Sharing Philosophies (45-60 min)

As a coach, you have a vision for the team and each player, built on a specific coaching philosophy and methods.

Sharing this helps parents engage more fully in their child's sports experience.

BE OPEN AND HONEST ABOUT YOUR METHODS AND INTENTIONS. THE MORE TRANSPARENT YOU ARE, THE STRONGER THE TRUST BETWEEN YOU AND THE PARENTS WILL BE.

The Philosophies



Parent Philosophy



Coaching Philosophy



**Team culture
Philosophy**



**Playing Time
Philosophy**



Parent Philosophy

To create a partnership with parents, invite them to share their motivations and concerns for their child. **Ask them to answer these two questions by email before the meeting.**

- What are your top three concerns for your child?
- What are the top three reasons you want your child to play sports?

Give them enough time to respond thoughtfully and suggest a return date to review their answers. You can include these questions in the invitation email (see [Sample Invitation Email in the additional Cohaesia Parents materials on the Sport'Aide website](#)).



To Do:

- **Before the meeting:** review parents' responses and consider how you might address them during the season.
 - How do your coaching strategies align with parents' concerns and motivations for their child's sports experience?
- **During the meeting:** discuss your coaching strategies to address common parental concerns. Focus on the most important or frequently raised ones.

If some parents' responses differ significantly from your philosophy and methods, plan a separate meeting with the parents and their child to discuss.





Coaching Philosophy

Sharing your coaching philosophy is key to **clarifying expectations** and **boundaries** and enhancing **team communication**.

Explain your philosophy (mission, vision, values, principles, standards) to parents and players to clarify what guides your actions and decisions as a coach.

Every philosophy is rooted in personal stories (e.g., your experiences as a player, a significant moment in your coaching career). Sharing these stories with parents and players when presenting your philosophy can:

- Show a human side beyond your role as a coach, **fostering greater empathy toward your approach and work**.
- Help others understand your coaching decisions, which can **reduce challenges and build trust**.

To Do:

Before sharing your philosophy, it's important to know it well yourself. Writing it down may be challenging, but it's worth it!



Complete **Part 1** of the "My Coaching Philosophy" worksheet (see [additional materials on the Sport'Aide website](#)) for thought-provoking questions to clarify your philosophy.





Team Culture Philosophy

A strong, healthy team culture boosts engagement, motivation, and positive relationships, enhancing team performance. Share your strategies for building a good team culture and briefly explain your choices. Being open about this will encourage parents to support you.

To Do:

Complete **Part 2** of the "My Coaching Philosophy" worksheet (see [additional materials on the Sport'Aide website](#)) for talking points to share your team culture philosophy with parents and players.



Playing Time Philosophy

Playing time is one of the most common sources of conflict, regardless of age or level. It's important to address this openly with parents to minimize potential conflicts during the season.

To Do:

Complete **Part 3** of the "My Coaching Philosophy" worksheet (see [additional materials on the Sport'Aide website](#)) for points to outline your playing time philosophy with parents and players.



Tips for Sharing Philosophies

- **Important!** Remind parents of the player development goals for the season based on their division. Align your messages with the typical development pathway for hockey players.
 - Refer to the "[Player Development Pathway](#)" section in the [Coach's Guide \(2023, p. 27\)](#) to see how your philosophies align with these goals (latest version available in French only).
- **Maintain an open attitude!** This is the time to welcome parents' comments and questions on your philosophies, showing openness to feedback while respectfully affirming your stance.
- When communicating your philosophies, be direct to avoid confusion. **Speak with conviction** about your beliefs, what is important to you, your concerns for today's players, and your aspirations for their child. The more conviction you show, the more parents and players will believe in the value and reach of your philosophy.



Subtle Distinction: There's a difference between speaking with conviction to show genuine belief in what you're saying and speaking with authority to assert your position in a power dynamic ("**my way or the highway**").



Discussion: Key Points for the Season

Go over the key information for the season, focusing on the most important elements. To save time, some information can be provided in documents for them to review on their own.

