



SAFE SPORT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION IN ONTARIO CURLING

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SAFE SPORT IMPLEMENTATION IN CURLING

Curling Canada and Curling Ontario are committed to the safety of athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers, and employees who participate in the sport of curling in the province of Ontario.

Safe Sport has become a focus of both the Federal and Provincial Governments. This has created a Safe Sport “Movement” to ensure participants of any age, skill or ability can participate in sport in a manner which is free from harassment, discrimination, or abuse and protects the health and wellness of the athlete. As a result some Safe Sport activities have become mandatory for National Sport Organizations (NSO’s) and Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO’s) and are tied to funding from Federal and Provincial Governments. Some Safe Sport activities have become LAW for all Ontario Sport Organizations, including curling clubs.

BACKGROUND

Concussion Prevention

Rowan’s Law - Rowan Stringer, a high school Rugby player from Ottawa, Ontario, passed away in 2013 from Second Impact Syndrome due to multiple concussions suffered within a short period of time. A coroner’s inquest into her death resulted in 49 recommendations to be implemented in an effort to prevent another tragedy such as this from happening in the future. Rowan’s Law, which passed unanimously at the Ontario Legislature on June 7, 2016. Parts of the Legislation came into effect in 2018 (Awareness Day), and on July 1, 2019 - Mandatory Concussion Awareness training for **all sport organizations (including Curling Centres)** became law. Further actions will be required by July 1, 2020.

Prevention of Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination

On February 10, 2019 - CBC published an [article](#) detailing abuse cases in sport. This article became the catalyst to the Safe Sport Movement driven by the Federal Government.

On February 19, 2019 - Federal and Territorial/Provincial Sport Ministers signed the [Red Deer Declaration - For the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination in Sport](#)

- *Sport must be free from harassment, abuse, unethical behaviour, and discrimination, regardless of sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion, language, age, sexual orientation, ability, or any other basis.*
- *Canadian athletes, who have called on all governments to take action to address significant concerns regarding the safety of participants at all levels, must play a central role in the prevention of harassment, abuse and discrimination in sport.*

The [Coaching Association of Canada](#) has been addressing the issue of abuse prevention for several years, and has become an industry leader on the subject, encouraging sport organizations to operate under the [“Responsible Coaching Movement”](#) - encouraging sport leaders, staff and coaches to have strong policies, conduct background screening, respect and ethics training and follow the Rule of Two, all in an effort to protect sport participants.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CURLING?

The following is a resource package, developed by Curling Ontario to help curling centres understand their legal requirements and to establish Best Practices to ensure the sport of curling remains safe for all participants.

SAFE SPORT IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR CURLING CENTRES

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness Resources**
 - Provide resources and/or obtain acknowledgement of receipt of Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness Resources of athletes age 26 or under and parents of athletes under age 18, coaches, officials, staff, board members
- **Develop a Concussion Code of Conduct for your Curling Centre**
 - Ensure Concussion Code of Conduct is Board Approved
 - Ensure Policy is posted to your Curling Centre's Website

BEST PRACTICES

- **Designate a Safe Sport "Officer/Director" at your Curling Centre**
- **Inventory and Update Safe Sport Policies for your Curling Centre, ensure they are board approved and posted to your curling centre's website**
 - Abuse Policy
 - Appeal Policy
 - Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy
 - Discipline and Complaints Policy
 - Dispute Resolution Policy
 - Investigations Policy - Discrimination, Harassment and Abuse
 - Rule of Two Policy
 - Screening Policy
 - Social Media Policy
 - Whistleblower Policy
- **Ensure all volunteers or adults with minor and vulnerable athlete interactions have been Screened, trained and reference checked.**
 - Invoke the Rule of Two in your club

ROWAN'S LAW

The new rules requiring the review of Concussion Awareness Resources and Concussion Codes of Conduct came into effect on July 1, 2019. **Curling Centres are LEGALLY required to comply with the following immediately.**

The rules for removal-from-sport and return-to-sport protocols are expected to be in place by July 1, 2020.

Requirements for Sport Organizations (including Curling Centres)

Ontario is a national leader in concussion management and prevention. Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 makes it mandatory for sports organizations to:

- 1) ensure that athletes under 26 years of age,* parents of athletes under 18, coaches, team trainers and officials confirm every year that they have reviewed Ontario's Concussion Awareness Resources
- 2) establish a Concussion Code of Conduct that sets out rules of behaviour to support concussion prevention
- 3) establish a Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocol

[Read more about the concussion requirements for sport organizations](#)

CONCUSSION AWARENESS RESOURCES

The Rowan's Law concussion awareness rules came into effect on July 1, 2019. After that date, sport organization must not register athletes under 26 years of age* into a sport activity unless they, as well as their parent (for athletes under 18), provide confirmation that they have reviewed one of the [Concussion Awareness Resources](#) within the previous twelve months. Sport organizations must also not allow coaches, team trainers and officials to serve as a coach, team trainer or official for or in respect of the sport organization unless they provide confirmation that they have reviewed one of the Concussion Awareness Resources, every year.

