



Chico Area Recreation and Park District
Youth Sports
Parent/Guardian Handbook

*Revised 4/12



Welcome to the CARD Youth Sports Family!

Welcome to the family! Every participant, player, parent, coach and staff is considered to be part of the CARD Youth Sports Family. Working together, we will:

- Promote respect, citizenship and sportsmanship
- Teach the fundamentals of sports, with the progression of skills, drills and game play throughout the season.
- Make sure all the players know that they matter, they are safe, they are supported, and they are connected.
- Strive to make sure that everyone is having fun!
- Give all players a “love of the game,” and spark an interest that will last a lifetime.

The golden rule of the family is to remember that we are all here for the kids. Our goal is to not only make them better athletes, but better people. We all strive to never lose sight of this goal, regardless of any competition, frustration or problem.

Who is in the Family?

We are all family, but you might start to wonder who is specifically in the family and who you go to when you need help. All of the below people can help you with any questions, comments or concerns you may have:

- Supervisors: usually in the CARD office from 8am-5pm.
- Officials: each game will be umpired by a CARD Youth Sports staff. All umpires have been trained and will work directly with the Head Umpire.
- Field/Gym Supervisor: usually on site, works closely with the supervisors in the program and ensuring everything is running smoothly. Should your behavior not warrant good sportsmanship, the field supervisor reserves the right to step in and ask you to leave the facility.
- Coaches Liaison: we have a dedicated staff to help all of our coaches develop their skills in order to give the participants the best possible coaching experiences!

Contact information that will be useful throughout the season:

- Senior Supervisor, Ann Willmann: 895-4711 ext. 115, awillmann@chicorec.com
- Youth Sports Supervisor, Erin Gonzales, 895-4711 ext. 112, egonzales@chicorec.com.
- CARD Front Desk, 895-4711
- CARD Weather Line, 895-4711 ext. 3

General Information

Uniforms.

In an effort to reduce program costs and offer low program fees to our customers, the Youth Sports Department will be using a single jersey for all sports (ie: once you buy one jersey, you can use it for all programs that require a jersey). Each program will not whether

you will need to purchase/use a jersey in the information flyer. Jerseys are available for purchase in the CARD Office for \$12. Visit the Youth Sports policies page for more information: <http://www.chicorec.com/Athletics/Youth-Sports-Policies/index.html>.

Coaches Liaison.

In order to present the best possible league and coaches to you and your family, we have incorporated in a Coaches Liaison into all leagues. The Coaches Liaison will actively help develop and communicate with all coaches. If you have any problems, issues, or even kudos for a coach, please do not hesitate to call the CARD Office and we can put our Coaches Liaison to work!

Problems, issues, testimonials, surveys.

Please do not hesitate to call the CARD office to talk about any problems or issues you are having on your team. We want to give all players a love of the game, and expect every kid to walk away from the season with a positive experience. If your child is not having a positive experience in anyway we want to fix that right away! It is difficult to make any positive changes when we hear feedback only at the end of the season...so please do not hesitate to call us!

We will also have customer testimonials on site the last few weeks of the program. Please take the time to fill out one of these forms, as it gives us a good gauge of what we are doing well overall and what we need to improve on!

In order to help give feedback to our coaches, we ask that every player and parent fill out a survey regarding your coach. All surveys will of course be confidential, and give us an opportunity to raise our level of coaching through the feedback we get. We will either email out the survey mid-season or have it on site mid-season.

Where do I sit when I am watching the game?.

There is limited seating in all fields/gyms, so please bring your own chair! We ask that when in the gym or on the field, everyone sits on the opposite side of the players/coaches.

The website.

The best place for all of the most up to date information is CARD's website at www.chicorec.com. When you click on the "Athletics" tab on the left, it will pull down a list of all of the sports that CARD offers. Click on the specific sport that you are looking and scroll down to find the program you are interested in. The parent handbooks, rules, standings and the most recent game schedules are always available at this location.

Informational flyers.

Informational flyers reviews the programs specifics. It is important that you read the informational flyer BEFORE you start the program, as it has some important information that every needs to know. All informational flyers can be found at the CARD Office front desk or online at: www.chicorec.com/Athletics.

