



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# COACHES & PARENTS HAND- BOOK BASEBALL



Great Miami Valley YMCA  
[www.gmvymca.org/sports](http://www.gmvymca.org/sports)

# Baseball

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# Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

The Great Miami Valley YMCA welcomes you and your child to the Youth Sports Program! A goal of the Great Miami Valley YMCA is for all youth sports participants, both parents and children, to have an enjoyable sporting experience. The YMCA uses sports as a tool to develop each participant physically, mentally, and spiritually. Our programs emphasize teaching the values of good sportsmanship, teamwork, goal setting and skill development in a fun, esteem-promoting atmosphere. Our participants will learn the basic fundamentals while learning the rules of the sport. Of course, a FUN and friendly environment are characteristics of all YMCA programs.

It is our goal to provide a safe and fun program for all. Achieving this goal begins with ensuring all our volunteers are adequately screened and prepared for the season. Youth Sports programs are possible by the dedication of volunteer workers. Many volunteers put in several hours of work to make the YMCA programs a success. Thank you to all of the YMCA volunteers who invest time and energy into the lives of young people today. If you are interested in future volunteer opportunities, please let us know.

Thank you for volunteering your time to participate in our youth sports leagues! By participating, you are clearly aware of how important the role of sports is to the development of important personal characteristics to children in these programs.

**Thank you, and enjoy the season!**

Sincerely,

Great Miami Valley YMCA

Sports Department

# ABOUT THE YMCA

## Great Miami Valley YMCA Mission Statement:

The mission of the Great Miami Valley YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy Spirit, Mind, and Body for all.

## Four Core Values of Character Development:

- ♦ Caring
- ♦ Honesty
- ♦ Respect
- ♦ Responsibility
- ♦ Youth Sports Philosophy:

□The YMCA's philosophy is "Athletes First, winning second, everyone's is a winner." Please do everything you can do to de-emphasize the score.

## YMCA Sports: 7 Pillars

1. **Everyone plays.** We do not use tryouts to select the best players, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Sports. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season everyone receives equal practice time and plays at least half of every game.
2. **Safety first.** Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We've modified each sport to make it safer and more enjoyable to play. We ask you to take time to check that the equipment and facilities are safe and to teach the sport as we've prescribed, so that the skills taught are appropriate for children's developmental level. We also ask you to develop your players' fitness levels gradually so they are conditioned for the sport. And we ask you to constantly supervise your young players so that you can stop any unsafe activities.
3. **Fair play.** Fair play is about more than playing by the rules. It's about you and your players showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players to do the same. Remember, we're more interested in developing children's character through sport than in developing a few highly skilled players.

**4. Positive competition.** We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. Learning to compete is important for children, and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. The “right perspective” means adults make decisions that put the best interests of the children above winning the contest. These are the lessons we want to teach through YMCA Youth Sports.

**5. Family involvement.** YMCA Youth Sports encourages parents to be involved appropriately along with their child participating in our sport programs. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials, and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child’s participation.

**6. Sport for all.** YMCA Youth Sports is an inclusive sport program. That means that children who differ in various characteristics are to be included rather than excluded from participation. We offer sport programs for children who differ in physical abilities by matching them with children of similar abilities and modifying their sport. We offer programs to all children regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. We ask our adult leaders to support and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the children and their parents to do the same. We do not forfeit games; instead, we share players and proceed with planned games.

**7. Sport for fun.** Sport is naturally fun for most children. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, playing with their friends, and competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children’s sport, they over-organize and dominate the activity to the point of spoiling children’s enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sport, we are in danger of our children taking themselves out of sport. Remember, that these sports are for the kids; make sure the kids are having fun.

# Team Responsibilities

## During Practices

- Come prepared for practice and early
- Dress to participate
- Be a positive teacher and participant

## During Games

- Come prepared for games and early
- Encourage all children who are playing
- Remember: Children are here to have FUN

## Communication

- PlayerSpace Website
- Parent and Coach communication is extremely important
- Check your emails and text messages for information regarding practices and games from the Sports Department
- The Sports Director is always available to answer questions and address any concerns— do not hesitate to contact me!

