

Greenville Recreation & Parks Department



Youth Sports Parent Information Handbook

www.grpd.info
252-329-4550

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Greenville Recreation and Parks Department Youth Sports Information

Thank you for choosing Greenville Recreation and Parks Department's (GRPD) youth athletic sports program. Please take a minute to read through this packet to familiarize yourself with our leagues, philosophy and policies. Our programs are centered on your child learning new skills in both sports and life. We are committed to offering quality sport programs where all participants have the opportunity to have fun while learning and participating in sports. Most of our leagues are comprised of parents and other adult volunteers who care about the healthy development of all kids. If you have not considered being a volunteer coach, please do. We have a comprehensive coaches' training program designed to teach all levels of coaches. If you have any questions about our programs, please feel free to contact us. Thank you again for your participation and let's have a great season!

GRPD 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.

Playing Time

Our minimum required playing time varies by sport, but is usually at least half of the game. Please visit www.grpd.info under the Athletics page and click on the appropriate sport to view our league rules which contains our minimum playing requirements.

Young Athlete's Bill of Rights

1. Right to participate in sports
2. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership
4. Right to play as a child and not as an adult
5. Right of children to share in the leadership and decision-making of their sport participation
6. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success
9. Right to be treated with dignity
10. Right to have fun in sports

Your Role as Parents

There are so many benefits from playing youth sports. Team sports help teach people how to work together; learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline; sacrifice for the good of the team; enjoy winning and deal with defeat all while becoming physically fit and healthy. In order for a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, league administrators, and especially parents. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in GRPD's Athletic Programs.

- Parents have a responsibility to their children: In order for your child to experience all of the benefits of youth athletics he or she needs to be at the practices and games. By signing up your child, you are responsible for making sure this happens. Parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind.
- Parents have a responsibility to the coaches: Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend teaching your child. Please take the time to meet your child's coach and attend any parent's informational meetings held in the beginning of the season. Coaches need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don't agree with a coach you are expected to tell him or her, but make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of children or other parents. People do not like to be embarrassed and a conversation away from others may lead to more healthy solution.

- Parents have a responsibility to the league: League administrators cannot see all games and practices of every team. Therefore, in order to maintain the protective shell around these programs, it is essential for parents to report abusive behavior or any other situation that needs to be addressed to the league administrator.
- Parents have a responsibility to other parents: Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from your child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. These are recreational leagues. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.
- Parents have a responsibility to themselves: It is your responsibility to enjoy watching your child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to its fullest, because a lifetime of memories is being created before your eyes.

Parent Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct is listed on each of our youth athletic leagues' registration forms and must be signed by a parent. The Code of Conduct is also listed on-line (www.grpd.info) for those who choose to register this method. Failure to comply with the Parent's Code of Ethics could result in a suspension from youth sport events.

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports events.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of each child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will support the coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all Greenville Recreation and Parks Department's youth sporting events.
- I will remember the game is for youth, not for adults.
- I will do the best to make the youth sports experience fun for my child.
- I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching or character development or providing transportation.
- I will treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect.

Negative Behavior: Parents, coaches, and spectators should be cheering for all children. Booing, heckling, or negative comments have no place in youth sports and will not be tolerated.

- Parents and/or spectators participating in negative behavior will be warned to stop, and asked to leave the park if the behavior continues. Individuals ejected from the playing area more than once during the season shall be banned from attending games for the remainder of the season.

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. Children 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 children understand good sportsmanship includes both small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents 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 examples of good sportsmanship:

- Keep your comments positive. Don't bad mouth other coaches, players or game officials. If you have a serious concern about someone's behavior, discuss it privately with your child's coach or with a league official.
- When you're talking to your child after a competition, it is important not to dwell on who won or lost, instead ask him/her how they felt during the game. If your 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!**

The best way to help a child to achieve goals and reduce the natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one, remember he or she is still learning. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things he or she did well throughout the season. As long as children give their best, they deserve to be treated like winners. In order for your child to get the most out of youth sports, it's important that you support your child by giving them positive encouragement and showing an interest in his/her team.

General League Information

• What to Expect After Registration

I have registered my child to participate in a youth athletic league, what's next? This is a common question our office receives. After you register, you will be given a receipt (you must print the receipt if registering on-line) which will contain information about the program. This information is also listed on the registration form and we recommend you retain the "information" portion for your records and follow the schedule that is listed.

For additional information about GRPD's athletic programs, please call a member of the Athletic Staff at 252-329-4550 or visit our website at www.grpd.info.

- **Practices and Games**

Practices and games vary slightly from sport to sport. Below is a brief description that will provide you information for practices and games for each of the leagues that we offer.