Waitlist procedures.

If you do not register by the program deadline, or if the program is filled, you will be placed on a waitlist. You may NOT participate in the program if you are on the waitlist. A CARD staff will call you and let you know if we are able to place you into the program. If you do not hear from a CARD staff within two weeks of the program starting, you unfortunately did not get into the program.

Weather line.

In the event that fields are not playable, please call our weather line at 895-4711 ext. 3 for updates to programs due to weather.

Revised and schedules.

In the case of game cancellations, revised schedules will be posted online within 72 business hours. Please check www.chicorec.com/Athletics for the most up to date schedules.

Team formation policy.

To find detailed information about how teams were formed, please go to <http://www.chicorec.com/Athletics/Youth-Sports-Policies/index.html>.

Rules of play.

The general rules of plays are adopted from the National Federation of State High School Associations. Any adjustments made to rules are for sportsmanship, safety or age. The adjusted rules can be found at www.chicorec.com/Athletics.

Every in the Family is Great at Youth Sports (some just don't know it yet)!

The number one reason that kids leave youth sports is because they are not having fun! As part of the Youth Sports Family, our job is to make sure that this NEVER happens. In order to achieve this goal and to give all players a "love of the game," we ask that everyone follows these common Family rules and understandings:

Winning or learning?

What makes a good youth sports coach? One that says, "I don't care about winning, I want my players to develop skills and have fun." The problem is that is much easier said than done once game time hits! Let's face the TRUTH: winning is fun and losing is not. However, both are equally valuable to the maturing child. Thus, these three things need to be the main focus of the Youth Sports Family for all youth players:

- Have fun and build a love of the game.
- Improve and mature as an individual and grow their sports skills.
- It's not all about winning or losing. The question should be: did we learn from it?

What is said after the game?

Please make sure that you ALWAYS keep a positive attitude after the game (both in the car and at home). It is MUCH too easy to start talking about a bad official or something a player or coach "should have done." But regardless of what happened, life goes on so enjoy it. In order to build a "love of the game," parents need to ignore the negative and talk about the

positive. If your player starts talking negative, ask them to make two positive comments about the game. Always point out positive performance issues and not the outcome of the game.

How to redefine winning.

Everyone knows that winning is better than losing. However, what is important within youth sports is how we define winning. Our ultimate goal is to have a paradigm shift from winning is having more points than the other to winning is trying as hard as you can. There's more going on than finishing with the highest score...there are so many opportunities to learn from the experience. For example, if you can put forth maximum effort, you become a winner." If coaches and sports parents can structure conversations around this shift, kids won't feel as nervous and will have their success determined by their effort.

Parents should ask kids to do this to help them focus on effort and mini objectives, rather than outcome. Focus more on the process of the game rather than the score.

Mistakes are part of the journey.

Mistakes are part of the game; they are part of the journey to becoming a great athlete. The greatest success occurs if you make mistakes because you can't learn otherwise. Not only is it important to remind your child that mistakes are okay, but it is important to remind them that they should be used as a learning opportunity. For example, through positive reinforcement you can tell the athlete, "You didn't get the ball there, but you tried something new, and that's a step in the right direction. Great work."

That stupid official!

Did you know that most youth official are learning just like your player? Please never criticize an official for making bad calls, remember that you are setting an example for the participants. If you have a concern regarding an official, please talk to the Coach's Liaison, Field/Gym Supervisor, or to the Recreation Supervisor. CARD reserves the right to ask anyone on the premise to leave the area if they are not acting with good sportsmanship.

Sideline coaching...don't do it!

One of the key elements of a youth player, is developing their ability to make decisions on the field. Players should NEVER listen to anyone during the game except three people:

- Their coach.
- The official.
- Their teammates.

Please resist being a sideline coach, and let the coach lead the team. Parents should feel free to offer praise and applause for good plays and good behavior for their team and the OTHER team!

The Coach is the Coach.

All coaches should hold a parent meeting before their first game. At this time, they will go over their coaching philosophy, team goals, and so on. They will also address repercussions for being late, poor attitudes and other issues that might come up during the season. Please actively listen to the coach during this meeting and ask ANY questions that you might have.

