

YMCA YOUTH SPORTS COACHES HANDBOOK AND ONBOARDING

Information Sources

Upcoming program information, registration, and center contact information

www.indymca.org

Program details, program locations, teams, coach and team contact information, practice schedules, game schedules, and more

www.yqametime.com

WELCOME TO THE YMCA AND THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING TO DEVELOP YOUNG ATHLETES WITH THE YMCA

YMCA MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind & body for all.

OUR VISION

Be, and be recognized as, the best at engaging and developing young athletes in our community.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

YMCA Youth Sports Programs develop a strong foundation of **physical, emotional, and social** skills in young athletes as they begin their athletic journey. Our programs emphasize participation, fun, sportsmanship, all while introducing healthy competition. With a family approach participants, parents, and coaches are all a part of the experience in YMCA Youth Sports.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) Develop the person and the athlete – empower athletes to develop the skills needed to succeed and improve the lives of others
 - a. Try new things – Self confidence
 - b. Effort not Outcome – Discipline and Motivation
 - c. Inclusive – Sportsmanship and Cooperation
- 2) Connect young athletes to their dreams – develop strong partnerships across disciplines to create systems that intentionally connect athletes to their next step.
 - a. Amplify athletes voice – no matter how young, athletes always define their goals
 - b. Align in structure, language, and skill development with community partners
 - c. Learn to compete
- 3) Strengthen support systems – develop the family to provide for long term enjoyment and opportunity
 - a. Promote meaningful volunteer opportunities
 - b. Coach the whole family, athletes, parents, and caregivers
 - c. Intentional family engagement – cheerleaders

YMCA Sports: 7 Pillars

1. Everyone plays. We do not use tryouts to select the best players, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Sports. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season, everyone receives equal practice time and plays at least half of every game.

2. Safety first. Although injuries are a part of sports, at the Y we do all we can to take care of your athlete. All of our sports staff are trained in First Aid and CPR to ensure your child is in good hands. Although the sports staff do pregame facility checks, we ask that you take the time to check that the equipment and facilities are safe. We also ask you to constantly supervise your young players so that you can stop any unsafe activities.

3. Fair play. Fair play is about more than playing by the rules. It's about you and your players showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players to do the same.

4. Positive competition. We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. Learning to compete is important for children and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. The "right perspective" means adults make decisions that put the best interests of the children above winning the contest. These are the lessons we want to teach through YMCA Youth Sports.

5. Family involvement. YMCA Youth Sports encourages parents to be involved appropriately along with their child participating in our sport programs. In addition to parents and caregivers being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials, and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child's participation.

6. Sport for all. YMCA Youth Sports is an inclusive sport program. Children who differ in various characteristics are to be included rather than excluded from participation. We offer sport programs for children who differ in physical abilities by matching them with children of similar abilities and modifying their sport. We offer programs to all children regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. We ask our adult leaders to support and appreciate the diversity of children in our community and to encourage the children and their parents to do the same. We do not forfeit games; instead, we share players and proceed with planned games.

7. Sport for fun. Sports are naturally fun for most children. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, playing with their friends, and competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children's sport, they over-organize and dominate the activity to the point of spoiling children's enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sport, we are in danger of our children taking themselves out of sport. Remember, that these sports are for the kids; make sure the kids are having fun.

Learning to Compete

Learning to compete is an important component of developing an athlete. At the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis competition is:

Entry level and age-appropriate events that are aligned with sanctioning guidelines and designed to improve an athlete's confidence.

Our focus is on setting the foundation for great athletes and developing great teammates by:

- Developing a young athletes social, emotional, and physical skills prioritized alongside the outcome of the event.
- Promoting rules that are age appropriate, but build toward sanctioning guidelines.
- Supporting all athletes with the opportunity to play during competition.
- Ensuring all athletes will retain opportunity to play during competition, regardless of ability, as long as effort and attitude are sustained.

