

King William County Parks and Recreation

Youth Sports Policies and Procedures Handbook

Spring Soccer 2023

Mission Statement

The mission of King William County Parks and Recreation regarding its youth sports programs is to promote participation by all King William County residents in team and individual sports. Programs are designed to meet participant needs for physical activity, social interaction, skill development, and to have fun.

Objectives

The objectives of King William County Parks and Recreation regarding its youth sports programs are as follows:

- To offer these programs to fulfill the recreation needs and wants as a service to the community.
- To offer an equal amount of participation opportunities regardless of sex, race, national origin, creed, religion, disability or socio-economic status, or other legally protected class.
- To make these programs safe and enjoyable in an atmosphere that promotes learning and participation first and competition second.
- To expect that good sportsmanship and fair play are standard behaviors.
- To ensure that the child's participation is a worthwhile and positive life experience.

Philosophy of Youth Sports

King William County Parks and Recreation strongly believes in the benefits of participation in organized sports. Participation in sports has proven to build self-esteem, promote teamwork, develop the body as well as the mind and is an integral part of the maturation process. Therefore, the goal of King William Parks and Recreation is to provide the program and venue for young people of all backgrounds to participate and enjoy a variety of recreational programs while maintaining a safe, wholesome environment.

Fair Play Concepts

Respect for the Other Team

You need the other team. Without the other team you can't play. So you need to show respect for other players by treating them as needed partners, not as enemies.

Respect Yourself

Set goals for yourself, practice on your own time, and perform as well as you can in games. Fair play means that you believe in yourself and see yourself as an important part of the team.

Cooperation with Officials

The rules of the game help you play the game better. Fair play means that you go along with the rules and cooperate with the referees, who are there for one main purpose: player safety.

Getting Involved

A good player wants to get into the game but also wants others to play. Fair play means you defend the right to play both for yourself and others.

Building the Team

To be a good team member, you need to get to know all of your teammates and the coach and to let them get to know you. We are all different in ability and in skills. Fair play is listening to each other, learning from each other, sharing ideas and feelings, and helping each other increase strengths and reach goals.

Sticking Up for What You Believe

If you believe in fair play and stick up for it, you will be respected. It means taking a stand in favor of the things listed above. It means letting others know that you value your teammates, the other team, yourself, and the rules of the game. We all like to win but it should not be at the cost of giving up our beliefs.

Creating a Protective Shield

This youth sports program exists to help children in the development of positive life skills and self-concepts. Our goal is to provide safe, enjoyable recreation opportunities for participants. We prohibit all forms of abuse or maltreatment of children in youth sports. We each have a responsibility to do what we can to prevent any and all forms of child abuse. We will take reasonable action to protect participants from any form of abuse or maltreatment and to deal with any transgression in a timely and appropriate manner. King William County Parks and Recreation uses all reasonable efforts to screen employees and volunteers in order to avoid instances where young athletes may be endangered, neglected, or abused. Although no organization can make every participant 100% safe, through screening, training, supervision, and steps to create a healthy environment for children to thrive in youth sports, we are taking critical steps toward protecting all of our participants. It is our mission to teach the basic skills which young people need to play sports in a safe and nurturing environment, where all children get an equal chance to play regardless of skill level. Every child in our leagues has the right to have fun while participating in our program. We will not tolerate any abusive behaviors that may jeopardize a child's well-being.

General Policies

Participation

- King William County Parks and Recreation youth sports programs are participatory in nature and do not require participants to try-out to participate.
- Each child should receive playing time as described in our rules.

Insurance

- It is recommended that all participants be covered under a personal medical/accident insurance policy.

Payments And Refunds

- Payments are due for all programs before the first scheduled practice.

- If the program is cancelled, the participant is entitled to a full refund.
- In order to receive a refund, a request must be made by email prior to the day of the individuals first scheduled practice. Refunds will not be given after the first scheduled practice day. If the individuals first practice happens to be postponed, then the request must be submitted prior to the originally scheduled practice date.

Medical Emergencies

- For any injury or accident that requires something other than a cleaning and covering with a bandage, coaches and parents are required to seek professional medical assistance.
- If medical transportation is required, any charges incurred will be the responsibility of the parents and/or the parents insurance policy.
- It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to notify King William Parks and Recreation if your child has a pre-existing medical condition (i.e. allergies, medications, physical impairments, etc.) in the space provided on the registration form and the coach will be informed of the condition. This is essential in order to determine the severity of an accident and to assist the medical personnel who respond to the scene.

Safety

- A safe playing environment is essential to provide a high-quality recreational sports program.
- Coaches must inspect the playing area prior to the beginning of any game or practice to look for dangerous materials or hazards.
- Coaches should report any and all findings or accidents to the on-site Parks and Recreation staff member and the Parks and Recreation Department, regardless of the nature of the incident.
- Parents/Guardians who feel the field conditions or playing conditions are an endangerment to their child(ren) should remove them from the practice, game, or activity.

Weather

- The safety of participants, officials, and spectators is the primary concern in cases of inclement weather.
- Once a game has started, the game officials will have the responsibility to remove the players from the field if weather conditions become unsafe.
- If ordered to do so, please find a safe shelter in an automobile or in a building until instructed to return to the playing field or told that the game has been cancelled.