Government of Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource E-Booklet

This e-booklet will help you learn more about concussions so you can keep yourself and others active and safe — whether you're an athlete, student, parent, coach, official or educator. You can download and print a copy for reference.

- [Ages 10 and Under](#)
- [Ages 11-14](#)
- [Ages 15 and Up](#)
- [Rowan's Law Awareness Poster](#)

Confirmation receipt for Concussion Awareness Resources

Following your annual review of one of the Concussion Awareness Resources, you may wish to complete this optional form and provide it to your sport organization(s) as proof/confirmation of your review of a Concussion Awareness Resource. This form might also be useful to you as a reminder to complete your review of one of the Concussion Awareness Resources again next year.

This form will not be saved by the Government of Ontario and the Government of Ontario assumes no responsibility for confirming that you have reviewed the Concussion Awareness Resources.

[Download Concussion Awareness Receipt Form](#)

CURLING CENTRES/TOURS/LEAGUES REGISTERED IN ONTARIO

Remember that as the organization accepting registration for participants - you must ensure the following participants have reviewed the Government's Concussion Awareness Resources:

- Members of your own Curling Centre
- Guests to your Curling Centre participating in a Bonspiel
- Persons participating in club on-ice rentals
- Curlers participating in interclub leagues, "tour" events

CODE OF CONDUCT TEMPLATE

The Rowan's Law Concussion Code of Conduct requirements came into effect on July 1, 2019. After that date, sport organizations must require that athletes under 26 years of age*, as well as their parent (for athletes under 18), coaches and team trainers confirm that they have reviewed the sport organization's Concussion Code of Conduct every year before:

- registering in a sport activity within the sport organization
- serving with the sport organization

A sample template can be found below to assist sport organizations with developing a Concussion Code of Conduct.

Information about the specific requirements for the establishment and review of Concussion Codes of Conduct, are outlined in the [Rowan's Law and its associated regulation](#).

- [Code of Conduct for Coaches](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Athletes](#)

REMOVAL FROM SPORT/RETURN TO SPORT PROTOCOLS

The Rowan's Law Removal-from/Return-to-sport requirements will come into effect on July 1, 2020. After this date, sport organizations will be required to have a removal-from/return-to-sport protocol.

A sample template from the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport will be forthcoming. Information about the specific requirements for the establishment of removal-from/return-to-sport protocols, are outlined in [Rowan's Law and its associated regulation](#).

In the meantime, Curling Canada's [Concussion Guidelines and Return to Play Protocol can be found here](#).

PREVENTION OF ABUSE, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The following are BEST PRACTICES recommended to clubs and are NOT legally required.

Curling Canada and Curling Ontario have taken the Responsible Coaching Movement (RCM) pledge, an outward declaration of our commitment to providing an environment for participants that is free of abuse, discrimination and harassment. The RCM applies not only to coaches, but also board members, staff, officials, ice technicians, volunteers working with youth at clubs or any adult who may be in a position of authority and have regular interaction with youth or vulnerable athletes.

What is the Responsible Coaching Movement?

The Responsible Coaching Movement (RCM) is coordinated by the Coaching Association of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport that has the potential to affect all sport organizations and coaches. The RCM is a call to action for organizations to implement realistic change based on their individual state of readiness.

Phase 1 of the RCM addresses the gaps identified by stakeholders that indicate there is a lack of uniform policies, a lack of club capacity, a limited communication strategy, a lack of a tracking mechanism for coaches, and a lack of a coordinated approach by sport organizations to address responsible coaching practices have all contributed to permitting instances of unethical behaviour in sport.

The goal is to make sport safer for children and the vulnerable sector. Although advances in athlete protection in the past twenty years have decreased instances of athlete maltreatment in amateur sport, incidents of athlete abuse, harassment by coaches, and risks to athlete safety have continued to occur.

To reduce risk in sport, the Responsible Coaching Movement focuses on three key areas: **Rule of Two, Background Screening, and Ethics & Respect Training.**

How Can Your Curling Centre improve Safety for Children?

- **Designate a Safe Sport Director/Officer at your club.**
Consider a board appointed position or committee to administer Safe Sport at your Club. Some sports have “Child Safety Officers.” At the very minimum - ensure Safe Sport responsibilities are written into staff job descriptions.
- **Board Approved Policies**
The first step in the Responsible Coaching Movement is taking an [inventory](#) of the policies and procedures your club has.