Fall Future Stars Soccer (U4-U16): Future Stars Soccer is a co-sponsored league by GRPD and the Pitt Greenville Soccer Association (www.pgsasoccer.com). Fall Futures Stars Soccer generally begins the Saturday after Labor Day, each team can expect to have a practice this day. Unless your volunteer coach reschedules, the time for your first practice will be listed on the registration form. Pre-season practices will last for two weeks, followed by games. U4-U5 will have games scheduled only on Saturdays for a total of seven games. U6-U16 will have weekday games scheduled the last three weeks of the season (no more than one game) and each Saturday, for a total of 10 games. As league administrations we only schedule Saturdays for the U4-U5 age groups and do not encourage coaches to hold weekday practices, but this is not always the case. Although not required, we do encourage coaches to hold weekday practices for the U6-U16 age group. The U8-U16 age groups will participate in a single elimination post season tournament. The tournament generally concludes by the third week of the November. Practices and games will be played at Bradford Creek Soccer Complex (Old Pactolus Rd) and the Pitt Greenville Soccer Association (PGSA) SoccerPlex (Hwy. 43).

Flag Football (ages 5-12): Flag Football is played at Jaycee Park (2000 Cedar Lane) during the week and begins the week after Labor Day. Each team typically has two pre-season practices and participates in 10 regular season games and a single elimination post-season tournament. Practices and games that are scheduled by our department will be during the week between 5:30-8:30pm (later times are usually for the 9-12 age group). The season will conclude by the third week of November.

Basketball (ages 5-18): Youth Basketball generally begins the week after Thanksgiving. Ages 5-12 play at H. Boyd Lee Park and ages 13-18 will play at Elm St. Gym. The date and time of your child's first practice will be listed on the registration form. Pre-season practices generally last until the second week of December and resume the first part of January. Ages 5-8 will play seven games on Saturdays and ages 9-18 will play 10 games, mainly during the week. The season generally concludes the first part of March. Coaches will have the option to schedule practices once games begin during the week and on Sunday afternoons.

Spring Future Stars Soccer (U4-16): Future Stars Soccer is a co-sponsored league by GRPD and the Pitt Greenville Soccer Association (www.pgsasoccer.com). Spring Futures Stars Soccer generally begins the first Saturday in March and each team can expect to have a practice this day. Unless your volunteer coach reschedules, the time for your first practice will be listed on the registration form. Pre-season practices will last for two weeks, followed by games. U4-U5 will have games scheduled only on Saturdays for a total of six games. U6-U16 will have weekday games scheduled the last two weeks of the season (no more than one game) and each Saturday, for a total of eight games. As league administrations we only schedule Saturday's for the U4-U5 age groups and do not encourage coaches to hold weekday practices, but this is not always the case. Although not required, we do encourage coaches to hold weekday practices for the U6-U16 age group. The U8-U16 age groups will participate in a single elimination post season tournament. Practices and games will be played at Bradford Creek Soccer Complex (Old Pactolus Rd) and the Pitt Greenville Soccer Association (PGSA) SoccerPlex (Hwy. 43). Players will also be able to take advantage of player clinics provided by the East Carolina Women's Soccer Coaches and players.

Greenie League Baseball (ages 4-8): Greenie League Baseball is a co-sponsored league between GRPD and Greenville Little Leagues (www.gllbaseball.com). There are three divisions of Greenie League Baseball depending upon the age of the child. Mini Fry (age 4) is played only on Saturdays, generally at H. Boyd Lee Park or Evans Park in the mornings and early afternoons. Mini Fry Baseball lasts for seven weeks and normally begins the first Saturday in May.

Small Fry (age 5-6) and Big Fry (ages 7-8) practices are held during the week generally at 5:30pm or 6:45pm and throughout the day on Saturdays. Prior to games beginning, you can expect up to two practices per week. During the week, games are generally at 5:30pm or 6:45pm (some Big Fry Games could begin at 7pm) and throughout the day on Saturdays. Teams could play up to two games per week, in addition to any practices that a coach may schedule. Each team will play 12 games during the season. Depending upon weather, the season generally concludes by mid June.

- **Game Schedules**

Game schedules are given to coaches or a Team Parent to distribute generally after the first week of preseason practices. Once game schedules are completed, they are posted on-line at www.grpd.info under the Athletics page.

- **Weather Cancellations**

Games shall be postponed when the Recreation and Parks staff determines the fields as being unplayable. Once games are cancelled, there are several ways for you to find out this information which include 1) a call from your coach, 2) calling 252-329-4550 and listening the recorded message, and 3) www.rainedout.com. Listed on the next page is additional information on www.rainedout.com and step by step instructions to get signed up.

www.Rainedout.com



In an effort to keep our staff, coaches and parents up to date on cancellations and program information, we will be implementing the use of rainedout.com. This is a program that we can use to get updates out quickly and effectively.

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 329-4550.

- **Team Photos**

Professional photographs will be taken for each of our leagues during the season. A picture schedule will be given to you by your coach. If you decide to order pictures, your order will be mailed directly to the address you provide on the order form (this is new beginning fall 2010).

