



WELCOME!

Youth Coach Manual

Mahomet Parks and Recreation would like to thank you for volunteering your time as a youth sports coach. Your efforts and guidance will surely make an impact on our youth. It is the intention of the Rec Staff that this manual serves as a guide to our youth sports programs. You may be a new coach or a seasoned veteran; either way we believe you will find this manual both helpful and informative. We so appreciate the work you are doing for our community's children.

We believe these experiences will help shape them into the leaders of the future. We also believe that the most important item to be stressed in this manual is that winning is not everything. Competition is expected, and somewhat inevitable, but a "win at all cost" attitude can be destructive. Each child has his or her own reasons for wanting to participate in youth sports, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they have the opportunity to do so. Please take the time and read through this information. As the season progresses and you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. Thanks for making Mahomet a better place to live and play!

Sincerely, Mahomet Parks and Recreation Staff

Contact Information

Office Number: (217) 586-6025

Office Address: 218 S Lake of the Woods Rd.

Office Hours: 8:00AM – 2:00PM, Monday – Friday

Email: mahometrec@mahomet-il.gov

Mission Statement:

The mission of Mahomet Recreation is to improve the quality of life for all participants by meeting the needs of the community through the provisions of safe, excellent, recreational and leisure-time activities.

Keep it
FUN



Keep it
SIMPLE

The main reason youth participate in sports is to have fun. How much they are concerned about the scoreboard can be greatly influenced by you. We strongly believe that the experience, development and safety of our participants come before anything else, including winning. **Please help us convey to our players the importance of having fun, building friendships and enjoying sports in a recreational environment.**

TEACH! Every child has the right to learn sports in a safe and comfortable environment. For many, it will be the only organized sport they play. Stick to the basics – help players build a strong foundation. There are many lessons to learn besides the game. Please incorporate teamwork, sportsmanship and positive thinking in all activities. Recognize that all children are not the same and respect their individual differences.

YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO GREATLY INFLUENCE YOUR PLAYERS.

Core Principles:

- Fun
- Physical Fitness
- Teamwork
- Fair Play
- Skill Development

Eight Ways to Motivate Your Athletes

1. *Recognize achievement*

Many young athletes will develop self-confidence and the motivation to try harder upon receiving recognition for their efforts, especially when it comes from someone they respect, such as a coach, parent or senior player. Recognize athletes' achievements in a variety of areas in addition to those related to performance or skill development.

These might include:

- Positive social behavior
- Regular attendance
- Caring for equipment
- Assisting the coach, official or younger athletes

2. *Set Goals*

Success or failure should not be determined by the scoreboard, nor by the number of games won. Provide opportunities for all your athletes to experience success by setting goals in both the short term and long term. Goal setting can have a dramatic positive effect on both motivation and skill development.

You can set specific performance goals that can, where possible, be measured. For example: "In this activity see how many times you can only use one hand."

An essential feature of goal setting is giving frequent feedback. Otherwise, the tracking of progress may become difficult and minor improvements may not be obvious.

3. *Self-motivation*

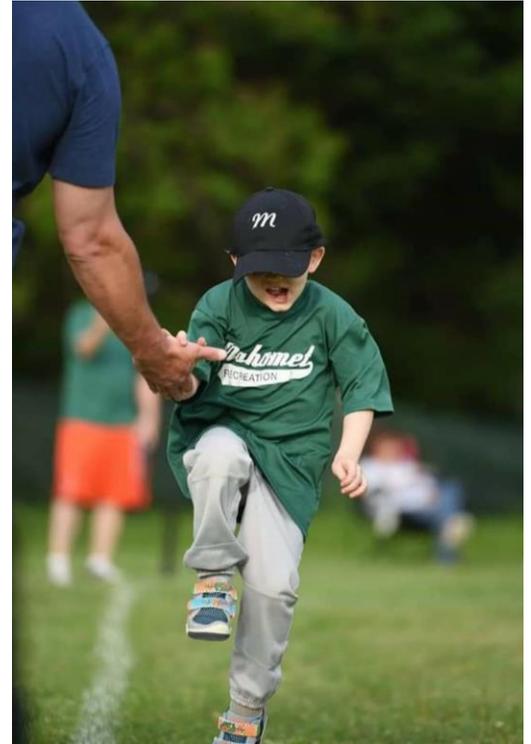
The feeling of pride and self-confidence that arises from success and the feedback gained from the coach and significant others may be more important than the achievement itself. It encourages the development of self-motivation, reducing a young person's need for reinforcement.