# Things to Remember

Players not able to make your team scheduled practice times: We understand not all parents may be able to make scheduled practice times each week. If you are unable to make the practice time, please let your coach know in advance if possible.

Parents be available for help: To make the coach's job easier, offer your assistance at practice. Come together to assign a parent be a Team-Mom or Team-Dad. Assistant Coaches are always welcome.

Awards: Coaches will not need to purchase awards for their teams. The YMCA will have awards available for each team at your last game.

End of Season Party: The end of season party is voluntary. If a coach/team decides to have an end of season party, try to plan it ahead of time.

## Weather Information/Cancellations

Games are played outside; therefore, the weather can determine if a game/practice is cancelled.

Please note field conditions may also determine if a game/practice is cancelled. If this occurs, YMCA Staff will contact all parents and coaches via Leagues (SGA).

Practice cancellation is up to the coach, unless the YMCA cancels in advance. If the coach cancels, the coach will contact all parents.

## 24 Hour Policy

- The Y Sports department does NOT permit any individual to confront a referee or Y Sports official at any time. If a situation arises in which a referee's actions create a problem, give the situation 24 hours to cool down.
- After the 24 hours have passed, if you still feel strongly that something should be done, please contact the Sports Director.

## Procedure for Head Injuries during YMCA Sports Programs:

1. Remove the athlete from play
2. Accident report filled out by either staff or volunteer (given to Sports Director same day)
3. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional
4. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion
5. Allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion

All parents and coaches will be sent the CDC website with further information about concussions:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/resources.html>

## Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law:

Refer to Parent/Athlete Information Sheet and Signature Form from Sports Director

## **Injuries:**

You are playing at your own risk. You will encounter physical contact in this game. It will be the intent of the officials assigned to your game, to provide a safe level of competition, however injuries may occur. In the event of an injury, an incident report MUST be filled out. The YMCA asks you provide us information regarding your family doctor as well as any allergies, however, we do not offer health insurance. Teach children proper techniques and how to play the game correctly. This will minimize injuries. In the event of a severe injury, the YMCA will follow up with all parties. Please make sure to communicate with us. We will assist to the best of our ability.



# **RULES OF PLAY - Baseball**

## **All Divisions (Ages 3-7)**

The "Y" believes in its philosophy of "Athletes first, winning second." Our Youth Sports Program is designed for all participants to grow in the areas of sportsmanship and physical fitness, as well as self-control, team effort, and skill development. It is a fun, instructional league where everyone plays and everyone wins! The following rules incorporate our philosophy into our Youth Baseball Program.

### **LEAGUE RULES**

1. The score will not be kept for any age division.
2. League standings will not be kept for any age division.
3. Any concerns about the league by coaches or parents should be discussed with the Sports Director.

### **GENERAL GAME RULES**

1. Field layout will be based on age-appropriate dimensions.
2. Every player **MUST** play at least half the game unless there are issues with a player's attendance or attitude.
3. Staff will either pick or one player from each team will play RPS to determine who is home or away.
4. Coaches for both teams or YMCA staff will call the game at the T-Ball level. YMCA staff, volunteer, or parent will be the umpire for the Coach-Pitch games.
5. Players will remain in the same batting rotation during the game. Coaches are encouraged to change the batting rotation for each game and to rotate players between positions so they get different experiences.
6. A batted ball must travel at least 5 feet in fair territory in order to be a valid hit—this will be a judgment call the umpire and both team coaches.
7. No stealing of bases will be allowed and no leading off.
8. No throwing of the bats will be allowed.
9. If a team is short of players on game-day, sharing of players between teams may be utilized.
10. IMPORTANT: Common sense and good sportsmanship should over-ride any/all disputes.

### **ATTIRE/EQUIPMENT**

1. Sport cleats are allowed and preferred. Regular gym shoes are allowed.
2. Youth baseballs, bats, and helmets will be supplied by the YMCA. Please note these are shared equipment. You can also bring your own equipment.