Examples of key points to cover may include:

- Training, game, and special events schedule
- Communication plan during the season (e.g., "24-hour rule" for addressing conflicts, communication timing and methods, contact person)
- Parent collaboration for roles or team activities (e.g., transportation, budget/fundraising)



ACTIVITIES

Examples of information that could be shared in documents:

- Return-to-play protocol for injuries or concussions
- Administrative details (e.g., staff contacts, managing absences and vacations)
- Case Management Guide for Hockey for serious and recurring misconduct
- Encourage parents to download the “Hockey Canada Rule Book” app to access regulations during the season. Suggest they consult the app if they disagree with a game decision to verify their understanding.



To Do:

- Prepare a plan of key points to discuss with parents and players to set up the season effectively.
- If needed, prepare documents to give to parents and players with essential information.



To Wrap Up the Day:

Remind everyone of the day’s purpose: to lay the groundwork for an enjoyable season by establishing a meaningful connection with parents and making them partners in the team’s success!

Let parents and players know they will receive copies of the documents created during the activities in the coming days.

Thank your team for their active participation!

SECOND PERIOD - FIRST TOURNAMENT


Detailed Description of Activities

Icebreaker

Team-Building Exercise (45 min)

Choose a large-group activity to help “break the ice”. This will help everyone feel comfortable and set a positive tone for the rest of the day. Here are some suggestions:



- **Fan Favorite: Hockey Quiz Game** (e.g., rules of the game, historical facts) – the team with the most correct answers wins the challenge. This is a fun way to review general hockey knowledge and discuss details that may cause conflicts during the season!
 - An option is available on the [Sport'Aide website](#). 
- **Tower Challenge** with Uncooked Spaghetti, Marshmallows, and Tape – the team that builds the tallest tower able to support a weight (object to be determined) for 5 seconds wins the challenge.
- **Paper Airplane Contest** – the team whose airplane flies the farthest wins the challenge.

Many other ice-breaking activities are available on the Internet.



To Do:

- Choose a simple team activity that can be completed in 45 minutes.
- Prepare the necessary materials according to the chosen activity.
- **Very important:** determine the general setup (e.g., team sizes, time for each step). Instructions should be clear and concise to maximize the activity time.

Discussion and Collaborative Session

Two discussion groups simultaneously

(75 min total)

30 MIN

Players and Head Coach

Part 1: Roadmap for a Successful Season

Beyond standard conduct expectations (e.g., punctuality, following coach instructions), certain **attitudes** and **behaviours** make a **team resilient, united, and high performing**.

Collaborate with players to discuss team standards and expectations. Together, co-create team standards and ground rules that align with your vision and values as head coach, as well as the team's goals and desired experience for the season. **We suggest targeting roughly 5 standards or ground rules to keep it manageable.**

You might feel some hesitation about involving players in this process. Don't worry! Players often have a good sense of what they need to do for team success. You may even be surprised by ideas you hadn't considered!



Discussion Points to Guide the Team Roadmap Creation:

- Ask players to name **a favorite hockey team**. Have them think about how that team's players act in practice and competition to achieve success. **What do they do individually and collectively for the team's benefit?**
- Have players identify **a teammate they admire for their personal and athletic attributes** (either past or present, in hockey or another sport). **Ask:** What behaviours, attitudes, or habits made this person a role model for you or your team?
- What can we do to ensure we are a **united team working together** toward a **common goal**?
- How can we make sure **we have fun** in our sport and prioritize the **well-being of every team member**?

Clarifications

- The roadmap differs from basic rules required to ensure player safety and smooth team operation (e.g., managing punctuality issues, cell phone use). Present these rules separately at the start of the season.
- Consider players' ideas and opinions so they feel heard and understood. This also makes it easier for them to commit to upholding these standards and ground rules during the season, and to accept any consequences if they are not followed.
- Record the agreed-upon standards and ground rules to formalize the document. Give each player a copy to confirm their commitment. You may also keep a signed copy for each player.

Players and Coaches

Part 2: Roadmap for a Successful Season

Note: The head coach may join the parents 'group for the rest of their discussion, while another coach joins the players' group to facilitate the next activity.

It's important for players to **confidently communicate their needs and expectations** to parents and coaches to foster positive relationships.

Building on the head coach's discussion on team standards for a successful season, players **identify ways parents and coaches can support both their enjoyment and performance** throughout the season.



