Woodland Park
Parks and Recreation

YOUTH SPORTS
COACHES
MANUAL

General Guidelines to Coaching Young Athletes
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**PRINTABLE INFORMATION, FORMS and SKILLS & DRILLS:**
Available on the City Website [www.city-woodlandpark.org](http://www.city-woodlandpark.org)
Parks and Recreation / Youth Sports / Coaches Page
A. LEAGUE PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

This manual has been prepared by the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department as a tool to assist you in teaching specific sport skills and techniques to youth. It may not have all the answers to your questions, so it is important for you to seek help from the Parks and Recreation Department and other resources available to you.

The Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide a healthy environment in which young people can learn about sports, develop basic skills, coordination, teamwork and most importantly, HAVE FUN. The Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department offers recreational leagues to all boys and girls to help them develop their social, emotional and physical skills by participating in team sports.

All decisions and behaviors should be based on what is best for the athletes whether winning or losing. All youth volunteer coaches must:

1. Complete a Volunteer Application and Background Check.
3. Complete the Head’s Up Concussions in Youth Sports Certification Course.
5. Adopt the “Bill of Rights for Young Athletes” listed below:

   Bill of Rights for Young Athletes

   I. Right to participate in sports
   II. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child’s maturity and ability
   III. Right to have qualified adult leadership
   IV. Right to play as a child and not as an adult
   V. Right of children to share in the leadership and decision-making of their sport participation
   VI. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments
   VII. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports
   VIII. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success
   IX. Right to be treated with dignity
   X. Right to have fun in sports
The Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Youth Sports Philosophy is clearly defined by the following Program Goals and Coaches Code of Ethics.

B. PROGRAM GOALS

- Fun and enjoyment for everyone: the athlete, the officials, the coach and the parent; to make this program a fun filled, enjoyable learning experience.
- Provide opportunity for continued growth and development: physical, mental and emotional.
- Learn the basic fundamentals of the sport and the importance of successful team play.
- Discipline: Master the art of listening and following instructions; respect for authority, coaches, officials, parents; respect and appreciation of rules, equipment and facilities.
- Development of leadership.
- Learning cooperation and teamwork.
- Appreciation of sports as a lifelong positive leisure pursuit.
- Help each participant learn to identify his/her own capabilities.
- Learn the feeling of success: Every child should have a good feeling about sports and themselves whether winning or losing.
- Learn how to compete: how to win or lose; how defeat can be a step towards growth; how to cope with stress and pressure.
- Give children a chance to play and experience the thrill that team play provides.

C. COACHES’ CODE OF ETHICS

- I will complete a Volunteer Application and Background Check at least every 2 years.
- I will complete the Head’s Up Concussions in Youth Sports Certification Course once a year.
- I will attend an ASEP (American Sports Education Program) Coach Certification Class to become a Certified Youth Sports Coach. I will follow and support the recreation philosophy and guidelines during practices and games.
• I will attend the Coaches Clinic provided by the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department. I will give the players a chance to receive the same learning experience as others, and I will to learn to teach players correctly and consistently.

• I will lead by example, in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players, coaches, officials and parents.

• I will remember that I am a youth coach, and that the game is for youth players not the adults.

• I will always give positive encouragement to players and display myself in a sportsmanlike manner when speaking with players, coaches, officials, spectators and staff.

• I will place the emotional and physical well being of all players ahead of any personal desire to win.

• I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the wide range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

• I will do my very best to provide a safe playing situation for all players. For supervision duties see page 17 of this manual.

• I promise to review and practice the necessary basic first-aid principles needed to treat injuries of all players. For injury prevention see page 17 of this manual.

• I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all players.

• I will insure that I am knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and that I will teach these rules to players.

• I will use coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.

• I will ensure that each child receives fair playing time.

• I will allow each player the opportunity to play in different positions throughout the season.

• I will communicate any questions, concerns or issues as they arise to all parties involved.

Coaches in violation of the Coaches Code of Ethics, will be given one verbal warning. Any further violations will be reviewed by the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Sports Coordinator and/or Director and the coach may be subject to dismissal from any future coaching.
D. COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents, coaches, officials, Site Supervisor and the Parks and Recreation Staff is key in order to offer a quality program. If there are any questions, concerns or suggestions we encourage communication with all parties involved. The Parks and Recreation Department is available to assist in resolving any situation that may arise. Please remember, communication is key!

E. COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has a specific role when attending youth sporting events. Sporting events need to be a positive and fun learning experience for all. There are 5 different types of roles when attending youth sporting events.

1) The Coach – responsible for teaching fundamentals of the sport to players
2) The Player – responsible for playing the game
3) The Official – responsible for officiating the game
4) The Staff – responsible for overall supervision of facilities and program
5) The Spectator – responsible for cheering in a positive manner for everyone

Coaches are role models for teaching the fundamentals of the sport, sport skills, tactics and sportsmanship. It is fun to win games but it is not probable for a team to win every game in a season. It is possible, however, for a team to lose every game in a season. The most important goal for every player to strive for is, “to do the best that he/she can,” given the level of skill and physical ability that the player possesses.

