

Program Philosophy: Athletes First, Winning Second

Every action adults take should be based first in what is best for young athletes, and second, on what may improve the athletes' or team's chances of winning. This does not mean we do not try to win; however winning should take a back seat to what is in the best interests of the young participants. We want to help athletes develop physically, psychologically, and socially.

I. Athlete Participation Guidelines

1. Athletes must be age or grade eligible for the sport they wish to participate in. This is determined by the sport participation guidelines. For example, baseball is age eligible; soccer and basketball are grade eligible.
2. One parent/guardian of an athlete must live in Montpelier to be eligible for certain sports, i.e. Soccer, Basketball, and Baseball.
3. Boys and girls have separate Soccer and Basketball programs for 3rd through 6th grade. These programs are not co-ed. However, the baseball programs co-ed, as we do not offer separate programs for boys and girls.
4. All athletes must be registered through the Recreation Department at the time they begin the sport. Two weeks after the sport start date the Recreation Department will no longer accept player registrations.
5. If parents/guardians cannot afford the registration fee, they need to contact the Recreation Department for a fee waiver or we can offer a payment plan. They still need to be registered.
6. Children do not need a medical exam prior to playing a sport, however if a child comes off the field or court injured (i.e. broken arm, finger, concussion or other injury), a doctor's note needs to be given to the coach and the Recreation Department needs to be notified.
7. Children with various disabilities are eligible to participate in the sports offered. They are subject to the same evaluation as other children when being placed on a team.

II. Coach Eligibility

1. The minimum age to be eligible to be a coach in charge of any practice or game is 18 years of age and he/she must have graduated from high school.
2. New coaches to our program are encouraged to participate in our ASEP education course we offer. All youth coaches are encouraged to participate in this course once a year. By participating in this course, the coach will receive a scholarship for one child. They can give their scholarship to another child enrolled in the program if they choose. All coaches are encouraged to participate in all clinics set up by the Montpelier Recreation Department.
3. Experience playing the sport is helpful, but not necessary.
4. All coaches are required to fill out a coach's application form and the necessary background check paperwork.

III. Referee/Official Eligibility

1. Middle school students and up may participate as officials under the supervision of an adult. (i.e. coach, referee) An adult should officiate with a student whenever possible.
2. Referees/officials must have participated in or have been involved in the sport they officiate or they have taken a course for that sport.
3. Officials do not need to be certified, but they need to know the rules to the sport.

IV. Player Selection

1. Individuals will be assigned to teams through a draft process. Players returning from a previous year may be kept on the same team, unless we change the number of teams or coaches do not return back. When this happens, a redraft of the league will be necessary to balance the league.
2. Skill and ability will be factors used to balance teams. We also need to balance teams by age.
3. As a practice, we do not cut athletes from our sports programs. We find the child a place on a team that is age or grade eligible.
4. Participants may request reassignment to a different team at the beginning of the sport prior to draft selection. This request may be denied if another player of equal ability cannot be traded to replace that player, or if it causes an imbalance in the league.
5. After completion of player selection, coaches are required to contact the Montpelier Recreation Department and report their team roster.

V. Equipment Policies

1. Montpelier Recreation Department will supply all team equipment. Individual equipment based on the sport should be provided for by parents or guardian (i.e. Gloves, cleats & shin guards).
2. All fields and facilities are kept to all safety standards. Coaches are responsible to inspect all equipment periodically over the course of the season. The Recreation Dept. is responsible for inspecting the equipment prior to the start of the season. Coaches and parents should ask that proper safety gear be worn at all times of play.
3. Equipment, provided by the Recreation Department, is loaned to coaches for the season and is expected to be returned at the end. All equipment should be returned including worn out items. After proper inventory has been taken to ensure replacements will be obtained they will be discarded.

VI. Facility Policies

1. Facility usage should be scheduled ahead of time to ensure space availability for organized practices or games for coaches, athletes and their parents. Everyone should be respectful to each other and keep parking lots, bleachers, locker rooms, rest rooms, and fields/courts clean.
2. Coaches are responsible for checking for any risks or hazards before using a field or indoor facility to insure the safety of the participants. If coaches cannot remove the risk or hazard they must contact the Recreation Department so the risk or hazard can be amended.
3. If field or indoor conditions are not safe due to the weather or other potential hazards, the coach will cancel the practice or contest to avoid putting athletes at risk.
4. Coaches will contact opposing coaches a couple days prior to a contest to discuss bad weather plans.