4. *Provide leadership opportunities*

Providing opportunities for leadership and expecting your athletes to assume (not too great) responsibilities are very important. Acknowledging their efforts through leadership motivates further success.

5. *Be consistent and enthusiastic*

The mood of the coach affects how young people enjoy their sport. The environment a coach creates, what they say and how they say it, should be consistent, caring and enthusiastic. The coach's behavior towards all young people, regardless of their sporting ability, should be the same.



6. Provide challenges

Do not underestimate the motivational value of small-sided competitive activities or challenges.

7. Vary your practices drills & make practices fun

A variety of practice routines and activities will reduce the possibility of boredom.

8. Be organized

Nothing bores or frustrates young people more than waiting in long lines or watching more talented athletes dominate the equipment. Grab a mom or dad to help if you find yourself unable to prevent lines/waiting.

Safety

The safety of children is extremely important. Here are some strategies to help you safeguard any children or youth in your supervision:

- Ensure that you are the last person to leave practice/game. Wait until all players have either left practice/game or have been picked up by a responsible adult.
- Talk to parents/legal guardians and introduce yourself. This initial contact can facilitate communication between you and parents regarding any player or team matters.
- If an emergency arises, report events as soon as possible to your Mahomet Recreation staff.

Accident Procedure

Step 1: Deal with the immediate crisis

- Call 911 as necessary - Do NOT wait for the parent/guardian
- Treat the injured person
- Do not move the person if a head or neck injury or a (possible) fracture or dislocation injury
- Contact the parents/guardians – have someone find supervisor staff onsite

Step 2: Let staff onsite know – Help fill out Onsite Accident/Incident Report

- Fill out the form completely and accurately; do not give your opinion; provide facts and record witnesses to the incident.

First Aid and AED will be in the concession stand at your game / practice location.

Certified First Aid/AED staff will be onsite at every MPRD activity.

Expectations

What you can expect from MPRD:

- We will provide the necessary training materials for youth sports coaches.
- We will provide all Team shirt and equipment for teams.
- We will provide participation awards to players under 3rd grade.
- We will provide a practice/game schedule for all leagues.
- We will begin and end games on time.
- We will strictly enforce rules, especially rules of sportsmanlike conduct.
- We will treat players, coaches, parents and spectators fairly and equally.
- We will promptly address any concerns or questions you have.



What we expect from you:

- MPRD expects that volunteer coaches will abide by spirit of the rules and all info outlined in this Coaches Manual.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches set an example to our youth participants of sportsmanlike conduct, teamwork and respect for officials.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches be a resource person to their team and communicate any important information to them in a timely manner.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches' first concerns are the safety of the youth in the program and their overall experience. Winning should not be the focus.

Background Investigation Forms: All volunteers must submit a background investigation form before they are able to coach. All background forms are submitted to the Mahomet Police Department and are completely confidential.



Pictures

Every season, team and individual pictures are taken. These pictures are optional and are not included in the price of the program. A picture time will be assigned to your team, which is listed on the game schedule. To ensure that all team members show up for the team picture, a reminder email the night before is helpful. Even if families are not buying pictures, encourage them to still be in the team picture. If there are problems with the photos, the photographer needs to be contacted directly. This information is located on the picture envelope. The picture envelopes will be handed out to coaches to then distribute to parents.

Awards



MPRD provides participation awards to all participants under 3rd grade. These will be given to the coaches on the last game of the season. If there is a tournament – first and second place trophies will be distributed.

Parents

Parents are not allowed on the field unless they are a head or assistant coach. Parents are under the same sportsmanlike conduct rules as the coaches and players. Please encourage them to cheer and support all teams in a positive way. Parents like to be informed. Please clearly communicate information to them. MPRD will send a sample email in your pre-season info that you can modify and make your own.

- Introduce yourself and give parents your contact information.
- Recruit a team mom or dad if there are dates you can't be there.
- Discuss the practice and game schedules.
- Explain snacks. Come up with who is in charge of the list.
- Go over rules & discuss your goals for the season
- Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Focus on the kids! This is their team, not their parent's team.



Concerns/Problems

If a problem/concern arises during the season, the department encourages its staff, officials, participants, parents and coaches to follow the “24-hour rule” before communicating the concern. In other words, give it 24 hours and allow the problem or concern to “cool off”, you may be surprised at the results of this approach. Obviously, major concerns should be brought to our attention immediately.

