

Welcome to YMCA Youth Sports

Thank you for being a part of YMCA Sports!

General Information:

- Game start times will be staggered as much as possible to minimize parking and traffic problems.
- Players may play on **ONE TEAM ONLY** in **ONE AGE BRACKET ONLY**. No exceptions.
- Games will be played every Saturday beginning at 9am and running until all teams have played. All teams will have at least one weeknight game this season. Games will take priority over week night practices when applicable.
- The Sports Office will be in direct contact with you throughout the season via PlayerSpace.

- Please take special note that there is a **ZERO tolerance policy** at the Y. If at any point Y representative sees anyone conducting themselves in an overly aggressive manner, if they aggressively approach a Y employee, or if they are verbally abusive, they will be asked to leave the property immediately.
- We will be asking all Head and Assistant Coaches to complete a background check and an online child abuse prevention training every two years.
- First aid kits are located in the snack shack and in the dugouts of the baseball fields.

Other Issues:

Official no-shows. If an official is not present at game time, we ask the coaches to either 1) try and officiate the game themselves, 2) ask a couple of parents to officiate the game, or 3) **as a last resort** we will try to reschedule the game.

- Rain-outs. Rainouts may or may not be rescheduled. In the event of a rainy day, **WE WILL CONTACT YOU** via PlayerSpace if games are cancelled.
- **Team Sponsors.** Each team could have a sponsor which includes the company logo on the jersey and in email blasts.

- Practices chosen at the coaches meeting are tentative and the sports department may change them where necessary.

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YMCA Youth Sports

General Information for Coaches

What do my players need to be ready?

We will provide your players with a jersey and a hat. **Any additional jerseys ordered will be associated with a \$15-\$30 fee per jersey.**

When do practices start?

Your team should have one (1) or two (2) practices per week depending on their age group. Practices are Monday through Friday, 5:30pm OR 6:30pm. No team may practice before the official start date. Micro T-Ball practices are on Saturdays only.

- **Age Restrictions** - Please be advised that age divisions are set up to accommodate players of that particular age. If you wish to move your child up to an older division, we will allow it. However, keeping an older child back in a younger age division is not permitted unless mental or physical limitations preclude a child from participating at their age level. The age cut off for baseball is the first of the month of the first game.

Prayer

Prayer – Before the start of each game and after the final whistle blows, both teams gather along their respective base paths for a prayer. The prayer can be led by a coach, a player, a parent, or the umpire. We encourage you to take part in the prayer by volunteering to lead it, having your child volunteer to lead it, or by taking part in it from the bleachers.

If you have a family that wishes to abstain from the prayer, please make sure you honor that request but encourage them to stand in the circle respectively before and after each game as a member of the team.

Pictures

Picture days will be communicated and will take place either in the Oakbrook gym or fields near the daycare.

Character Development

The YMCA Challenge

At the YMCA, we are committed to quality programs that enhance the spirit, mind and body of all. Through the delivery of these programs we strive to incorporate and enhance the character values of caring, honesty, responsibility and respect. YMCA coaches must be willing to take the YMCA challenge to accept and demonstrate these character values.

This can be partially accomplished by providing an environment in which the four character values are fostered. Coaches, parents and officials are all role models and their behavior should be conducive to character development. The four values should be demonstrated by all at each game and practice.

CARING is demonstrated throughout the youth sports program. A coach's attitude and the way he/she communicates with his/her players helps demonstrate this value. Remember to treat the

players the way you would like to be treated if you were learning a new skill or task. Players can exemplify caring by applauding for players injured during a game or by being supportive of teammates during games and practices.

HONESTY is an important component of our programs. For the youth sports coach and his/her players, honesty and integrity should be put before winning and performance. Once again, this concept is best demonstrated by your example to your team. It should be maintained in all interaction with parents, players, and officials. The same should be true for your players in their interaction with teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials. An example of this would be admitting to a foul or penalty rather than attempting to "get away with one".

RESPECT is shown by both players and coaches during a season. First and foremost is to show respect for the officials and for the calls he/she makes. To dispute, mock or second guess calls does not show respect for their position of controlling the game. Respect can also be shown during interaction between players and coaches. An example of this is the ability of both players and coaches to listen to one another.