Game Cancellations and Rescheduling

- If a game is cancelled due to weather or other unforeseeable circumstances, all efforts will be made to reschedule that game; however, due to time restraints and/or field usage conflicts, some games may not be rescheduled.
- It will be the decision of King William County Parks and Recreation when, and if, the games are rescheduled.

Age Groups

All youth team athletic programs are based on age.

Selection of Teams

At the end of each season, every coach will be asked to fill out a Player Rating Form, indicating their opinion of where each child currently falls on a given numerical skill chart. Again, this is the opinion of the coach and therefore is subjective and does not take into account their potential but rather where they currently fall based on the league as a whole. This essentially replaces the preseason skill test with a season long skill test to judge a player more accurately in where they currently are. The overall purpose of the Player Rating Form is to increase the likelihood of having teams be created equally so every team has the potential chance to win.

Coaches Section

As used throughout this Handbook, "Coach" means all coaches, instructors, and their assistants.

Background Checks: All coaches will be required to undergo a criminal background investigation. This process is to further ensure the safety and well-being of all participants. All coaches will be subjected to two (2) background checks (Criminal History and Virginia State Police Sex Offender Registry). The cost of the background check will be paid by King William Parks and Recreation. All coaches, instructors and assistants are required to consent to this background check and provide the necessary documentation and information.

Coaches Code of Conduct

I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of personal desire to win.

Expected Behavior:

- Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with players, league officials, game officials, parents, and spectators.
- Including all players in team activities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability, or any other legally protected class.
- Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and adhering to the spirit of those rules.
- Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
- Allowing reasonable absences from practice.

I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognizing the difference of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concerns for their individual needs and well-being.
- Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved in sports.
- Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills, and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
- Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social, and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and interacting with youth.

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

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Protecting players from sexual molestation, assault and physical or emotional abuse.
- Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice of playing conditions.
- Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.

I promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognizing and administering proper first aid to an injured player.
- Demonstrating concern for an injured player, notifying parents, and cooperating with medical authorities, if needed.
- Protecting the players well-being by removing them from the activity when injured and not returning them to the activity if they are compromised by injury.

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

Expected Behavior:

- Establishing practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed to improving all players skills and individual abilities.
- Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
- Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the player.

I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Adopting the position, teaching, and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others, as we would like to be treated.
- Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game.
- Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.

- Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach, and expect sportsmanship and fair play.

I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all King William Parks and Recreation youth sports events.

Expected Behavior:

- Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players.
- Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug, or tobacco products to any of your players.
- Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Becoming knowledgeable, understanding applicable game rules, league rules, regulations, and policies.
- Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players.

I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.

Expected Behavior:

- Teaching techniques that reduce the risk of injury to both the coaches' own players and their opponents.
- Discouraging illegal contact of intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable warnings to players involved in such activity.

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for children and not adults.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a positive, helpful, and supportive attitude.
- Exercising your authority/influence to control the behavior of the fans and spectators.
- Exhibits gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
- Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to the participation of adults and youth.
- Fulfilling the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a "Children First" philosophy.
- Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn, and play hard within the rules.
- Placing the emphasis on fun and participation.

Coaches Code of Ethics

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.

- I will treat each player as an individual remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players. I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children not adults.

Participants Section

Participation in youth sports program can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the King William Parks and Recreation to provide the highest quality of athletic programs to ensure that a child's experience with youth sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen. Therefore, King William Parks and Recreation has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

- Players will listen to their coach and be respectful of others.
- Players will take care of the facilities, equipment, and jerseys.
- Players are encouraged to eat the right foods and drink plenty of water before and after practices and games.
- Players will avoid all type of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
- Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.
- Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
- Players will refrain from horseplay and all other dangerous activities.
- Players will participate for the love of the game/competition and not to win at all cost.

Player's Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Player's Code of Ethics Pledge:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
- I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- I will treat my coaches, other players, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun.

- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all sports events.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it is important to me.
- I will do my very best at school.
- I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Parents Section

In order for a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, league, administrators, and especially parents. It is the philosophy of King William Parks and Recreation that parents shall not physically threaten or endanger another individual (either child, spectator, or coach), or to spoil the experience of the participation in youth sports for the children. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in King William Parks and Recreation programs:

Parents have a responsibility to their children: To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. 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 it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you wish to address an issue with a coach, do so in a respectful manner. Make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of the children. Parents are expected to be respectful of the coaches and staff by being punctual for game and practice start and end times. It is highly recommended that parents stay and support their children and assist the coach if requested.

Parents have a responsibility for safety and security of the league: In order to maintain the safety and security of all league participants, it is essential for parents to report abusive behavior or dangerous situations that need to be addressed to the league administrator. This is the only way these programs can achieve their intended goals.

Parents have a responsibility to other parents: Personal gain should not be derived from your child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents are never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. 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 the fullest. Because a lifetime of memories is being created before your very eyes.

Parents Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents Code of Ethics Pledge:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child and offer to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for the youth – NOT ADULTS.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I will require that my child's coach upholds the Coaches Code of Ethics.

Suspension

If a player, coach, or parent violates one or more of the above responsibilities and expectations for any reason, you will receive a phone call and/or email informing you of at least a one-week suspension from the next consecutive practice and match. Therefore, you will not be allowed at soccer league facilities during soccer related activities until your suspension has been fulfilled, and then you may return to normal. Suspensions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

If, for any reason, you again violate the above responsibilities and expectations, you will be banned for the remainder of the season.