



West Ferris Ringette Association of North Bay

Conflict Prevention and Disagreement Resolution Guideline

February 21, 2024

Purpose

The Guideline is based on a vision that members of all ages can learn to deal constructively with conflict and live in civil association with one another. The ability to resolve disputes effectively is central to the peaceful expression of human rights. Conflict resolution can be viewed as a responsibility of law-abiding members of our society. Responsible citizens in a democracy express their concerns peacefully and seek resolutions to problems that take into account common interests and recognize the human dignity of all involved.

Conflict can be an opportunity for growth, self-awareness, and development of understanding and respect for others. This Guideline is meant to help support members address disagreements and potential conflict at the level closest to the situation as possible before escalating issues to a formal complaint process wherever possible and appropriate.

Guiding Principles

- Use positive communication skills
 - Listen openly
 - Reflect or clarify points as needed to ensure understanding by summarizing a point in your own words and stating it back to the person you are communicating with to allow for them to acknowledge your understanding or clarify
 - Avoid name calling, blaming, judging, and abusive language
- Be aware of your own biases
- Remain Calm
- Move away from being adversaries working against each other to 'win' a disagreement/dispute towards being partners working side by side to develop a mutually acceptable solution
- Be Assertive vs Aggressive
 - A basic assertive script is: 'When you (observed action/behaviour), I feel (your experience), In the future I would prefer/like (preferred future behaviour).'
- Be open to different views
- Focus on the issue not the person
- Focus on mutually beneficial interests, not positions
- Define the issue using objective/observable criteria
- Problem solving focus:
 - **Negotiate:** the two members meet face to face to work together to problem solve through the disagreement/dispute and come to a mutually agreeable resolution on their own without assistance
 - **Mediate:** the two members meet face to face to work through the disagreement/dispute with a problem solving focus with the assistance of a mutually trusted third party. This can be informal, a mutually agreed to third party of any sort, or formal, a mutually agreed upon third party who has an official position within the association
 - **Build Consensus**