



RECREATION AND PARKS

Volunteer Coach's Handbook

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RECREATION AND PARKS

Thank you for volunteering to coach in Greenville Recreation and Parks Department's (GRPD) youth athletic sports program. This handbook will help prepare you for the upcoming season. Our programs focus on participants learning new skills in both sports and life. We are committed to offering quality sports programs where all participants get the opportunity to have fun while learning and participating in sports. It is with your time and effort we are able to make such a commitment to our programs' participants. If you have any questions about programs, please feel free to contact us. Thank you again for committing yourself to the growth and development of not only our programs, but more importantly, our program participants. Make this season and each season thereafter a great experience for yourself, participants and spectators. Have a great season!

Greenville Recreation and Parks Department Mission Statement

To advance parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that promote mental and physical health, serve as a deterrent to illegal or inappropriate behaviors, and enhance Greenville's quality of life.

Recreation Division Mission Statement

The GRPD Recreation Division will provide progressive and diverse recreational services that are inclusive, while promoting creative, social, mental and physical well-being of the Greenville community.

Youth Sports Philosophy

GRPD Youth Sports philosophy is to provide a safe and fun environment for the youth of our community to learn the importance of teamwork, fair play and skill development. Our objectives include developing positive social skills, encouraging lifetime participation in sports and involving entire families in our programs to develop social capital for our community.

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General Program Information

Future Stars Soccer

Future Stars Soccer, offered in both fall and spring for age groups U4-U16, is sponsored by Greenville Recreation and Parks Department and Pitt-Greenville Soccer Association. As a sanctioned North Carolina Youth Soccer Association recreational league, Future Stars delivers quality soccer opportunities in a fun atmosphere and strives to create a positive environment based on mutual respect and good sportsmanship. Future Stars' philosophy and goals are to teach young soccer players basic skills and to promote the enjoyment of the game in a fun atmosphere.

- Program time frame:
 - **Fall:** September – mid November
 - **Spring:** March – mid May

Youth Basketball

Greenville Youth Basketball League is offered during the winter for 5-18 year olds. Fundamental skills are taught in a fun and positive environment. The league encourages good sportsmanship, developing strong playing skills and promoting friendly relationships among players, coaches, referees and parents.

- Program time frame:
 - December – March

Greenie League Baseball

Greenie League Baseball, held in the spring, is co-sponsored by Greenville Recreation and Parks Department and Greenville Little Leagues and is offered for ages 4-8. Greenie League is comprised of three divisions: Mini Fry T-ball (4 year olds), Small Fry Baseball (5-6 year olds) and Big Fry Baseball (7-8 year olds). Goals of the program include promoting physical activity, socialization and baseball fundamentals.

- Program time frame:
 - mid April – June

Youth Flag Football

Youth Flag Football is offered in the fall for ages 5-12. The program teaches fundamental flag football skills and promotes sportsmanship and teamwork. Teams for the following age groups will be formed: 5-6, 7-8 and 9-12.

- Program time frame:
 - September – early November

Team Formation

GRPD youth teams are created one of two ways:

- I. Random Placement
 - a. Teams are randomly assigned in the following programs and age groups:
 - i. Future Stars Soccer – All Age Groups
 - ii. Youth Basketball – Ages 5-6 and 7-8
 - iii. Greenie League Baseball – Age 4 & Ages 5-6 (Mini Fry and Small Fry Divisions)
 - b. After teams are randomly assigned, coaches are assigned to all teams.
 - i. Parent volunteers are placed with their child.
- II. Draft
 - a. A draft will determine team placement in the following programs and age groups:
 - i. Youth Basketball – Ages 9-10, 11-12, 13-15 and 16-18
 - ii. Greenie League Baseball – Ages 7-8 (Big Fry Division)
 - iii. Youth Flag Football – Ages 5-6, 7-8 and 9-12
 - b. A skills assessment for each age group will be conducted at the beginning of each program. Coaches will then pick their teams in an order decided by a random draw.

****For all programs, teams are allowed one head coach and one assistant coach. ****

The following guidelines will be used when assigning teams:

- a. Siblings will be placed on the same team. The Athletic Staff will need to be notified of step-siblings to ensure they are placed on the same team.
- b. If a team is sponsored, efforts will be made to place the sponsor's child on that particular team.
- c. Sorry, requests for team placement will not be accepted.

