

RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports  
Child and Youth Programs (CYP)



PARENT HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter . . . . .	3
Mission and Philosophy. . . . .	4
Eligibility / Inclusion Policy. . . . .	4
Registration. . . . .	5
Refund Policy . . . . .	5
Team Assignments . . . . .	6
Youth Responsibilities and Conduct . . . . .	7
Parents’ Orientation, Responsibilities, and Conduct. . . . .	8
Coaches’ Training, Responsibilities, and Conduct . . . . .	9
Officials’ Training, Responsibilities. . . . .	10
Health and Nutrition. . . . .	11
Physicals . . . . .	11
Substance Use . . . . .	11
Guidance Policy. . . . .	12
Child Abuse. . . . .	13
Touch Policy. . . . .	14
Injuries . . . . .	14
Emergency Numbers. . . . .	14
Absences . . . . .	15
Sportsmanship. . . . .	15
Scores . . . . .	15
Safety Inspections . . . . .	15
Inclement Weather . . . . .	16
Team Photos, Awards, and Celebrations. . . . .	17
Appendix A - National Standards	
Appendix B – Team Parent Description	
Appendix C - Questions for Parents to Ask Their Child about Their Sports Experience	

## **Letter from the Coordinator**

### **Welcome to RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports,**

I am thrilled you are here! This handbook is presented to serve as a reference for you to help you understand the philosophies of the youth center regarding youth athletics, and its success. Additional information on the management of the Sports Program can be found in AFI 34-144. RAFL Youth Sports Program's primary purpose is to provide quality non-school leisure related sports and fitness activities that build self-esteem and motivate your child. We strive to ensure sports and fitness programs meet the needs of every child and are fun for youth by encouraging continued participation regardless of their athletic ability.

It is our mission to provide a safe environment that covers the athletes, coaches, and parents on and off the field/court. Create a welcoming atmosphere where all children are taught the fundamentals of a sport while having fun and enjoying the game. Each coach needs your support to make your child's progress successful. You will be required to attend a pre – season parent orientation prior to the sports season to discuss the program philosophy, goals for the season, logistics, and uniforms.

RAFL Youth Sports want this to be a great experience for you and your child. We look forward to a successful and fun -filled sports season. We hope to have your continued involvement with the RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program. Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns feel free to contact the undersigned at 226-1182 or [elisabet.anguiano-@us.af.mil](mailto:elisabet.anguiano-us.af.mil)

Elisabet Anguiano

Program Director, Youth Sports and Fitness

Partnership, Sportsmanship, Nutrition

## **AF CYP MISSION STATEMENT**

To assist DOD military and civilian personnel in balancing the competing demands of the accomplishments of the DOD mission and family life by managing and delivering a system of quality, available affordable programs and services for eligible children and youth birth through 18 years of age.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program is to provide a quality youth sports experience in a safe, positive and fun environment where children have the opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and ethically while also learning good sportsmanship, develop fundamental sports skills, and foster new friendships.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SPORTS**

At RAF Lakenheath, the Youth Sports Program was developed to enhance children's ethical, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual learning with the purpose of having fun while nurturing each child's capacity to learn life-skills. The emphasis of youth sports is on skill development, co-operation, teamwork and maximum participation. The Youth Sports Program follows the National Standards for Youth Sports and develops programs that are consistent with the philosophy outlined in those standards.

### **ELIGIBILITY / INCLUSION POLICY**

RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports program is open to dependents of active duty, reservist, retirees, and DOD / NAF civilian employees of all the armed forces / military branches of service in accordance with AFI 34-262 Services Programs and Use Eligibility, and AFI 34-144 Child & Youth Programs regardless of race, creed, gender, economic status, or ability. Youth must be currently in grades kindergarten through twelve (12) to be eligible. Eligibility for Youth Sports programs and / or certain age divisions may be extended to the non-military community on a space available basis when otherwise the activity would not be able to be offered.

## **REGISTRATION**

Each child wishing to participate in the Youth Sports program must be registered by a parent or legal guardian. At the time of registration, an AF Form 88 *Youth Programs Registration* (or alternate form), and Parents' Code of Ethics must be completed and appropriate fees paid. A physical valid through the sport season is required before a child may attend any practice or participate in an event / game.

