



**LACROSSE CANADA
CROSSE CANADA**

ABUSE AND MANAGEMENT OF ABUSE

INTRODUCTION:

After completing this section on Abuse and the Management of Abuse it is the firm intention and belief of the NOCP Committee that as an outcome you will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics of bullying, harassment and child abuse.
- Recognize how harassment differs from child abuse.
- Recognize how officials should respond if they witness bullying, harassment and child abuse.
- Recognize strategies to prevent harassment or child abuse charges against LC participants.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read the following notes then complete questions 1, 2 and 3 at the bottom.

BULLYING:

Bullying involves a person expressing their power through the humiliation of another person. Bullying describes behaviours that are similar to harassment that occur between children under the age of twelve, between youths or between adults that are not addressed under human rights law. Bullies are typically cruel, demeaning and hostile towards the targets of their bullying. Bullying behaviour is similar to harassment in that it is hurtful interpersonal mistreatment of a person. Bullying can be broken down into four types:

- 1) Physical (hit or kicks victims; take and or damage personal property).
- 2) Verbal (name-calling, putting down, insulting and or sarcastic remarks).
- 3) Constant teasing, deter social relationships (try to cut off victims from their social connections by convincing peers to exclude or reject a certain person).
- 4) Reactive (victim bullies the bully).

The following are just some of the examples of tactics used by bullies to control their targets:

- Unwarranted yelling and screaming directed at the target.
- Continually criticizing the target's abilities.
- Blaming the target of the bullying for mistakes.
- Making unreasonable demands related to performance.
- Repeated insults or put downs of the target.
- Repeated threats to remove or restrict opportunities or privileges.
- Denying or discounting the targets accomplishments.
- Threats of and actual physical violence.

HARASSMENT:

Harassment is usually a pattern of behaviour (i.e., not a single event) that occurs between peers of the same age or towards an adult from someone who has authority over the adult victim. Harassment behaviour can be seen as the following:

- Harassment can be insulting, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive comments which are offensive to the targeted individual.
- Discriminatory behaviour based on race, gender, religion or sexual orientation.
- Harassment creates negative and uncomfortable feelings for the person or group to whom it is being directed. These uncomfortable feelings that are generated can vary in range of insulting in the eye of the offender or to even fear for one's safety.
- Harassment can be difficult to deal with because what one person views as harassment may be considered as simply a joke by others.

Most lacrosse associations investigate incidents of harassment internally for good reason; however, when there are cases of suspected physical or sexual assault or criminal harassment (stalking) they should be referred to the police as they are beyond the scope and responsibility of the lacrosse associations.

EXAMPLES OF HARASSMENT:

- Unwelcome jokes or teasing about one's looks, age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, etc.
- Threatening or punishing actions that make a person feel less valued and or diminish their performance.
- Any form of physical assault (like slapping, punching, hitting).
- Behaviour that creates a hostile environment (yelling, swearing or taunting).

WHAT TO DO ABOUT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:

- Let the person know that their behaviour is not acceptable and request that they stop or refrain from this behaviour only when you consider yourself safe to do so.
- Report all incidents of bullying and harassment in a confidential manner to the Provincial Body the MA's office: – Ask for the Harassment Complaint Coordinator if they have one or the Director of the MA/AMA.

CHILD ABUSE:

Is any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect that causes physical injury or emotional damage to a child. While each MA/AMA has a defined age as to what is a child or adult is (ie. Ontario, it is defined as persons under the age of 18). The essential elements of child abuse center around the following:

- It is an abuse of power or authority and/or breach of trust over an individual who has not reached the age of majority.
- In most cases Child Welfare agencies and or the local municipal police investigate reported cases of child abuse.
- It is not investigated internally by a lacrosse association as it really is beyond their judicial supervision but they have both a legal and moral responsibility to report any such incidences to the proper authorities.
- However, it is the legal and moral responsibility of all adults, who become aware or who know a child is in need of protection from abuse or neglect, to report this to the proper authorities either Police or Children's Aid or Child & Family Services.

EXAMPLES OF CHILD ABUSE

- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**
When someone repeated makes the victim feel worthless by rejecting, ignoring, isolating, terrorizing, corrupting, and/or using the victim. It can be name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing or ignoring a child's needs.
- **PHYSICAL ABUSE:**
When someone uses physical force such as hitting, burning or shaking to purposefully injure or threatens to injure a child.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE:**
This is where an older adolescent or adult uses a child to meet their own sexual needs which may include contact and non-contact sexual acts.
- **NEGLECT:**
This is the failure of an adult to provide the basic necessities of life such as

clothing, shelter, food, education, good hygiene, medical and dental care, adequate rest, safe environment and moral guidance.