Coaches are responsible for their personal conduct and behavior, as well as, the conduct and behavior of players and spectators. Coaches are expected to play fair and keep a positive attitude at all times. The coaches and spectators should cheer for all players and teams. Cheer for the players that make a good play, as well as, the player that needs encouragement.

When a team is winning, the coach needs to stress compassion for their opponent’s position and respect their efforts. When a team is ahead by a substantial margin, coaches are required to adjust their offense and defense strategies so the losing team will have the opportunity to experience success. When a team is losing, the coach needs to be a positive role model and encourage the players to continue to perform their best throughout the game. No one is to blame for the defeat.

Coaches are required to follow the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation League Rules and Philosophy at all times. A coach that does not follow the guidelines provided by the Parks and Recreation Department will need to meet with the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation staff in order to continue to coach.

Coaches are to follow the league rules as printed and are not allowed to make any changes. If a coach would like to recommend a rule change, they must contact the Sports Coordinator. All proposed changes will be discussed with all team coaches. After these discussions with all coaches, the Parks and Recreation Department will
make the final decision. If a change is made all coaches, officials and staff will be notified.

The use, possession and/or consumption of any drugs and/or alcoholic beverages immediately before, during or immediately after any youth scheduled practice or game is prohibited. Coaches are not allowed to smoke or use chewing tobacco during practices or games.

All information provided on the team rosters is confidential and is not to be used for personal or professional gain. Be sure to get permission from all families before distributing any of the personal information on the rosters to your team.

Coach Appreciation: Prior to the end of the season, each registered coach will be emailed a Program Evaluation Form and Player Evaluation Form. We encourage each coach to take a few minutes to respond to the questions in detail. When evaluating your player’s skills, please take time to compare their skills to other players within the same league. We value your opinion, as these assessments will be used for future seasons.

To show appreciation, each coach that turns in both forms and team equipment to the Parks and Recreation Office by the listed deadline, will receive a $20 credit on their account. Team coaches need to coordinate this effort together, to ensure everything is returned. If any of these items are received after the deadline, a credit voucher will not be issued. One credit voucher, per season, will be issued per family; unless coaching two separate teams. This credit may be used towards any Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Program.

F. SPORTSMANSHIP

What is sportsmanship? Sportsmanship means playing fairly and winning or losing gracefully. Fair play and good sportsmanship must be foremost in all youth sports experiences. Any inappropriate behavior or language toward players, coaches, officials or spectators will not be tolerated. Show courteous and positive actions towards players, coaches and officials at all times.

“Athletes First – Winning Second” is a motto that indicates striving to win is important in sports. However, no effort in striving to win should be done at the expense of any athlete’s well-being, development and enjoyment. To show good sportsmanship, whether a team wins or loses, players and coaches must shake hands with their opponent at the end of each game. Be sure to teach your team “Good Sportsmanship” in all phases of sports.

The Site Supervisor and/or officials will follow the rules listed below for anyone showing any type of misconduct or unsportsmanlike behavior during all Parks and Recreation programs.

1) 1st offense - verbally warned
2) 2nd offense - removed from the game area immediately for a minimum of 5 minutes (teams play shorthanded if no substitutions are available).
3) Final offense – Ejected from the game and facility. The ejected player, coach or spectator will need to leave the facility immediately and will need to meet with the Parks and Recreation staff prior to being allowed to participate in the next practice or game.

Examples of Misconduct and Unsportsmanlike Behaviors:
- Use of profane, rude, abusive, insulting, vulgar, offensive or obscene language or gestures.
- Disrespecting an official or Site Supervisor.
- Disrespecting or taunting anyone at the facility.
- Disrespecting the facility and the facility rules.
- Violent/aggressive behavior towards anyone at the facility.
- Failure to remain off the playing area while not in the game.
- Use of alcohol, drugs or any tobacco during youth sporting events.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during youth sporting events.

The Site Supervisor and/or officials have the right to eject anyone, at any time, to keep control of the game and facility. Anyone that is repeatedly displaying misconduct or unsportsmanlike behavior or not following the league rules will need to meet with the Parks and Recreation Sports Coordinator and/or Director prior to being allowed to attend or participate in the next practice or game.

G. SITE SUPERVISOR

There will be a Site Supervisor present at all games. Their responsibilities include opening/closing of facilities, official support, enforcement of rules, parent and coach support and overall facility management. Please feel free to respectfully discuss any comments or suggestions with the Site Supervisor.

H. OFFICIALS

The officials and the Site Supervisor have final authority over all games. Coaches and spectators will honor the officials’ decisions at all times. Respect for an official by coaches, spectators and players, promotes good sportsmanship. An official does not win or lose a game for the team. The Site Supervisor and the officials have the authority to end a game at any point he/she may consider necessary to maintain control.

Coaches are to follow the league rules as printed and are not allowed to make any changes. If a coach would like to recommend a rule change, they must contact the Sports Coordinator.