Each coach has a specific and personal way of running their team that needs to be respected. CARD lets the coach's discretion decide repercussions for breaking team rules, being late, missing practices or poor sportsmanship.

Why did the Coach take my child out?

Good youth coaches know that all players should have equal playing time and probably play different positions. This is especially important within all elementary leagues. This is part of the growing and learning experience and is vital within sports. All players are guaranteed to play at least half of a game, unless there are disciplinary reason that they coach set up at the beginning of the season (breaking team rules, being late, missing practices, poor sportsmanship, etc)...which should have been discussed at the parent meeting at the beginning of the season.

Sportsmanship is the key.

Despite our every effort to ensure that all parents and bystanders in the crowd understand that there is a zero tolerance for any unsportsmanlike conduct...there is also those one or two people that never seem to understand the importance of staying positive! CARD reserves the right to ask any person in the gym/field to leave the vicinity if unsportsmanlike behavior occurs! Repercussions for those people are at the discretion of the Youth Sports department.

Communication is the key

The following information is to enhance communication between coaches, players, parents and umpires...we are all part of the Family and need to show each other respect because of it.

- Player/Coach Relationship
 - o This is an important relationship within the dynamics of the team.
 - o It is of great importance to make sure that open lines of communication exists between a player and a coach to discuss the good and the bad.
 - o Almost all problems can be solved between a player and the coach if open lines of communication are available.
 - o Coach are expected to give constructive criticism to all players, regardless of extenuating circumstances.
- Parent/Coach Relationship
 - o No parent should ever question or confront the coach immediately after a game or in front of players.
 - o If a parent wants to discuss a problem with the coach, please make an appointment with them to discuss your concerns.

When a player has a problem with a coach, parents and players need to take positive steps to remedy the situation:

- The athlete needs to speak to their coach first.
 - o Parents should encourage their athlete to speak directly to the coach before getting themselves involved.
- The athlete and parent speak to their coach.
 - o If the player's initial conversation with the coach results in an unsatisfactory answer, parent should set up a meeting with the coach to discuss the problem further.

- There is a meeting with the athlete, parents, coach, and a Coach's Liaison/Recreation Supervisor.
 - o If the above steps have been exhausted and the parties involved are still not satisfied with all the answers, you may wish to contact a supervisor.

Family Task List

We all have a part in the Family. Here are a few things we ask each member of the family to do. Please take a moment to review them with your child so you are all prepared for the first day of the program.

Drop off/pick up on time.

Please try and have all players to practice and games on time, if not early. Coaches spend a great deal of time prepping for practices and games. Remember that when you show up late, it makes everyone stop so that your child can be included in the practice or game. Thank you for being on time!

Have the right equipment for all practices and games.

A detailed list of equipment that is needed is available on the program Informational Flyer. But lets face it, kids are kids. Many simply don't prepare and forget simple things that make a big difference (water, athletic shoes, etc). Please remember to check the gear and make sure they have it for practices and games. We highly recommend that you teach your player to do this and make it their responsibility...and a final check by you before leaving the house is always a good idea!

Communicate when you are going to miss a practice or game.

There is a lot more to life than sports. If you have an important family matter or something comes up, simply call your coach and let the know in advance. A lot of time and effort goes into planning for game rotations and practice schedules that is crucial on the number of players expected to be there. Please be respectful of the coaches planning. Please call your coach directly as soon as you know if you are going to miss a practice or game.

Parent/Guardian Code of Ethics

Being a parent of a youngster involved in sports takes effort, commitment, and a healthy dose of patience. It means shuttling your child back and forth to practices and sneaking out of work early to attend games- and that's just the beginning! In order to ensure that all parents and guardians are aware of the minimum expectations of the "Family," we have included the Parent Guardian Code of Ethics from the National Alliance for Youth Sports:

- As a parent guardian of a Youth Sports participant, I pledge that:
 - o I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other sport events.
 - o I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.
 - o I will insist my child plays in a safe and healthy environment.
 - o I will provide support for coaches and officials in working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.

- I will demand a drug and alcohol free sports environment for my child and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for children and not for adults.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fan and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I will promise to help my child to enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing.

