



YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our main emphasis is on the development of each child in our program. The three areas of a child's development we are concerned about are:

- Physical development by learning basketball skills and improving fitness and conditioning.
- Psychological development, by learning to control their emotions and developing positive feelings of self-worth; and,
- Social development by learning to be a part of a team and display appropriate sportsmanship.

We feel that the best environment for a child to develop in these areas is an environment without the pressure to win. If we strive to encourage each child to do their very best and not be concerned about winning, then we feel like each child will be able to experience personal success and growth - and that's a winning program!

To help create this type of atmosphere, we have instituted the following guidelines:

- Every child plays in every game.
- Win-loss records for teams in the 8u through 12u leagues are not kept. There are no awards for 1st or 2nd place until the 15u through 18u leagues.
- There are no post-season tournaments.
- For safety reasons, NO jewelry, NO pants or shorts with **pockets** shall be worn during games or practices. The uniform jersey issued to each player shall not be altered in any way. Any participant who fails to follow the above guidelines will not be allowed to play until the offense(s) is (are) corrected.

In summary, we value playing the game of basketball for its developmental and health benefits more than we value playing basketball to win!

CHILDREN FIRST, ALWAYS LEARNING!



YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT

York County Parks and Recreation requests that coaches and parents discuss the purchase of additional items (such as pictures, shorts, and socks) before making any decision. Furthermore, we want parents to know that they are not obligated to supply their children with these additional items even if the team decides to do so.

York County Parks and Recreation's goal is to treat all participants equitably with regard to recognition of participation and, therefore, will only supply trophies to the 1st and 2nd place teams in both the 15u league and the 18u league. This equity is often disrupted when some teams purchase trophies, and others do not. It also can cause problems within families with more than one child participating in the program. Because of these issues, we prefer that individual trophies not be purchased as a "team decision" but instead through an individual "family decision." Under these conditions, trophies could be given to the child at home. We hope this clarifies our position on these issues. Please get in touch with us at 890-3500 if you have any questions or comments.



PARENTAL SUPPORT – THE KEY TO PEAK PERFORMANCE

Parents' role in the lives of young basketball players has a tremendous impact on their experience. We offer friendly reminders for all of us as we approach the upcoming season. If you have any questions or suggestions about these thoughts, please feel free to call us at Parks and Recreation at 890-3500.

1. **Let the coaches coach:** Please leave the coaching to our volunteer coaches. You have entrusted the care of your player to these coaches, who need to be free to do their job and feel supported by their team's parents. If a player has too many coaches and hears too many "voices," especially during a practice or game, it is confusing for them, and their performance usually declines.
2. **Be your child's best fan:** Let's support our children unconditionally, being careful not to withdraw love and approval when they perform poorly. Our children should not have to perform well on the court to win our support. As their "best" fans, we're their "truest" fans through a game's (and life's) highs *and* lows!
3. **Support and root for all players on the team:** Foster teamwork. Our children's teammates are not opponents. When a teammate is playing better than our child, our child has a wonderful opportunity to learn. If they are struggling, we can cheer them on to keep trying.
4. **Encourage your child to talk with the coaches:** If your child is having difficulties in practice or games, or can't make a practice, etc., please encourage them to speak directly to the coaches, especially if they are older. This is an important part of growth and taking personal responsibility.
5. **Understand and display appropriate game behavior:** Our children's self-esteem, attitude, and game performance can be affected by us as parents. Let's remember to be supportive and to cheer the effort from all children playing. To perform to the best of his/her abilities, a player needs to focus on the parts of the game that *they* can control (attitude, fitness, skills, effort/hustle, positioning, decision-making, etc.). If they start focusing on what they *cannot* control (decisions by referees or coaches, issues with teammates or opponents), they may not play up to their ability nor display such positive behaviors as teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for authority. Positivity in the gym is what they all need to be hearing from us to help reinforce what they need to stay focused on themselves.
6. **Reality test:** If our child plays hard, but their team loses or they personally have not played as well as they wanted to, help them to see "playing their best" as a "win". Remind them to keep focusing on improvement and good effort. Their fun and satisfaction should be derived from trying their hardest when competing.
7. **Keep basketball in its proper perspective:** We all know that basketball should not be larger than life for us as parents. If our child's performance produces strong negative emotions in us, we need to suppress them. Remember, our relationship will continue with our kids long after their competitive basketball days are over! It is a great sport. But as parents, let's strive to keep it in proper perspective.
8. **Have fun:** That is what we will be trying to do! We will try to challenge your child to reach past their "comfort level" and improve themselves as a player and as a person. We will attempt to do this in a fun and positive environment. We look forward to this and partnering with our parents. We hope you do too!



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF ATHLETES

1. Make sure my children know that win or lose, I love them and am not disappointed with their performance.
2. Be realistic about my child's physical ability, skill level, and experience.
3. Help my child set realistic goals for improvement.
4. Emphasize improved performance, not winning or being "the best." Positively reinforce and encourage them for their improved skills, effort, teachability, teamwork, sportsmanship, and example. Those are winning qualities that will help them succeed and find fulfillment on the court, in the classroom, and beyond!
5. Take care not to relive my own athletic past through my children. Remind me that living vicariously through one's children is something we, as parents, can easily do as they play sports. It can happen if we were great at sports and want them to enjoy them and be as successful as we were. Or, it can happen because we wish we *had* been better at sports...and want them to excel in an area where we did not. When this does happen, it can be accompanied by an intensity that can be overwhelming for a child and can take the enjoyment out of sports for them. Instead, I want to continually remind myself to encourage and support my child in becoming their own unique person!
6. Provide a safe environment for our child's training and competition. This includes proper use of equipment and training methods.
7. Control our own emotions at games and events. Don't yell at players, coaches, or officials.
8. Be a cheerleader for my child and the other children on the team. (It's okay to applaud the effort and good play from the other team as well.) Remember, the encouragement and support I give my child (and others) through the "low" of bad performance or loss show them that I truly care for them no matter what. I will always be there for them in life, cheering them on!
9. Respect my child's coaches. Communicate openly with them. If I disagree with their approach, I will discuss it with them privately. I will also respect and appreciate their time devoted to my child and others. "It takes a (caring) village to raise a child!"
10. I will strive to be a positive role model for my child and others. I will *enjoy* this experience!