SAFE SPORT RESOURCES

Curling Ontario has adapted Curling Canada’s policies into easy-to-use Word templates for our member clubs — just insert your club’s name and customize as needed. These templated resources are available in the Curling Ontario Resource Library and include:

Rowan’s Law

- Concussion Code of Conduct Policy
- Concussion Guidelines

Safe Sport Policies

- Abuse Policy
- Appeal Policy
- Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy
- Discipline & Complaints Policy
- Dispute Resolution Policy
- Investigations Policy (Discrimination, Harassment & Abuse)
- Rule of Two Policy
- Screening Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

[Access these templates here](#) to help ensure your club meets legal requirements and adopts best practices for safety and inclusion.

Policies should be **posted on your Curling Centre's Website** so that they are accessible to athletes, parents, volunteers, guests, coaches, board members, staff, members, etc...

SCREENING AND TRAINING

Ensure Adults working with minor athletes (17 and under in Ontario) or vulnerable sector athletes (Para, Special Olympics), or who are in a Position of Authority have been screened and trained. This includes Coaches who regularly work with youth in your curling centre, staff, board members, officials, ice technicians, etc.

Training

- Choosing Coaches who have been trained within the [National Coach Certification Program](#) have had Ethics Training.
- Clubs may also elect to have coaches take additional Respect Training such as [Respect in Sport](#), or abuse prevention training such as [Commit to Kids](#).
- Training must include ROWAN's LAW Concussion Awareness Resources (See above)
- Training should also include reviewing the Curling Centre's Safe Sport Policies - at minimum
 - Code of Conduct and Ethics
 - Rule of Two Policy
 - Social Media Policy
- Training is never complete without a signed acknowledgement of their understanding and a willingness to follow. Here is a Template of a [Training Record form](#) which you can customize for your centre's needs.
- Hold annual training sessions to bring old and new volunteers/coaches/staff up to speed on Safe Sport Policies

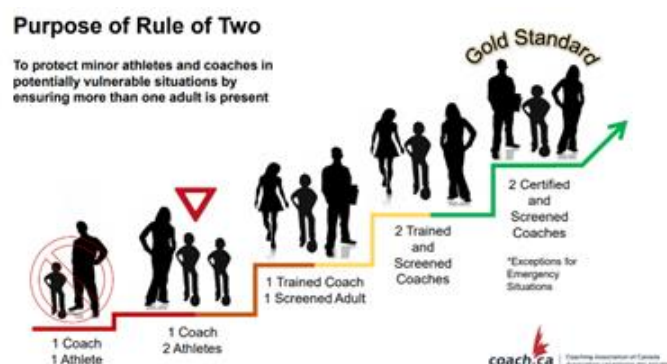
Screening

- Your club should have a board approved [Screening Policy](#) and must make a concerted effort to follow it.
- Screening is more than a Criminal Record Check or a Vulnerable Sector Check.
- When a person is new to the club, ensure you get at minimum two personal reference checks from other clubs or sports where the coach/volunteer has functioned in a similar role.
- Be sure to keep Police Checks "up to date" as per your policy, consider paying for Screening checks so volunteers are not "out-of-pocket"

Rule of Two









The Rule of Two means that a coach (non-familial adult) is never alone or out of sight with a child.

Two NCCP Trained or certified coaches should always be present with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation such as in a locker room or a meeting room. All one-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and in view of the second coach except for medical emergencies.



One of the coaches should also be of the same gender as the athletes.

Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available – the following may be acceptable:

-   No transporting non-familial athletes alone in a vehicle
-   No closed door/locker room/change room meetings
-   No “Closed” texting/social media groups
-   No sharing hotel rooms with non-familial athletes

Curling Centres should ensure all coaches (paid or volunteer), staff, board members, parents and persons in authority are aware of the Rule of Two and make every effort to follow it.

It is intended to be a common sense best practice to protect both the athlete and the adult. It is a best practice which has been followed for many years by organizations such as Boy Scouts/Girl Guides, Special Olympics.

Curling Canada and Curling Ontario have created a [RESPONSIBLE COACHING MOVEMENT POSTER](#) for you to help educate your members, coaches, staff, board of directors.

GET HELP

Duty to Report

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect a child is in need of help, you need to make the call. It isn't up to you to prove or investigate the abuse but it is up to you to reach out and help protect the child.

Under [section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act](#) every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a Children's Aid Society.

ATHLETE SUPPORT

If an athlete is being abused and is seeking help - a variety of support organizations exist. They can start by calling the [Canadian Sport Helpline](#).