Any inappropriate behavior or language towards officials, opposing coaches, players or spectators will not be tolerated. Coaches should instruct players and spectators not to question the official’s decision. Any questions for the officials must be made at the appropriate times and relayed through the coaches. All decisions made by the referees are final.
For reasons of changing weather or facility conditions, the Site Supervisor or the official may delay or cancel a game in progress.

Officials shall stop the game if a player has been injured. Coaches shall instruct all players to stop and go to their team bench when an injury occurs. Coaches and staff are allowed to attend to the injured player. If a player is bleeding, they must be removed from the game and the bleeding treated and under control before the player is allowed to return. Coaches are to complete an Injury/Incident Report, see section N for information. Each coach will receive a couple of these reports and the Coaches meeting, if more reports are needed please visit the City website or come by the Parks and Recreation Office.

I. AWARDS

All participants will receive participation awards. League standings are not kept for any division.

If time allows a single elimination tournament will be offered for the following divisions at the end of the season:

- Baseball 11 – 15 year olds
- Basketball 7th - 8th Grade Division
- Soccer 7th – 12th Grade Division
- Volleyball 7th - 8th Grade Division

1st Place awards will be given to the top team in the tournament.

J. PARTICIPATION

Every child shall receive fair playing time. Keeping safety in mind, each player will have the opportunity to play different positions throughout the season.

Exceptions: While keeping the recreation philosophy in mind, a Coach may take disciplinary action with a player who has missed practices or games without a valid reason or who has been disruptive at practices or games. In this case, the coach must notify the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department and communicate with player’s parents or guardians prior to the next practice or game to explain why the player has limitations on playing time. During the pregame meeting with the officials, coaches and Site Supervisors; teams are to share the number of players they will have for the game and if there are any player limitations.

K. PLAYER REGISTRATION

Players may not participate with a team unless they are registered with the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department. Team assignments are final. Players may not transfer or play with another team in the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation League unless approved.
Skill level is a factor when creating teams. Late registrations will be assigned to teams on a space available basis. Siblings in the same division, unless otherwise requested, will be placed on the same team. Each coach and sponsor will have their own children on their team, unless requested differently.

A parent may request to move their child up one division. A child must be within one year of the next division. The child must attend the scheduled skills assessments for the age group they are requesting to play in. At that time, the Parks and Recreation staff will assess the athlete’s skills and make the final decision on whether the athlete will stay within their age group or move up to the next division. This decision will be made on what is best for the child. We encourage players to stay in their designated divisions and develop leadership skills within their own age group.

A parent may request to move their child down one division due to a mental or physical condition that would make playing in a younger age group more suitable. The request to move down a division must be accompanied by a signed physician’s statement submitted to the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department.

We do not guarantee requests. Every coach has something different to offer the players and all coaches have access to the same training and assistance. While one coach may stress technique, another coach may teach strategies of the game.

Once the season starts and there are no openings in a division, a waiting list is started. If a player has not shown up for any practices or returned any phone calls during the first week of practice, coaches must inform the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department immediately. If there are players on the waiting list, the position on the roster may be filled.

If you are unsure how to handle a child, parent or team problem, please contact the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department for assistance. There are many resources available and remember, we are here to help.

L. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to practices and games is the responsibility of parents or guardians. Parents must pick up children immediately after practice or games. The coach must not leave the facility if a child is waiting for their ride. All children must be supervised by an adult at all time.

M. CANCELLATIONS / CLOSURES

Our goal is to have all teams conduct every practice and game that is scheduled; however, sometimes Mother Nature makes that difficult. Encourage players to dress appropriately for all practices and games. Practice or Facility Closure: A notice will be posted on the City website at www.city-woodlandpark.org, and the cancellation line at 687-5296 or on the City Website. The city website and cancellation line will be updated on an as needed basis throughout the evening and weekends. During regular office hours, an email will be
sent to the coaches. Please check email often and reply that the email was received. If no response is received from a team, a phone call to coaches will be made. Please respect the decision that is made by the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department.

The Woodland Park Parks and Recreation staff is responsible for making the decision on whether or not facilities are open or closed. If the facility is open:

1) Practices – coaches may make the decision on whether or not they would like to hold practices. If coaches decide to cancel a practice they must notify the Parks and Recreation Department no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day of the scheduled practice.

2) Games – the Parks and Recreation staff is responsible for making the decision on whether or not the game is on as scheduled, delayed or cancelled. This is not a coach decision.

Weather can change at any time, we recommend coaches and parents to call the check the City website or call the Cancellation line prior to leaving for a practice or game. If the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department cancels a game, every effort will be made to reschedule. Practices that are cancelled will not be rescheduled.

To help to alleviate the pressure of getting through on the cancellation line, coaches are encouraged to develop a phone tree for easy communication of cancellations and reschedules. The coaches are responsible for communicating this information to their team.

