

Putnam County Recreation Department

PARENT PACKET

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PUTNAM COUNTY RECREATION DEPARTMENT

SPORTS ETIQUETTE FOR PARENTS

We all recognize that athletics bring about very passionate emotions – for players and for fans. But when it comes to youth athletics, the games can bring out some of the worst instincts that we have.

We all want our sons and daughters to play, to play hard, to play well, and have fun – yet we, as parents, sometime undercut how much fun our children have, and how much they will actually benefit.

This happens by and through our behavior, especially during games.

So, with all the different athletics out there today, here is a primer, a reminder, or a little thing that we can do on the sidelines to make youth sports more pleasant for all concerned -- most importantly, the children.

15 things to keep in mind:

1. **Let the coaches coach.** If you are telling your son or daughter – or any other player – to do something different from what his/her coach is telling him/her, you create distraction and confusion.
2. **Let the children play.** It is very unnerving for many young players to try to perform difficult tasks on the field at the spur of the moment when parents are yelling at them from the sidelines. If the players have been well coached, they should know what to do on the field/court. If they make a mistake, chances are that they will learn from it.
3. **Do not discuss they play of specific young players in front of other parents.** How many times do you hear comments such as, “I don’t know how that boy made the team...” or “She is just not fast enough...”? Too many parents act as though their child is a “star”, and the problem is someone else’s child. Negative comments and attitudes are hurtful, totally unnecessary, and kill harmony among parents – all are often essential to youth team success.
4. **Discourage toxic behavior.** This can be accomplished by listening patiently to any negative comments that might be made, then address the issues in a positive manner. Speak to the positive qualities of the player, family, or coach.
5. **Do not complain about your child’s coaches to other parents.** Once this complaining starts, it is like a disease that spreads. Before you know it, parents are talking constantly in a negative way behind the coach’s back. If you have a legitimate complaint about the coach regarding game strategy or playing, arrange an appointment to meet privately, away from the field/court.
6. **Make positive comments from the sideline. Be encouraging.** Young athletes do not need to be reminded constantly about their received errors or mistakes. Their coaches will instruct them, either during the game or at half-time, or during practices. Young players will often make an extra effort when they hear encouraging words about their hustle from the sideline.
7. **Avoid making negative comments about players on the other team.** These are children we are talking about. Besides being tasteless and classless, these kinds of negative comments can be hurtful to the young person involved and to the family.
8. **Try to keep interaction with parents of other team as healthy and positive as possible.** You want your team to win but you should not lose your senses and make unnecessary comments. Be courteous and avoid the “tit for tat” syndrome.
9. **Parents of the other team are not the enemy.** Neither are the boys and girls on the other team. Leave the negative feelings at home.
10. **Refrain from criticizing the referees.** There will be times that calls will be missed. Sometimes this missed call may affect the outcome of the game. By and large, those individuals who officiate youth games are under-compensated while they are trying to give a good effort. They try to be fair and objective.

11. **Blaming others is not a formula for success in sports.** Outbursts from parents on the sideline signal to our children that they can blame the referees for anything that goes wrong.
12. **Yelling our comments such as “good call, ref” or “thanks, ref” may only serve to alienate an official.** The referee assumes he/she made the proper call, that’s why he/she made it. Trying to show superficial support because a call went “your way” is simply annoying to the officials, and to anyone within earshot.
13. **If you want to coach, obtain your coaching certification and then apply for a job.** Screaming and yelling is unnerving to players and is unnecessary especially if you are trying to yell out instructions to various players, including your own son/daughter. It is embarrassing to the players involved and counterproductive.
14. **We all feel things and are tempted to say things in the “heat of the moment”.** We do not excuse athletes for doing inappropriate things in the “heat of the moment” so we should apply similar standards to our own sideline behavior. Quickly check yourself and ask: “Will I be proud of what I am about to say or do when I reflect on it tomorrow?”
15. **The parking lot is not the time to “fan the flames.”** A referee’s call, a parent’s comment that was made – let it go. Go home, relax, and unwind. Talk positively with your child. The ride home is sometime as important as the game itself.



PUTNAM COUNTY RECREATION DEPARTMENT

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

This policy was implemented on 06/01/13 and revised on 08/30/14 with the purpose of upholding a healthy and enjoyable environment for the entire community of Eatonton – Putnam County. This policy is in affect for all participants and spectators at all Putnam County Recreation Department events and locations and will be enforced by law officers. This includes events held out-of-town. All decisions made are final.

It is the policy of the Putnam County Department to promote the development of strong character, a right attitude and a sense of responsibility and citizenship in youngsters. It is the purpose of this department to achieve this goal through fair play and good sportsmanship with adult leaders providing the example.

