



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# **PARENT & COACH HANDBOOK YOUTH SPORTS**



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# YOUTH SPORTS

## Table of Contents

Letter to Parents/Guardians and Participants.....	2
Contact Information.....	3
Things to Remember.....	3
How many quarters can I play my team? .....	3
Parent/Coach Youth Sports Handbook .....	4 - 10
Quenchers .....	9 - 10

## Letter to Parents/Guardians and Participants

Dear Parents and Participants,

The YMCA of Harrison County welcomes you to the Youth Sports program! A goal of the YMCA of Harrison County is for all youth sports participants, both parents/guardians and youth, to have an enjoyable sporting experience. Skill development is the main component of all Y youth sports programs. Non-competitive games are a part of every season and each child will play an equal amount of time in every game (or as close as possible based on number of players on a team). Of course, a FUN and friendly environment are characteristics of all YMCA of Harrison County programs.

This is the Youth Sports Parent and Coach Handbook. It describes the YMCA of Harrison County's youth sports program. Please take a few minutes and read the information inside this handbook. This material may answer some of your questions, as well as give you the Youth Sports Philosophy and YMCA mission statement.

Youth Sports programs are possible by the dedication of volunteer workers. Many volunteers put in several hours of work to make Y youth programs a success. Thank you to all of the volunteers, past and present, who invest time and energy into the lives of our youth. If you are interested in future volunteer opportunities, please let us know.

Families are very important to the YMCA of Harrison County. Please take an interest in your child by participating with him/her during the practices and games. Also, time spent with your child at home in sports skills development builds confidence and parent-child relationships.

Thanks for your participation. We look forward to serving you and your child in our Youth Sports program. If you have any comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Brandon Babb  
Membership and Sports Director

## Contact Information

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## Things to Remember

Can't reach a Y staff member or your coach? - Visit [www.ymcaharrison.org](http://www.ymcaharrison.org) for copies of packets, schedules, forms, or cancellations related to your current sport.

Coaches' Online Training Website - If you are a volunteer coach and unable to attend the scheduled coaches' training, you are required to complete training online at <http://training.ymca.net/>.

Food and Drinks - Thank you for helping keep our facilities clean. Please do not bring food or drink in the gymnasiums during practices or games.

Safety - All sporting activities will be monitored by YMCA of Harrison County staff who are trained in CPR and First Aid. First Aid kits are available at all sites.

Weather Information/Cancellations - For severe weather conditions, please contact your coach. They will have the latest information regarding game day cancellations and weather related information. Cancelled practices will not be made up. Cancelled games will only be made up if the schedule allows. You can also sign up to receive text alerts by texting:

- YHCYOUTHSOCCER to 84483 for Spring/Fall Soccer
- YHCROOKIEBB to 84483 for Rookie Basketball
- YHCYOUTHBBALL to 84483 for Youth Basketball

Your opinion matters to us! - A survey will be sent to you at the end of the season. If your email is not on file with us, visit our Member Services Desk to have it added.

### How many quarters can I play my team?

If I have 10 players: All players play 2 quarters

If I have 9 players: 2 kids play 3 quarters, 7 kids play 2 quarters

If I have 8 players: 4 kids play 3 quarters, 4 kids play 2 quarters

If I have 7 players: 6 kids play 3 quarters, 1 kid plays 2 quarters

If I have 6 players: 2 kids play 4 quarter, 4 kids play 3 quarters

# PARENT AND COACH YOUTH SPORTS HANDBOOK

## YMCA of Harrison County Mission Statement:

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

## 4 Core Values of Character Development:

- Caring
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility

## Youth Sports Philosophy:

Building Winners for Life! It is the program that develops kids' skills, fitness, and character – for today and for life.

## YMCA Sports: 7 Pillars

**1. Everyone plays.** We do not use tryouts to select the best players, nor do we cut kids from Y Youth Sports teams. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season, everyone receives equal practice time and plays at least half of every game.

**2. Safety first.** Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We've modified each sport to make it safer and more enjoyable to play. We ask you to take time to check that the equipment and facilities are safe and to teach the sport as we've prescribed, so that the skills taught are appropriate for children's developmental level. We also ask you to develop your players' fitness levels gradually so they are conditioned for the sport. And we ask you to constantly supervise your players so that you can stop any unsafe activities.

**3. Fair play.** Fair play is about more than playing by the rules. It's about you and your players showing respect for all who are involved in Y Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players to do the same. Remember, we're more interested in developing children's character through sports than in developing a few highly skilled players.

