



Burlington Lions Optimist Minor Hockey Association

Helmet Check Guideline 2010/2011

BLOMHA continues to recognize the importance of helmet safety. Even the NHL has stepped up to realize hits to the head and concussions are a serious matter. All teams from Tyke to Midget are required to submit a checklist on equipment, including the helmet.

The check is to be completed by the team Trainer by November 30th of each season and submitted into the office. The check is designed to ensure there are no issues with the helmet that could possibly result in an injury. Hits into the boards, and/or improper fit, could cause injury. It is important to remember the CSA sticker must remain affixed to the helmet and face cage with no alterations or it may cause removal from a game by a Referee. Referee checks take place during the handshakes.

Here are a few things to remember:



1. Joffa and Itech skating helmets are only designed for skating. The arrow above shows where a J-clip is required. J-clips help prevent the face cage from moving and/or assist in the prevention of injury to the chin, jaw or even teeth. Given their Styrofoam composition, skating helmets cannot be fitted with J-clips, and do not provide the same protection as a regular hockey helmet. There is an Itech helmet that appears like a skating helmet but has been equipped with the CSA required J-clips. Before you purchase a helmet, please discuss with a sales clerk about J-clips. Our Development 4/5 program allows the usage of these skating helmets for the season; however, would need to be replaced once your child advances to the Tyke program.



2. This arrow points to the noted J-clips for a better understanding of their positioning on the helmet. When an inspection is completed these clips should be tight and can be used to adjust the positioning of the face cage if it is too tight or loose on the players chin.

If the chin cup is too tight on a players chin, a blow to the cage would be absorbed by the face and head. If the chin cup is in front of the chin there is no protection for the players jaw.

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Best practice for inspecting the chin cup is that an adult should be able to place one (1) finger between the chin of the player and the chin cup.

If a cage is too big for the helmet (won't fit into the j-clips), or the chin cup is resting below the jaw (and in some cases rests against the throat or breastbone), any impact to the cage will be absorbed by the throat or chest. This can cause pain or injury.

3. **Extra or Missing Stickers** – only CSA stickers are permitted on the helmet or cage. All other stickers including name tags should be removed. The glue on CSA stickers is approved by the manufactures and will not affect the plastic shell of the helmet. Some stickers, such as the STOP or players numbers, have been approved by CSA and are permitted to be worn.
4. **Cracked Helmets** – Cracks develop around screws that have been over-tightened. Any crack reduces the protective capabilities and should be replaced right away.
5. **Helmet Fit** – many helmets can be adjusted to size. Most helmets are in two pieces. In the middle area of the helmet there are screws that can be adjusted to pull the helmet apart or push it together. Once the helmet is placed on the child's head, it can be tightened to a comfortable fit and secured. All straps (chin and side cage straps) should be adjusted so they do not hang and are properly secured so the helmet/cage is not loose.
6. **Stick Tape Knob/Cage openings** – junior sticks have small shafts that will easily pass through openings of a face cage or goalie mask. A tape knob should be placed on the sticks end – approx 1" in diameter.
7. **Goalie masks** – goalie masks must also show the CSA approval sticker. All parts of the mask must be in place with no cracks or defects. The "Cats Eye" cage is not an approved mask and is not permitted by Hockey Canada.
8. **Mouth-guards** – within Alliance Hockey, mouth-guards are not mandatory. If it is preferred by the parent, a player may wear a mouth-guard, but there are rules that must be adhered too. Some mouth-guards can be secured to the cage, this is fine (and is preferred for younger age groups) but then the player must keep the mouth-guard in during play on the ice. If the mouth-guard is not worn properly it is cause for a referee to call the play.

Note: REP team trainers conduct helmet and equipment checks twice a year. It is recommended helmets be inspected on a more regular basis for body-checking teams. If a helmet is noted defective it should be replaced as soon as possible to prevent injury or discomfort to the player.

Concussions are a serious matter and should not be looked at lightly. It is the only head we have, so let's protect it.

If any questions arise regarding helmets or any other sort of equipment, please do not hesitate to contact BLOMHA's Technical Director of Risk Management, Donna Ballentyne at mdballentyne@hotmail.com.