## **REFUND POLICY**

A full refund of registration fees may be requested and honored by the Youth Sports & Fitness Program Director at any time prior to the scheduled first practice. Thereafter, only partial / prorated refunds will be approved for Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or medical reasons. Supporting documentation may be required depended on the circumstances surrounding the request. The method of refund payment will vary depending on original type of registration fee payment. If fees were paid via credit or club card, then your account will be credited. If fees were paid via cash or check, then you will be given cash. Refunds cannot be processed after the completion of that sport event or season.

## **TEAM STRUCTURE**

Participants are not allowed to play in two age divisions. Participants are not allowed to move to a different team once on a submitted roster for a specified team. If you have any special requirements as to practice schedule days and or times this should be indicated on the sports registration form in the special instructions block. Please include justification reasons. All requests will be considered and effort made to grant requests, but not all may be fulfilled due to the amount of players on a team or number of requests submitted.

## **TEAM ROSTERS**

The system used for team roster building will be as fair as possible to all teams and individual players. The children in the 9 and up age divisions will be divided equally among all teams by age, skill and gender with each team being as equal as possible to achieve team parity. Children of volunteer coaches will be placed on their parents' team if so requested. Team rosters will be created through a draft system after the completion of a skills assessment for the 9-12 age divisions only. Coaches as well as parents of players will be presented with team rosters at the earliest possible convenience usually by the parents' orientation.

## **MAXIMUM NUMBER PLAYERS ASSIGNED**

The maximum number of players assigned to a team shall not exceed 2 X the number of players needed to play the sport (i.e. 5v5 basketball = 10 man max. roster size). In some cases the roster will not exceed the number of players needed to play plus 4 additional players (i.e. 11v11 soccer = 15 person max. team roster). Once rosters are full and distributed to coaches no changes will be made.

## **TEAM ASSIGNMENTS**

The Youth Sports and Fitness Program Director (YS&FPD) will randomly assign children to teams based on their age, size (height and / or weight), playing experience, and / or skill level. Prior to team assignments however, children may be asked to attend specific sport skill evaluations. The purpose of these evaluations is to assess the skill level of participants in an attempt to distribute talent equally to each team. These evaluations are extremely important and each child needs to be present. Parents may request their child move up an age division if they feel it is in the child's best interest; however children are encouraged to play in their assigned age division. Before a child can be considered for placement in an older age division, they must attend an evaluation session. If the child receives the highest marks of his / her peers and is mature enough as determined by the evaluators, then the child may be moved up as long as a parent is willing to sign a waiver form.

Parents may also request siblings be on the same team provided they are in the same age division, but no other request (i.e. to be on a team with a specific coach or child for carpooling purposes) will be granted. Coaches are not permitted to add players to teams, or cut players from teams. The YS&FPD is the only one authorized to make roster changes.

## **SPECIAL PLAYER PLACEMENT (WAIVERS)**

Only the YS&FPD is authorized to move a gifted athlete up into another age grouping when it is in the best interest of that child and the other children. This will not be done without first conducting a skills evaluation of that child. Parent's requesting such moves must first identify the overall social and physical developmental benefits to be gained by the child if a move is to be considered.

Local age division waivers may be requested only for the following circumstances:

- Gifted and/or highly experienced youth may be moved to the next higher age group provided they fall into the age requirement standard of a 3 year span.
- Developmentally challenged youths may be placed in a lower age group (regardless of chronological age) if a medical statement substantiates condition.
- Waiver requests must be made known to the YS&FPD at time of registration.
- Waivers must address the physical, emotional and mental aspects of development of your child and the reasoning why your child should be considered for a move up.
- Approval of waiver will be on a space available basis and skill assessment basis which will be conducted after the registration period ends. If your child is 8 years of age and requesting to move to the 9-10 Division and the 9-10 division is full, waiver will be denied.
- All participants requesting to play in a higher division must participate in one of the scheduled skills assessments. The child requesting the waiver must score in the top half of the range of scores (top fifteen usually) within the division wishing to be placed to be considered for the move to that higher age division.
- A request for waiver may be submitted to a higher level authority than the local youth sports director if the move encompasses more than a 3 year age span (i.e. 12 year old wanting to move to the 13-15 division). A skill assessment is still required with similar requirements as above. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis and are final.