## **T-BALL (Age 3-5)**

1. All players on the team on offense will bat once each inning without regard to the total number of outs recorded. An offensive player can be called out if a defensive player makes a good play.
2. Number of Field Players: all players on the team will play the field every inning. There will be no catcher.
3. Pitch Count: each player will be allowed 5 total swings from the tee if needed.
4. Bat head will remain on the ground until the ball has been placed on the batting-tee by the Coach. The Coach will place the ball on the tee and adjust the height for each player.
5. Time: games consist of 4 innings or 1 hour in duration. A new inning will not start after 50 minutes of play.
6. No score will be kept.

## **COACH-PITCH (Age 6-7)**

1. Number of Field Players: 9 total players to include 5 infield (1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, Shortstop, and Pitcher) and 4 outfield. 6U will use an adult volunteer in the place of a catcher.
2. Coach will pitch to his own team at a distance no closer than 8 ft.
3. Pitch Count: Each player transitioning to Coach-Pitch will receive up to 5 pitches from their coach and be allowed up to three swings off the tee if necessary.
4. Inning is complete once the team goes through the batting order.
5. Outs Rule: 3 Outs or batting through the rotation (whichever comes first) will determine a change from offense to defense.
6. Ball is in play until the ball is controlled at a base or the official calls time., Players will be allowed to run one additional base on an overthrow.
7. A Two-base rule will be in effect when a batter hits a "good" hit.

# BE INVOLVED, BUT NOT *TOO* INVOLVED

YMCA Youth Sports needs enthusiastic involvement from parents to be successful. Volunteering your time not only helps the program; it's also an enjoyable way to meet other adults and make new friends. Here are just a few ways to become involved:

- Be a coach or an assistant coach
- Be an official or umpire
- Keep time or score
- Maintain equipment or facilities
- Coordinate refreshments
- Become part of a car pool

A healthy involvement will usually be welcomed by both the coach and your child. However, no coach wants to be - or should be – second-guessed by parents on strategy moves or other coaching decisions. Signs of parents being too closely involved include these:

- You are overly concerned with the outcome of the game
- You spend a lot of time talking with the coach about the game plan, player skill levels, and the way the coach conducts practices and coaches games
- Your child has stopped enjoying the sport or has asked you to stop coming to games or practices
- You require your child to take extra practice

Be involved, show interest, help the coach where they need help, encourage your child, and enjoy the sport yourself!

## PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Remain in the spectator area during competitions
2. Let coaches coach
3. Keep comments positive to players, parents, officials, and coaches of either teams
4. Come to games sober and refrain from drinking alcohol or smoking at contests
5. Cheer for your team
6. Show interest, enthusiasm, and support for your child
7. Be in control of your emotions
8. Help when you're asked to by a coach or an official
9. Thank the coaches, officials, and other volunteers who conducted the event

## HELPING YOUR CHILD ENJOY SPORTS

You can help your child enjoy sports by doing the following:

- Developing a winning perspective
- Building your child's self-esteem
- Emphasizing fun, skill development, and striving to win
- Helping your child set performance goals

### DEVELOPING A WINNING PERSPECTIVE

Every decision parents make in guiding their children should be based first on what's best for the child, and then second on what may help the child win. Stated in another way, this perspective places **Athletes First, Winning Second**. We're not saying winning is unimportant. Winning, or striving to win, is essential to enjoyable competition. Pursuing victory and achieving goals are sweet rewards of sport participation. But they can turn sour if, through losing, you or your child lose the proper perspective also. An obsession with winning often produces a fear of failure, resulting in below average performances and upset children.

### BUILDING YOUR CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM

Building self-esteem in your child is one of your most important parenting duties. It's not easy, and it's made even more difficult in sport by the prevailing attitude of "winning is everything." Athletes who find their self-worth through winning will go through tough times when they lose. Building self-esteem in your child takes more than encouragement. You need to show your child unconditional approval and love. Don't praise dishonestly; children can see through that. No matter the amount of mistakes your child may make, show the same amount of love and approval for them that you showed before the game.