VII. Practice Policies

1. Practices for all teams shall have a set amount of time before scrimmages and competitive play begins. Practices will start around the same time frame to ensure equal practice opportunity.
2. Coaches will decide days and time of practice at the coaches meeting before the start of the season.
3. Practice time is scheduled a minimum of once a week with a scheduled contest usually on a Saturday for 3rd through 6th graders.
4. The coaching staff must be present at practices and games. However, if they need to cancel practice due to weather or any other reason, coaches will make every attempt to contact players as soon as they know they need to cancel or have another parent greet parents they were unable to contact at the field to let them know of the cancellation.

VIII. Contest Policies

1. Athletes usually only participate in one contest a day. Tournaments or round robin are the only exception. Maximum length of contest will be addressed at the coaches meeting and be passed on to the specific sport and/or age group.
2. No contest will take place in stormy weather or after dark on a field outside without lights.
3. In any case of a team's inability to field a full team, the opposing team may allow some of their athletes to play for the other team so a game may take place.
4. Score is not as important as building athlete's confidence and skills so refrain from running up the score.
5. Every player should get time to practice their skills for the well being of the athletes through a balance of playing time in scrimmages or games, equal play time opportunities for all players.

IX. Participant Behavior Policies

1. Cheating, verbal, and physical violence, drug and alcohol use are unacceptable behaviors and will not be tolerated.
2. Harassment, smoking, swearing, and using derogatory language and gestures are also considered unacceptable behavior.
3. Unacceptable behavior during practice is subject to punishment of coaches choice, during games coaches and officials have the authority to remove players and fans if need be.
4. Coaches may give a verbal warning to the player for a first offence; at the second offence, have them sit out and tell the parents. If this inappropriate behavior continues, the player may be asked to not come back. In cases sever enough banning may be an appropriate course of action.
5. Coaches and parents should be instilling the importance of good sportsmanship to their players.

X. Adult Participant Behavior Polices

1. Coaches, officials, other volunteers, and parents need to be held accountable to certain standards of behaviors just as young athletes are.
2. Cheating, verbal and/or physical violence, drug and alcohol use are unacceptable behaviors and shall not be tolerated.
3. Harassment, smoking, swearing, and using derogatory language and gestures are behaviors also considered unacceptable.
4. Failure to exhibit acceptable behavior by any adult, be it a Coach, Official, or Parent, may result in a verbal warning by an official or asked to leave the event could result in being banned from attending future events depending on the severity of the behavior. Permanent banning from future contests is a judgement that will be made by the Recreation Department after an investigation of the incident has taken place. The immediate contest does not continue until the situation is resolved by one of the above actions.
5. Parental concerns and complaints about coaches and officials shall be brought to the attention of the Director of Recreation and should be in a written documentation by the person who is making the complaint.

XI. Awards and Recognition Polices

1. All athletes will receive a certificate for participating.
2. Postseason parties are at the coaches' discretion.

XII. Health and Safety Policies

1. All athletes must wear the safety equipment necessary for the sport they are participating in.
2. No jewelry of any kind may be worn for the safety of all athletes.
3. Any athletes injured during a contest that forces them to see a Doctor should have a doctor's note before returning to playing. (Especially any head injury.)

Two similar team selection guidelines submitted by current soccer and basketball coaches

Selection Guideline One:

1. The team selectors should balance the teams from a talent/ skill perspective. This is Principle #1.
2. The team selectors should balance the teams by grade as much as possible
3. The selection process should not be a competition to see who can select the best team. Some coaches will know the kids a lot better than other coaches. These coaches should help the other coaches as much as possible to meet the first principle.
4. Clinics, not formal evaluations, should be helpful at the beginning of each season, which enables all the coaches to see most of the kids and also allows the kids to work on playing skills. It may also help some inexperienced coaches learn some coaching techniques.
5. Kid's and parent's requests should be taken into consideration. The kids, and therefore the parents, are much happier when you take their requests into consideration. But their requests should not be promised because it must fit in so the first principle is met.
6. For basketball, generally, teams should stay together from year to year unless the first principle requires a change. If the first principle makes a change necessary, then more than one or two players should be moved. If a player requests a change then this should be considered and approved as long as the first principle is not impacted.
7. If coaches or team selectors disagree about the fairness of teams, or other specifics, then the Recreation Department should be asked to assist determining a compromise or settlement. The coaches or team selectors will accept and respect the Recreation Department's decision.

Selection Guideline Two:

1. Coaches agree on a list of top ranked skilled players.
2. Coaches identify players by grade.
3. Coaches take turns picking kids (one at a time) from the group of top ranked skill players, and continue picking until all kids are picked. During this process, coaches can/should take into account friendships, grade balance and boy/girl ratio.
4. At the end the coaches compare teams for balance. For example, number of 3rd graders vs. number of 4th graders on each team. At this point any last minute adjustments can be made.