## **YOUTH RESPONSIBILITIES**

Participation in a youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the RAFL Youth Sports program to ensure that a child's experience is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participating youth to make this happen. For that reason, the following responsibilities were established for participants to adhere to:

- To listen and be respectful to their coaches
- To take care of the facilities, equipment, and uniform which they have been given
- To make sure to eat nutritious foods and drink plenty of water before, during, and after practices / games
- To avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents
- To show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose
- To not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family
- To refrain from horseplay and all other dangerous activities in which they may become hurt
- To participate for the love of the sport and teamwork, and not to win at all cost

## **YOUTH CONDUCT**

Coaches and parents should discuss with each of their youth the Players' Code of Ethics. The NAYS believes that youth sports should be a positive and safe learning experience, so players will be held accountable for their actions. Negative behavior will not be tolerated by the YS&FPD, coach (es), or official(s) in charge and players will be asked to cease such behavior. If a youth fails to heed the request, the youth will be asked to leave the area / game. Continued conduct problems may result in possible removal from the current Youth Sports program and possible future Youth Sports programs.

## **PARENTS' ORIENTATION**

Prior to the start of each season, the RAFL Youth Sports program will host a parent orientation meeting. This orientation is mandatory once a year, and are highly encouraged because valuable information will be presented about the Youth Sports program and upcoming season. These meetings only last approximately one hour. Also, before or during the first practice of each sport season coaches will conduct team / parent meetings with information regarding their team specifically.

## **PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To have a part in the supervision of their child
- To bring forward valid complaints
- To be a good spectator
- To educate your children about abuse
- To help each child find the right sport and program for his or her needs
- To assess the philosophy of the coach and organization to make sure it matches the child's needs
- To provide the child with the physical / emotional nurturing and guidance they need to thrive
- To be an advocate for each of your children and support each child
- To equally support your children as athletes
- To understand that all your children are gifted, but not in equal ways
- To support the individual needs and interests of children
- To provide unconditional love and support, not based on performance
- To pay attention to see if your children are having fun, learning and improving as opposed to just winning
- To create a safe and fun environment

## **PARENT / SPECTATOR CONDUCT**

We recognize that parents / spectators are a vital part of the youth sports experience. Each parent has signed a NAYS Parents' Code of Ethics as part of the registration package for their child. Again, the NAYS believe that youth's sports should be a positive and safe learning experience. So like the players, parents will be held accountable for their actions as well. Negative behavior will not be tolerated by the YS&FPD, coach (es), or official(s) in charge and parents / spectators will be asked to cease such behavior. If the parent / spectator fail to heed the request, the spectators will be asked to leave the area. If the parent / spectator refuse to leave the area, Security Forces will be contacted for assistance in escorting the offending parent / spectator from the area. Continued conduct problems may result in possible suspension from attending any future Youth Sports events.

## **COACHES' TRAINING**



All RAFL Youth Sports' coaches must be certified through the NYSCA. Each coach must attend at least one (1) training clinics to become certified as a Youth Sports Coach. The training clinics include information on the physical, mental, and social characteristics / development of youth; positive guidance techniques; safety; first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); conditioning and training; nutrition; sport specific skills, strategies, tactics, and techniques; substance abuse awareness; child abuse; injury prevention; liability; diversity; and sexual harassment. Upon completion of the training, the RAFL Youth Sports program pays for the coaches NYSCA certification and membership that includes a million dollars (\$1,000,000) excess liability insurance while performing coaching duties.

