

# ***Back to Hockey***

## ***Promoting the social side***



**ENGLAND  
HOCKEY**

Over 80% of Back to Hockey players have told us they keep coming back because they love the social nature of the sessions. To facilitate a social environment both within and between session, coaches and coordinators need to understand that Back to Hockey sessions are a social event for many of the players. The vast majority of the players just want to play in a fun, friendly and safe environment.

A number of successful ways other clubs have achieved this is through;

### **Before the session**

- Find out why the players are attending and how long it has been since they last played. Not only can you put their nervous at ease you can plan the most appropriate session.
- Use coaches who are friendly and welcoming, they don't need to be the best technical coaches.
- Encourage players who are coming to bring a friend with them. Not only can they support each other, but it increases the number of players at the session.

### **During the session**

- Warm ups that encourage players to get to know each other. For example stuck in the mud and players must learn each other's name whilst 'freeing' statues.
- Schedule longer drinks breaks so players can have a chat about how they are finding the session and allow friendships to develop. The players will also be grateful a longer rest!
- Keep mixing the teams throughout
- Ask players how they are finding the sessions, what they like, don't like or want to do more of.

### **After the session**

- Can the club facilitate cake and a drink in the club house, local pub or cafe. Let players know about this beforehand so they can make suitable arrangements.
- Post photos from the sessions on social media and tag players. Also encourage conversations online to keep their interest. You might ask what they would like to see at the next session, encourage them to bring a friend or the favourite part of the previous session.
- Use Whatsap like apps to communicate with the group and to build a community. Or create a Facebook group.