Once team selection is complete coaches must report their team roster to the Montpelier Recreation Department. They also are responsible for contacting player's parents informing them of team placement.

Volunteer Job Description

Position Title: Youth Sports Program Coach

Purpose of Job: To provide a positive, athletic experience to a group of young sport participants where sportsmanship and fair play are the top priority.

Program Description: Youth sports coaches emphasize skill development, fair play, sportsmanship and fun. Coaches will strive to ensure each participant is provided the opportunity to play in each game. Coaches will also ensure they correct type of equipment is used and is adapted to meet the needs of each group.

Program Administrators: Arne McMullen, Director of Recreation
Jenny Bartlett, Program Coordinator

Coach Qualifications:

1. Must pass background checks
2. ASEP volunteer coach certification (preferred)
3. Desire to work with children
4. Enthusiastic
5. Commitment to individual participation
6. Patient
7. Organized
8. Mature
9. Dependable

Responsibilities:

1. Coach the sport to young players while emphasizing skill development, fair play, sportsmanship and fun
2. Preside at practices and games
3. Provide a safe environment for practices and contests
4. Teaching skills in developmentally appropriate progressions
5. Match and equating players fairly for practices and contests
6. Be responsible for making sure equipment is returned to proper areas and locked up
7. Work to increase team unity
8. Find officials for scrimmages and home contests as needed
9. Enforcing the Montpelier Recreation Department policies and rules
10. Responsibility for children must be turned over to parent or guardian prior to the coach leaving the field or facility.
11. Never leave players unattended.
12. Providing proper first aid, for which you are certified, when injuries occur.
13. Keeping records of injuries and other losses.
14. Warning players of inherent risks in the activities.
15. Contacting opposing teams to confirm game details.

Coaching Contract

I understand that my responsibilities as a youth coach are of great importance and that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the youth athletes I coach. Therefore, I promise to uphold the following rights of youth athletes to the best of my ability.

- I. Right to participate in sports
- II. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child; maturity and ability
- III. Right to have qualified adult leadership
- IV. Right to play as a child and not as an adult
- V. Right of children to share in leadership and decision-making of their sport participation
- VI. Right to participate in safe and health environments
- VII. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports
- VIII. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success
- IX. Right to be treated with dignity
- X. Right to have fun in sports
- XI. Right to equal playing time
- XII. Right to feel like a player who is a valued team member

I also promise to conduct myself in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Coaches as given next:

1. I will treat each athlete, opposing coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect and dignity.
2. I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills, teaching, and evaluating techniques, and strategies of the sport.
3. I will become thoroughly familiar with the rules of the sport.
4. I will become familiar with the objectives of the Montpelier Recreation Department Youth Sports programs. I will strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them to my athletes and their parents.
5. I will uphold the authorities of officials who are assigned to the contest in which I coach and I will assist them in every way to conduct a fair and impartial competitive contest.
6. I will learn the strengths weaknesses of my athletes so that I might place them in situations where they have a maximum opportunity to achieve success.
7. I will conduct my practice and contest so that all athletes have an opportunity to improve their skill level through active participation.
8. I will communicate to my athletes and their parents the rights and responsibilities of individuals on our team.
9. I will cooperate with the administrator of the Montpelier Recreation Department in the enforcement of rules, regulations, and I will report any irregularities that violate sound competitive practices.
10. I will protect the health and safety of my athletes by insisting that all of the activities under my control are conducted for their physical and psychological welfare, rather than for the vicarious interest of adults.

With my signature, which I voluntarily affix to this contract, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and will do my best to fulfill the promises made herein.

Sport

Signature of coach

Date

Program Administrator

Coaching Application

Name _____ Cell Phone _____

Address _____ Home Phone _____

_____ Email _____

Gender Male Female

Are you 18 years or older? Yes No

1. Circle the highest year you completed in school:

Elementary 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

High School 9, 10, 11, 12

College: _____(years)

2. Work history (last 10 years)

Company

Position

Dates

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3. What is the sport for which you are apply to coach? _____

4. Why do you want to coach to coach this sport? (Be specific) _____

5. Have you played this sport? Yes No Number of years _____

6. What other sports have you played, if any?

Sport

Age Level

Number of years

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

7. Have you coached this sport? Yes No Number of years _____

8. What other sports have you coached, if any?

Sport	Sponsoring Agency	Age Level	Years coached
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

9. Have you had any formal training as a coach? Yes No
If yes, please describe (for example: PE degree, coaching courses, clinics, etc.) _____