Coach's Role During the Activity:

- Provide instructions for the activity
- Keep track of time
- Facilitate a smooth discussion
- Offer input to guide the discussion if necessary

Objective

Players co-create a list of **three things parents can do** and **three things coaches can do** to contribute to the **team's success**.

Instructions:

- Select two players to lead the discussion under the coach's supervision. These players will note down ideas, ensure everyone has a chance to speak, and encourage participation.
- Brainstorm ideas on what parents can do for the team's success, noting all suggestions from the team.
- Identify the three most important actions for the team's success, explaining why each one is significant.
- Repeat the previous steps to identify what coaches can do for the team's success.
- Select six players to each present one item to parents and coaches during the "full-group review" (see below; p. 30). These players should also explain why the chosen item is important to them.



To Do:

Make sure players have materials to take notes and keep a list of three things parents and coaches can do for the team's success (e.g., tablet, paper, and pencil).



Reminder:

The next activity is exclusive to parents and takes place at the same time as the youth activity.

60 MIN

Parents and Coaches

Co-creation of the Parental Code of Conduct

Note: The head coach is invited to join the discussion after their first activity with the players, while another coach should join the players to facilitate their second activity.

By involving parents in a co-creation process for their code of conduct, you give them a sense of ownership over their behaviours and their impact on the team. **This approach encourages greater commitment to desired behaviours while strengthening team unity.**

Since many associations have a parental code of conduct that teams must follow, the goal is to engage parents in **a more concrete discussion on how to align with these principles.**

Here are two commonly used codes of conduct:



- [Hockey Québec 2024-2025 Parent Code of Ethics](#)
- [Parent Code of Conduct from the Integrity Protection Policy \(p. 25; available in French only\)](#)

Check with your administration or association to see which code of conduct is preferred in your organization.

Instructions:

➤ Divide the parents into subgroups, provide each group with a copy of the code of conduct, and give them the following instructions **(30 min)**:

- Provide a concrete example **for around 5 principles in the code of conduct** to follow throughout the season (e.g., an everyday action or specific situation, an attitude). Choose examples that you feel are essential for creating a positive experience for everyone during the season. Write the examples on the sheet.



If a principle seems important but isn't in the code of conduct, write it down and share it during the group regathering.

➤ Full-group review **(30 min)**:

- Ask parents to share 1 or 2 examples for some of the code's principles. Let them discuss these examples to encourage reflection and awareness.
- Ask parents the following question: **Are there any principles we'd like to focus on more this year?**

Optional Challenge for Parents:

Invite each parent to identify a principle that is challenging for them and think about a change they could make to better respect it (e.g., giving feedback more focused on effort and enjoyment, stopping negative comments toward referees). Parents can reflect on this individually over the next few days.

After the Activity:

- Collect each team's copies so you can review their notes (examples) in the coming days.
- Explain to parents that you will select one or two examples that address the most essential aspects of each principle to ensure the team's well-being and success.
- In the following days, provide each parent with a copy of the revised code of conduct, including examples, and keep a signed copy from each parent.



To Do:

Print enough copies of the Parent Code of Conduct for each team.

Good to Know!

Using **playful consequences** to address parent behaviours or attitudes that go against the code of conduct is an effective strategy to avoid confrontation or lecturing, which could lead to conflicts.

Witnesses to these behaviours may also feel more comfortable intervening with this type of lighthearted approach.

Examples of Playful Consequences

- Put a quarter in a “penalty jar” each time the code of conduct principles isn’t followed.
- Wear a symbolic accessory at the next game (e.g., hat, button, t-shirt) with a humorous message such as:
 - Oops, I did it again!
 - Warning: Parent in Training!
- Perform an action in line with the code of conduct at the next game, such as:
 - Encourage a player on the opposing team.
 - Congratulate the referees at the end of the game.
 - Give three effort-based encouragements to team players, regardless of the outcome.
- Take on a responsibility at the next practice or game, such as filling water bottles, giving a constructive pre-game talk, etc.

Note: If you plan to implement playful consequences, it’s essential to discuss the process with parents beforehand. For any unacceptable behaviour involving parents, refer to the [Case Management Guide for Hockey](#) (available in French only).