RESPONSIBILITY as a YMCA youth sports coach includes areas such as being on time, personal appearance, teaching basic skills, and overall leadership in the program. The participants should also be aware of the responsibilities of being on a team. These include paying attention at practice, working with others as a team, and most of all, treating others the way they would like to be treated.

THE YMCA PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SPORTS

Seven Pillars of YMCA Youth Sports

What we want youth sports to be in the YMCA is stated in our Seven Pillars of YMCA Youth Sports.

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

Pillar Two - Safety First. Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We ask you to develop your players' fitness levels gradually so they are conditioned for the sport. And we ask you to constantly supervise your young players so that you can stop any unsafe activities.

Pillar Three - Fair Play. Fair play is about playing by the rules - and more. It's about you and your players showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA 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 sport than in developing a few highly skilled players.

Pillar Four - Positive Competition. We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. The right perspective is when adults make decisions that put the best interests of the children above winning the contest. Learning to compete is important for children, and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. Through YMCA Youth Sports we want to help children learn these lessons.

Pillar Five - Family Involvement. YMCA Youth Sports encourages parents to be involved appropriately along with their child's participation in our sport programs. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials, and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child's participation.

Pillar Six - Sport for All, YMCA 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 children who differ in physical ability, financial circumstances, and years of experience. We offer programs to all children regardless of their race, gender, religious creed, or ability. We ask our adult leaders to encourage and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the children and their parents to do the same.

Pillar Seven - Sport for Fun. Sport is naturally fun for most children. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, of playing with their friends, and of competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children's sport, they over organize and dominate the activity to the point of destroying children's enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sport, we are in danger of our children taking themselves out of sport. Remember that these sports are for the kids; let them have fun.

Coaches Teaching Value to Players

The values a Coach provides and the leadership needed to promote sportsmanship, fair play, and the four character values (caring, honesty, responsibility, and respect) to the players, parents and spectators. The Values Coach can be the person who is constantly on the lookout for players demonstrating the four values and recognize them for doing so. There are a few important things to remember when teaching values to children:

1. Ask open ended questions rather than giving the answers.
2. BE YOURSELF. Children respect an adult who listens and speaks honestly.
3. Demonstrate caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in your actions during all interactions with your team.
4. Hold a team discussion at the end of every practice. This is the time for players and coaches to get together to talk.
5. Give each person the chance to respond or "pass". Don't feel you need to comment on their responses. You can reinforce participation with nods, smiles, and short words like "yes", "thank you" etc.
6. When the discussion comes back to you, summarize the responses to show that you were listening. Add your own feelings if it's appropriate.

Code of Conduct

Parent/Coach Behavior

It is important for us, as adults, to conduct ourselves in a positive manner in order to create an atmosphere for our children that is conducive to learning, sportsmanship, and development. The YMCA has a **Zero Tolerance Policy** for parents throughout the season. If any of these rules are broken, you will be asked to leave the property immediately. Please follow these rules throughout the season in order to provide the best experience possible for you and your child.

Facility Supervisors and officials have the authority to ask any spectator or coach, who does not display conduct consistent with the YMCA philosophy, to leave the game area. This includes inappropriate comments to the officials, staff, or other participants.

- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to *talk* to or yell at officials.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to stand or congregate in the dugout.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted on the field of play at any time, unless instructed to by the umpire or coach in the case of an injured player.
- Spectators/Parents should stay a minimum of 3 feet from the field at all times.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to use foul language, taunt, or make inappropriate comments about, or gestures toward, other parents, spectators, players, coaches, or referees.

- Spectators/Parents should only use language that is supportive of the children on the field of play.
- Spectators/Parents should be supportive of both teams and lend encouragement at all times.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to engage in any form of physical or verbal confrontation on YMCA property.
- Spectators/Parents should approach the coach in a professional and respectful manner with questions or concerns regarding their child or the team.

