



Coach Mentorship Program Overview

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1. Purpose:

Provide coaches with enhanced resources to help augment and validate their coaching abilities. The program is designed to provide coaches with supplemental educational opportunities, one-on-one mentoring and support in areas that have been identified as critical athletic development. The program provides a structure and culture of learning and growth for all SPMHA coaches. The program provides coaches with the required skills, knowledge and support to promote and sustain higher levels of coaching performance, for the purpose of increasing overall coaching competency.

2. Benefits & Expectations:

While the benefits of mentoring are often thought of and reported for the coaches only, they are not the only ones who learn and grow through mentorship; in fact, the benefits of mentoring are significant for everyone involved.

For the Coach: increased learning, motivation, self-efficacy, productivity, decreased feeling of isolation, and an overall increase in self-satisfaction.

For the Mentor: renewed sense of commitment to the development of coaching, stimulation of new ideas, continuous learning and professional development, enhanced leadership skills, and satisfaction of giving back to the coaching community.

The expectation upon conclusion of the mentorship experience is to increase the confidence and competence of all coaches. Confident and competent coaches will help enhance positive experiences for everyone involved in the minor hockey experience. The program will also help increase coach appreciation, loyalty, enthusiasm, motivation and retention.

3. Recruitment & Matching:

Mentor Coach applications are collected by SPMHA and selections are made by the Hockey Operations Group.

Mentor coaches should be confident in their abilities to act as a trusted teacher, advisor, counsellor, instructor, tutor and trainer, that can help coaches reach their potential by guiding/encouraging them to grow and excel.

Mentor Coach responsibilities include:

- Attend Mentor Coach training sessions and other related meetings
- Develop a mentorship plan together with assigned coaches
- Minimum of 4 mentee observations sessions / assigned team/coach
- Complete and follow up coach action plans
- Submit final mentorship experience assessment

Mentors should have:

- Credibility with peers within the Hockey Community
- Minimum of Hockey Development 1 “Trained” status
- High ethical standards & leadership skills
- Recognized hockey technical and coaching expertise
- Recognized hockey experience
- A desire to contribute to quality coach development
- A commitment of time and energy to the mentorship process
- Proven guiding and facilitation skills
- The ability to be critically reflective and ask questions
- The ability to listen actively to Coaches

Mentors will be deliberately matched with teams based on complementary personalities, professional characteristics, shared goals & values, and geographical location. The SPMHA Hockey Operations Group is to help with the matching process and will collect the mentee and mentor motivation forms (Appendices 9.2 & 9.3).

Mentors will be assigned to a minimum of 4 teams each, and will be expected to complete a minimum of 4 in person observation sessions with each team.

4. Mentor Training:

All identified mentors will be required to participate in a workshop at the commencement of the season to introduce the structure of the program, help them familiarize themselves with the observation tools, the mentorship process, mentoring functions and skills, and SPMHA principles of mentorship. The purpose of the training will be to ensure expectations are clear, and to ensure consistency in our approach and application of the program.



All mentors receive formal NCCP Mentorship training, and receive the official credit on their NCCP transcript. The NCCP Mentorship training is designed to prepare individuals to step into their role as a mentor with clarity of purpose, and confidence in their actions. The training reaffirms and strengthens their abilities and skills as a mentor, while expanding upon the mentor's knowledge of the mentoring process. Completing the training will provide the mentor with standards and protocols for the implementation of mentoring within the SPMHA mentorship program and beyond. By the end of the training, the mentor will:

- Understand the concept of mentoring;
- Understand the process of cognitive coaching;
- Acquire and perform the communication skills required to be an effective mentor; and
- Utilize the 3 steps of the mentoring process.

5. Mentoring Functions and Skills:

Functions: The key mentoring functions of this program are consultation and collaboration:

- Consultation: Involves mentors giving advice or suggesting strategies, resources, and ideas that may help the coach.
- Collaboration: Involves the mentor and coach working together to plan or develop strategies. Working collaboratively tends to reduce the power imbalance that may exist between the two, thus building a relationship of collegiality that increases mutual trust and respect. Collaboration also gives mentors chances to model the thought processes they use when planning and developing strategies. Such modelling is one of the most effective processes used in mentoring.

Consultation and collaboration will be of particular importance in helping coaches develop their coaching philosophies, seasonal plans and selecting team staff during the season.