**4. Positive competition.** We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. Learning to compete is important for children, and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. The "right perspective" means adults make decisions that put the best interests of the youth above winning the contest. These are the lessons we want to teach through Y Youth Sports.

**5. Family involvement.** Y Youth Sports encourages parents/guardians to be involved appropriately along with their child participating in our sport programs. In addition to parents/guardians being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child's participation.

**6. Sport for all.** Y Youth Sports is an inclusive sport program. That means that children who differ in various characteristics are to be included rather than excluded from participation. We offer sport programs for youth who differ in physical abilities by matching them with children of similar abilities and modifying their sport. We offer programs to all children regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. We ask our adult leaders to support and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the children and their parents/guardians to do the same. We do not forfeit games; instead, we share players and proceed with planned games.

**7. Sport for fun.** Sport is naturally fun for most youth. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, playing with their friends and competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children's sport, they over-organize and dominate the activity to the point of spoiling the enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sport, we are in danger of our youth taking themselves out of sport. Remember, that these sports are for the youth, make sure they are having fun.

### **Volunteer Coaching:**

Want to develop a closer, more meaningful relationship with your son/daughter? Become a volunteer coach. The Y promotes family, leadership, relationship and community through coaching youth sports. We can always use good role models.

### **Coaches Training:**

Anyone interested in volunteering as a youth sports coach is required to complete a Volunteer Sports Application and can participate in the **YMCA Coaches Training sessions prior to the start of each season**. The coach's trainings are not just another "meeting," but much more than that, offering leadership for volunteer coaches, learning the YMCA way of youth sports, skill development, and program development. Trainings are held prior to the start of each sports season. It is important that coaches are aware of YMCA Sports principles, making certain that positive competition in youth sports is a positive experience for kids, parents, coaches, referees, and spectators. Most importantly, parents and their children are depending on you.

### **Sports Pledge**

Win or lose, I pledge before God to do the best I can, to be a team player and to respect my teammates, my opponents and officials, and to improve myself in spirit, mind, and body.

## **Youth Sports Responsibilities and Expectations:**

### **As a COACH, please:**

1. Be welcoming! Contact players prior to your first practice to welcome them and confirm practice times/dates/location.
2. Be accessible and approachable to players and parents/guardians before and after practices and games. Arrive early to help build relationships.
3. Be informative and distribute all printed materials and communicate any changes in the schedule or special announcements, such as Picture Day and Trophy Day information.
4. Take attendance and call players who have missed two practices or games in a row.
5. Promote good sportsmanship and respect for others regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
6. Assure safe and fair play at all times.
7. Dress appropriately and smartly.
8. Plan practice sessions and game plans.
9. Encourage and be positive in correcting and instructing.
10. Know emergency procedures.
11. Listen to the players.
12. Know the rules of the game and pass that knowledge on to other players.
13. Make it a rewarding and worthwhile experience.
14. Be drug, tobacco and alcohol free during all team events.
15. Understand that you are a representative of the YMCA of Harrison County during all events.
16. Lead by example among program parents/guardians to support the duties and responsibilities of the referees and league leadership.
17. Remember you are a role model spiritually, mentally and physically.
18. Be aware of the Youth Sports Philosophy and support it.
19. Have fun!

### **As a PARENT/GUARDIAN, please:**

1. Read and use all printed material provided by the Y.
2. Make sure your player arrives on time to all practices and games.
3. Ensure the player is properly equipped with shoes, shin guards, shorts/sweats and team t-shirts.
4. Stay at practices and games whenever possible and support your player and team.
5. Volunteer to help the coach whenever possible, perhaps assisting in practice and sitting on the bench with players.
6. Inform the coach if the player is unable to attend practice or game.
7. Encourage your child and team, but not insult or discourage the other team. Encourage good sportsmanship.
8. Encourage your child to treat others with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
9. Spend time at home practicing with your child on his/her skill development.
10. Acknowledge the other team's accomplishments.
11. Support and not criticize the coach.
12. Support and not criticize the referees.
13. Be positive at all times!
14. Be drug, tobacco and alcohol free during all team events.
15. Be aware of the Youth Sports Philosophy and support it!
16. Enjoy the games and have fun!

### **As a PLAYER, please:**

1. Be ready to practice and play!
2. Perform up to your potential and have fun learning youth sports!

3. Arrive at practice and games on time.
4. Show respect for your coach, volunteers and other players at all times. Ask questions when appropriate.
5. Show respect to the other team and officials.
6. Have lots of fun!

