

January 11th, 2018

Hello Hockey Parents,

Our season is well underway, and I am very pleased with how the season is going. We have had several wins and several losses and truthfully, I am unaware of the win-loss records at each respective age group. However, I have witnessed young athletes at all age levels, smiling, having fun and developing their skills while making memories. To me and to our board that is the real win!

In September, the board took an afternoon away from work and spent some time in a strategic planning session. Our goal was to develop a clear vision and mission for the Watertown Hockey Association and to define the values that will guide us in our decision making going forward. A group of about 15 board members, parents and contributors came together to develop the following:

Watertown Hockey Association Core Values:

Integrity, Respect, Fun, Sportsmanship, Safety, Growth & Development

Watertown Hockey Association Vision Statement:

To be the model youth development program.

Watertown Hockey Association Mission Statement:

To provide for growth of Watertown Hockey Association players - We do this by emphasis placed on sportsmanship, teamwork, respect for the individual, integrity and love of the game.

Please join our board and our coaches in adopting the above statements and values. It is our goal to not only develop athletes but to develop fine young men and women. We truly seek to develop not just the player, but also the person.

In our efforts to develop players WHA has also adopted the ADM model as developed by USA hockey. The ADM or American Development Model is the product of years of research and collaboration of the finest hockey minds and youth development minds in the world. Please take some time and go to usahockey.com/playersandparents and review the parent handbook for more information on the ADM and Safesport.

We are all very passionate about this sport and passionate about providing a great experience for our players and parents. With respect to all, I would like to remind everyone of a few items:

1. Aside from minor officials (penalty box workers, scorekeepers, and announcer) parents should never be in the locker room area for league level players. Please wait for your players in the lobby/spectator area following games. We are a zero-tolerance facility and if you cannot abide by this rule you may be expelled from attending WHA events for the season.
2. 24-hour rule: Coaches, officials and board members will make mistakes and we do want to make sure there are open lines of communication amongst all. Please keep the 24-hour rule in mind and wait at least 24 hours before confronting your director or board members with your grievances, unless the well being of a player is in immediate danger. Parents are to bring their concerns first to the director and we ask that parents don't directly confront the coaches. Please keep in mind that all of us on the board including your directors are volunteers. Please don't "dump" or vent to the directors with every minor grievance. Please make every effort to keep your discussions productive.

3. “A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events and outcomes. It is a catalyst and it sparks extraordinary results” – Wade Boggs

Please keep a positive attitude! Your attitude is contagious and will be the largest factor in your player having a positive experience. I say again, **your** attitude will be the largest factor in your player having a positive experience. Your attitude and your actions will also play a major factor in everyone around you having a good experience, so please remain positive! If you cannot remain positive, please keep to yourself.

4. The following is an excerpt from the competitiveadvantage.com’s article “13 steps to being a winning parent”

“STEP FOUR : BE SUPPORTIVE, DON’T COACH!”

Your role on the parent-coach-athlete team is as a Support player with a capital S! You need to be your child's best fan, unconditionally! Leave the coaching and instruction to the coach. Provide encouragement, support, empathy, transportation, money, help with fund-raisers, etc., but... do not coach! Most parents that get into trouble with their children do so because they forget to remember the important position that they play. Coaching interferes with your role as supporter and fan. The last thing your child needs and wants to hear from you after a disappointing performance or loss is what they did technically or strategically wrong. Keep your role as a parent on the team separate from that as coach, and, if by necessity you actually get stuck in the almost no-win position of having to coach your child, try to maintain this separation of roles (i.e. on the deck, field or court say, "Now I'm talking to you as a coach", at home say, "Now I'm talking to you as a parent"). Don't parent when you coach and don't coach at home when you're supposed to be parenting.”

For the complete article you go to the website: www.competitivedge.com/parentscoaches-guides-13-steps-being-winning-parent

Please also be mindful not to coach from the stands, only encourage and cheer. It can be very confusing and anxiety inducing for a child (or anybody for that matter) to be getting direction from several different directions. It is the coach’s responsibility to coach your child. If your child is struggling with an area of the game, encourage your player to ask the coach for direction. Do not coach your child at home, or undermine your coaches’ plan for developing your athlete. The coaches have been trained and do have a strategy and a philosophy for developing the players and the team for long-term growth. Undermining the coach at home can be very confusing for your child and will only hurt the team’s chances for success.

In closing, I would like to say that it has been and will be a point of emphasis for myself and our board to make sure that the players, parents, coaches and officials all have a great experience with the Watertown Hockey Association. While mistakes will be made and there will be philosophical differences, our board and our coaches are committed to providing a great growth experience for your player.

Sincerely,

Eric Skott

Eric Skott, WHA Board President