### **COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To serve as a role model
- To be knowledgeable of all league policies, procedures, and rules
- To provide a safe and fun environment for the youth, and report any suspected child abuse or neglect
- To communicate with parents and players
- To encourage parent involvement during practices, games, and other related functions
- To teach the young athletes the fundamentals of the sport
- To give each player equal playing time
- To put the feelings of the players ahead of the desire to win

### **COACHES' CONDUCT**

Each coach has signed a NAYS Coaches' Code of Ethics as part of their NYSCA training. Once more, the NAYS believe that Youth Sports should be a positive and safe learning experience. So like the players and parents, coaches will be held accountable for their actions when working with children. If you feel for any reason that a coach is not following the NYSCA standards, then please report their actions to the YS&FPD. Coaches who fail to demonstrate the desired Standard of Conduct [Code of Ethics] will be counseled and / or disciplined by the YS&FPD. Coaches not favorably responding to counseling and / or disciplining will be brought to the attention of the Youth Program Director for a review of their performance. The YS&FPD will forward his or her recommendations to the Youth Programs Director who will suspend any coach whose conduct is considered detrimental to the best interests of the Youth Sports Program. If suspended, NYSCA will be notified and the coaches' certification will be revoked. The coach will not be allowed to participate in future Youth Sports programs if this decision is made. In addition, base Installation Record Checks (IRCs) are conducted on all persons interested in volunteering with our youth. Persons with unfavorable IRC findings will not be allowed to work with our youth.

### **OFFICIALS' TRAINING**

For the most part, the officials / referees used in the RAFL Youth Sports program are individuals working for a local official association which has been contracted by Youth Programs to perform such duties. All of these officials / referees must be certified through the appropriate sports association for that sport for which they are assigned to officiate / referee. As part of their training, officials / referees are trained in: their responsibilities as an official / referee; the rules of the sport; court / field coverage and positioning; communication and signals; safety; sportsmanship; and working with administrators, coaches, parents, players, and other officials / referees.

### **OFFICIALS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To maintain certification by the appropriate sport association for the sport in which they are officiating
- To familiarize themselves with the current association rules and league by-laws
- To arrive on site at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of the game
- To wear the proper uniform for the sport they are officiating and conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times
- To inspect the playing surface and surrounding area to ensure it is safe for use
- To inspect all team members to ensure they are wearing the proper uniform and authorized / required safety equipment
- To remain impartial in the sport they are officiating (i.e. officials should not be a player, coach, or parent in the sport and age division in which they are officiating)
- To report all game results, injuries, and un-sportsmanlike incidents to the YS&FPD

### **HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

Understanding the benefit of developing and maintaining a healthy life style is essential for children to achieve overall fitness and success. Children need to develop good habits to perform at their best. Youth should be encouraged to eat nutritionally balanced meals, get plenty of rest, and exercise as conditioning is an important step in preventing injuries. The practice of rapid weight gain or loss (seen primarily in wrestling and football) solely for the purpose of participating in sports is banned in the RAFL Youth Sports program. In addition, youth should bring their own water bottles and remember to drink plenty of water especially on hot and humid days.

## **PHYSICALS**

Each child must obtain a medical clearance (sports physical) from a physician in order to participate in the Youth Sports program. The clearance must be dated no more than a year earlier from the completion of the specific sport event or season. A copy the physical must be on file in the Youth Sports program office before the child may attend a practice or game to prove their fitness to do so.

## **SUBSTANCE USE**

Coaches, officials / referees, parents / spectators, and players must refrain from chewing / smoking tobacco products, drinking alcoholic beverages, or using drugs of any kind while at any activity or function sponsored by the Youth Sports program. Any person found in violation of this rule will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Security Forces will be notified if necessary. The offender will be dismissed from the program and prohibited from attending any future Youth Sports events.

The use of performance enhancing drugs (i.e. steroids), blood doping, or other performance enhancing technique not approved by the International Association of Athletics Federations are also strictly forbidden in the Youth Sports program.