## **Young Athlete's Bill of Rights**

1. The right to determine when to participate and in what sports and to what degree of intensity and involvement.
2. The right to play in every game no matter what their degree of physical ability or the relative importance of the game in terms of league competition.
3. The right to be taught the fundamentals of the sport by a teacher or coach and play with rules that have been adjusted for children.
4. The right to be coached by those who have been trained in or who have been made aware of the various stages of emotional and psychological development in children, and to be treated on a level equivalent to their emotional and physical maturity – not by standards of collegiate or professional sports.
5. The right to have a coach who places the child first, the team second, himself or herself third, and winning fourth; to feel free to laugh after a defeat and to have fun participating even while playing on a losing team; to be able to use play as an opportunity to test life; and not to be subjected to adult-imposed pressures to win.
6. The right to have a coach who is patient and supportive, as opposed to one who believes in a harsh, negative, "professional" approach; a coach who takes time to work with each athlete, regardless of ability or potential.
7. The right to be treated as a member of a democracy, not a dictatorship, including the freedom to voice opinions openly to the coach without fear or repercussion.
8. The right to play in a safe and supportive atmosphere.
9. The right to report to a coach or parent any physical pain or emotional concerns such as fear or rejection without fear of ridicule or loss of esteem.
10. The right to freedom from physical and emotional punishment by their parents or the coach. Punishment leads only to fear and inhibition. The purpose of sports should be to help a child grow, feel expansive, and realize his or her potential.

## **Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct**

1. I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in Y Youth Sports.
2. I will remember that the game is for youth – not for adults.
3. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, instructors, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
4. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
5. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
6. I will support all staff, the coaches, instructors and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
7. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all YMCA of Harrison County Youth Sports events.

8. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
9. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, instructors, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
10. I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan or assisting with coaching if needed.
11. I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach fulfills his/her responsibilities.
12. I will strive to fulfill the mission of the YMCA of Harrison County and demonstrate and adhere to the YMCA of Harrison County Youth Sports philosophy.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers are the KEY to Y Youth Sports! Without the help of volunteers, youth sports programs would not exist. You don't have to be a coach to volunteer in Y Youth Sports. Some of the things volunteers can do include:

- Coaching
- Officiating
- Serve as "Team Mom or Dad" to assist with team activities (i.e. coordinate snacks, make call, etc.)
- Help distribute information to teams

## **General Youth Sports Information:**

1. All siblings can be placed on the same team, provided they are in the same age grouping. Please indicate this request on the youth sports registration form.
2. Player and coach requests are accepted; however, no guarantees are made, we do our best to accommodate these requests. Please indicate this request on the youth sports registration form.
3. All outdoor games are played in the rain. Games are canceled due to severe weather. A decision to games status is made one hour prior to the first game time scheduled. If a cancellation occurs, make-ups will be scheduled at the end of the season (if possible).
4. Schedules and team information will be available from your team coach and/or the YMCA of Harrison County prior to the first game/practice.
5. Shirts will be handed out before the first game.
6. End of season awards will be given to coaches to present during the last game.
7. Pictures are taken for most youth sports programs and will be passed out to the coach to pass out to the players. Purchasing your pictures is an option, not an obligation. However, please have your child present for the team photo. All picture concerns are handled by the photographer.
8. All youth in youth sports should wear comfortable athletic clothing.
9. Team t-shirts should be worn on picture days and at all games. Please have your child dress appropriately for the sport and the weather.
10. We ask parents to provide snacks for post-game treats which are usually coordinated by the team parents. The coach should assist in assigning the team snack, if help is needed.
11. For many of our youth sport programs, we rent/use "off-site" facilities. We ask that you would be respectful to the property. Please do not smoke on the premises. If a mess of any kind is made, please clean it up prior to leaving. Some locations do not have trash containers available, so please bring trash bags if you are in charge of team snacks.
12. All parents have the opportunity to evaluate programs. Please take the time to do this.
13. A Program Membership allows a participant to take a class for a fee for a specific length of time. It does not allow the use of the facilities other than for the class. \*The difference between a Program Member's fee and a Member's fee may be applied to a YMCA membership any time before

the last class of the session or game of the league in which you are enrolled. All Program Members must present their receipt to gain access to the facility for classes.

## **Quenchers – Hints for keeping happy, healthy, HOT kids hydrated!**

As the kids explode out of doors and indoors, make sure they are prepared. Drink WATER! Water is a vital ingredient for keeping body temperature in check. Water lost as sweat needs to be replaced to avoid dehydration. Thirst doesn't kick in until approximately 2% of body weight is lost as sweat, so make sure that kids are drinking BEFORE they get thirsty.

