Magdalena Ecke Family YMCA

Youth/Peewee Sports Parent & Coach Program Standards



Dear Parents & Coaches:

Welcome to the Magdalena Ecke Family YMCA youth sports program. We are pleased that you have chosen to participate in one of the largest kids' organizations in the world. Our program is based on over 150 years of experience working with children of all ages in developing healthy, confident, fit adults.

As a YMCA, we would like to share with parents the rewarding responsibility of helping your child grow. We are committed to creating an environment where kids can grow, develop, mature, and have fun. As parents, you play an important part in that environment by reinforcing the program, especially between practices and games. Kids want to feel good about themselves. They also want their parent to feel good about them. Effective involvement of parents meets both objectives.

Specifically, you participate when you:

- 1. Support your child's participation by praising improvements and what is done well.
- 2. Attend practices, games, and special events when possible. Commitment is key!
- 3. Are aware of the youth sports philosophy and goals and abide by them. This especially applies to showing respect for officials, coaches, opposing teams, and fellow team members.
- 4. Spend time with your child working on skills and attitudes developed during practice and games.
- 5. Spend time with your child listening as he or she talks about accomplishments and feelings.
- 6. Volunteer in a way that will help the program.

Our program emphasis is on having fun and learning to enjoy the sport. It is also to learn the life-long values of sportsmanship, self-respect, respect for others, and sound attitudes about winning and losing.

Character Development: Defined as "the ethical traits that define a person; attributes; held values." The YMCA of San Diego County has adopted the following character development values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.

We hope this will provide you with some insight on what we are attempting to do. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me, that's what I am here for.

Sincerely, Chasen Eddow Youth / Peewee Sports Director ceddow@ymca.org 760.942.9622 Ext. 12572

YMCA Youth Sports – Every Kid is A Winner

Over the years the YMCA, locally and nationally, has observed an every-increasing trend toward more organized and more competitive sports for kids. At the same time, kids are burning out on sports by the time they reach high school. Instead of feeling excited about trying to improve, they are increasingly labeled as "good" or "bad" athletes, and treated accordingly by coaches and other kids.

YMCA Youth Sports are different. The emphasis is on having fun and enjoying the sport. We also emphasize the lifelong values of sportsmanship, self-respect, respect for others, and valuing the effort instead of whether you win or lose.

Many children experience sports for the first time in a YMCA youth sports program, and that is something we like to see. Recently studies have shown that kids who participate in a variety of sports, especially in their early years, enjoy sports more and are less likely to get injured due to repetitive motion in one direction. Our slogan "It's For Everybody", means just that. Regardless of the ability level, we have a program that they can participate in, and thrive.

Competition is an important part of the program, but it is kept in its proper perspective. We use the sense of competition to challenge kids to achieve new heights. How you play and how you feel about yourself are more important than whether or not you win. In our coaches' trainings, we emphasize the recreational aspect of our program. We discuss the need to keep competitive instincts in perspective with our overall goals.

In order to reinforce these concepts, the Magdalena Ecke Family YMCA makes the following policies:

- Each child will play at least one half of each game.
- No league standings are kept.
- Every child receives a trophy at the end of the season, regardless of their performance during the season.

In short, YMCA Sports allows every kid to be a winner!

Fair Play Concepts

Playing sports can be an exciting and enjoyable experience. The feeling of being excited and having fun are closely tied to your attitudes – what you think and feel about the game, the other team, and yourself. People often speak about the concept of "fair play". But what exactly is fair play? Here are some of the key points:

Respect for the Other Team

You need the other team. Without the other team, you can't play. So you need to show respect for the other players by treating them as needed partners, not as enemies. When you play against a good, strong team that you respect, you usually play a better game.

Respect for Yourself

We know that the way people look at things influences what they do. So, if you think of yourself as a good player, as an important part of the team, you are more likely to play like one – to set goals for yourself, practice on your own, and perform well in games.

Cooperation with Officials

The rules of the game help you play the game better. Fair play means that you go along with the rules and cooperate with the referees, who are there for one main purpose – to make sure the game is played well. If you are really honest with yourself and with the referees, you'll usually get more out of the game. We have zero tolerance with any participant or parent arguing with or berating officials.

Building A Team

To be a good team member, you need to get to know all of your teammates and the coach and to let them get to know you. We are all different in ability and in skills. Fair play is listening to each other, learning from each other, sharing ideas and feelings, and helping each other increase strengths and reach goals.

Keeping Winning in Perspective

Children by nature do not put as much emphasis on who is winning or losing, but rather on how much fun they are having. If we as staff and parents can encourage this attitude which is already ingrained in them, then they will carry their love for sports into adulthood. The most important competition is within each child – to challenge him or herself to achieve greater accomplishments than the last time.

Important Do's and Don'ts for Parents/Coaches

- 1. **Do allow your child to experience the game for him/herself.** Your child on the floor is not you. If he makes a mistake, it's his mistake. If he makes a basket, it's his basket. Glory or grief, it's his game.
- 2. Let your child keep the game in perspective. Chances are the "big game" isn't as important to your child as it is to you. If you spend the day staying calm instead of talking about the "big game" your child will feel less pressure and have more fun.
- 3. **Don't criticize your child or other children on your child's team or other teams.** What took weeks of patient effort can be undone with a few unkind words. Remember the power you have over these kids.
- 4. **Feel free to shout encouragement during the game.** Yelling instructions, however, will distract your child and keep them from hearing what the coach is saying. Remember that the coach has been trained to lead the team.
- 5. Support the coach, even if it seems that (s)he is not doing what you want him to do. Before you complain, decide whether you're ready to give up your valuable free time to step into that coach's shoes.
- 6. **Don't argue with the referees.** Kids will adopt your habits when they get older, so consider the ramifications of your actions. Respect for the game officials is a fundamental aspect of the values we teach. We expect all parents to act in agreement with this practice, and will not tolerate any negative talk or berating of officials.
- 7. **Let your child mature athletically at his/her own pace.** Don't put him into a "good" or "bad" category.
- 8. **Praise your child for simply performing.** Don't dwell on a mistake with scorn or anger. After all, these are children.
- 9. **Don't forget to praise all the players after the game, especially if they lost.** Remember we want to reward the effort, not necessarily the result.
- 10. And please, don't take sports too seriously. Even success in the "big game" won't provide the answer to world hunger. Let it just be fun!

YMCA Youth Sports Spectator's Code of Conduct

- 1. Remember that children play organized sports for enjoyment. They are not there to provide entertainment, and they are not miniature pro-athletes.
- 2. Be on your best behavior. Please refrain from using profane language or harassing players, other parents, coaches, or officials.
- 3. Applaud good plays by your own team AND the visiting team.
- 4. Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them, there would be no games.
- 5. Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake during a game or practice.
- 6. Condemn the use of violence in all forms.
- 7. Respect the officials' decisions.
- 8. Encourage players to always play according to the rules.
- 9. HAVE FUN! Make it enjoyable for you and your child.