Coaches, parents, and players are encouraged to talk about the importance of a tobacco, alcohol, and drug free environment. Discussions should be kept simple and informative with examples of their harmful physical, social, and mental effects on or off the court / field. These include:

- Change in appetite and / or sleeping habits
- Drop in academic performance or school attendance
- Withdrawal from family, friends, or interests; or change in friends
- Extreme mood swings - happy one minute with hostility and lack of cooperativeness the next
- Pays less attention to personal hygiene / appearance and tidiness of room
- Heightened secrecy / dishonesty about activities and possessions
- Unexpected rapid increase in muscle size

## **GUIDANCE POLICY**

The RAFL Youth Sports program offers a caring and nurturing environment that encourages growth in self-control and respect for the rights of others. A youth's attempt to learn; participate, and respond to people / activities in youth sports is an important part of his / her overall development. Youth are protected from hurting themselves and others. Guidance should be a process of teaching, which allows socialization to take place. Coaches and other adults are the models for youth. Coaches should practice techniques that are fair, consistent, and respectful of youth and their needs. In this way, a youth will know the importance of similar behavior in his / her life.

*Behavior that is considered inappropriate:*

- Causing physical harm to another person by hitting, kicking, throwing, or any other action
- Exhibiting behavior that is potentially harmful to themselves
- Using inappropriate language, spitting, or other form of verbal abuse or degradation
- Refusing to comply with RAFL Youth Sports rules and / or failing to listen to coaches, officials, or other adult

*Appropriate guidance techniques:*

- Talking with the youth
- Helping the youth use negotiation to resolve conflicts
- Removing the youth from the situation for a few minutes temporarily
- Limiting the youth's participation in the activity

*Humiliating or frightening punishment which is strictly forbidden:*

- Withholding of water or snacks to change behavior
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the youth or their family
- Restrictions or confinement by physical means
- Physical punishment (hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, spanking, push-ups, running laps, etc.)

Occasionally, there are children who have difficulty adjusting to team groups. If a child repeatedly behaves in a way that is detrimental to him / herself, other youth, or adults; coaches must bring the problem to the attention of the YS&FPD. At that time, the parents will be contacted to discuss the problem. After several attempts have been made to work with the child on these challenges, the YS&FPD may suggest professional help or temporary removal from Youth Sports. Parents are required to follow the YS&FPD approved guidance methods while in the Youth Sports program.

**All violations of the guidance policy by coaches should be reported in writing to the YS&FPD, who in turn will report it to the Family Member Support Flight Chief. Coaches who violate the guidance policy will not be permitted access to youth in the Youth Sports program until retrained.**

## Prevention

Child abuse and neglect occurs in all kinds of families and care-giving settings. Child abuse may occur as a single incident or be a pattern of behavior extending over many years. With that in mind, Youth Programs takes many precautions (some of which are noted below) to prevent child abuse.

- Coaches receive training on child abuse prior to each sports season.
- A guidance policy is in place to inform coaches about appropriate / inappropriate ways of interacting with youth.
- Background checks / Installation Records Checks (IRC) are conducted on all coaches.
- References are checked for coaches associated with Youth Sports.
- Entrance / exit into the Youth Centers are limited to a single entry / exit point.
- A closed circuit camera / television system is in place in each major area of the Youth Centers.
- At least two (2) coaches / adults must be present at all practices and game.
- Coaches / adults may not allow youth to follow them into storage rooms or closets.
- Coaches / adults must stand outside the bathroom while waiting for an individual youth. They may never enter and remain in a bathroom alone with a youth.
- Coaches may not take a youth to their home or visit a youth at their home without written permission from the youth's parents and the YS&FPD.
- Coaches may not take children in their own vehicle without written permission from the youth's parents and the YS&FPD.

## Reporting

Reporting suspected child abuse is the first and foremost thing a person can do to stop child abuse. Anyone who suspects child abuse is ethically obligated to report it. By the nature of the Youth Sports program, coaches are considered "mandated reporters." This means that coaches working with youth have both an ethical and legal responsibility to report child abuse suspicions. It is important to remember that when dealing with the issue of child abuse and neglect, the report that is made is only a suspicion. Actual child abuse or neglect does not have to be proven by the reporter. Determination as to whether or not an allegation is substantiated will take time and resources only available through support agencies, such as Family Advocacy.

Documentation is critical when dealing with the issue of child abuse and neglect. Any mark or injury (suspicious or not) observed on a youth should be documented. This will help determine if a pattern of injury is occurring. When reporting a child abuse or neglect suspicion, it must be done both orally and in writing to the YS&FPD, Family Member Support Flight Chief, and Family Advocacy office. The report needs to be as specific as possible as to time, location, and type of injury, as well as anything the youth may have said that caused the suspicion.

