

*As a coach, you have a major influence on your athletes. Not only will you affect the development of their skills and long-term enjoyment of the sport, you will also play a role in their development as individuals. It is important that you have effective resources to help you.*

*The Coaching Association of Canada, in partnership with the national sport organizations, compiled the following coaching tips.*

## Risk Management: The First Line of Defence



**Sports which involve physical contact, like hockey, always carry the risk of serious injury to participants. Risk management is the process by which amateur hockey organizations identify, assess, minimize or eliminate and insure against the risk of bodily injury or financial loss resulting from their activities.**

While insurance is available to protect against unavoidable risks, risk management, or identifying, assessing, and minimizing or eliminating risks is the first line of defence. All those involved in amateur hockey, including coaches, players, parents, administrators, volunteers, and officials, must help to identify and minimize or eliminate risks.

As a coach, you must assume a leadership role on this risk management team:

- Instill respect in your players for rules, officials and opponents and teach them to never hit an opponent from behind.
- Teach your players technical skills using proper progressions, especially proper techniques for giving and receiving checks and making contact with the ice and boards.
- Ensure your players' equipment fits properly, provides quality protection and is adequately maintained.
- Develop an Emergency Action Plan to be prepared for any serious injuries.
- Ensure players follow proper stretching and warm-up routines before games and practices, and participate in off-ice training programs.
- Inspect ice surface, bench area and dressing rooms for potential risks such as debris, protrusions and inadequate lighting.
- Encourage officials to enforce all rules.

