



**RC SPORTS**

## **YOUTH BASKETBALL COACHES HANDBOOK**



**THANK YOU** for making the decision to volunteer as a coach for the Youth Basketball Program. It takes a special person to make a commitment to create an impact in our community. Volunteer coaches are an important component to the success of the City of Rancho Cucamonga's Youth Sports Programs. Coaching our youth participants should be a fun and rewarding experience.

You are playing a key role in the development of skills and character of individuals on your team. We truly believe that positive experiences through sports participation help build well-rounded children. Coaches provide leadership that directly impacts our participants' overall experience in our sports programs. This manual is a tool to assist you in your coaching success.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

The main objective of the City's Youth Sports Programs is to provide a positive and fun experience for all involved. We emphasize an enjoyable recreational experience that promotes the development of skills. "Fun" is essential; if it is not "fun" young people will not be interested in playing sports. Skill development is equally as important as making this a fun experience. The rewarding challenges that playing sports offers leads to improved self-confidence. We believe that the knowledge and skills gained in the program are more important than a win.

The benefits of participating in a youth sports program include:

- Enjoyment and recreation
- Development of skilled performance
- Physical fitness and agility
- Knowledge of conditioning techniques
- Development of interpersonal skills (self-discipline, teamwork, goal-setting and self-control)

## **ROLE OF THE COACH**

The benefits of participation in the Youth Sports Program are directly related to the quality of leadership you provide. The players will model many of your traits, positive or negative. It is important to establish the precedent that when you speak, valuable information is being communicated.

Appropriate objectives for a given level of play and effective teaching of those objectives benefit the players enormously. Once negative or incorrect skills are taught, they are difficult and time consuming to correct. It is important that coaches make a commitment to learning and apply what they have learned for the players talent to be fully developed. It is the primary purpose for our Coaches to:

- Effectively teach the skills, rules and strategies of the game in an orderly and enjoyable environment.
- Teach and model desirable inter-personal skills.
- Have awareness of each participant's ability and challenge them through active practice sessions and games.

Good **organization and administration** are critical for successful coaching. Coaches must determine and clarify the major purpose of their activity. This can be achieved by:

- Identifying your mission as a coach.
- Determine and share the goals and objectives for the season.
- Implementing the season plan at practices and games.

- Evaluating your coaching strategy and adjusting if necessary.

The **effectiveness** of your coaching is most likely based on the following principles:

- Appropriate player expectations.
- Clear communication and instruction.
  - *Players must have a clear understanding of the skills to be learned and the key elements of performance. Clearly stated objectives are a pre-requisite for effective instruction.*
- Maintaining an orderly environment.
- Maximizing practice time by keeping on task.
- Monitoring progress and evaluating players.
- Providing specific feedback for improvement.

**Evaluation** of your players is critical to success. You will know very little about many of the players on your team. Improving player performance is contingent on evaluating their current ability. Player evaluation must occur skill by skill, practice by practice, throughout the entire season. As needs of your players change, there should be corresponding changes in your instructional emphasis. Observe your players while they participate in individual and small group skills. Understanding of the game can be evaluated by noting the response of the players to situations which require a decision prior to acting during drills, scrimmages and games. Be sure to ask questions to observe what they know and what they can apply. Coaches can assess the social needs of players through informal conversation and observation of interactions with teammates.

Players will learn from what you teach and from what you do. Players will notice how organized you are, how well you instruct, if you know the rules, if you are interested in their growth or the win/loss record, how you control your emotions, and if you are fair. You have become a significant role model in their life.

## **DISCIPLINE**

It is your responsibility to have a systematic plan for maintaining discipline before your season gets started. Identifying what is desirable and undesirable conduct by your players is the first step. Your players should be aware and expected to follow the Program's Code of Conduct and involved in establishing the rules for the team. Children need clearly defined limits and structure for how they should behave.

Not only are rules needed to maintain discipline, but enforcement of those rules must be carried out so that recurrences are prevented. Rules should be enforced through rewards and consequences. When determining rewards and consequences, use rewards that are meaningful to your players and appropriate to the situation. Be sure that all players are aware of the rewards and consequences up front.

Coaches' critical comments may correct the misbehavior but can also create an intimidating, negative atmosphere that reduces learning and motivation. Many of the problems associated with discipline could be avoided if coaches anticipate the occurrence of misbehavior and develop policies to correct the actions. *Refer to the Program Rules and Regulations and Code of Conduct.*

## **WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH PARENTS**

Support and assistance from parents can be very helpful. It is important that you communicate to parents how you perceive your role as the coach, the purpose and objectives of the City's Youth Sports Program and the responsibilities that parents and children have in the positive environment that the program is intended to offer.

We ask that coaches host a parent orientation meeting. An agenda for this meeting should be established to keep order. This meeting will serve as an opportunity to share the program's Rules and Regulations, Code of Conduct, give details about the season, and provide a means for collecting vital information. When needed, face to face meetings with parents will go a long way towards unifying coaches and parents.

**Thank you** again for your support of the City of Rancho Cucamonga's Youth Basketball program! City Sports staff are here to assist you, below is a list of our Youth Basketball Program staff:

For more information or questions, you can contact the sports division at [Sports@cityofrc.us](mailto:Sports@cityofrc.us)

**NO TOLERANCE POLICY!**