Dehydration, left untreated, can lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion and very serious heat stroke. Closely watch kids for signs of dehydration, including:

- fatigue
- dry lips and tongue
- low energy
- grayish skin
- lack of tears

Since children's body temperature rises faster than adults, it is essential that kids get plenty of fluids to keep them cool, especially when it's hot and humid.

### **What you can do to keep kids hydrated**

- Make sure that kids drink fluids at every meal and snack time throughout the day, and during every period of physical activity.
- During physical activity (and especially on hot days), make sure that kids drink frequently, even if they are not thirsty.
- Every 20 minutes, give younger kids five ounces of cold water (about the size of a small juice box or 10 gulps) and give teens about nine ounces.
- Offer cold water – it's absorbed faster. Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks as these are absorbed more slowly.

### **Choose wisely to really beat the heat!**

- Cold Water
- Sodium-Free Seltzer
- Water flavored with fruit slices or frozen fruit
- Diluted 100% Juice (4 oz. water and 4 oz. juice)
- Juice ice cubes
- Juice Spritzers (juice and seltzer water)

### **Why not juice, soda or sports drinks?**

- Because they often contain sugar, caffeine, phosphorus and artificial sweeteners.
- Even very small amounts of sugar slow down fluid absorption by the body. The acid in juice can cause stomach upset, especially when combined with heat and exertion.
- Caffeine increases the amount of water lost by the body, and speeds up dehydration.
- Phosphorus in carbonated soft drinks limits the body's ability to use calcium to build bone.
- Artificial sweeteners condition youth to expect "sweetness" in drinks and foods, and kids may reject healthful alternatives that don't provide the same sweet taste. Since their long-term safety is not fully understood, it is best to avoid them.
- Sports drinks are helpful only for highly intense activity that lasts longer than one hour, when the

ability to keep going is required for competition. In normal play, stopping for a healthy snack and cold drink is a better way for the body to refuel.

### **Keeping kids energized with snacks**

Growing kids, even teens, need a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack to maintain their energy – this is especially true when outdoor games are the way of the day. A 15 minute rest in the shade for a healthy snack and cold drink is essential on hot days. When kids spend a full eight hour day away from home, they need at least one good meal and two snacks. A snack or meal every two and a half hours is a good standard.

### **Drink Sense Tips**

#### **DO SELECT**

Water  
100% Juice:  
Apple and Eve  
Mott's 100% Juice  
Libby's Juicy Juice  
Hansen's Junior Juice  
Minute Maid 100% Juice  
Welch's 100% Juice  
Ocean Spray 100% Juice  
Northland 100% Juice  
Sodium-Free Seltzer  
Zazz Seltzer, all flavors  
Polar Seltzer, all flavors  
Schweppes Seltzer Water

#### **STEER CLEAR**

Soda: regular or diet  
Drinks with added sugar and/or artificial sweeteners:  
Fruit Punch  
Capri Sun  
Kool Aid  
Crystal Light  
Minute Maid Coolers  
Newman's Own  
Sunny Delight  
Welch's Juice Cocktail  
Ocean Spray Juice Cocktail  
Vitamin Water  
Iced Tea  
Lemonade  
Sports Drinks: Gatorade, Powerade

### **Snack Sense Tips**

Create snacks that include choices from each of the following groups:

**Fruits and Vegetables:** frozen grapes, berries, or melon chunks; pre-cut orange wedges; apples; pears; bananas; applesauce; pepper strips; carrot sticks or baby carrots; sliced cucumbers or squash; pea pods; green beans or jicama sticks. A quick ranch dressing or plain yogurt and honey dipping sauce make it fun.

**Proteins:** Peanut or other nut butters; hummus or chick peas; cheese; yogurt; hard boiled eggs; tuna fish (the new pouch preparation is great); a handful of unsalted nuts (peanuts, cashews, walnuts or almonds); soybeans (edamame) with or without the pods (find them in the frozen foods aisle; simply defrost and eat).

**Whole Grains:** whole wheat pita or flatbread; whole wheat or graham crackers; RyVita crisps; whole wheat toaster waffles; trail mix or granola; oat bran mini muffins; fig bars; or dry whole-grain cereal.

**A note about trans fats:** Many snack foods tend to be high in unhealthy trans fats, especially crackers and grain-based products. Purchase products that have no "partially hydrogenated oils" or "shortening" present in the ingredient listing. Products labeled "Zero Trans Fats" may have up to .5 g of trans fats per serving, so a quick label check helps to avoid these unhealthy fats.

Sense Snack Tips information provided by the Prevention Research Center at Harvard School of Public Health.