As with any rule, there are of course consequences for actions that are deemed infractions of the rules. Any spectator/parent infringing upon the above stated rules will be subject to the following consequences:

- First Offense – Warning by the umpire, coach, or Director. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the spectator/parent may be subject to a ban from the YMCA property.
- Second Offense – Spectator/Parent will be required to leave the YMCA property. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the spectator/parent may be subject to a ban from the YMCA property.
- Third Offense – Spectator/Parent will be banned from YMCA property.

If you have any concerns, please report them to a YMCA staff member located in the Snack Shack or to the Sports Director at (843) 821-1028, or by e-mail at david.kasel@summervilleymca.org. Your concerns will be addressed in a timely manner.

Child Abuse Prevention

Purpose

In response to an increasing number of abuse and neglect cases being both reported and confirmed locally, but also on a national scale, we have established some guidelines and procedures to raise awareness of child abuse and to minimize the potential for abuse/neglect occurring within our programs and facilities.

Strategies to Prevent Child Abuse

1. The YMCA has, in place, a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure to screen out staff and volunteers not suited for working with children. All of our volunteers go through a criminal background check.
2. The YMCA will take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse seriously.
3. Staff and Volunteers understand their legal obligation to report suspected abuse.
4. Staff and Volunteers understand what practices may be considered abusive and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
5. Staff and Volunteers protect themselves and the YMCA by agreeing not to be alone with YMCA youth or program participants outside of YMCA programs or facilities (i.e.: babysitting, take children on trips, etc.) Players may not go to coaches' homes, unless their parents are with them.
6. Coaches should monitor the release of participants on their teams to ensure a child is never left alone or picked up by a stranger.
7. Profanity, inappropriate jokes and any other type of harassment is prohibited.
8. Coaches will respect children's rights not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable. Side hugs, pats on the back and high fives are appropriate contact for coaches to have with their players.
9. Coaches must use positive techniques of guidance including positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.

Reporting Child Abuse

- When you suspect that a child has been abused, whether at, or outside of the YMCA, you must report the information immediately to the Sports Director.
- It may be necessary to remove the child out of an activity if they appear to be in pain or are withdrawing from the group. In this case, make sure the child is with an adult that they trust.

- Do not discuss the situation with anyone except the Director.
- You will be asked to write down the facts or assumptions that you have made.
- The Director will make the appropriate phone calls.

Remember, you are not making the determination that child abuse has actually occurred. You are reporting that you suspect child abuse.

All coaches and volunteers will be required to complete the online Child Abuse prevention training every two years and the Athlete Protection course. These courses come from our insurance company from Praesidium Academy. There are 2 courses that they will need to complete, Abuse Risk Management for YMCA Volunteers and Athlete Protection.

Risk Issues

Bad Weather: In the case of bad weather on a practice night, the YMCA will cancel practice via email and our Facebook Page. In case of a late storm or pop up storm, it is up to the coach to determine if practice should take place or not and to contact their team in the event of a cancellation. **The YMCA will not reschedule missed practices.**

Unless extreme conditions exist, games may not be called until the game time. Minor weather conditions may result in games being postponed. As soon as cancellations are made coaches will be contacted and asked to contact their team. Information will also be posted on the YMCA Facebook Page and via email. Every effort will be made by the YMCA to make-up cancelled games.

Lightning: Activities will be stopped immediately and all people asked to move inside to a safe location when either of the following occurs:

1. Cloud to ground lightning is observed and less than 30 seconds pass from seeing the lightning and hearing the thunder from the flash
2. In cloud lightning is occurring directly overhead. The outdoor activities can be considered safe to continue 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen.
3. Coaches can make calls on site when Director is not present.

Tornado Warning: In the event of a tornado warning, practices and games should be discontinued. Return to the building or seek shelter nearby. Practices and games may only continue when the warning has ended and no dangerous weather conditions are present.

Missing Children

If you notice a child in your care is missing:

1. Determine through a quick search that they are really missing (never leave other children unattended).
2. Arrange for other adults to continue searching while you call the YMCA to notify the staff in charge. The YMCA will send help and call the parents.
3. Activate the 911 system.