Full-group review



Bring together the players, parents, and coaches in the same room, and invite the players to speak to the group.

Invite the six selected players to share the three actions parents can take and the three things coaches can do to contribute to the team's success.



To allow players to confidently communicate their needs and expectations to parents and coaches.



THIRD PERIOD - SECOND TOURNAMENT

Detailed Description of Activities

Discussion and Team Activity Session

Discussion group with parents and team activity with players simultaneously

(75 min total)

60 MIN
TOTAL

Parents and Coaches

Discussion on Healthy Parenting in Sports

It can be uncomfortable and counterproductive for coaches to lecture parents on how to be good sports parents. It's more beneficial to create a conversation between parents and coaches about what it means to be a healthy sports parent.

Take advantage of free time at tournaments to bring parents and coaches together to lead a discussion on healthy sports parenting.

To Start ...

Show a short video to start the conversation (e.g., [*The ride home*](#), [*The truth about sports parenting*](#)).



20 MIN

Then ...

Invite parents to discuss in small groups what the video evokes in them (initial thoughts, realizations, etc.). Those who wish can then share their conclusions or reflections with the whole group.

Reflection Questions for Large-Group Discussion

30 MIN

- How has participation in sports strengthened the bond between you and your child?
- In what ways has sports participation been a challenge or obstacle in your relationship with your child?
- How do you ensure that your child experiences daily enjoyment in their sport?
- Why is it important to you that your child plays sports (e.g., to develop physical skills, build character, socialize, have fun)?
 - Does the message conveyed through your actions and words align with why you want your child to play sports?



To Wrap Up the Discussion

10 MIN

Review the main points that emerged about positive parental involvement in their child's sports experience.

Ask parents: What are the top 5 takeaways from this discussion to help you actively contribute to a positive team experience this season?

During the Activity

Create a safe environment that allows parents to share their challenges and concerns. To start the meeting, emphasize that you want an **honest, respectful discussion** where **everyone's input is valued**.

A non-judgmental approach is essential—curiosity and openness should be encouraged!



Precision

Adapt this period of reflection and discussion to your parent group, focusing on what seems to resonate most with them. It is not necessary to cover all discussion points.

Your role is to guide the conversation when needed with questions, to share your perspective as a coach (and possibly as a parent), and to keep the discussion on relevant topics.

60 MIN
TOTAL

Players and Coaches

Team-Building Activity **Our Trademark**

The Head Coach should be present!

Conduct the **Our Trademark** activity to develop team cohesion within your group of players (see the description sheet on the [Sport'Aide](#) website; available in English on request).



Preparation Period

30 MIN

Organize the players into small groups of 3-4 and give them the instructions provided in the “Activity Preparation” section of the description sheet.

Group Discussion

30 MIN

Bring everyone back together and follow the steps outlined in the “Activity Facilitation” section of the description sheet.

Once the activity is complete, prepare the players to present their trademark to the parents and other coaches.

Suggestion

As a group, select four players to each present one of the team’s strengths, then a fifth player to conclude by presenting the trademark that represents these strengths.



To Do:



- Read the [description sheet for the **Our Trademark** activity](#) in advance so that you can facilitate it easily.
- Print copies of the [interactive **Our Trademark sheet**](#) and the [Character Strengths sheet](#), with at least one copy per subgroup (available in English on request).

Note



These tools are also available in the [Cohaesia approach on the Sport'Aide website](#). Other relevant team-building activities can also be found there (e.g., Our Leaders; available in English on request).

15 MIN

Whole Group Recap



Gather the players, parents, and coaches in the same room, and invite the players to speak to the group. The players should have determined the speaking order in advance, during the reflection activity on their trademark.

Invite the selected players to present the strengths that characterize their team, the associated behaviours, and the trademark that represents these strengths.



Activity to allow the players to present their team's trademark.

**MAINTAINING THE CONNECTION
DURING THE SEASON**



03

During the Season

Staying Connected with Parents

The early season activities are designed to lay a solid foundation for a positive relationship with parents. To maintain this connection throughout the season, it's recommended to periodically organize other small activities.

Each team should choose what is most suitable and realistic based on their resources and circumstances.