Remember that reports are confidential and should be seen by or discussed with only those who persons that need to know about them. They should not be discussed with anyone else.

Family Advocacy . . . . . 226-8070

DoD Child Abuse & Safety Violation Hotline . . . 571-373-5348 (Local charges may apply)

**TOUCH POLICY**

Physical contact is a significant part of every Youth Sports program, but coaches / adults need to be aware that a child's perception of a physical touch may not match your own.

Appropriate touching creates positive emotional / social growth in children, helps youth develop a sense of trust / security in the world, and directly affect the youth's self-esteem. Appropriate touching includes high fives, "quick release" hugs, and taps on the shoulder or back.

Inappropriate touching creates an improper / negative emotional effect on youth, and goes against societal norms and violates the law. Forms of inappropriate touching are: arm grabbing, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, spanking, striking, prolonged tickling, fondling, lingering hugs, kissing, and lap sitting. Inappropriate touching may involve coercion or other types of exploitation of youth for the sole satisfaction of the adult.

### **INJURIES/FIRSTAID**

In the event of an injury, play should be stopped and the injured youth tended to immediately.

If the injury is minor, the appropriate first aid should be performed and the injury documented on the AF Form 1023, *Youth Flight Record of Injuries*. If the player is seriously injured, emergency medical services (EMS) assistance should be called at once. If you personally do not have a cell phone, the use of a bystander's cell phone is also acceptable. Otherwise, find the closest landline. While waiting for EMS to respond or as soon as possible thereafter, the coach should telephone the parent (if he / she is not present) of the injured youth, notify the Youth Programs staff of the accident as soon as possible, and complete the AF Form 1187 *Youth Flight Accident Report*.

Coaches need to be sure to include the injured person's name, type of injury, severity of injury, who you relinquished the care to, and if the parent was present and / or notified. Coaches should turn in the AF Form 1187 to the YS&FPD as quickly as you can, because the YS&FPD must then forward the report to HQ AFMC within twenty-four (24) hours of the injury. At outdoor sports, first aid kits can be obtained from the head coach as one was issued to them along with the team equipment. At indoor sports, a first aid kit can be found at the front counter. Each kit contains the following basic first aid items: bandages, antibacterial soap, gauze pads, roll gauze, tape, tweezers, scissors, thermometer, latex gloves, and a cold pack. Under no circumstances will any person associated with the Youth Sports program administer any type of medication to a youth. This includes all over the counter / non-prescription drugs (i.e. aspirin) or prescription medicine.

### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) 911 or +44 01638527911  
RAF Lakenheath Emergency Care DSN 226-4226, or +44 01638524226

### **ABSENCES**

Youth should attend every sports practice and game that is reasonably possible. However, if a youth will miss a practice / game the coach should be notified in advance of the absence and subsequent reason. Coaches may not punish a youth for excused absences by sitting the youth out a game, making them run extra laps, or other similar discipline. Excused absences include: illness, church, school, and family activities as youth are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities in addition to their participation in a particular sport.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

The RAFL Youth Sports program encourages good sportsmanship amongst its youth participants, as well as coaches, officials / referees, and parents / spectators. To help promote and reinforce this behavior in our youth, the Youth Sports program presents a sportsmanship award to the youth who best exemplifies good sportsmanship during each sports season, as best justified in the nominations submitted by our coaches, parents, participants, officials / referees, and staff. (A nomination form may be obtained from the YS&FPD.)