- **Awards**

Trophies, medals or plaques are not provided by the City of Greenville but may be purchased by parents or coaches for all team members.

- **Team Requests**

Sorry, requests for team placement will not be accepted.

- **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, 13-15, 16-18
 - iii. Greenie League Baseball – Mini Fry and Small Fry Divisions
 - b. After teams are randomly assigned, coaches are assigned to all teams.
- II. Draft
 - a. A draft will determine team placement in the following programs and age groups:
 - i. Youth Basketball – Ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12
 - ii. Greenie League Baseball – Big Fry Division
 - iii. Youth Flag Football – Ages 5-6, 7-8, 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.

Please note, that siblings will be placed on same team. The Athletic Staff will need to be notified of step-siblings to ensure they are placed on the same team.

- **Combining Leagues**

GRPD reserves the right to combine age groups and/or genders when appropriate and necessary. It is our goal to have every age group form a league, however if this is not the case due to low enrollment we will combine age groups and/or genders in order to offer the league.

- **Required Equipment**

For all programs, jewelry is not allowed to be worn during games or practices unless it is for medical notification purposes. This includes, but is not limited to: earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, watches, etc. Athletic shoes must be worn by all participants and are encouraged to wear shorts or sweat pants during practices and games, wearing jeans is discouraged. Sandals, flip flops, crocs, etc. may not be worn during practices and games.

Future Stars Soccer: See information above. Each player must provide their own shin guards for practices and games. Those not wearing shin guards will not be able to participate. If cleats are worn, they must not have a “toe cleat” which is commonly found on baseball and softball cleats. Tennis shoes may be worn. The issued uniform must be showing. If it is cold, then players may wear long sleeve shirts under their game shirt. Sorry, hooded sweatshirts are not allowed due to safety issues. Each player is encouraged to bring their own soccer ball to practices.

Equipment issued by league: Fall Future Stars participants will receive a t-shirt, shorts and socks
Spring Future Stars participants will receive a league t-shirt

Flag Football: See information above. Players are required to wear a mouth piece and shorts or pants without belt loops or pockets. Shorts and/or pants may not be turned inside out exposing pockets.

Equipment issued by league: Each participant will receive a league t-shirt.

Basketball: See information above.

Equipment issued by league: Each participant will receive a league t-shirt

Greenie League Baseball: See information above. Players are required to have their own glove. Shorts may be worn, but baseball pants are encouraged. Some coaches may request a specific color for you to purchase so team members match. We recommend that you wait to purchase baseball pants until after your first practice. All players are encouraged to wear a protective cup, but it’s required to be worn by the person playing the catcher position (catcher position is only used in the Big Fry 7-8 age group).

Equipment issued by league: Each participant will receive a league t-shirt. Hats are issued to players in Small Fry (ages 5-6) and Big Fry (ages 7-8).

- **Switching Teams**

Switching teams is not permissible. If there is a situation the Athletic Staff needs to be aware of, or to report any violations please call the Athletic Office.

- **Game Officials**

Game officials are not the “bad guys”. They need your support and encouragement. Treat them and their calls fairly and respectfully. Remember children reflect the attitudes and conduct of their parents, so keep your sideline behavior positive and supportive.

Refunds

Refunds will be given if the program is cancelled due to the lack of participant interest or a valid medical reason on the part of the participant provided to our office prior to the program start date. If you are not completely satisfied within the first two weeks of the program, please contact the Athletic Office at (252) 329-4550 for a full refund.

Financial Aid

City of Greenville residents may request a reduction in program fees when a need exists. These requests must be made in writing on an official “Request for Fee Reduction” form and will be evaluated based on overall household income and size as determined by the State of North Carolina’s Medicaid program through verification by possession of current Medicaid card, Food Assistance and Nutrition Program approval letter or Health Choice card. This option does not exist for non-City residents. All requests for fee reductions will be approved or denied by the Director of Recreation and Parks or a designate. All registrants will be required to pay a minimum of \$5.00 for each registration.

Coaches and Volunteers

Our youth athletic leagues utilize hundreds of volunteer coaches each year. Volunteers are truly the backbone of our youth athletic leagues. WE NEED YOUR HELP! Even if you do not have much or any experience in a particular sport, we can train you and provide you with resources for you to become familiar in a particular sport. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer coach or know of someone interested in coaching, please call the Athletic Office at 252-329-4550 or complete the coaches’ application on the back of a registration form.

- **Background Checks**

All of our volunteer coaches are required to complete an extensive criminal background check prior to coaching to help ensure the safety of the children participating in our leagues.

- **What if there is no Coach**

As league administrators, we make many efforts to ensure all of our teams have a volunteer coach prior to the start of the season. If we are missing a coach after our registration deadline, we begin soliciting help from

parents in the program by email and phone calls. If we are not successful, then at the first practice we will have a staff member present to talk with the parents. If none of the parents on the team are interested in coaching, we do one of two things; 1) Split the team members up to other teams, or 2) Refund the participation fee.