Investing time in these activities to involve parents in team activities and experiences strengthens the bond between parents and the team, creating a supportive and united environment that benefits everyone.

ACTIVITIES

A Practice with Parents

Organizing a practice with players and their parents is an excellent opportunity to build connections among team members (players, parents, coaches) while allowing players to benefit from training. It also helps to:

- Help parents understand the subtleties and complexities of the game and training (e.g., the challenge of remembering multiple strategies), fundamental concepts of offense and defense, and the players' daily efforts to excel.
- Make players aware of the complexity of teaching techniques or game strategies to a group.

ACTIVITIES

A Practice with Parents (continued)

Some examples ...

On Ice or in a gymnasium

(e.g., floor hockey, ball hockey):

- Have players create a game situation, teach it to their parents, and then ask parents to put it into practice during a friendly game.
- Ask players to design and lead the practice (e.g., a series of drills), giving them the opportunity to coach their parents.
- Organize a practice that allows players and parents to practice and compete together.

In Off-Ice Training Areas

(e.g., bleachers, arena hallways):

- Have players design a workout session targeting different physical aspects of the game—stability, strength, power/agility, etc. Players teach the exercises to parents and guide them throughout the session.
- Organize a training session where players and parents can work out together, focusing on mutual support and encouragement.

Planning the Practice with Parents:

- Inform players in advance that they'll need to prepare the session plan, allowing them to prepare for the activity.
- Organize the practice or training session for players and parents if you intend to lead it.

Alternative

Split the group to offer both on-ice and off-ice practices, especially for parents who don't know how to skate. In this case, the coaching team would be divided, and each parent-child duo would have the option to join the session of their choice.

ACTIVITIES

Team Picture

When taking the official player and team picture, include parents in a team picture. This serves as a powerful symbol of solidarity for the parents. You can also offer parents the chance to have a picture taken with their child in uniform to create a special family moment.

Team Meal

Providing an opportunity for parents to share a meal with the team and other parents can help build strong connections. This could be a meal at a restaurant or a potluck in a community room or at a team member's home. It allows the team to celebrate victories together or support each other after a loss.

Simpler Option

Snacks and refreshments after a game

This more affordable and time-friendly option can be organized a few times during the season. Stronger connections can form between coaches, parents, and players if they have multiple opportunities to get to know one another on a personal level.



ACTIVITIES

For the last practice
before a match

Pre-Game Meeting

Involve parents in the final practice before a game. Invite them to join the team meeting where the week's training and game plan are reviewed. This helps parents understand what the team has worked on recently and what to encourage during the game.

This activity can be particularly relevant if facing a more challenging team or one with overly vocal or provocative parents. Use this time to remind parents of the team's standards.

For example:

“ We are aware that the opposing team's parents can be loud and provocative, but we want to remind you that respect is very important to us. It's essential to set a good example (e.g., self-control) and not engage in their behaviour.

We know this game will be more physical against this team. We ask that you let the referees and coaching staff handle game situations. The players simply need your encouragement!

”

Post-Game Discussion

It can be especially beneficial to invite parents to join the post-game discussion with the team, whether celebrating a win in the locker room or delivering a message after a loss. This is a time to emphasize the team's strengths, even in challenging moments, and ensure that players continue to enjoy their sport. It's also an opportunity to remind parents, when needed, that true success goes beyond the final score.

↪ **A Bold Option:** Allow parents to address the players directly to emphasize the team's strengths.

ACTIVITIES

Valentine's Day Letter

Ask players to prepare a letter to express appreciation to their parents for their support in their sports journey. Players can give this letter to their parents on Valentine's Day (e.g., by email or handwritten).

Inspiraring Questions for Players

What do your parents do to support you in your sport every day?

What are you grateful for regarding your parents' involvement in your sports experience?

Imagine yourself at the end of your sports career. What would you like to say to your parents to thank them?

Reminder for Players

The key is to be authentic and sincere in their gratitude. Simple actions, like driving them to practice, are just as meaningful as bigger sacrifices.

Need More Inspiration?

Consult the [Initiatives Collection by Hockey Québec](#) (available in French only), which compiles various initiatives introduced by minor hockey associations in Québec to promote healthy and enjoyable environments for parents, coaches, and players.



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