Awards

Trophies and medals will not be provided by GRPD. If you choose to purchase trophies for your team, you are responsible for handing them out at the end of the season. Please make arrangements to give team awards to players at the conclusion of the season. **The athletics staff will not be responsible for getting awards to players once the season has concluded.**

Principles for Coaches and Parents

General Youth Coaching Principles

Coaching is an extremely important responsibility. A good coach always places the best interest of the player before winning. The players and their parents have placed you in a position of leadership, and you have a responsibility to give them your best effort. This athletic experience will play a significant factor in determining whether the players continue participating in sports in the future. If you follow the list of coaching principles, the players and their parents will be better served.

Ten Coaching Guidelines

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He/she should be sensitive to the player's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He/she should be dedicated to serving children and understand sports provide physical and emotional growth for its participants.
2. A coach needs to realize he/she is a teacher, not a drill sergeant. He/she should help children learn and work to improve their skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the player transforms into the best interest of the game.
3. The safety and welfare of the players can never be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push players beyond their limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the athletic experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is supposed to be fun.
5. A coach should care more about the players as people than athletes.
6. A coach should encourage his/her players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from making discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. A coach needs to remember the rules of the game are designed to protect the players, as well as to set a standard of competition. He/she should not circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his/her opponent's team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He/she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he/she gets from his or her players, regardless of victories or defeat. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indications of good coaching.

Teaching and Coaching Your Own Child

Teaching and coaching your own child represents one of the most delicate challenges. If you are coaching a team on which your child plays, beware of two potential problems.

1. Because he/she is your child, you may go overboard in giving them all the benefits. You certainly don't want to neglect your own child, but without you being aware of it they may receive more privileges than the other members of the team.
2. The second type of problem is that in order to avoid bias, you may bend over backwards and, in fact, neglect your child to prove to the others you are not giving them special treatment.

In order to avoid these problems, it is important you have others observe your coaching style, being particularly sensitive to the treatment of each individual athlete. It is also important to have talked to your child in advance to let them know your dilemma. You may even ask them for suggestions, because they may have a better understanding than you realize.

Once you have discovered the rewards of coaching, it is important to improve your knowledge. Take the time to read a book on coaching principles of young athletes and enroll in a coaching course when offered. Just as your child will enjoy their sport more as they gain skills, you will also enjoy coaching more as you gain knowledge and experience.

Teaching and coaching your child on an individual basis should be a shared experience, a give-and-take where there is mutual respect and open discussion on every issue. As the child grows, this is particularly important, as ultimately it is the child who must do the performing.

Additional Coaching Tips:

- Take time to introduce yourself to parents on the first day and set “team rules” so everybody hears them and knows what to expect.
- Keep up with all your players during your scheduled practice time.
- Check in with the Site Supervisor at your site when you arrive for practices or games; there may be important information you need to give to your team.
- Use mistakes as positive opportunities to learn rather than negative outcomes to dwell on.
- Encourage your parents to attend practice and games.
- Make sure you are creating a fun and pleasant atmosphere for your players during practices and games.
- Play ALL of your players. Remember all players at the game from the beginning should play at least half the game.
- Motivate your players to work toward achievable goals.
- **HAVE FUN!!**
 - Always Remember: You are doing this for fun and to help the players. Be a "nice" coach who your players will remember fondly.

Dealing with Parents

The success of your team involves everyone’s participation. The key to keeping parents involved and happy is **communication**. Encourage parents to talk to you and ask questions and give input. If a parent offers their services or help, let them be part of the experience. They can offer help in many ways such as: refreshments, organizing socials or after game lunches. We encourage coaches to meet with their team parents early; explain to them what you hope to accomplish and reassure them it is your wish their child has an enjoyable experience. Call parents if you need help and have not heard from anyone. More often than not, people want to help, but think if they do not know the sport then there is nothing they can do. Thank parents publicly (i.e. after a game, at team party, etc.).

Dealing with disruptive parents is a dilemma. Depending on the circumstances, ask your league coordinator for advice and support.

During your meeting with the team parents tell them following:

- "Positive encouragement is good; negative comments are bad."
- "Cheering is good, but do not yell at your child or anyone else's child during the game. It can be distracting and what you tell them may be different from what the coaches are saying. If you would like to be an assistant coach, please call me, I would love your help."
- "Be careful not to say anything that might be taken the wrong way or hurt someone's feelings. Remember: this is for fun and these are children."
- "Be a good role model and a good sport."
- "Do not yell at the referees or say anything bad to or about the other team. Never ‘boo’ the other team or cheer when they make a mistake."

