



Community Services Department • RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION
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CITY OF TORRANCE YOUTH SPORTS



COACHES' MANUAL

"Creating and Enriching Community through People, Programs and Partnerships"



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LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

The City of Torrance Youth Sports program is designed to provide all children the opportunity to participate in an organized recreational sports activity without fear of discrimination, humiliation or harm.

THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO:

1. Introduce the children to an organized team sport experience where they can learn the game.
2. Promote values associated with group participation such as: teamwork, sportsmanship, unity, cooperation and a sense of belonging.
3. Give children the opportunity, regardless of ability, to engage in competitive activities and at the same time have fun.
4. Establish a sense of responsibility to someone other than one's self.

VOLUNTEER COACHES

The definition of a "Volunteer Coach" is an individual who willingly gives time and effort to the City of Torrance Recreation Services Division for the advancement of the Youth Sports program. Without this type of volunteer leadership, a significant portion of this program would be unable to survive. Through your participation, all children will be provided with the opportunity to take part in a wholesome activity.

Volunteer coaches contribute a great deal to the community, and beyond this, they gain personal benefits from their efforts. The benefits derived from being a volunteer coach come from knowing that you, as a volunteer, have provided a meaningful service to the children that live in our community.

The City of Torrance Recreation Services Division considers volunteer coaching a privilege, not a right. After completion of a ***Volunteer Application, Background Check and Fingerprint Request Form, which will be reviewed by the Department of Justice, the applicant may then be invited to coach.***

RELATIONSHIP WITH GAME OFFICIALS

The Recreation Services Division has made every effort to secure and train the best officials available. These high school and college students go through multiple trainings, as well as in-services during the season. Even with this training of officials, mistakes will be made. As with anyone in any profession or occupation, officials are fallible.

In most instances, participants and spectators take their cue from the actions of the coaches. Displays of poor sportsmanship by spectators can often be traced directly to the coach. The coach's effective leadership and example of sportsmanship may avoid such acts. This responsibility should never be overlooked or forgotten. Officials must be symbols of authority. They are in complete command and must maintain this position throughout the game.

It must be remembered that officials are **not** enemies of the team. They are responsible for the proper administration of the contest, just as coaches are responsible for the direction of their teams.

POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT COACH/OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Officials must be treated with respect. Treat officials as you would wish to be treated. Officials are expected to treat all volunteers with mutual respect.
2. A decision based on an official's judgment should **not** be questioned. In questioning a rule, officials should be addressed courteously. The case should be explained in a way that does not jeopardize the role of the officials. Officials are instructed to answer a coach's question if submitted courteously and when the game is complete or on a coach's timeout only.

3. Coaches should remain off the playing field/court during the game.
4. Players should not be permitted to question an official's decision.

NOTE: Any coach who violates one of these points places himself or herself in jeopardy of being suspended from further coaching activities. ***Any coach ejected from a game will be suspended from the next scheduled game or longer.*** This includes tournaments, and if the game is the last game of the season, the suspension will be for the first game in the next season that the said coach participates. A suspended coach shall have no contact with his/her team for the entire duration of the game in which he/she is suspended. ***Furthermore, any coach that is ejected from a game twice during the same sport season will be suspended from coaching for an indefinite period of time.***

RELATIONSHIP WITH SPECTATORS

Setting a proper example for the spectators is one of the coach's responsibilities. The basic philosophy of the program must be conveyed to spectators by coaches. The spectators must know what the coaches stand for and what they are attempting to accomplish. Remember that the basic purpose of the entire program is for participants to enjoy themselves and to learn the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, etc. Spectators often lose sight of this, and it is sometimes necessary for coaches to meet with parents to remind them of the program's purpose. Many times a word from the coach to a spectator, who is out of line, has a better effect than intervention by the league Supervisor.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

Volunteer coaches must do everything possible to maintain and develop good working relationships with parents. This is not always easy. Parents often feel that their children are perfect and "*can do no wrong*". In their eyes, their children are the best on the team. However, volunteer coaches must always keep in mind the objectives of the program; the spirit of "team play" must be emphasized, rather than singling out anyone as a star player. Parents will be better supporters if they understand what you are trying to do. One of the best ways to keep them informed is to hold a pre-season meeting, at which time the objectives of the program are described. The success of your meeting will depend greatly on your approach. Among the topics you should cover are:

1. The philosophy of the program and the responsibility players have to the team, coaches and to themselves.
2. Your role as leader of the team.
3. The role the parents have in seeing that their children attend all practices and games.
4. Proper game behavior.

During the meeting, various jobs needing to be handled may be discussed, and volunteers should be recruited to perform them. Assistant coaches (only one on the sidelines with the coach) and "Team Parents" should be recruited at this time. Assistant coaches must fill out a Background Check Form and be fingerprinted.

Parents must realize that they should not interfere with the coaches during games. Shouting criticisms at a child only embarrasses that child. Furthermore, parents should not punish their child at home, for mistakes made during a game. Coaches should talk in private with parents who expect their children to play without mistakes.

RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR AND STAFF

Any help that you need or any problem that may occur, should be discussed with the staff at your facility or the program Supervisor. They are always willing to assist you, in any way possible, to help make your season a successful one.

NOTE: *If a coach has a problem or complaint regarding officials, spectators, or parents, he/she should present this matter to the program Supervisor or staff within two working days.*

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN

The most important relationship a volunteer coach makes is that with his players. ***The following thoughts are important to remember:***

1. Remember that all members of your team are individuals, and though they possess certain characteristics common with other children, they are each different in many ways. Successful coaches must be able to deal with their players as individuals.
2. Too much emphasis by coaches on perfection may lead to a loss of interest among some players. Generally speaking, children in the early stages of learning need some good examples of fundamental skills. Once the basics are learned, there is ample time for more technical aspects of the activity.
3. Consistency in handling children is a great virtue. Inconsistency by adults makes it difficult to establish standards of conduct. Players need to know, with some assurance, the consequences of their behavior. Best results with children are accomplished by coaches who display a genuine liking and regard for them. Young people respond best to adults who like them, are firm, considerate, sympathetic, and respect the dignity of each individual.
4. Scolding, sarcasm, nagging, taking away privileges and restricting a child's behavior often intensifies the very conditions that give rise to a problem. Humiliating children in front of others is especially harmful. The practice of having a player run laps is inadvisable, as it reinforces a negative attitude toward running and conditioning. Giving a player a time out is a more recommended form of punishment. Sitting out is an effective form of punishment, as it denies the child the right to be active, a fate dreaded by any athlete.
5. Players must treat officials with respect, refrain from debating decisions, and should be encouraged not to voice disagreement. It is inappropriate for players to engage in a discussion with spectators during the course of the game. The relationship with opposing teams should be one of mutual respect and esteem. Players that continually argue with officials should be removed from the game and their misconduct discussed after the game.
6. Remember winning ISN'T everything, having fun IS everything. So have fun and the kids will too.

In conclusion, the concerns of successful volunteer coaches should not be the win-loss record of their team. Rather, successful coaches are those who affect the behavior of players in a positive way. **"POOR COACHES ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN WINNING GAMES."** Good coaches are interested in having their players come out of the athletic experience as better athletes. A coach should not sacrifice team rules, or the spirit of fair play, just to win a game.

COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

Coaches are expected to adhere to the Department's philosophy, which is mentioned in the beginning of this manual, and the following Code of Ethics.

1. Coaches shall abide by the official's decisions or by the City of Torrance Recreation Services Division's Rules and Regulations.
2. Coaches shall not knowingly play ineligible players.
3. Coaches shall not teach unnecessary rough tactics against opposing players.
4. Coaches shall not use profane, obscene, or vulgar language towards players, officials or spectators.

Any coach violating the Department's philosophy and/or Code of Ethics may be suspended from coaching for an indefinite period of time, and could result in permanent removal from the Recreation Services Division's Youth Sports programs.

Again, if a coach is ejected twice during the same sports season, the result will be a suspension for an indefinite period of time.

DROPPING OR ADDING PLAYERS

Coaches may not drop or add players at will. A player can only be pulled from the program by their parents or the program Supervisor. Only the program Supervisor may add players to a team with Coaches request.

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

1. All players must be listed on the "**Official Team Roster**" form.
2. After being assigned to a team, players may not re-register for another team. If a player quits the team and receives a refund or credit he/she may not sign up again during that current sports season.
3. Coaches playing ineligible players will be suspended for an indefinite period of time. The ineligible player will also be suspended and not allowed to play during the current sports season.

NOTE: Questions regarding the eligibility of players may be raised verbally, at any time, by a coach to the program Supervisor.

TEAMS

The number of players per roster varies according to the sport. The Recreation Program Supervisor may allow teams to have more than the maximum number of players allowed, but this must be approved on a case-by-case basis prior to the start of the season.

PRACTICE SCHEDULING

Practices must be scheduled with League Staff or the Program Supervisor. Be sure that reservations have been made for the facilities for a specific date and time. Since there are a large number of teams, practices must be on a reservation basis.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment will be made available for each team prior to the start of the season. The Recreation Services Division will issue this equipment at a time specified by the program Supervisor. Coaches and players are expected to care for the equipment that they have been issued, realizing that this equipment is intended for future use and must be returned.

The Department will designate a specific time for the return of equipment. At that time, the coach must account for all equipment issued. So that all equipment is accounted for, popped or flat balls should be returned as well. ***Coaches will only receive their refund when all equipment is accounted for.***

GAME SCHEDULING

The scheduling of games is the responsibility of the program Supervisor and the Youth Sports Field Supervisors. Schedules will be in accordance with the number of teams and facilities available for use. Each season will be approximately eight weeks in length.

UNIFORMS

Shirts will be provided by the City of Torrance and must be worn during all games. Players who do not have a shirt will not be able to play.

AWARDS

Every child that participates in season play will receive an award.

REFERENCES

Contact us at youthsports@TorranceCA.Gov for more information.