10. Describe any informal training that would help you coach (for example: reading books, watching sports) _____

11. Have you ever been convicted of a felony or crime? If so, please explain. _____

12. Do you have any medical conditions that may affect you ability to coach? Yes No

13. Please rate your knowledge of the following topics with regard to this sport by circling the appropriate number **1- very little 2- reasonable amount 3- a great deal**

1 2 3	Skills and strategies	1 2 3	Developing Sportsmanship
1 2 3	Rules of the sport	1 2 3	Communication skills
1 2 3	Organizing practices	1 2 3	Warm-up and physical conditioning techniques
1 2 3	Equipment needs and specifications	1 2 3	Working with parents
1 2 3	Injury prevention and Treatments	1 2 3	Principles for teaching sport skills
1 2 3	Legal Duties	1 2 3	Managing time

14. Please list two references who can attest to your coaching potential.

Name	Address	Telephone
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Youth Soccer

The following rules are provided as a guideline for Montpelier Coaches and Referees.

Player Equipment

All players must wear for games and practice:

1. Soccer cleats or sneakers (no steel baseball cleats)
2. Shin guards
3. Mouth guards (highly recommended by the Montpelier Recreation Department)
4. The goalkeeper may wear a hat for sun protection
5. Casts, knee braces and air splints are allowed if properly padded and approved by a physician and/or parent

All jewelry (rings, watches, earrings, etc.) must be removed for all practices and games.

Game Lengths

3/4 Divisions	25 Minute halves	5 Minute half times
5/6 Divisions	30 Minute halves	5 Minute half times

The time is only stopped for a goal or a lengthy injury. There are no timeouts

Number of player/substitutions

Games are played with 7 players on a side including the goal keepers. The goalkeepers must wear a different color jersey.

Either team may substitute on the following:

1. Between halves
2. On a goal
3. Any time the clock is stopped (i.e injury or goal)

The team in possession may substitute on throw-ins, goal kicks, and corner kicks. If players from the defending team are waiting to sub, those players may also enter the game.

The Goalkeeper

The goalie is the only player on the field that can handle the ball with their hands. Players may not pass the ball back to their own goalkeeper and have the goalie pick up the ball.

The Officials

The job of the referee is to indicate when the ball is out of play or a rule violation has occurred. The referee will blow the whistle for a rule violation and if the ball goes out of play and the players do not realize it. The referee's call is final.

Penalty Kicks/Goal Kicks/Corner Kicks

Penalty kicks will not be balled at either age level in youth soccer. If a foul occurs in the penalty area the team in possession will be awarded a Direct Free Kick if the foul was intentional, or an indirect free kick, if the foul was unintentional.

Goal kicks occur when the ball is kicked over the end line by the opposing team. The ball is kicked back into play by placing the ball anywhere on the goal box. Any player on the team can take the kick. The ball must travel outside the penalty area before a player on either team can touch it.

A corner kick occurs when the defending team kicks the ball out of bounds over their own end line. The ball is put back into play by the offensive team by kicking the ball from the corner arc.

Throw-Ins

A throw-in occurs when the ball goes over the sideline out of bounds. The lines are part of the area they define (they are the bounds). If two players equally kick a ball out of bounds, then a drop ball is used to restart play.

Offside

A player is in an offside position when nearer to their opponent's goal than the ball unless:

1. The player is in his/her own half of the field, or
2. There are 2 players from the other team between the defending player and the goal.

A penalty for offside is only called if the referee judges that the offside player is involved in the play. The penalty for offense is an indirect free kick.

Fouls/Misconduct/Handball

Fouls and misconduct penalties are divided into two main groups. Direct kick fouls, and indirect kick fouls. Direct kick fouls are those of a serious nature. They are tripping, pushing, holding, or handling the ball. Goals may be scored directly from a direct kick foul. If a direct kick foul occurs in the penalty area the ball will be placed at the spot of the foul and then taken, no penalty kicks.

Indirect fouls are those that occur for dangerous play, obstructions, and penalties away from the ball. A goal may not be scored on an indirect kick.

A handball is when the ball is intentionally or deliberately played with the hand.

Coach's resources for game play and practice drills can be found online. There are a few sites that we recommend for your use:

Sport Concussion Institute: www.concussiontreatment.com

www.usyouthsoccer.org/CoachResourceCenter/

www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/coachconnect_lessonplans/

www.freeyouthsoccerdrills.com/

www.top-soccer-drills.com/

www.soccerhelp.com/

www.footy4kids.co.uk/

www.bettersoccercoaching.com/

www.kindergartensoccer.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/coachingtips.pdf

www.soccerhelp.com/

www.footy4kids.co.uk/soccer_coaching_and_the_very_young_child.htm

www.bettersoccercoaching.com/

Concussion information

Background checks