Good Sportsmanship

What is good sportsmanship?

Good sportsmanship occurs when teammates, opponents, coaches and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially parents and coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and behave with dignity – whether they win or lose a game.

Parents and coaches can help kids understand good sportsmanship through small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before/after a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully. Displaying good sportsmanship is not always easy; it can be tough to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game, but the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways.

A child who practices good sportsmanship is likely to carry the respect and appreciation of other people into every other aspect of life.

Some suggestions for building sportsmanship on your team:

- If you are your child's coach, don't expect more from them than the other children on your team. Don't be harder on him/her than anyone else on the team, but don't play favorites either.
- Keep your comments positive. Don't bad mouth other coaches, players or game officials. If you have a serious concern about a parents' behavior, discuss it privately with the child's parent or with a league official.
- When you're talking to your team after a competition, it is important not to dwell on who won or lost; instead ask your team how they felt during the game. If a child mentions he or she didn't do well at a particular skill, offer to work on these skills with the child before the next game.
- Applaud good plays no matter who makes them.
- Set a good example with your courteous behavior toward the parents of kids on the other team. Congratulate them when their kids win.
- Remember it's the child, not you, who is playing.
- Keep your perspective, it's just a game. Even if your team loses every game of the season, it is unlikely to ruin the child's life or chances of success.
- **DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!!**

Coach's Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct

1. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players **ahead of any personal desire to win** and remember the game is for the youth, not adults.

Expected Behavior:

- Allow and encourage players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
- Fulfill the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a “children first” philosophy.
- Place emphasis on fun, participation and team.

2. I will remember to **treat each player as an individual**, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development for the same.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognize the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well being.
- Encourage all players, regardless of skill level.
- Recognize some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.

3. I will do my best to **provide a safe playing** situation for my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintain a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Correct or avoid unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- Use appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Report unsafe conditions to Recreation and Parks staff.

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

Expected Behavior:

- Establish practice plans that are interesting, varied, and productive which are aimed at improving all players' skills and individual abilities.
- Devote appropriate time to the improvement of each individual player.
- Conduct practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

5. I will **lead**, by example, **in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship** by supporting all players and officials.

Expected Behavior:

- Abide by and support the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
- Provide an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
- Use the influential position of a youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect sportsmanship and fair play.
- Use appropriate language at all times. At no time is profanity acceptable.

6. I will use **appropriate coaching techniques for each of the skills** I teach.

Expected Behavior:

- Study and learn the rules of the game for the appropriate age group.
- Review all coaching material provided to coaches.
- Attend all coaches' meetings/clinics

7. I will **not use alcohol and tobacco products** during league sponsored events.

Expected Behavior:

- Be alcohol and drug free during all league sponsored events.
- Refrain from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- Encourage parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol during team activities.

8. I will remember that **children play, referees call, fans cheer and coaches TEACH.**

Expected Behavior:

- Exercise your authority/influence to control behavior of fans and spectators.
- Treat parents and coaches of other teams with respect.
- Treat officials and league administrators with respect.

9. As the coach, I will **respect and support the decisions** of the contest officials.

Expected Behavior:

- I will back and support the decisions of league officials and assist in enforcing all league rules.
- If I have concerns or questions, I will direct them to the league administrator at an appropriate time. I will not criticize another coach, game or league official.
- I will cooperate and offer assistance whenever I can.

10. I am aware **I have a tremendous influence on my players** and **I will not place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.**

Enforcement

GRPD is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Ethics in youth sports programs. Our Code of Ethics defines the expectations for individuals serving as coaches in youth sports. It also provides the tools to be used by GRPD, when necessary, to check behavior and to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

GRPD firmly believes the youth sports experience should be positive, safe and provide learning opportunities. For this to be possible, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children. Every volunteer coach is required to adhere to the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge. It is the duty of GRPD to ensure all volunteers successfully pass a criminal background check. It is also the duty of GRPD to respond to complaints against any volunteer coach in a youth recreation program. This is accomplished by initiating the "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure" detailed in the next section. The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the coach's behavior.

In the event a coach is found to have violated the Code of Ethics, a list of possible disciplinary actions has been compiled to accompany the Code of Conduct. GRPD reserves the right to reprimand violators of the Coaches Code of Ethics. This list is not all inclusive and is subject to change.