Rosters/Schedules

Coaches will receive their full roster & all info to their email the morning after a coaches meeting! Team schedules and web rosters will be posted online 3 weeks prior to the start date of the season. We encourage all coaches and parents to NOT print the schedule, as the most updated schedule (rainouts, updates) will always be online. Changes to the schedule may be made by the league coordinator at any time, but not without proper notification to coaches. Schedules and web rosters may be found at www.mahometrecreation.com.

Weather Cancellations

For any weather or cancellations call 586-7246, any cancellations will be posted online and on our voice mail by 4:30 pm and by 7:30 am on Saturdays. If there are no updated announcements, please assume all games will continue as scheduled. Generally: if school closes or dismisses early, recreation activities will be cancelled.

Text Alerts - to receive messages via text instead, go to mahoemtrecreation.com and click on Field Status. Next, click on the Rainout Line Banner. Then click "Email & Text Alerts" in the left-hand column of the page to sign up.

Uniforms and Dress Code

All league participants and coaches must wear recreation issued T-shirts. Players must tuck them inside their pants.

Basketball: No pants with zippers are allowed, including jeans. No extra equipment is allowed (i.e. bandannas, hats, jewelry). Proper non-marking gym shoes should be worn, no street shoes are allowed on the gym floor.

Soccer: Soccer cleats are allowed; however, no metal spikes are allowed. Shin guards are required. No extra equipment is allowed (i.e. bandannas, jewelry).

Baseball/Softball/T-ball: Hats/visors are also included. Participants are encouraged to wear baseball pants, shorts or sweatpants, refrain from wearing jeans. No extra equipment is allowed (i.e. bandannas, non-recreation issued hats/visors, jewelry). Proper baseball/softball cleats should be worn – No Metal Spikes Allowed.

Flag Football: Flags must be visible with one flag on each side of player and worn at the hip. Flags cannot be worn on the front or back of the player. No metal spikes or cleats are allowed. No extra equipment is allowed (i.e. bandannas, hats, jewelry). Don't forget to put on some layers when it's cold!

Practice Format

Practice schedules will always be distributed to coaches only. The coach is then responsible of passing on the confirmed dates to their team. They are never mandatory.

It is up to the coaches to determine how practices are run. Here are some suggestions for an effective practice:

1. **Have an outline** of what will take place before practice begins.
2. **Stretch** This will reduce the chances of injuries.
3. **Skill warm-up** Revise a skill taught in an earlier session and reinforce the key points as players warm up. Remember to use praise.
4. **Skill Development** Demonstrate the new skill you have planned for the session. Remember to stick to the basics. Demonstrate slowly and in pieces if needed. Practice the skill. Observe all players so that you can praise good technique and spot basic errors. Be positive and supportive as you correct mistakes.
5. **Modified game** Play a game. Make sure no one is sitting out for an extended amount of time.

Sport specific drills and ideas are always available by contacting MPRD office

Practice Times and Availability

Basketball: Due to the limited availability of the school facilities, practices are one weeknight per week either Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Practice times are typically 45 minutes long between 5:30PM and 7:30PM. It is NOT first come, first serve. If you desire different practice times, you must seek out approval from the Program Coordinator. Note –Practice days/times have been reserved through the MS School District. Expect alterations/changes during the season as a result of school scheduling conflicts.

Baseball/Softball/T-ball: A pre-season practice schedule will be made. This will include 2-3 practices prior to the game season start. During the season, practice locations and times are available on a first-come, first serve basis unless otherwise notified. Baseball field availability is VERY limited during the season.

Soccer & Flag Football: A pre-season schedule will be made for 3rd grade and up. Practice space at Barber Park will be available on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays on a first-come, first-serve basis. On all other days, there are open spaces in the South-West corner of the field that are usually open and available for practice. Never practice on Field 1 or 2 at Barber – those fields are reserved for scheduled games only. No more than one practice session per week should ever be held.

Before and After the Game

Before games: Games are scheduled with limited leeway time. Please make sure that your team is on time and ready to play at your assigned time. Introduce yourself to the officials. Ask parents to not sit on the “bench side.”

After games: Quickly do a cheer and shake hands with the opposing team. Clear off the fields quickly so that the next game can begin on time. Compliment your team on their playing. If your team has chosen to do snacks, please pass them out off the fields. Remind the players and parents of the next practice/game.

Rules

League Rules may be found at mahometrecreation.com under “Recreation Forms.” Rules change from year to year – so you will find the most recent sport rules at a time only.

Game / Practice locations

All addresses for your game or practice can be found at mahometrecreation.com under “Facilities.”

If you have any additional questions, please contact MPRD Program Coordinator:

Denise Reynolds, dreynolds@mahomet-il.gov