N. INJURY / INCIDENT REPORTS (Available on City website)

If an injury or incident occurs during a practice or game, an Injury/Incident Report must be completed and turned into the Parks and Recreation Department within 24 hours. IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911. A first aid kit is provided with an ice pack, bandages and tissues. Due to liability purposes, please do not add any items to the first aid kit. An incident report must be received, by the Parks and Recreation Department, before replenishing first aid supplies. Safety is the most important consideration when conducting practices and during games. Coaches must instruct players on the hazards and proper techniques of the activity.

O. EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORMS

Emergency contact information, along with primary contact information is provided on the team roster.

P. GAME LOGS (Available on City website):

Game logs are to be used to assist in rotating the players in and out of games and making sure that playing time is fair for each player. If you have your own template to use, that will be fine. In case there are questions regarding fair playing time, it is highly recommended to keep track of how much time each player is in each game and
the rotations. The scorekeeper/timekeeper will assist in keeping track of players entering into the game and also will help to make sure each player plays in every quarter. Ultimately, it is the coach’s responsibility to be sure all players have fair playing time each game.

Q. PLAYER INFORMATION SHEETS (available at www.city-woodlandpark.org)

Each player deserves the opportunity to choose 2-3 positions that they would like to learn to play during the season. Coaches are to assist each player to help them meet their goals for the season. Parents should practice with players at home, as well.

R. GETTING STARTED

To help with getting started, refer to page 14 of this manual for the Coaches Checklist and Team Parent meeting agenda. Coaches are required to conduct the Team Parent Meeting at their first practice (see practice schedule for exact time and location). Communication is key to a successful season.

**PLANNING YOUR PRACTICE**

Each team is allowed 2 to 3 contacts per week. Your team may have to share the facility with another team. Practices are scheduled for 1 hour.

**Warm Up (5 mins.)**
Warm-up activities should prepare the body for more intense activity, thereby reducing the risk of injury. Begin each practice with some simple warm-up exercises. These can include easy pace skills and drills. Practices for young players don’t need to begin with a prolonged period of stretching or calisthenics. Warm-up should be FUN.

**Review (15 mins.)**
Are there certain skills your players really need to improve? All players can benefit from working on the fundamentals. In this part of the practice have the players work on improving the skills they already know. Organize drills or low organized games so that everyone is involved, give encouragement where you notice improvement, and offer individual assistance to players who need help.

**Teach (12 mins.)**
Young players respond best to challenges. Divide the less skilled players with a coach for more hands on teaching. Try to build the foundation of existing skills and give your players something new to learn at each practice. When you present a new skill, give a brief explanation, demonstrate what you want (use a skillful player if you can’t demonstrate), then let your players try the skill. Remember that players learn more from doing than listening, so keep your instructions to a minimum. As the players are practicing, give encouragement and try to correct errors. Be positive in your comments, so players experiencing difficulties are not discouraged.
Scrimmages (20 mins.)
All athletes love games and scrimmages. Scrimmage activities are fun, and they increase the likelihood that skills learned in practice will be used in league games. Try to think up activities, which simulate the game the player’s will face and will develop useful team skills. These can include drills, modified games, and regular games. When players are scrimmaging, a useful technique is to divide the playing time in half, coach one half, then keep quiet for the remainder of the game (this is the hardest task).

Cool Down (5 mins)
Do some exercises to relax body to prevent any injuries.

Evaluation (3 mins.)
In a Team Circle, players and coaches should get together and talk. The Team Circle is an ideal time to discuss rules, strategies and compliment the team on a good job at practice/game, etc.

GAME DAY

Game preparation is necessary prior to the start of the game. Players should show up prior to each game 15 minutes early. Even though the facility may not be available to practice on the coach should design a beneficial warm-up plan for the time before the game starts.

| ROTATION SHEET / GAME LOGS / LINE UPS | Having a rotation plan prepared prior to the game helps:  
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
|                                       | • Reduce the stress of doing it during the game.  
|                                       | • Ensure an equal rotation for playing time.  
|                                       | • Speeds up getting on the playing area.  
|                                       | • Allows players to know in advance where they are playing  
|                                       | • This also forces a coach and the team to try their best with the players at the positions predetermined. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>START TIME</th>
<th>Coach should have team ready to play at game time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEAM MEETING</td>
<td>Meet players during breaks to provide positive encouragement, discuss strategy and use as training from what occurred previously.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| COMPLETION OF GAME | • Win or lose – cheer and congratulate other team.  
| | • Clear out bench area if another game is scheduled following yours.  
| | • Remove any trash.  
| | • Provide snacks and drinks in the hallway. |
| TEAM CIRCLE | • Debrief game with players and compliment on a good job.  
| | • Announce next meeting date, time and location.  
| | • Clean up the facility before leaving. |

REMEMBER-IT IS ONLY A GAME!!
**COACH CHECKLIST**

Contact each member of your team immediately and speak with a parent. Be sure to provide your full name and phone number. Have the parent write down the date, time and location for the first few practices and Team Parent Meeting. A complete calendar of practices, games and team pictures is to be provided to them.