Possible actions include:

- Warning to and/or apology from the coach
- Probation
- One game suspension
- Multiple game suspensions and a meeting with the Athletic Staff
- Season suspension and a meeting with the Athletic Staff
- Indefinite suspension

Factors that might suggest a more lenient penalty include:

- First offense
- Remorse
- Apparent desire to reform

Factors that might suggest a harsher penalty include:

- Child endangerment
- Violation of law
- Prior complaints/review action
- Lack of remorse
- Number of expected behaviors violated
- Breach of duties as a role model

Enforcement Procedure

This section outlines the procedures GRPD will use when a complaint against a coach is received.

When GRPD receives a complaint about a coach or notification of a possible Code of Ethics violation, within 48 hours the Athletic Staff will initiate a review process consisting of:

1. Gather written reports and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from individuals involved to determine if a violation of the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, other coaches, parents and children.
2. After all information is gathered, the Athletic Staff will review all documentation. Once all documentation is reviewed, severity of the penalty will be determined as outlined in this manual. GRPD has the authority to decide the severity of the situation and whether or not the effected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined in the Code of Ethics Pledge.
3. The coach will be informed by the Athletic Staff of the penalty for violation of the Coaches' Code of Ethics. At this time, a meeting with the involved coach and Athletic Staff may be scheduled.
4. The Athletic Staff has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Coaches' Code of Ethics/Conduct. If disciplinary action is taken, the information will be logged in the coach's file.

First Aid

Care for Common Minor Injuries

It is the coach's job to maintain as safe an environment as possible. It is strongly recommended that coaches have certification in CPR and First Aid.

When an injury does occur:

1. Stay calm.
2. Administer basic first aid as soon as possible.
3. If injury is serious or the extent is unknown: CALL 911
4. Notify Parent
5. Fill out accident form completely.

Treating Floor Burns, Strains, Minor Bumps and Bruises

R – Rest, stop any activity causing pain.

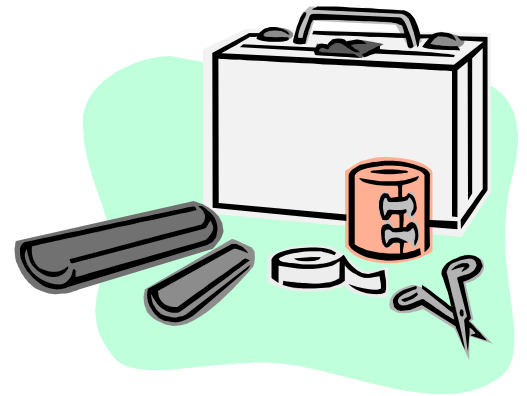
I – Ice for 24-36 hours after the injury.

C – Compress with bandage if needed.

E – Elevate to avoid subsequent swelling.

Conditions Requiring Medical Attention

- Significant swelling/dislocation of an extremity.
- Any obvious deformity.
- Severe pain.
- Inability to bear weight on a lower extremity.
- Lacerations with or without fractures.
- Significant swelling of a joint, i.e., elbow, knee.
- Loss of sensation in an extremity.



Conditions Mandating Only Experienced Medical Personnel Move the Athlete:

- Loss of consciousness.
- Neck or back injury with loss of sensation in arms or legs.
- Head injury with disorientation and/or visual changes.

Rehabilitation/Treatment for Chronic Injuries:

1. Blisters
 - Keep pressure off of new blisters.
 - Where the skin is torn, use extreme care.
 - Advise parents to:
 - Keep area clean.
2. Abrasions and contusions (scrapes and bruises)
 - Keep them clean and dry.
 - Expose them to the air when possible.
3. Chronic knee pain, tendonitis, stress fractures, and ligament strains. Follow the doctor's directions, which will generally include:
 - Rest for 5-7 days and ice for pain.
 - Stretch related muscles to strengthen them.
 - Move gently, stopping at the point of pain.
 - Exercise to strengthen afflicted area as it heals.

Heat Emergencies:

These problems often occur when athletes play too long and hard or stay too long in the sun. Sunburn can occur on overcast days as well as sunny days. When athletes are in the sun, they should wear water-resistant sunscreen, which provides maximum protection. Sunglasses and a hat provide added protection.

1. Heat Stroke

- *Signs and Symptoms:* Hot, red skin; very high body temperature; shock or unconsciousness.
- *What to Do:* Treat heat stroke as a life-threatening emergency, and CALL 911. Get the victim to a cool place and wrap him/her in wet clothing. Care for shock by laying the victim down and elevating their feet. Give nothing by mouth.