PRACTICE/GAME SCHEDULE

Activity Timing

Game of Catch as players arrive

Recruit Parent/Volunteer Help as players arrive

Team Huddle @ Start Time: 2-3 minutes

Sports Pledge

SPORTS PLEDGE: Win or lose, I promise to God to do the best I can, to be a team player and to respect my teammates, my opponents and officials, and to improve myself in spirit, mind, and body.

PRACTICE (30 MINUTES)

For warm up and practice ideas visit the coach's page on the [YMCA of Greater Indianapolis Website](#)

Warm Up – 3-5 minutes

Aerobic activity, can be a quick jog or play a game

Develop Flexibility – 5-10 minutes

Flexibility involves the joints & muscles. It is the ability of the muscles around a joint to allow the joint its full range of motion. Being flexible makes movement easier.

Things to Remember:

- ☐ Don't bounce.
- ☐ Keep it comfortable. Never stretch until you have pain.
- ☐ Count to at least 20...slowly. Better yet, count to 30.

- If you need to practice your math skills, count down from 30 to 0. (Warning to teachers, if you try this in class, there will be no way to stop your children from yelling, "Blast off!" after counting down.)
- Stretch a bit before you practice. Stretch a lot after.

Run Practice (30–45 minutes)

Things to Remember:

- Introduce the foundational skill you are focused on that day
 - Address body positioning and technique, have athletes practice positioning
 - Run drills, around the foundational skill, with all athletes participating. Watch for correct positioning and technique
 - Add movement to the drills, use play as a component of adding movement through scrimmage or portions of the game
 - Keep all kids playing and active as much as possible during practice – end with team stretching and discussion that reinforces the values and skills worked on
- www.indymca.org

Games

Things to Remember:

- Communicate expectations (what to wear, where to go, how early to be there) to all families the week before the game.
- Follow the same warm up and flexibility schedule as practices.
- Play with heart
- Be great sports
- Respect the officials
- Win or lose congratulate the other team at the end of the game
- Hold "team meeting" after the game, invite families to participate. Review the positives, congratulate players on use of core values, talk about the skills you will work on over the next week, and leave with energy. Note: Do not focus on score, winning or losing, follow up should be focused on core values used, skills that were executed well, and factors that you will work as a team to improve for the next game.

Coaches Expectation

View How to Coach Kids

YMCA sports staff and coaches will promote *sportsmanship, mental toughness, work ethic, humility, a team player, respect, and encouragement*. At all practices and games YMCA youth sports coaches will demonstrate the YMCA Core Values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in the following ways:

Caring

- Spend time after practice helping a player learn a skill.
- Comfort a player who is dejected after a loss.
- Help a player who is stressed manage that stress.

Honesty

- Tell a player that they're not executing a skill correctly and you'll help her.
- Tell a player when you don't know a rule (but you'll find out what it is).
- Tell a player when you make a mistake, such as misinterpreting who instigated minor misbehavior during practice.

Respect

- Listen to players attentively when they are talking.
- Bring the same energy and enthusiasm for teaching skills to all your players, no matter how skilled they are.
- Don't criticize players in front of their teammates.

Responsibility

- Show up on time and prepared for all practices and contests.
- Provide appropriate first aid for injured players.
- Closely supervise all practice activities.

YMCA Coaches will use teachable moments to develop core values, life skills, in young athletes, examples include:

- If one player yells at another for a mistake in play, talk to that player about respect.
- If a player does something dangerous during a game, have a brief discussion with that player about responsibility and caring for others.
- If a player helps another child who is hurt, praise the player for being caring.
- If a player raises her hand to admit she was tagged when called safe congratulate her for being honest.

Using Values Activities

- Attempt to change players' attitudes as well as their actions
- Focus on long-term results

Healthy Kids = Strong Athletes

NUTRITION

Coaches' Role: Ask your team to give examples of foods they can eat that can help them do better in practice and games, even school!

Lead by example, talk about food choices that can help a young athlete develop into a strong athlete.

Healthy Kids = Strong Athletes

HYDRATION

Coaches' Role: Explain to your team the importance of hydration. Talk about water as the primary beverage during practice and games. Ask athletes to bring water bottles to every practice and game. Take breaks and ask athletes to get a drink.