The Team Parent meeting will be conducted at the 1st practice. The meeting date, time, and location will be listed on the practice and game schedule. When calling to notify players of the first scheduled practice, encourage participation from the parents for the Team Parent Meeting. Explain to the parents that the meeting is very important to help establish a positive working relationship with the team and league; as well as helping to ensure their child has a rewarding experience.

To help prepare you for the Team Parent meeting, a sample agenda is listed below. Take attendance at this meeting. In order to make sure each family has the information from the Team Parent Meeting, coaches are to follow up with parents that did not attend. Good communication is the key to a successful season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF</th>
<th>Let them know why you decided to coach, what is your coaching background, employment, and anything else you would like to share.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. COACHING PHILOSOPHY/RULES</td>
<td>Discuss the Parks &amp; Recreation coaching philosophy. Discuss your coaching philosophy. Cover in detail the Parks &amp; Recreation rules that will be followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. COACHING GOALS</td>
<td>Describe what your goals are for yourself and the goals for the team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. EXPECTATION OF PLAYERS</td>
<td>Discuss attendance requirements and how they can affect playing time. Example: do the best that he/she can, work hard and commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. DISCIPLINE</td>
<td>Discuss how rule violations by players will be handled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. FACILITY RULES</td>
<td>See section on rules for facilities and discuss with parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. EXPECTATION OF PARENTS/TRANSPORTATION/POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT</td>
<td>Describe what the Parks and Recreation Department parent expectations, copy on the next page. Everyone signed for a Parent Agreement during registration. Let them know when the Parent Orientation meeting will be for them to understand how the game will be called. Discuss arriving 15 minutes early, being ready at game time and what being a part of a team sport means. Let the parents know to be on time to pick up their child and call if unable to attend a practice or game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. UNIFORMS &amp; EQUIPMENT</td>
<td>See uniform and equipment section. Be sure the equipment properly fits the player. Address the need to dress appropriately for practices and games. If using an indoor facility, it is mandatory that the players carry their gym into the facility instead of wearing them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. PRACTICE, GAME AND PICTURE SCHEDULES</td>
<td>Distribute the practice, game and picture schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. ASSISTANCE NEEDED</td>
<td>Coaching / Team Manager / Assistance with drills. Team Manager Job Description on page 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. NOTIFICATIONS FOR CHANGES IN SCHEDULES</td>
<td>Explain to the parents how a Phone Tree can help make communicating easier for notifying the team of any cancellations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. SAFETY WARNING</td>
<td>Warn of inherent risks in the sport to parents and players.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. EMERGENCY INFORMATION</td>
<td>Be sure you have an Emergency Information Form from each player. Keep this information with you at all times. Ask parents if there are any health issues for their child that they need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TEAM MANAGER’S
JOB DESCRIPTION
DELEGATE - YOU DON’T HAVE TO DO IT ALL YOURSELF!!

Administrative Assistant to the Coaches:

1. Prepare schedules including: practice schedules, game schedules, healthy snacks and drink schedules.
2. Track playing time of each player to aid the coach and league in seeing that all players have equal playing time.
3. Organize and/or delegate phone tree for communication and notification of cancellations, changes in schedule, etc.
4. Organize and delegate responsibilities to inform parents of team pictures and distribute order forms.
5. Develop and maintain social relationships with coaches, players, parents and sponsors.
6. Organize and delegate end of season celebration for the team, coaches and sponsor.
7. Organize and delegate coaches’ appreciation gift.
8. Communicate with sponsors and invite them to games and end of season celebration.

The Team Manager is in a position to allow the coaches to concentrate on teaching skills, coaching the games and developing a positive relationship with our children.

The Team Manager is best filled by parents who understand and support the Bill of Rights of Young Athletes (page 1) and believe the motto “Athletes First”. This parent should work closely with the coaches of their team to:

- serve as a liaison between coaches, parents and the league
- assist with any personal needs of players
- complete clerical duties as required by the coaches
- promote a positive social attitude for players, coaches, parents, sponsors and the league

This person should delegate responsibility 1) for snacks and drinks after the games and practices, 2) to have water available during the games and practices.

Most of all have fun and enjoy being with the team. Parents can make a difference. Constantly reinforce positive communications with positive behaviors. Help everyone keep situations in perspective, and have a good time.
WORKING WITH PARENTS

Coaches should develop a good working relationship with the parents. The key is to tell them about the program and listen to their concerns. When calling to notify players of the first scheduled practice, encourage participation from the parents for the Team Parent Meeting. The Team Parent Meeting must be conducted at the 1st practice. The meeting date, time, and location will be listed on the practice and game schedule. Some guidelines to consider when working effectively with parents are:

- Always listen to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children that are involved. Encourage parental involvement.
- Express appreciation for their interest and concerns. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
- A coach may not be able to please everyone.
- Know objectives and share planned outcome for the season.
- Make copies of Woodland Park Parks & Recreation rules, philosophy, practice dates and times and provide them at your Team Parent Meeting.
- Resist unfair pressure. You are the coach, if asked, it is your responsibility to explain why the reason for the decision.
- Be fair and treat all players equally. Be consistent. If a change to a rule or philosophy arises during the season, make sure you inform all the parents immediately.
- Handle confrontation one-on-one and not in a crowd situation. Try not to be defensive or argue with a parent. Listen to their viewpoint and thank them.
- Discussion of individual players with other parents is not allowed.
- Do not blame players for their parents’ action.