2. Heat Exhaustion

- *Signs and Symptoms:* Cool, pale, moist skin; rapid, weak pulse; weakness/dizziness; nausea/vomiting.
- *What to Do:* Treat heat exhaustion as an emergency, and CALL 911. Get the victim into the coolest place available. Place the victim on their back with their feet elevated. Cool victim by applying wet sheets or towels to the body and by fanning. Give ½ glass of water to drink every 15 minutes if the victim is fully conscious and can tolerate it.

3. Heat Cramps

- *Signs and Symptoms:* Muscular pains and spasms, usually in the legs or abdomen.
- *What to Do:* Get the victim into the coolest place available. Give ½ glass of water to drink every 15 minutes for an hour.
- *Prevention:* Seek protection from the sun and extreme heat. Replace fluids by drinking water, sports drinks or fruit juices.

Inclement Weather

Games will be postponed when the Recreation and Parks staff determines the fields as being unplayable. **In the event of game cancellations, coaches will only be notified using rainedout.com and by email.** You may also get an update on cancelled games by calling our **weather hotline at 252.329.4299**. If games are made up, a rain make-up schedule will be given to the coaches to hand out to all players.

Prior to starting the season, coaches are encouraged to register with rainedout.com. Please also encourage the parents on your team to sign up for this service. Listed below are step by step instructions to sign up for rainedout.com.



How do I sign-up for updates from rainedout.com?

It's just six easy steps.

- 1.) Go to www.rainedout.com
- 2.) In the search bar in the middle of the screen, type in 'GRPD'
- 3.) **Click** on 'GRPD Athletics'
- 4.) **Click** on 'Sign Up Now for Mobile Alerts'
- 5.) Enter your information; select all of the programs you would like to receive updates on; agree to the terms of use and **click** 'create account'.
- 6.) Validate your phone number or e-mail address by typing in the verification code sent to you as a text message or reply to your e-mail notification.

** Standard text messaging rates apply.

For questions, please contact the Athletic Office at 252.329.4550.

Nutrition Information

Strategies to Stay Hydrated

- *Start Practice Well-hydrated*
 - The National Athletic Trainers Association recommends children under 90 lbs. drink 3-6 oz. of fluid one hour before the activity. Children more than 90 lbs. should drink 6-12 oz.
- *Drink on a Schedule*
 - Athletes should drink at regular intervals of 10 to 15 minutes during the activity. They should drink 6-8 oz. of fluid during these breaks.
- *Replace Lost Water After Activity*
 - The National Athletic Trainers Association recommends children less than 90 lbs. drink 8 oz. of fluids after the activity in order to help the body replace fluids lost during activity. Children who weigh more than 90 lbs. should drink up to 12 oz. of fluids.
- *Be Alert for Heat Stroke Warning Signs*
 - Warning signs include fatigue, nausea, headaches and excessive thirst. Also, you should not exercise if you have had an illness or a fever recently.
- *Avoid sugary and caffeinated drinks.*
 - Water is the best for staying well-hydrated during an activity. Drinks with sugar and caffeine can dehydrate individuals, rather than hydrate.

Healthy Snacks

- *Pre-Game*
 - Fuel muscles with carbohydrates one to two hours before an athletic event or practice.
 - For a longer game or exercise session, add some protein or fiber to slow digestion and sustain energy.
 - Avoid fatty foods and extra-sweet foods such as soda, candy and sports drink.
 - Snack examples: whole-grain bread, crackers, tortillas or pretzels, low sugar cereal, plain popcorn, low-fat cheese, yogurt, pudding, apples, bananas, pears or oranges.
- *Half-Time*
 - Keep the water flowing.
 - Avoid salty foods.
 - Best choice is fruit.
 - Quick and easy to eat foods.
 - Snack examples: bananas; orange slices; clementines; grapes; small slices of melon; and apple wedges.
- *Post-Game*
 - Need lots of fluids to replace what has been lost to perspiration.
 - If they've really been sweating, they also need sodium and potassium, such as Gatorade.
 - Carbohydrates and proteins help refuel and re-energize.
 - It is not wise to reinforce the idea sweets are a good way to reward yourself for a job well done.
 - Snack examples: fresh fruit or apple sauce; dried fruit; fruit flavored gelatin; granola bars; crackers or bagels; yogurt; pudding; string cheese; popcorn, pretzels or baked chips; low-fat muffins; or trail mix.