Be aware of the weather, follow YMCA weather protocols, and when necessary, change practices to accommodate additional hydration breaks.

[YMCA Medical Advisory Guidelines: Heat Index](#)

Healthy Kids = Strong Athletes

SLEEP

Coaches' Role: Remind athletes the importance of sleep to help them focus and participate at their highest potential.

Remind athletes about good sleep habits: going to bed at the same time, not watching tv or looking at their phone before bed, eating a good dinner and avoiding foods that keep them up (like soda, sugary food like cake and cookies) before bed.

Healthy Kids = Strong Athletes

SUCCEED

Coaches' Role: Remind athletes that what happens on the field is only part of being a good athlete. Strong athletes get good grades, help their parents, and help others succeed.

Help kids learn how to be great humans by giving them opportunities to share how they were kind, where they helped others, how they helped at home, successes in school, or times they got all their homework done

Healthy Kids = Strong Athletes

VIEW CDC HEADS UP CONCUSSION TRAINING

STAY HEALTHY

Coaches' Role: Remind athletes that in order to play their best they need to stay healthy and help keep their teammates healthy.

Encourage kids who have an injury to let their coach and parent know. Kids reporting pain to their parent or coach should be removed from play and given instruction to talk to their parents if they have not already and parents should be advised to seek advice from the child's physician. An accident report should be completed if the injury happens at practice or is reported to have happened at the YMCA.

All coaches should be trained in the CDC Heads Up concussion training. Any child who hits their head during practice, reports hitting their head, or is showing symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play, parents should be called, child must have physician clearance to return to play. If injury happens at practice, or is reported to have happened at the YMCA, an accident report should be completed.

YMCA coaches should remind parents to:

Review CDC Heads Up Concussion materials

Keep their child home to rest if the child is reporting feeling ill

Seeking medical advice if the child reports pain while playing or at rest

Enhanced protocols are in place as our community continues to address COVID. Coaches should be aware of [enhanced COVID procedures](#) and follow them to the current community COVID spread.

HOW THIS WORKS – A COUPLE THINGS TO KNOW

All the details and who/how to contact the Y?

Visit [Y Game Time](#) for copies of packets, schedules, forms, or cancellations related to your current sport.

Volunteer Coaches' Training:

Coaches will be assigned to their team through YMCA Game Time and must review and sign all forms, as well as complete a background check in Presidium.

Anyone interested in volunteering as a youth sports coach is required to participate in the **YMCA Coaches Training sessions prior to the start of each season.** The coaches' trainings are not just another "meeting," but much more than that, offering leadership for volunteer coaches, learning the YMCA way of youth sports, skill development, and program development. It is important that coaches are aware of YMCA Sports principles, making certain that positive competition in youth sports is a positive experience for kids, parents, coaches, referees, and spectators. Most importantly, parents and their children are depending on you.

Coaches' Credentials

If you are a volunteer coach and are unable to attend the scheduled coaches' meeting and training, you are required to have all certifications and trainings from current in Presidium. This includes: [Volunteer Agreement](#), [Volunteer Code of Conduct](#), [Code of Conduct for Abuse Prevention and Online/Social Media](#), [Liability Waiver](#), and [Volunteer Handbook](#). As a coach, you are subject to a background check. If a background check is not completed, then you will, as a coach, not be allowed to coach until it is completed.

Food and Drinks

Thank you for helping keep our facilities clean. Please do not bring food or drink (besides water) in the gymnasiums during practices or games.

Safety

All sporting activities will be monitored by YMCA staff who are trained in CPR and First Aid. First Aid kits are available at all sites. Please make sure your trainings are current and that you modify your practices to keeping the safety of the kids as the primary priority

Weather Information/Cancellations

For severe weather conditions, an email and text message from the league administrator will go out through Y Game Time regarding any cancellations of practice and games. Cancelled practices will

not be made up. Cancelled games will only be made up *if* the schedule allows. Coaches and parents will be notified within one-week of a cancellation on the make-up status.