Coaches should outline in writing the role of the parent. They should include guidelines such as:

- Parents need to understand the importance of making a serious effort to take an active role in the youth sports experience of their child by providing positive support as a spectator to the coach, league administrators and officials.
- Understand the importance of being a positive role model exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games and practices, while also giving positive reinforcement to their child and team.
- Understand the importance of commitment to their child’s youth sports experience by annually signing a Parent Agreement.
- Understand the importance of a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment at youth league sporting events.
- The time players are to arrive for practice sessions and games and the time the players are to be picked up.
SUPERVISION DUTIES

Coaches have both general and specific supervision duties. General supervision is your responsibility to be in the area of play. Below are (3) three guidelines suggested to help meet these responsibilities:

- Coaches should be immediately accessible to the activity and be able to oversee the entire program systematically.
- Coaches must be alert to conditions that may be dangerous to participants and take action to protect them.
- Coaches must be able to react immediately and appropriately to emergencies.

Specific supervision requires a coach to be with the individuals participating. It refers to the planning, direction, and evaluation of an activity. Below are (2) two guidelines for when specific supervision must be given:

- When introducing an activity, until the players are familiar enough with the activity to appreciate their own ability to do the activity, and are able to understand and adhere to the safety procedures established;
- When the coach observes any failure to adhere to rules or any change in the condition of the players.

The more dangerous the activity, the more specific the supervision required.

Coaches should perform certain duties to protect themselves and players from injury:

- Provide a safe environment (survey the practice and game area for safety hazards).
- Report any unsafe conditions to the Parks and Recreation Office.
- Properly plan the activity.
- Provide adequate and proper equipment.
- Match athletes by size and maturity.
- Warn of inherent risks in the sport to parents and players.
- Supervise the activity closely (do not allow players to participate unattended or involve themselves in dangerous horseplay).
- Evaluate players for injury or incapacity.
- Know emergency procedures and first aid.
- Keep adequate records.
- Use common sense.

INJURIES AND INJURY PREVENTION

Injuries are a part of playing sports. The severity and nature of the injury will determine how actively involved the coach must be in treating the injury. Regardless of the seriousness of the injury, the coach is responsible to know what steps to take. The City of Woodland Park does not carry insurance on players or spectators. Parents are responsible for any and all charges resulting from a medical emergency.
Minor Injuries, Scrapes and Cuts - For an open wound the person treating should put on a pair of disposable surgical gloves and follow the three steps of:

Stop the bleeding – apply direct pressure with a clean dressing to the wound.
Cleanse the wound once the bleeding is controlled.
Protect the wound with bandage or sterile gauze.

For a bloody nose not associated with a serious facial injury, have the injured player sit and lean forward slightly. Pinch the player’s nostrils shut.

Bumps, Bruises, Sprains and Strains - If large and painful follow the PRICE Method.

P  Protect the athlete and injured body part from further danger or trauma.
R  Rest the area to avoid further damage and foster healing.
I  Ice the area to reduce swelling and pain.
C  Compress the area by securing an ice bag in place with an elastic wrap.
E  Elevate the injury above heart level to keep the blood from pooling in the area.

Serious Injuries - Any injuries that are to the head, spine or fractures or any other cause they may make a player lose consciousness are injuries that a coach MUST seek medical attention immediately.

- Have someone call 911 for medical attention.
- Do not move the injured player.
- Remain with the player until medical personnel arrive.

Note: It is important to have the emergency phone numbers for persons to contact for each player at each practice and game. The coach should keep the player’s emergency information phone numbers with them at all times. The coach is given a first aid kit with basic supplies for minor injuries.

Coaches should take measures to help prevent injuries to players. Some precautions include:

- Obtain any medical concerns/issues on each player from the parents.
- Incorporate physical conditioning in practice sessions.
- Ensure sufficient hydration for each player. Make it mandatory each player brings water to drink, if it is not available at the practice / game site. Otherwise the coach should arrange for water to be available. By the time a player is aware of their thirst, they are long overdue for a drink.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL COACHES

The City of Woodland Park strives to provide quality coaches for all teams in all leagues. To be a successful youth coach it is helpful to know some of the attributes many successful youth coaches possess:
Show Affection and Patience:

- Make an effort to get to know each player on your team. Each player differs in ability and personality and in the reasons for playing sports. Some hope to be future stars, some want to have fun, and others are there because their parents or friends have pressured them into participating.
- Treat each player as an individual.
- Empathize with players trying to learn new and difficult skills.
- Treat players with respect, as you would like to be treated under similar circumstances.
- Be in control of your emotions.
- Show your enthusiasm for being involved with your team.
- Keep an upbeat and positive tone in all of your communications.
- Keep in mind when dealing with your players:
  - All players do not learn at the same rate.
  - All players do not respond to the same instructional approach in the same way.
  - Personal limitation can be compensated for (example, hustle can overcome certain deficits in skill).
  - Players have different motives, values and interests.
  - Players come from different types of families and have various types of influences and pressures.
  - Players have different experiences and dissimilar potential for athletic success.
  - Players mature at different rates, thus producing a dissimilar potential for learning and performance.