## **SCORES**

Coaches and parents should de-emphasize winning as the primary goal. Youth can learn from both winning and losing if winning is placed in the proper perspective. Success cannot be defined by whether or not a team wins or loses. Coaches and parents should stress to youth that success is related to effort and is found in striving for the best they can do. Coaches must make sure that youth understand that losing a game or event is not a reflection on their own self-worth. For that fact, game scores will not be kept in the youngest age divisions of each sport. And in the older age divisions, each sport has some type of rule to minimize the score spread / difference. Running up the score or excessive score domination by any team is prohibited in all sports

## **SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

To minimize injuries and ensure the highest level of safety for our youth, equipment and facility inspections are conducted on a regular basis. The Base Safety Office conducts safety inspections of all the Youth Sports facilities annually; while the YS&FPD conducts pre-season, game day, and post-season facility inspections. In addition, the YS&FPD conducts pre-season inspections on each piece of equipment before it is put into use or issued to coaches and post-season inspections when it is returned. The equipment and facilities provided by the Youth Sports program are the only equipment and facilities authorized to be used by a youth / team, unless otherwise approved by the YS&FPD. Coaches must take the time before each practice, game, or other event to ensure that the athletic facility and equipment are safe to use on a daily basis. But safety should be every ones concern, so do your part and be on the lookout for obvious observable items such as: debris, holes, and ruts at the facility; or cracks, rips, and tears in equipment. (Safety inspection checklists specific to your sport may be obtained from the YS&FPD.) If there is a safety issue, try to alleviate the problem yourself. If the problem cannot be fixed on the spot, avoid the area by moving to another location or discontinue the use of the equipment if possible and continue with the event. Otherwise, cancel the event until the problem can be alleviated and notify the YS&FPD of the problem as soon as possible.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The safety of athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators is always the first priority. Coaches will utilize their best judgment in ensuring that all involved are safe. When in doubt they are taught to always sway on the side of caution. Because of the particular dangers associated with thunderstorms, coaches and officials will immediately remove teams from the field to a safe area indoors when thunder is heard or lightning is seen.

Indoor sports generally are not affected by outside weather conditions; however, road conditions can become hazardous and make getting to that venue a dangerous endeavor. Therefore we utilize the same system prescribed by the Security Forces for determining whether travel is warranted or permissible. Coaches will use this same system to determine whether practice sessions and or games can and will be conducted.

- Under green road conditions, road conditions are safe for travel; practices and games go as scheduled.
- Under yellow or amber road conditions, extra caution must be exercised in travel. Practices and games will in most cases not be canceled. Under amber conditions a coach may obtain permission to cancel practices only after getting approval from the Youth Sports Director. Parents should contact the coach in amber conditions if they suspect a cancellation.
- Under red road conditions, only essential travel is authorized. All scheduled youth sports activities will most likely be canceled whether it be games or practices. The coach can verify by contacting the Youth Sports Director.
- Youth Sports coaches must monitor conditions during activities such as practices and games, for changing road conditions. A change to red or black road conditions requires all activities to terminate to allow for safe travel home.

The RAF Lakenheath Law Enforcement (LE) desk has the most up to date and accurate road and driving conditions available. Coaches must contact them for the on-the-hour conditions. They can be reached at 266-3541 or 01638 523541.

Only the Youth Sports Director has the authority to cancel games due to inclement weather or other unforeseeable circumstances and will be done a minimum of 1 hour before game play is to begin. Coaches only may contact the Youth Sports Directors office if there is a question regarding weather or driving conditions, in the area where game play is to be conducted. Once the team has traveled to, or game play has begun the head official or on site sports director and or League administrator will make the cancellation determination. For game play status outside the local area call the following Youth Sports Office: RAF Lakenheath 226-1182 OR 01638 521182.

## **TEAM PHOTOS, AWARDS, AND CELEBRATIONS**



Group photos, awards, and end of season parties are the responsibility of each team. However, it is recommended that the team coach along with the parents discuss as a group whether or not they wish to pursue one, two, or all three and recommend keeping plans simple and limited in price. Individual photography sessions will be the sole responsibility of the individual and not the Youth Sports Office or its staff. Photos may not be taken anywhere in the vicinity of the Youth Center grounds or gymnasium. (A list of photographers, sources to buy awards, and suggestions for parties may be obtained from the YS&FPD.)

- Should you have any problems or complaints with the quality of photos that you receive, this complaint should be addressed directly to the photographer and not the Youth Sports Office.

