

Code of Conduct

Philosophy and Parent Code of Conduct Pledge

The goal of the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department is to provide an enjoyable, exciting and satisfying recreational experience for as many of the children in our community as possible.

Our rules are written to encourage participation and enjoyment by all. Developmental sports are to provide "successful" experiences through fundamental skill development vs. a "winning" only, singular philosophy. Skill development ultimately provides the tools for a more competitive winning focus or experience.

To parents of participants, we direct you to refrain from criticizing or exhibiting frustrations toward opposing coaches, players, fans, and officials IN ANY WAY. This distraction will only have a negative impact on your child's, as well as other children's overall experience. However, we urge you to discuss any concerns you may have regarding the activity with the coach or league supervisor before or after the event in a courteous and respectful manner. Let's work together to provide a positive experience for each and every player.

We hope that you will measure "success" not simply in terms of team victories, but also in the real enjoyment of playing an exciting sport and having a great time!

To this end we would like to solicit your support by pledging to provide a supportive, positive image in and around all TPRD sporting events. Below is the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSKA) Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge, which will be extremely important for your child, as well as other participants, to expect from their spectators and parents to realize a "successful experience" in sports. Please read the material below and indicate by your signature below that you will abide by this ethics pledge in order for your child to participate in TPRD sports programs.

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

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
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- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a 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 in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth - not for 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.

Quick Click: 8 Ways to Be Your Child's Cheerleader

Your child will pursue many passions in his or her young life. Here's how to support their extracurricular endeavors - without succumbing to stage-mom status.

1. Identify skills early on. If your child wants to participate in sports, be realistic about his or her ability. If they are just within the age requirement, make sure that he or she is able to physically handle himself or herself.
2. Allow her to follow her own interests. Don't discourage your child if he or she is more interested in playing soccer than [practicing the piano](#). Making their own choices helps them forge their identity.
3. Don't blame yourself for your child's choices, talents, or failures. Disappointment may stem from your own youthful dreams or your sense of personal responsibility. Remember, you are not the direct cause of your child's missed goal or failed audition. Encourage them to try their best and support them when even that isn't good enough. Sometimes the only way to do that is by lending a sympathetic ear. Later, offer to help him practice his skills.
4. Discourage activity-hopping. Does your child want to quit the school band or swim team after only a few weeks? Set a "wait-and-see" period before allowing her to give it up. Help her determine why she wants to leave the activity. Is it too challenging? Too boring? Too time-consuming? Maybe she doesn't click with the other kids or the coach. Once you know, you can work to remedy the situation - or move on.
5. Prevent burnout. If basketball practice starts to get in the way of schoolwork, then it may be time for your child to scale back or take a break. Ask your child if he or she is too tired or if the coach is working them too hard. Discuss your concerns with the coach, and help your child set priorities.
6. Stay positive. Don't be hard on your child if he or she loses a game or flubs a recital performance. They are bound to have their bad days, no matter how often they practices. Focus on their efforts, not the final outcome.
7. Set a good example. Good sportsmanship starts with you. If your child spots you kicking and screaming on the sidelines, he or she will learn that it's acceptable for them to do so too.
8. Let kids be kids. Your child needs time to socialize. Unstructured activities with their peers give them time to recuperate from the pressures of extracurricular activities and school.

From Parent & Child Magazine

Quick Click: 8 Ways to Support Your Child's Coach

Whether your child is playing soccer, baseball, softball, volleyball, flag football, tackle football, or basketball your child can learn a lot from a great coach. Support your athlete - and the whole team - by assisting the coach from the sidelines.

- Make sure your child has what he or she needs. If your child is properly equipped, their coach can concentrate on more important matters like safety, teamwork, and skill-building.
- Let the coach do the work. Nothing stresses a coach out more than having too many helpers on the field. Realize that he or she knows how to best support your child's performance. Let them do their job.
- Be aware of the coach's rules. Touch base with your child and the coach about expectations. If you disagree with anything, speak with the coach privately - out of earshot of the kids.
- Ask how you can help. The coach does a lot of work, on and off the field. Ask what you can do to lighten his or her load (without taking over).
- Learn how to handle injuries. Accidents happen. Make sure that you're prepared for them by having first aid supplies at home and in your car.
- Foster your child's fitness. The coach can only transform your child so much. [Be aware of her eating habits and encourage good health](#). Exercise with your child, whether it's a jog around the block or a lap in the pool. A great website for additional information is <http://www.healthiergeneration.org>.

- Notice your child's behavior. If your child acts unfairly to his or her teammates during the game or doesn't give the coach their full attention, talk to them later about good sportsmanship and respect.
- Have fun. Maintain a sense of humor, even in the face of defeat. Keep the mood light. "I'm convinced a kid will play all day if it's fun. When it stops being fun and it's about a parent's own dreams, forget it," says Tom Shaw, a three-time Super Bowl-winning conditioning coach.

"8 ways to Support Your Child's Coach" Scholastic Inc. June 20, 2007.