### EMPHASIZING FUN, SKILL DEVELOPMENT, AND STRIVING TO WIN

The reason you should emphasize fun is quite simple: without it, your child may not want to keep playing. Kids don't have fun when they stand around in practice or sit on the bench during games, when they feel pressure to win and don't improve or learn new skills. Conversely, they do have fun when practices are well organized, they get to play in games, they develop new skills, and the focus is on striving to win.

### HELPING YOUR CHILD SET PERFORMANCE GOALS

Performance goals - which emphasize individual skill improvement - are much better than the outcome of the goal of winning for two reasons:

1. Performance goals are in the athlete's control.
2. Performance goals help the athlete improve.

Performance goals should be specific, and they should be challenging but not too difficult to achieve. You (and your child's coach) should help your young athlete set such goals. Help your child focus on performance goals before a game; this focus will help sports be an enjoyable learning experience for your child.

# HEALTHY KIDS

## Hints for keeping happy, healthy, HOT kids hydrated!

As the kids explode out of doors and indoors, make sure they are prepared. Drink WATER! Water is a vital ingredient for keeping body temperature in check. Water lost as sweat needs to be replaced to avoid dehydration. Thirst doesn't kick in until approximately 2% of body weight is lost as sweat, so make sure that kids are drinking BEFORE they get thirsty! Dehydration, left untreated, can lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion and very serious heat stroke. Closely watch kids for signs of dehydration - including fatigue; dry lips and tongue; low energy; grayish skin; and lack of tears. Since children's body temperature rises faster than adults, it is essential that kids get plenty of fluids to keep them cool—especially when it's hot and humid!

## What you can do to keep kids hydrated

Make sure that kids drink fluids at every meal and snack time throughout the day, and during every period of physical activity. During physical activity (and especially on hot days), make sure that kids drink frequently, even if they are not thirsty. Every 20 minutes, give younger kids 5 ounces of cold water (about the size of a small juice box—or 10 gulps), and give teens about 9 ounces. Offer cold water – it's absorbed faster! Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks – these are absorbed more slowly.

### Snack Sense Tips

Create snacks that include choices from each of the following groups:

**Fruits and Vegetables:** frozen grapes, berries, or melon chunks; precut orange wedges; apples; pears; bananas; applesauce; pepper strips; carrot sticks or baby carrots; sliced cucumbers or squash; pea pods; green beans or jicama sticks. A quick ranch dressing or plain yogurt and honey dipping sauce make it fun!

**Proteins:** Peanut or other nut butters; hummus or chick peas; cheese; yogurt; hard boiled eggs; tuna fish (the new pouch preparation is great!); a handful of unsalted nuts (peanuts, cashews, walnuts or almonds); soybeans (edamame) with or without the pods (find them in the frozen foods aisle; simply defrost and eat!).

**Whole Grains:** whole wheat pita or flatbread; whole wheat or graham crackers; RyVita crisps; whole wheat

toaster waffles; trail mix or granola; oat bran mini muffins; fig bars; or dry whole-grain cereal.

**A note about trans fats:** Many snack foods tend to be high in unhealthy trans fats, especially crackers and grain-based products. Purchase products that have no "partially hydrogenated oils" or "shortening" present in the ingredient listing. Products labeled "Zero Trans Fats" may have up to .5 g of trans fats per serving, so a quick label check helps to avoid these unhealthy fats.

# SNACK SCHEDULE

Please ask if any children have any allergies before choosing your snack choices.

Game 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 7 \_\_\_\_\_

Game 8 \_\_\_\_\_

Please have each parent sign-up for a game or practice. The kids LOVE snack time!

The YMCA encourages all parents/coaches to make healthy snack choices for the children. Some recommended items include:

Pretzels

Water

Fruits/ Veggies

100% Juice

Fruit bars / granola bars

Light popcorn

Trail mix

Carrot Sticks

Raisins

Nuts

Sunflower seeds

