

# Rule Emphasis

The 2008-09 Rules Emphasis has been approved by the Hockey Canada Board of Directors, and mandates that all Hockey Canada participants are to adhere to these guidelines. The enforcement of this rules standard in our game will continue to allow for improved skill development and positive hockey experiences.

The mission of Hockey Canada is clear; the game will be enhanced through the application of the standard of enforcement and rules emphasis.

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## Rules Emphasis

The Shared Respect Initiative calls for all participants of the game to respect one another. The intent of Hockey Canada is to enforce a standard of play that promotes an exciting and fun game for all its partners.

All partners share an equal responsibility to ensure the integrity of the game is upheld. Through this process of change, the onus is not only on our game officials but all its participants.

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## Checking To The Head

(contact physically or with a stick to another players head area)

Deliberate checks to the head remain to be a major problem in today's game. Concussions not only deprive players of playing time, they end players' careers and can have long term effects.

Checks to the head demonstrate a lack of respect and fair play and must be penalized. Any moderate or severe blow to the head must be penalized with a minor penalty and a misconduct or a major penalty and a game misconduct for checking to the head. A match penalty could also be assessed under this rule. These are aggressive fouls and must be called at ALL occurrences during the hockey game, including shorthanded situations.

Whether it is elbowing, high sticking, roughing or cross-checking, hits to the head are an intentional act of violence and must be treated with zero tolerance on the part of the official at all times.

We want to continue to work to eliminate any contact from behind, as the resulting injuries, especially to the head and neck can be catastrophic. It is a dangerous and cowardly act. It is imperative that coaches instruct their players to STOP and eliminate all checking from behind. Strict application of this rule is needed to remove this foul from our game.

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## Standard Of Play

Continued enforcement of the standard of play with regards to the restraining (hooking and holding) and stick fouls (slashing, high-sticking, cross-checking) at all levels will be maintained to allow for further enhancement of the quality of our game.

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We ALL play a role in supporting the improvement of our game.

All partners must demonstrate awareness and support for the application, spirit and the respect of the rules.

If you have any questions regarding the standard of play or rules emphasis for this season, please contact your branch referee-in-chief for further clarification.