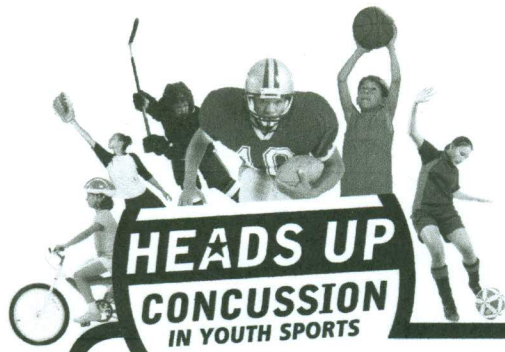
- A. Players, managers, spectators, or coaches ejected from a game will not be allowed to participate in the next one (2) and/or up to the next two (2) games. In the event that the ejection is in the last game of the season the suspension may carry over to the next participating sport.
- B. Players, managers, coaches, or spectators who are guilty of profanity, either by words or sign, against other players, coaches, spectators, referees, or any other people just before, during, or immediately after a game shall be suspended for the current game and the next game and possibly up to the following game also.
- C. Players, managers, coaches, or spectators who are guilty of making threatening gestures against other players, coaches, spectators, referees or other people shall receive up to a two (2) games suspension.
- D. Players, managers, coaches, or spectators who participate in pushing, striking, or fighting against any other players, managers, coaches, spectators, referees, or any other people shall receive punishment as determined by the Recreation Director and County Manager.
- E. Players, managers, coaches, or spectators who are found consuming any controlled substance shall be suspended from league play for the amount of time to be determined by the Recreation Director and County Manager.
- F. Violators of A, B, C, or D above as determined by the Recreation Department officials or staff will result immediately in leaving the premises entirely without visual or verbal contact with their team for the entire suspension. Violators may be on probation for one (1) year from the date of suspension up to a maximum of five (5) years after which time the violator may request a hearing for reinstatement.



GEORGIA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION
CARING FOR GEORGIA'S PEOPLE AND PARKS

Georgia Recreation and Park Association Sportsmanship Statement

"The Georgia Recreation and Park Association (GRPA) and its member agencies have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GRPA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site. Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area during warm-ups or while the contest is being conducted. Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at today's event."



A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just “not feeling right” or “feeling down”

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

- Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.
 - However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no “concussion-proof” helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY.

A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.

2. KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.

Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. TELL YOUR CHILD’S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION.

Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/Concussion.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People.™

Protect the ones you love

SPORTS INJURIES



Sports Injuries: The Reality

We all want to keep our children safe and secure and help them live to their full potential. Knowing how to prevent injuries from sports and recreation activities, one of the leading causes of child injury, is a step toward this goal.

Taking part in sports and recreation activities is an important part of a healthy, physically active lifestyle for kids. But injuries can, and do, occur. More than 2.6 million children 0-19 years old are treated in the emergency department each year for sports and recreation-related injuries.

Thankfully, there are steps that parents can take to help make sure kids stay safe on the field, the court, or wherever they play or participate in sports and recreation activities.

Prevention Tips

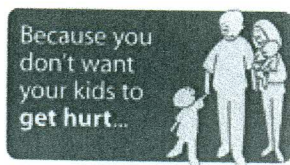
Gear up. When children are active in sports and recreation, make sure they use the right protective gear for their activity, such as helmets, wrist guards, knee or elbow pads.

Use the right stuff. Be sure that sports protective equipment is in good condition and worn correctly all the time—for example, avoid missing or broken buckles or compressed or worn padding. Poorly fitting equipment may be uncomfortable and may not offer the best protection.

Practice makes perfect. Have children learn and practice skills they need in their activity. For example, knowing how to tackle safely is important in preventing injuries in football and soccer. Have children practice proper form – this can prevent injuries during baseball, softball, and many other activities. Also, be sure to safely and slowly increase activities to improve physical fitness; being in good condition can protect kids from injury.

Pay attention to temperature. Allow time for child athletes to gradually adjust to hot or humid environments to prevent heat-related injuries or illness. Parents and coaches should pay close attention to make sure that players are hydrated and appropriately dressed.

Be a good model. Communicate positive safety messages and serve as a model of safe behavior, including wearing a helmet and following the rules.



Additional Resources

WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING

*A message every adult should read because children are watching you
and doing as you do, not as you say.*

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator,
and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you feed a stray cat,
and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make my favorite cake for me,
and I learned that the little things can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I heard you say a prayer,
and I knew that there is a God I could always talk to, and I learned to trust in Him.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick,
and I learned that we all have to take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you give your time and money to help people who had nothing,
and I learned that those who have something should give to those who don't.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it,
and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel
good, and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw tears come from your eyes,
and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it is all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw that you cared,
and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I learned most of life's lessons
that I needed to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked at you and wanted to say
"Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking."

LITTLE EYES SEE A LOT.

Each of us influences the life of a child.

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly.