

# YOUTH SPORTS

MCAS CHERRY POINT



# Parent's Guide

# introduction

Parents are possibly the most important part of any youth sports program because without the parents, there would be no participants and a lot fewer volunteer coaches. Consequently, your role is critical to the overall health of our program and we want to do everything we can to ensure that both your child and you have a positive experience. With that in mind, we are providing this guidebook as a resource for you and your child's time in youth sports.

## youth sports mission statement

We strive to ensure that the children, who participate in our programs and events, have a positive experience in sports by emphasizing learning, respect, participation and having fun.

## youth sports philosophy

The Cherry Point Youth Sports program is built on the philosophy that the primary goal of any recreational sport is for the kids to learn the sport and have fun. We believe they can do this best when they are taught the fundamentals of the game and when each player is given an equal opportunity to participate in an environment that encourages and even demands good sportsmanship. Competition is an integral and essential part of all sports and we encourage it. Winning championships however, is not the emphasis of this program.



# how kid's define fun & their experiences

1. They want lots of action in practice and games
2. They want personal involvement in the action  
(they don't want to sit on the bench)
3. They want controlled challenges – they don't like blowouts
4. They want to reaffirm friendships with other kids

## four myths surrounding youth sports

1. Children play sports to entertain adults
2. Sports for kids must be organized and controlled by adults if they are to be of real value
3. Children are miniature adults
4. The real value of sports is winning

## how you can be a good youth sports parent to your child

1. Talk to your kids about their sports experience
2. Let kids make decisions about participation
3. Don't compare your kids to others
4. Provide emotional support and let their coach critique/criticize individual performance
5. Avoid connecting external rewards or parental affections to your child's performance in the sport
6. Encourage participation in a wide range of sports & physical activity
7. Help kids set limits in sport participation
8. Encourage but don't pressure kids to play – know how kids define pressure

## your involvement

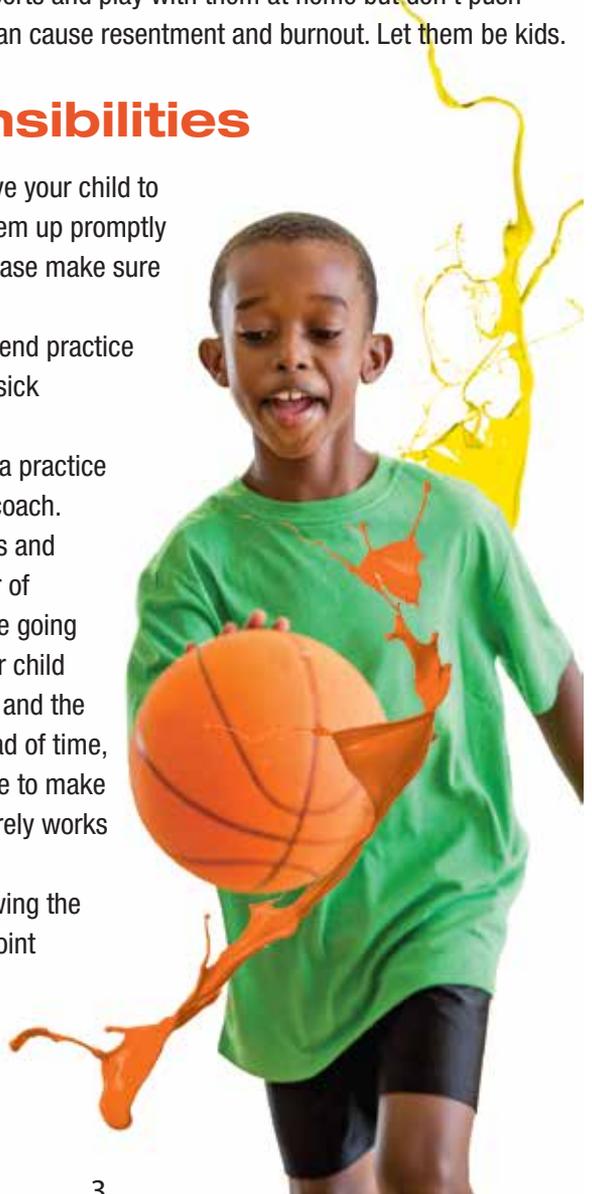
We encourage parental involvement with your child's participation in our program. There are three ways you can do that:

- ~ Attending practices and games
- ~ Volunteering as a coach
- ~ Volunteering as a team mom or dad

Encourage your child to play sports and play with them at home but don't push them. Pushing a child to play can cause resentment and burnout. Let them be kids.