WHAT CAN ONE DO ABOUT CHILD ABUSE?

1. Children who are being abused or neglected by an adult should call Children's Aid or Child & Family Services or the Kid's Help Line themselves or talk to an adult they trust, teacher, friend or coach.
2. If a child informs you that they are being abused or neglected you should listen closely and document what they say.
3. Each and every LC participant who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be suffering, or may have suffered from emotional, physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to their local child protection agency (Children's Aid, Child & Family Services or the Police).

HARASSMENT AND ABUSE RESOURCES:

KIDS HELP LINE - CALL: 1-800-668-6868 OR VISIT: WWW.KIDSHELPPHONE.CA

HARASSMENT AND CHILD ABUSE CHARGE PREVENTION

Charges of harassment or child abuse against LC participants are very serious and can be very damaging to the individual, the local association, the provincial association and to the game itself. The following is a list of guidelines that is by no means comprehensive but one which the participants of the officiating program may use to minimize the risk of such charges and to assist in your understanding of the types of things that can be done to protect against harassment or child abuse charges.

- Treat everyone with respect at all times.
- If you are working with a Minor as an official, mentor, supervisor, instructor or administrator, there should always be another adult in the vehicle, dressing room or meeting place (as appropriate) at all times.
- Be aware of where, why and how you touch another person. Always consider how any touching or body contact will be perceived.
- The subject of your conversations and your word choice in conversations must always be age appropriate.
- Never undress in view of Minors. Use proper decorum when changing or showering in the company of other adults.

ABUSIVE PARENTS:

Any parent who fails to comply with the Rules and Regulations of the local MA/AMA, and exhibits behaviour that is deemed inappropriate is subject to disciplinary action by the executive officers of the local MA/AMA. The officers of the MA/AMA are empowered to suspend the parents from all activities of the association, following a disciplinary hearing of the local MA/AMA. A local MA/AMA may adopt a disciplinary process: Initially a letter of warning; secondly, short term suspension; thirdly, long term suspension. A parent, who fails to comply with the terms of reference for the suspension that is determined by the local MA/AMA, may be required to withdraw his/her membership within the local MA/AMA. This action may also include the cancellation of the membership of all registered players of the parent.

All MA/AMAs are encouraged to develop steps and spread the word to all involved with their local associations that there **will be a policy on abuse, if not already in place and it will be enforced.**

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in making such a policy known and enforcing it to ensure our arenas remain a safe and positive place for our young players, referees, off floor officials and coaches to grow and develop.

After having reviewed the previous material please take the time to have some self-reflection on the issue by responding to the following questions.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements about harassment are true?

- a. Is usually a pattern of behaviour and not a single event.
- b. Is normally investigated internally by the lacrosse association.
- c. Is any behaviour that a person considers insulting, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive.

Answer is _____

2. Which of the following statements about child abuse are true?

- a. Is investigated by Child Welfare agencies or the police.
- b. Is normally investigated internally by a lacrosse association.
- c. Is any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect which causes physical injury or emotional damage to a child who has not reached the age of majority.

Answer is _____

3. Which of the following statements are true?

- a. Only adults can be the victim of harassment.
- b. Victims of harassment should let the person know that their behaviour is not okay and ask them to stop if it is safe to do so.
- c. A participant who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be suffering, or may have suffered from emotional, physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the local child protection agency

Answer is _____

What should you do as an official if you are witness to child abuse or child harassment while you are carrying out your duties as a referee?

If such an event should arise, it is recommended that you complete a special incident report and file it with the representative governing body of the lacrosse event in which you are participating as an official.

The representative governing body shall mean:

- 1) Local House League Play – Local Lacrosse Association President or designate for such cases.**
- 2) Zone or League Play – President or designate for such cases.**
- 3) Provincial MA/AMA Championships – President or designate for such cases.**
- 4) LC Championships – LC convenor or designate for such cases.**

At all of the above levels they are required to investigate as per their policies, the incident cannot be ignored. The president or designate needs to be aware of what their responsibilities are when they are presented with such a situation as they too are obligated to take this forward.