Skills: Mentors will utilize the following fundamental skills

- Building rapport: Developing a harmonious comfortable relationship
- Listening: Active listening and listening with empathy
- Asking questions: To verify, clarify, or direct – closed ended questions
To get coaches to describe, explain, or rationalize – open ended questions
- Paraphrasing: Relaying information back to the coach in the mentors own words
- Pacing and leading: Technique designed to encourage reflection and develop a higher level of understanding

6. Principles of Mentorship:

- I. Facilitator:
Emphasizing the relationship between the more experienced person and the less experienced person. The mentor is more of a facilitator – creating a safe, open environment in which the coach can both learn and try things for themselves.
- II. Coach self discovery:
Giving the coach a significant role in directing the process. To accomplish this, the mentor engages the coach through a process of questioning that guides them to discover solutions themselves. Traditionally hockey is extremely hierarchical, which often leads to a perceived power imbalance between a mentor and coach. In situation like this, it's vital the mentor downplays the perceived imbalance by working with the coach as a peer.
- III. Guide:
Emphasizing the personal development of the coach. This includes improving self-awareness and self-knowledge, developing individual skills and talents, building coach capacities. Mentorship is not about mentors cloning themselves; rather, the focus is on coaches developing themselves, with guidance of the mentor.
- IV. Formalizing the process:
This process includes a pre-brief, observation and debrief (reflective conversations).

7. The Mentorship Process

7.1 Getting Prepared:

After training has been completed, the next step involves preparing for the mentorship before it begins. This stage involves self-assessment of personal and professional skills and needs, looks at effective strategies of mentorship, and the formal matching of mentees with mentors.

The first step in preparing for mentorship is to engage in self-assessment activities to promote self-awareness.

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) – (Appendix 9.4 & 9.5)
- Coaching philosophy (Appendix 9.6 & 9.7)
- 360 Coaching Assessment (Appendix 9.8)
- Assessment of Coaching Performance (Appendix 9.9)
- Mentorship Quiz (Appendix 9.10)

7.2 Setting the Stage:

Once the mentorship assignments have been made, it will be the responsibility of the mentor to schedule the first meeting with their teams to set the stage for the mentorship.

The purpose of this stage will be to go through the following:

1. Building Rapport – to learn about each other
2. Explore Reasons – interests, values and aspirations
3. Seek Consensus – on common objectives
4. Develop a Plan – an overarching guide for the season (Appendix 9.11)

7.3 Observations:

A minimum of 4 scheduled observation sessions should be outlined within each respective mentorship plan. Goals and objectives for each session will vary depending on the mentorship plan, but should generally take place once a month. All observations will follow the following process:

Pre-brief: The purpose of the pre-brief is for the Mentor to determine the coach's objective for their session, their implementation plan, and the indicators of success the coach will use to measure the effectiveness of the practice. This step should last 15 to 30 minutes and is meant to ensure everyone understands expectations of the session. The pre-brief can take place either over the phone or in person, the days leading up to, or just prior to, the ice session. (Appendix 9.12)

Observation: The purpose of the observation is to determine the coach's ability to demonstrate specific coaching outcomes. These outcomes will be division appropriate and will depend on the goals outlined both within their practice plan, and yearly training plan. Essentially this allows the coach to demonstrate required criteria and evidence set for their respective division. (Appendix 9.13)

Debrief: The purpose of the debrief is to give the coaching team an opportunity to reflect on and talk about their practice. Give the mentor an opportunity to provide feedback on what they observed, and challenge the coaching team to identify ways they can improve. (Appendix 9.12)

Action Plan: Regardless of how successful the session went, an action plan should be developed **together** to outline next steps and ways to advance future coaching performance. This includes specifying, in order, the necessary steps to accomplish these goals. For example, the action plan could list steps the coach will take to improve in certain areas. (Appendix 9.14)

The mentor coach is to continue to act as a supportive resource throughout the implementation of their action plan, and should follow up on the outcomes of the action plan during subsequent sessions.

8. Program Evaluation & Next Steps:

In evaluating the mentorship experience, it is possible to determine the effectiveness of the program and better understand what worked, and what did not work, in order to make the necessary adjustments moving forward.

The evaluation provides quality assurance as well as understanding of the program's contribution to the overall progress made. It provides an opportunity to plan and improve programming to meet the needs of all those involved. Evaluation is an ongoing strategy towards growth and a tool for better understanding the impact of the program over time as it continues to evolve.

Program evaluation is supported by the following tools:

- Evaluating the Mentorship Program - Mentee (Appendix 9.15)
- Evaluating the Mentorship Program – Mentor (Appendix 9.16)

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