- Gain players' respect by showing your players that you can teach them to develop their skills and that you are willing to make the effort to do so. Be a fair and considerate leader by showing them that you care about them as individuals and that you are glad to be coaching them.

- Strive to make the experience as much fun and as personally meaningful for the average and low-ability players as for the superstars. The coach that allows all of their players to participate and develop skills will, in the end, come out on top.

- Use positive words when recognizing players for effort and performance. Encouragement is an important part of the positive approach to coaching. Most players are motivated to develop their skills and play well. Encouragement helps to increase their natural enthusiasm. Encourage effort; don't demand results. Be realistic and base your encouragement on reasonable expectations. Encouragement can become contagious and build team unity. This will help communicate your enthusiasm, and will rub off on your team. Try to get your players to support and encourage each other.
Remember, a smile is worth 1000 words

- Using these types of positive words provides support to players. A coach who uses these words or phrases plus describes why the performance earned the phrase will result in support plus education. "Way to go Bobby" could be expanded to "Way to keep your shoulders square, Bobby."

Demonstrate Good Character & Sportsmanship
- Create an atmosphere of courtesy and fair play:
  - Dress to look like a coach
  - Show respect for officials before, during and after each game
  - Be gracious in winning and losing
  - At the end of every game there should always be an exchange of handshakes with the players and coaches from both teams

  *Remember you cannot demand respect; it must be earned.*

Inject Humor into Practices
- Make practices fun by including a variety of activities
- Keep all players involved in drills and scrimmages
- Consider laughter by your players as a sign of enjoyment and not a lack of discipline
- Smile

Maintain a Positive Team Environment
- It is important for coaches to understand why players drop out of sports. A study of the top eight reasons identified the following:
  - The coach didn't understand kids
  - They didn't get to play enough
  - The coach was a poor teacher
  - There was too much pressure to win
  - They didn't like their teammates
  - Poor sportsmanship
  - The coach played favorites
  - The coach put too much pressure on me

- It is important to understand that the title COACH does not guarantee automatic respect and devotion from the players. The players on your team expect a lot from you. Four of the eight factors listed above are coaching behaviors. The
coach influences the other factors. Good youth coaches are individuals who understand they are coaching children and not college or professional athletes. Encourage your players to help each other, not criticize a teammate's performance. Do everything you can to make the players on your team thrilled to call you COACH!

Understand Why Kids Play Sports
- A coach must understand the reasons why each of his/her players has signed-up to play if s/he is to help them have the best possible experiences. In numerous studies conducted on why children play sports, the top reasons are always consistent and include: To have FUN, learn SKILLS, develop FITNESS, and participate because they enjoy COMPETITION. Winning and receiving individual awards do not appear among the top reasons. Coaches who understand kids' needs are more likely to keep those kids on the playing field.

Establishing Rules
- Players want clearly defined limits and structure. They don't like unpredictability and inconsistency. Coaches can utilize this desire to create a well-defined situation in which players can have plenty of freedom and fun within reasonable limits. For older players, a coach may find players more willing to live by the rules when they have a hand in formulating them and they have made a public commitment to abide by them. A coach should determine what team rules they feel are important and/or which are imposed by the Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department:

League rules for players include:
- Do not participate in any hazardous horseplay.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship by showing respect to players, coaches, parents and officials. Use of profanity will not be tolerated.
- Take care of equipment.
- Respect facilities.
- Show up to each game wearing a complete clean uniform (play is not allowed if missing any portion of the uniform).

Suggested topics for team rules include:
- Hustle on and off the playing area during practices and games
- Arrive at each practice and game on time with all required equipment
- Listen when the coach is talking or demonstrating
- Collect all personal belongings after each practice and game
- Call the coach at home prior to missing a game or practice

Integrate High Skilled and Less Skilled Players (TEAMWORK)
- Every coach is likely to have players that have a wide range of skill level. A coach must learn to be successful in this situation to develop a sense of teamwork. Every member of the team must feel that they are making a meaningful contribution to the success of the team. This will be an all season process. Some suggestions for enhancing teamwork:
  - stress teamwork emphasizing the contributions of all members of the team
• encourage positive verbal feedback among team members; watch out for skilled athletes who constantly criticize or make fun of their less skilled teammates
• use individual skill stations, if possible, to lessen peer pressure; emphasize skill learning as your overall goal for the team
• use small group drills with one skilled and two less skilled in each group
• make sure the parents of all your players understand what you are trying to accomplish with your team; avoid using the term substitute
• don't overlook your skilled athletes in your attempts to help the less skilled, provide challenging practice situations for all players
• mix up your starting line-ups; this will encourage the less skilled players to work hard and also encourage the better athletes to help their teammates improve