If a team wishes to present awards to its members, they should be participant in nature. Participants who are dismissed for disciplinary reasons or those who quit before the end of the season are not eligible for recognition unless their departure is related to a deployment, permanent change of station (PCS), remote tour, separation, extended temporary duty (TDY), or similar circumstance. Upon request, the Youth Sports program will provide a Certificate of Participation for each child that finishes the sport season.

## **NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR YOUTH SPORTS**

### **Standard # 1 - PROPER SPORTS ENVIRONMENT**

Parents must consider and carefully choose the proper environment for their child, including the appropriate age and development for participation, the type of sport, the rules of the sport, and the age range of the participant and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.

### **Standard # 2 - PROGRAMS BASED ON THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN**

Parents must select youth sports programs that are developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational wellbeing of children.

### **Standard # 3 - DRUG, TOBACCO & ALCOHOL-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Parents must encourage a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment for their children.

### **Standard # 4 - PART OF A CHILD'S LIFE**

Parents must recognize that youth sports are only a small part of a child's life.

### **Standard # 5 - TRAINING**

Parents must insist that coaches be trained and certified.

### **Standard # 6 - PARENTS' ACTIVE ROLE**

Parents must make a serious effort to take an active role in the youth sports experience of their child providing positive support as a spectator, coach, league administrator and / or caring parent.

### **Standard # 7 - POSITIVE ROLE MODELS**

Parents must be a positive role model exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices, and home while giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their child's coaches.

### **Standard # 8 - PARENTAL COMMITMENT**

Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child's youth sports experience by annually signing a parental code of ethics.

### **Standard # 9 - SAFE PLAYING SITUATIONS**

Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, healthful playing situations and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.

### **Standard # 10 - EQUAL PLAY OPPORTUNITY**

Parents, coaches, and league administrators must provide equal sports play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.

### **Standard # 11 - DRUG, TOBACCO & ALCOHOL-FREE ADULTS**

Parents as coaches, fans, and league administrators must be drug, tobacco and alcohol-free at youth sports activities.

## **TEAM PARENT - JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **JOB REQUIREMENTS:**

- Be able to dedicate from 1-2 hours weekly for the entire season.
- Complete knowledge of all policies and procedures contained within the Youth Sports Program Parent Information Handbook.
- Become a role model for youth in sportsmanship and leadership set down by Air Force Youth Sports guidelines.
- Fill out required volunteer forms; internal records check (IRC), child abuse, drugs and alcohol statements.

### **JOB DUTIES:**

- Assisting the coaches in the accomplishment of the following duties.
- Contacting all parents on the team and notifying them of game schedules, special events and other need to know items.
- Recruit parents for establishing a snack schedule for each game in the season.
- Recruiting parents to help work fund raising events to earn money for trophies and end of season parties.
- Organizing and recruiting a photographer for team and individual pictures and contacting parents about team photo shoot dates and times.
- Keeping the score book or official game clock at the team's games.
- Creation of a team banner to be displayed at games and special events (optional).
- Recognize the volunteer efforts of the coaches with a gift or memento at the end of the season.
- Conduct yourself in a good sportsmanship like manner and ensure that all other parents on the team do the same.
- Ensure that all play is conducted safely; be responsible in the event of a minor injury and be able to handle any emergency situation if it should arise.

### **JOB MISSION:**

- To provide quality youth sports activity in a positive fun and safe environment where children have the opportunity to develop skills, self-esteem, good sportsmanship and friends.

Note: Parents please remember that though there are many ways you can assist the team and the coach for your child's team, what you cannot do is help out the coach with the actual practice unless you are a certified NYSCA coach and have been through the Youth Sports Program Coaches Clinic.

## **QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS TO ASK THEIR CHILD ABOUT THEIR SPORTS EXPERIENCE**

1. Did you have fun?
2. Did you learn something new?
3. Do you feel as though you improved a skill today?
4. Did you play well?
5. Is there anything you feel you need to work on, and if so, can I help you?
6. What did the coach say you should concentrate on?
7. Were you a good sport?
8. What was your favorite part of practice / the game?
9. What do you like most about the coach?
10. Is there anything you are having difficulty with?
11. Did you look forward to playing today, if not why not?
12. Is there anything else you want to talk about?

□ *National Alliance for Youth Sports, 1998*