## your responsibilities

- ~ It is your responsibility to have your child to practice on time and pick them up promptly at the end of practice, so please make sure you do so.
- ~ Do not allow your child to attend practice or games if they are feeling sick or running a fever.
- ~ If your child is going to miss a practice or game, please inform the coach. A good coach plans practices and games based on the number of children they believe they are going to have in attendance. If your child isn't at a practice or a game and the coach is not aware of it ahead of time, it will force the coach to have to make changes on the fly, which rarely works out well.
- ~ You are responsible for following the rules as laid out by Cherry Point Youth Sports.



# your attitude & actions

Like it or not, you are a role model. The only question is whether you are going to be a positive one or negative one. Your attitude will go a long ways in determining whether or not your child has a positive youth sports experience. Here are some ways you can be a positive role model:

## Support and encourage your child by...

- ~ Attending practices and all games.
- ~ Not comparing them to other players or siblings. Doing so can have a long term negative impact on your child.
- ~ Avoiding giving your young athlete a critique of the way they played immediately after the game or during the car ride home.
- ~ Don't coach your child from the sidelines or stands. You may know more about the sport than your child's coach, but you have to remember that they are the ones who volunteered their time to coach. If you want to volunteer, we are always looking for good coaches.

## Sportsmanship, practice it by...

- ~ Cheering and celebrating the successes of all of the kids playing, not just your child or the children on their team.
- ~ Not yelling at officials, coaches, or players (including your own child) during games. Remember that all of these folks are human and make mistakes, just like you would if you were in their position.
- ~ Understanding that while everyone loves to win, for kids playing the game it's more about the experience than winning or losing. Two different nationwide surveys have shown that kids would rather play on a losing team than sit on the bench on a winning team. Those two surveys have also shown that 70% of all kids quit organized sports by the age of 13 with the number one reason being because sports was no longer fun. Let the kids have fun.
- ~ Remembering that you are the adult and acting like one. With parents being the majority of the adults in attendance, it is critical that you help us set the tone for a positive experience for your child, as well as all of the other children in the program. Remember, it is much more difficult for a child to deal with an out of control parent than it is for a parent to deal with an out of control child.
- ~ You will be required to sign a Parents Code of Ethics pledge prior to your child receiving their uniform. Poor sportsmanship or lack of respect for players, coaches, officials, other fans or Youth Sports staff, will not be tolerated in this program.

# your child's participation

**Playing Rules** - We encourage our parents to familiarize themselves with our playing rules and program policies, a copy of which are available upon request.

**Mandatory Play** - Our playing rules spell out specifics as to our mandatory playing rules. Every child is guaranteed a reasonable and fair time of play during the game, unless injured, sick or disqualified by the game official. However, we do enforce disciplinary rules and participants may be kept from playing for reasons of persistent poor sportsmanship and/or persistent absence at practice.

**Equipment & Uniforms** – Depending on the sport, we provide either uniforms (jersey & shorts), team golf shirts or t-shirts for participants. If you have questions about a particular sport, please ask as to what your responsibility will be as far as appropriately clothing and equipping your child.

**Inclusion** - We will make every reasonable effort to include all children in our program, regardless of ability or needs. If your child has special needs or a disability, please note it on your registration form. We then will make arrangements to meet with you and determine the best way to include your child in our program.

**Conflict** - If you have issues with your child's coach(es), please speak with them first. If you cannot reach a satisfactory resolution, please contact the Youth Sports Director.

**Concussions** – Concussions among young athletes is a serious issue. We have handouts from the CDC available for parents that help in recognizing the symptoms of a concussion as well as how to respond. Valuable information, videos and other resources are available through the CDC's Head Up website: [www.cdc.gov/headsup](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup)



**Hydration** – Like their elder counterparts, young athletes need to be properly hydrated in order to perform their best and aid preventing injury or heat related illness. This means drinking water or a sports drink prior to, during and after practices or games. If you have questions about hydration, we can provide you with a handout that has helpful information on it. This website also provides excellent information concerning hydration for young athletes:

[www.childrens.com/health-wellness/the-impotence-of-hydration-for-young-athletes](http://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/the-impotence-of-hydration-for-young-athletes)

**Safety** - Your child's safety is of paramount concern to us and one of our primary goals is to provide a safe environment free from maltreatment or neglect of any child by an adult affiliated with our program. If you see or suspect child abuse or neglect, you have a responsibility to report it.

DoD Child Abuse and Safety Violation Hotline is: 1-877-790-1197





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**NOTE:** A copy of our Policies and Procedures are available upon request in the Youth Sports office located in the Cherry Tree House (Bldg. 4415)