Make Proper Decisions When Coaching Your Own Son or Daughter
- Ask your kids if they like the idea of you being their coach. Most will love it but a few may not.
- Start with the premise that most parents will assume you're going to give your own child the most playing time and the best positions. Be careful when selecting your lineup. Even though it may be clear to everyone that your child is the most talented athlete on the team, you should treat your child the same as any other child. This means making sure that everyone plays the most and least desirable positions. It means everyone must take turns coming out of a game in a normal substitution rotation. Keep a game sheet who plays where and how often during each game. Maintain the sheets during the season.

Continue to Train and Improve as a Coach
- A coach can learn to improve his/her role of coaching from:
  • Books and videos on learning and instructing skills
  • Internet sites on coaching
  • Other experienced coaches
  • Clinics
  • This coaching manual
- A good coach never stops the pursuit of learning!

Communicate Effectively with Players
- Sport skills should be taught so they have meaning to the players, not just meaning to the coach. In teaching a skill - use the IDEA approach:
  I  Introduce the skill
  D  Demonstrate the skill
  E  Explain the skill
  A  Attend to players practicing the skill

  • Introduce the Skill
    - Get the players' attention
    - Name the skill
    - Arrange the players so all can see and hear
    - Explain the importance of the skill
Demonstrate the Skill
- Use correct form
- Demonstrate the skill several times
- Perform in slow motion so players can see all movements
- Demonstrate at different angles so players get a full perspective of it
- Demonstrate the skill left-handed also if you have any left-handed players on the team

Explain the Skill
- Provide a brief description of the skill along with a demonstration

Attend to Players Practicing the Skill
- Observe and provide positive, corrective feedback
- “Compliment Sandwich” is recommended when a coach must correct technique
  * Indicate what the player did correctly
  * Tell the player what was incorrect in the performance and instruct them how to correct it
- Encourage the player by re-emphasizing what they did good

Understand Players’ Rights and Responsibilities
- Participants that play youth sports with the City of Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department have a right:
  ➢ To have fun
  ➢ To learn skills
  ➢ To be coached as a child and not as an adult
  ➢ To get to play his/her fair share
- Participants that play youth sports with the City of Woodland Park Parks and Recreation Department have the responsibility to:
  ➢ To try their best at all times
  ➢ To give their coach the respect and attention they deserve
  ➢ To be present and on time for all team activities
  ➢ To respect the rights of the other players on the team
- A player must fulfill his/her responsibilities if s/he expects people to respect their rights.

Put Winning in Proper Prospective
- Coaches must be able to keep their outlook on winning in proper prospective. It is important to know why kids play sports as previously discussed and for coaches to develop the proper outlook on winning.
  - Babe Ruth once said, “Play fair, win honestly, don't brag about winning or cry over losing.”
“Athletes First -Winning Second” is a motto that indicates striving to win is important in sports but no effort in striving to win should be done at the expense of an athlete's well-being, development, and enjoyment.

A coach must have his priorities in order when working with young athletes. Most coaches will tell you that to have fun and develop players are more important than winning but when actually coaching they will overemphasize –winning.

Coaches need to remember the challenge and joy of a sport is experienced through striving to win, not through winning itself.

Winning will take care of itself within the limits of your players' talents if you work to help players develop their athletic skills.

Coaches should help players set achievable, individual goals. Then teach the players to measure their success in terms of attaining such goals.

The result of defining winning in terms of effort rather than outcome is to make youth sports more humane, meaningful, satisfying and enjoyable. Striving to win and giving ones best effort are objectives every coach, player, parent or adult can and should support.

Coaches who put too much emphasis on winning and not enough on caring for their players miss the whole point of working with young players.

Remember this is an instructional, not a competitive league and it is only a game.

Do the Little Extra

There are additional certain things that a coach can do during the season that can make a difference to the players on his/her team. Listed below are a few you may want to consider:

- Call and speak with a parent immediately following the coaches meeting with the first practice date, the coach's name and phone number.
- Prepare a packet for players and parents to include: practice and game schedule, team rules and league rules.
- Keep progress reports for each player throughout the season. Give each player their progress report at end of season team party.
- Have a backup plan if the parent supplying the snacks and refreshments forgets or misses the game. Many players will tell you that finishing a game and not having snacks and refreshments is worse than losing the game.
- Have players mark clothing and equipment with name and phone number. If a player leaves a piece of equipment, pick it up and notify the player so they don't become worried and start searching for it.
- Have a mid-season team meeting with parents to update them on the season or present them with a newsletter during the season.
 Conduct an individual player evaluation that the player can take home to share with a parent on what they are doing well and what they can work on to improve during the remainder of the season.

 Meet with players as a team to discuss what went well and what could be improved, instead of yelling at a player after they made a mistake on offense or defense.

 Take photos of players during the season and present to players.