Unattended Children

Occasionally, parents drop off their children and don't return on time to pick them up. The coach is responsible for that youth until the parents arrive. Always attempt to call the parents and emergency contact person if a child has not been picked up. Don't transport the child home. Do not put a child in your vehicle without another adult present. If you have no choice but to drive the child to the YMCA, always call the YMCA and tell them the name of the child and your expected arrival time.

Emergency Medical Plan

What to do When a Child Gets Hurt.....

1. Acknowledge what happened and take care of the child (Band-Aids, ice packs, ice cubes, etc... Administer first aid, seek medical attention etc.).

2. If the parent is not present notify them immediately, even if the injury is minor. If someone other than the parent transports the child, tell that guardian and then call the parents to follow up.
3. If the injury is serious make every attempt to notify the parents or emergency contact and let them make the judgment for treatment. If they are unavailable or the injury demands immediate attention, you make the determination of whether to seek medical assistance.
4. If you are not comfortable providing medical attention or feel the situation needs someone with more medical training, contact 911.
5. Notify your YMCA Director. If the injury occurs during a game, please make sure the YMCA Director is aware of the situation. If a serious injury occurs at your practice, please notify the YMCA so that they can follow up with the family involved

Injury Prevention

Know the risk factors of the sport specific physical activity that your child is participating in. Make sure that the athlete has the appropriate protective equipment to prevent injury. Help your athlete develop strength, flexibility, and endurance. *Encourage your child to report pain and injury.*

Warm Up: Warm up activities are slow sustained stretching exercises, calisthenics and slowly increasing the intensity of motion. A good warm up should increase your body temperature, respiration, and heart rate, followed by stretching muscles with a slow static stretching.

Cool Down: Gradually reduces workout intensity. Have athletes walk at a slow rate until their heart rates get near normal. Follow up with light stretching.

Over Use Injuries: It is very important that coaches and parents are proactive and ask pointed questions if they suspect an athlete is injured or overly fatigued. Athletes commonly continue to play when fatigued or injured and may not report an injury to their coach.

Dehydration Prevention: Make sure your athlete has the proper amount of liquids and is staying properly hydrated. Fluid should be caffeine free. Athletes should have water breaks every 10-20 minutes and more often when exercising in extreme heat.

Heat Related Injuries: Know the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Make sure athletes are in appropriate clothing and receiving fluids & rest periods during high heat conditions

Concussions: Athletes need to be in proper protective gear for their sport. In the event of a head injury athletes need to be cleared by a medical professional before returning to play.

Injury and Risk Prevention Guidelines

DONT'S

To further protect the youth, the YMCA, and yourself, avoid these things:

1. Don't administer medications. This includes aspirin and sun screen.
2. Don't transport the injured child/youth yourself. If you feel the youth needs medical attention notify the parents or call 911.
3. Don't give a diagnosis of injury unless you are a physician. Just state the symptoms and what happened.
4. Don't leave any youth unattended without adult supervision.
5. Don't give a statement to the media concerning an incident. Direct them to the Athletic Director.

DO'S

1. Regularly inspect your playing area and equipment for hazards. Report dangerous conditions right away and do not let your athletes play until it is safe.
2. Warn your players of potential injuries which can occur in sports and point out their responsibility for the health of teammates and opponents. List common injuries and how to prevent them.
3. Make sure that players do not participate in physical activities when hurt.

4. Make sure that players warm up/cool down before all practices and games.
5. Supervise all activities and teach strict observance of game rules. "Horsing around" is a common cause of injuries.
6. Prevent heat injuries by encouraging regular water breaks and including brief rest periods.
7. Advise players about proper playing equipment. For example, teach players how to prevent blisters by wearing footwear that fits correctly.
8. **Never be the only adult on site.** An accident requires a lot of attention. Always take a first aid kit if you have one. A first aid kit is left in the mailbox of the sports office or in the snack shack. Please alert the sports office if you take any supplies during practice so we can make sure to keep it stocked.

Facility Use Guidelines

Property rules are put in place in order to ensure a safe, clean, and enjoyable atmosphere for all spectators and players. Please follow these rules and be considerate of the YMCA property and the people around you.