How to Succeed – Youth Sports Responsibilities and Expectations:

As a COACH, please...

1. View trainings (CDC Concussion and How to Coach Kids) included in this handbook and onboarding toolkit.
2. View all documents including the YMCA Medical Advisory Guidelines and Codes of Conduct included in this handbook and onboarding toolkit.
3. Log into Presidium to view and acknowledge all volunteer resources including codes of conduct.
4. Become familiar with the Game Time Software, and use it to manage your team throughout the season.
5. During season answer all Y Game Time messages within 24 business hours.
6. Encourage families to visit Y Game Time regularly and sign up for text alerts during season.
7. Be welcoming! Contact players prior to your first practice to welcome them and confirm practice times/dates/location.
8. Be accessible and approachable to players and parents before and after practices and games. Arrive early to help build relationships.
9. Be informative and distribute all printed materials and communicate any changes in the schedule or special announcements, such as Picture Day and Trophy Day information.
10. Take attendance and call players who have missed two practices or games in a row.
11. Promote good sportsmanship and respect for others regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
12. Assure safe and fair play at all times.
13. Be aware of the rules of play for your age group and sport, located on Y Game Time.
14. Plan progressive practice sessions and game plans according to the rules of play
15. Encourage and be positive in correcting and instructing.
16. Be inclusive of all learning styles by using multiple instruction methods and tools including Y Virtual for at home practice
17. Know emergency procedures.
18. Be drug, tobacco and alcohol free during all team events.
19. Understand that you are a representative of the YMCA during all YMCA activities.
20. Lead by example among program parents to support the duties and responsibilities of the referees and league leadership.
21. Be aware of the Youth Sports Philosophy, parent, and athlete expectations and support them
22. Have fun!

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT “We understand that challenges will occur and want to do our best to protect staff, parents/caregivers, and players. As we are in the process of streamlining our guidelines, please utilize the Youth Development [behavior management philosophy and guidelines](#).

YMCA Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in Youth Sports

The YMCA of Greater Indianapolis, beginning with our CEO and Board of Directors, is committed to our diversity and inclusion initiative. This initiative was cultivated in response to the changing

demographics and needs of communities across our region and allows us an association to become more culturally competent and inclusive in our Greater Indianapolis YMCA service areas and communities.

Our objective is to ensure that all of our key constituents, staff, volunteers, members, donors, vendors, community leaders, feel valued and welcomed and that they contribute to our institutional commitment to strengthening communities through supporting healthy lifestyles, youth development, and social responsibility.

The staff and volunteers of the Youth Sports Programs of the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis will be committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all of our members and program participants by abiding by the [Principles of a Welcoming Community](#) as adopted by the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis Board of Directors in October 2018.

We will value the diversity of all people within our association and the communities we serve by supporting the cultural competence of staff, members and volunteers. We will commit to developing our own competency to stay relevant to the changing needs and interests of our diverse communities.

As coaches and leaders within the association, we will work to ensure that every individual's identity – race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance or other dimensions – has an equitable opportunity to participate in youth sports programs and we will be committed to identifying and removing barriers to their full inclusion.

Equity is defined by Y-USA as: A continual process of ensuring that every individual has the access and opportunity they need to thrive, and are not at a disadvantage from achieving their potential because of their background, identity, or social position.

For further opportunities for development, please register for the following FREE trainings offered by Y-USA:

- Dimensions of Diversity
- Advancing Equity: Systems of Inequity
- Advancing Equity: The Y's Approach

Thank you for joining our team and your commitment to ensuring our YMCA youth sports programming meets our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion through our youth sports programming.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURES

I _____ have completed the following trainings.

[How to Coach Kids](#)

[CDC Heads Up Concussion](#)

Signature _____

I _____ have read and agreed to the statements in the following.

- [Volunteer Agreement](#)
- [Volunteer Code of Conduct](#)
- [Code of Conduct Abuse Prevention and online/social media](#)
- [Liability Waiver](#)
- [Volunteer Handbook.](#)

I will follow up with the sports director at my assigned center to complete necessary center-based training.

Signature _____