

It PAYS to be Positive!



Parents Promoting Positive Sports!

THE LEAGUE'S ROLE

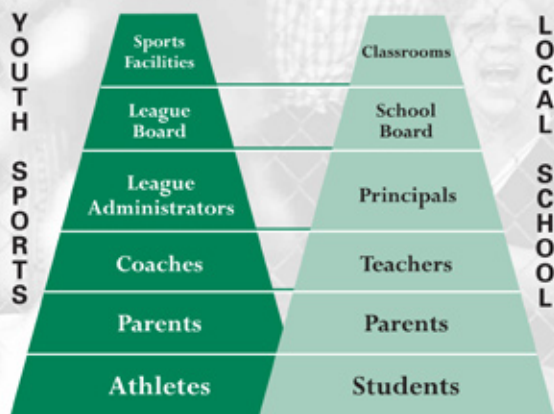


is to provide your child with an opportunity to learn, grow, develop skills, meet new friends, and also experience the excitement and fun associated with participation in youth sports.



Youth Sports is an extension of *the child's* EDUCATION

Comparing Two Familiar Models



Respect
your child's sports classroom



Do You Know the following about your child's league?

- How long will practice be?
- How often will my child have games /practices?
- What equipment will I need to purchase for my child?
- Will my child's coach be trained?
- Will my child's coach be certified?
- How can you help?
- What is the league's minimum play rule?
- What volunteer screening procedures are in place within the league?
- What is the primary focus of the program?
- What is the league's mission statement?
- What are the league's goals?
- Who is in charge of safety concerns?

Keep a copy of the following:

- A schedule of games and practices
- Important numbers to call in case of rain-outs and/or emergencies
- Rules of the game
- League policies and procedures
- Complaint procedures, in case of problems

Support your league by volunteering in the following ways:

- Team Parent
- Assistant Coach
- Refreshments for practices/games
- Transportation
- Team telephone tree
- Website development/updates/
information
- Fund raisers
- Concessions
- Field maintenance

The Coach's *Role*

Think of the coach as your son or daughter's youth sport teacher. Whether the coach is a seasoned professional or a first-time volunteer, they have elected to accept the responsibility as the authority or one of the authorities for instructing your child. Volunteer coaches are not paid



The Official's *Role*

The official's role in a game is to make calls based on the rules of the game. Please respect this authority and never undermine the "official" call by questioning from the sidelines



Be a **model** **youth sports** parent

- Remember that where your child practices and plays games is like the classroom – respect the classroom.
- Make only positive, encouraging comments to the players on both teams.
- Remember, making mistakes is part of the learning process – don't criticize.
- Discuss your concern away from the players and, in particular away from your child.
- Respect the officials
- Focus on fun and participation rather than winning or losing.
- Ask your child if they had fun. Then ask why or why not?
- Control your emotions.
- Get interested in your child's sports.
- Learn the rules of your child's sport.
- Make every effort to get your child to practice on time.
- Reinforce the coach's instruction when practicing with your child at home.
- Remember, positive reinforcement is the key to improvement.
- Don't undermine team morale.
- Let the coach know if your child will be missing practice or a game.
- Pick your child up promptly after practice and games.
- Refrain from tobacco or alcohol use at all youth sports events.
- Participate in team activities.



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The Right Approach with your child's **COACH**



Remember these points next time you feel your tension rise.

Timing is everything: Don't confront the coach unexpectedly in the parking lot after a game. Surprise attacks aren't fair to the coach and generally don't go smoothly anyway. Call the coach ahead of time and arrange to speak with him or her before or after an upcoming practice. Ask what would be the most convenient time to get together and go from there.

Be prepared to listen: If you're not willing to listen to what the coach has to say, how can you realistically expect the coach to listen to you? Focus on listening rather than trying to get your point across and the coach will be a lot more likely to work with you - not against you.

Don't unload: Parents are often guilty of bombarding coaches with accusations, complaints and other negative comments. No matter how frustrated or upset you are, resist the urge to unload on the coach because it will accomplish absolutely nothing.

Civility rules: You can quickly defuse an often-tense situation between coaches and parents when it comes to the issue of playing time by being calm and friendly. Setting a civil tone right from the start is a critical building block for a productive discussion.

Solutions: Accept the fact that there are many ways to solve a problem. Come up with as many options as you can that combine the coach's interests and your own.

Be realistic: Don't approach the meeting with the belief that your child is being deprived of an athletic scholarship or a pro career because they aren't getting to play a certain position. Taking the attitude that your child is destined for stardom will only cripple the discussion.

Know what you're talking about: If you signed your child up for a league that doesn't have a stated policy on playing time, and the coach believes your child isn't as talented as a lot of the other kids, you're fighting an uphill battle. Always make sure at registration that equal playing time is a clearly stated goal of the program before you and your child get stuck in a program that's going to be demoralizing for both of you.

What would you do? Prior to setting up a meeting with the coach, put yourself in his or her shoes. Carefully observe practice sessions and games and ask yourself if you could do a better job delegating playing time. If not, then you may be overreacting. If so, you've probably got a pretty good case and should explain your observations and suggestions to the coach.

Say thank you: Thank the coach for taking the time to speak with you. Coaches are typically parents themselves with their own son or daughter on the team. They understand you want the best for your child, just as they do for theirs. Acknowledge their positive attributes, since many coaches only hear from parents when they're doing something wrong.



The importance of drinking fluids during a game and practice

Young children do not handle heat very well and it is very important that they get fluids during a game or practice. It's recommended that every 15-20 minutes children drink 6 to 8 ounces of water.

What your child should eat before a practice or game

Pay attention to what your child eats before practices and games. Carbohydrates are easily digested, so we recommend whole wheat breads, pastas, soups, fruits or yogurts about an hour and a half before the activity, if possible.



Questions For Parents To *Ask Their Child* About Their *Sports Experience*

1. Did you have fun?
2. Did you learn something new?
3. Do you feel as though you improved a skill today?
4. Did you play well?
5. Is there anything you feel you need to work on, and if so, can I help you?
6. What did the coach say you should concentrate on?
7. Were you a good sport?
8. What was your favorite part of practice/the game?
9. What do you like most about the coach?
10. Is there anything you are having difficulty with?
11. Did you look forward to playing today? If not, why?
12. Is there anything else you want to talk about?

Types of **CHILD ABUSE** to be prevented in **YOUTH SPORTS**

Emotional Abuse – Behaviors that attack or break a child's self-worth and development. Examples: calling people names, making fun or putting someone down, saying things that hurt feelings or being yelled at.

Physical Abuse – Behaviors and actions that hurt someone's body that are not a part of the sport like hitting, kicking, slapping or shaking someone. Examples: throwing equipment at players, shaking or hitting athletes for making mistakes.

Philosophical Abuse – Inappropriate use of core philosophies. Examples: Win-at-all-costs mentalities, unsportsmanlike behaviors and condoning inequities in participation opportunities.

Sexual Abuse – Forcing or tricking someone into sexual touch, sexual contact or sexual acts.

Neglect – Failure to provide basic or essential care to meet a child's needs. Examples: failure to practice, encourage or work with a young athlete or to seldom give athletes opportunities to participate.





Parents' Code of Ethics:

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth - not adults.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.



PAYS is a program of the National Alliance For Youth Sports. The Alliance offers programs and services for everyone involved in youth sports experiences, including professional administrators, volunteer administrators, volunteer coaches, officials, parents and young athletes.

National
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