- **NO SMOKING** anywhere on YMCA property – not in your car, not close to the tree line, not in the bathroom, not in the parking lot – nowhere, PLEASE.
- **NO PETS** are permitted on YMCA property – no dogs, cats, ferrets, pigs, birds, snakes, fish – no PETS.
- **NO ALCOHOL** is permitted on YMCA property – no O'Doul's or Busch NA either.
- **NO WEAPONS** are permitted on YMCA property – no guns, bow-and-arrows, knives, clubs, axes, flails, swords – no WEAPONS.
- **NO SOLICITING** is permitted on YMCA property unless given permission by the Oakbrook Branch Director.
- **NO SPEEDING** is permitted on YMCA property. The speed limit on YMCA property is 10mph.
 - Adhere to all STOP signs located on the property.
 - Adhere to all NO PARKING signs on the property.
 - Adhere to all CAUTION areas located on the property – do not park in or enter these areas.
- Please dispose of all TRASH in the cans provided throughout the property.
- Please park in designated parking areas and park in such a manner as to be considerate of others' need to enter and leave parking areas without being encumbered.
- Please report any restroom problems to the staff in the Snack Shack.

Sportsmanship – Winning and Losing

Coping with winning and losing is, of course, an essential part of playing sports. Ideally kids first learn about how to deal with victories and defeats from their parents even before the youngster's lace up

their first pair of sneakers. But as the coach, it is up to you to reinforce the appropriate behavior for winning and losing.

When They Win...

Every player will tell you that it is more fun to win than it is to lose. But as the coach you should strongly remind your team that "winning with class" is how you expect them to play. As such, if you spot one of your players taunting or humiliating an opponent when your team is way ahead in the game, simply call "time out" and have the player sit the bench next to you. Explain to him or her that such behavior will not be tolerated by you and unless they can learn to control themselves, they will not be allowed back into the game. Don't worry. The ultimate fun is in playing and the child will quickly modify their ways to get back into the action. If they do happen to repeat the offensive actions again, put them back on the bench until the lesson is learned. Make sure the parents are aware of why the child was on the bench and spend time in your next practice talking about appropriate behaviors with your team.

When They Lose...

Many times, especially for younger kids, a loss will be accompanied by tears of disappointment. As the coach, understand that losing is for many players a new and painful experience. Console them, praise them for their efforts, but never embarrass them. Tears are a normal reaction for young players who have just felt the sting of a defeat.

Your job is to reassure them that today "Just wasn't our day," and that "We played well, but the other team played a little better." Those are the kind of thoughts you want your team to hear. Kids are resilient and for most players the bitterness of a loss and the tears that go with it often disappear quickly. Within minutes they will bounce back and be asking about what their next activity for the day will be. The best guideline to follow is to always remember that good sportsmanship starts with you! Players quickly watch, monitor and copy their coach's behavior. How you handle and react to a loss or victory will affect how your team does the same.

Working with officials

Youth Sports officials are usually parents, other coaches, high school or college students. Most of these people are learning how to officiate through practical experience. Coaches and parents should try to be sympathetic rather than critical of the official's role.

1. Officials do make mistakes and miss calls. It does not help the game or players to embarrass the official by pointing out errors in front of everyone.
2. We want to maintain a positive playing environment and cutting down officials on the field is not positive.
3. Calls will not start to go your team's way if you ride on officials all game long.
4. You may **not** address an official in an aggressive manner. A better approach for coaches is to wait until half time or until the game is over, thank the person for officiating the game and then express your observations.
5. Most officials want to improve and appreciate constructive criticism, when it is given in a positive and respectful manner.
6. Keep in mind that the officials work for the YMCA and are not obligated to discuss their job with coaches, parents or spectators after each game. Should an official not want to speak with you, please respect their wishes and direct your feedback to the Sports Director.

Our hope is that the provided information allows for a successful, FUN, season for you and your team.. If you need any further assistance this season, please feel free to call the sports office at 843-821-1028 or email David at David.Kasel@summervilleymca.org. We are looking forward to a great season!

Youth Sports Department
SummervilleYMCA.org

