



# CODE OF ETHICS

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## **HEY PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS - JOIN THE BACKYARD FLAG FOOTBALL TEAM!**

### **Volunteer Coaches and Assistants**

Parents or any individuals interested in volunteering one hour of their time per week during the nine week flag football season should contact the league office at (412) 318-4383 or by e-mail at [backyardfootball@comcast.net](mailto:backyardfootball@comcast.net). Volunteers are needed as coaches and assistants. Free training provided.

### **Backyard Flag Football/Coaching Philosophy**

We continually seek coaches who understand the principals of football and possess experience teaching basic physical skills to young players. Participation by all players is part of Backyard Flag Football's philosophy, so coaches must be able to make each player feel he or she is an important part of the team. Backyard Flag Football Youth Flag Football is not seeking "Vince Lombardi" type coaches that practice the kids to exhaustion in a military type manner - We have coaches, and are seeking individuals that will teach the kids the basics of football in an enjoyable yet competitive manner. The goal of the Backyard Flag program is to present the sport of football in a positive light to the youth of the community. In addition, our coaches must adhere to Backyard Flag guidelines established by the Backyard Football League; that is, no verbal or physical abuse of players, and no extensive practices. Backyard Flag practices are usually limited to one per week with games being played on Sundays.

### **What We Teach**

All of our coaches understand and follow the following Youth Coaching Principles, which include:

- teaching the kids the fundamental basics of football (passing, catching, running, holding the football properly, three point stances, etc.)

Coaching is an extremely important responsibility. A good coach always places the best interests of a player before winning - Yet Backyard Flag Football does want the kids to be part of a competitive game environment - Just simply not at all costs! The players and their parents have placed our coaches in a position of leadership, and thus have a responsibility to give them your best effort. Additionally, this football experience will play a significant factor in determining whether the players continue participating in football in the future.

### **Backyard Flag Football Youths Ten Coaching Guidelines**

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He or she should be sensitive to the children's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He or she should be dedicated to serving children and understand that football provides physical and emotional growth for its participants. Remember, Backyard Flag Football is for the children.
2. A coach needs to realize that he or she is a teacher, not a drill sergeant. He or she should help children learn and work to improve their skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the child transforms into the best interests of the game.



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3. The safety and welfare of the children never can be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push children beyond limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the football experience should not be one of them. Playing football is supposed to be fun.
5. A coach should care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth football program is a means to an end, not an end to itself.
6. A coach should encourage his players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. A coach needs to remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect the participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. He or she never should circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his or her opponents' team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He or she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he gets from his or her players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.

## **General Principles for Parents**

Athletes and coaches will not be able to perform at their best if parents do not have a clear understanding of the philosophies of the youth football program.

The following is a suggested guideline for parents:

1. Understand the daily pressures a child faces. Football should be an outlet and place for a player to have fun. Encourage your child and allow him or her to have a good time.
2. Remember that your child learns more from your actions than your words. Practice good sportsmanship by being respectful to players, parents, and coaches on both teams.
3. Parents should appreciate the efforts made by both teams. There is nothing wrong with applauding a good play made by the opponents.
4. Parents should support the coach, as long as the coach follows proper coaching guidelines. Parents should understand that most coaches are volunteers. It is inappropriate for a parent to coach a player who is on the field. Not only does it devalue the coach, it also confuses the player.
5. Parents should not embarrass their child by calling attention to themselves through loud or rude behavior.
6. Don't be a coach-be a parent. Offer encouragement and positive reinforcement. A sure way to dampen your child's enthusiasm is with constant criticism.



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7. Parents should encourage discipline by having their children arrive on time for practices and games.
8. Parents should help their children realize that belonging to a team requires commitment. Regular attendance and being prepared are necessary for the team to function smoothly.

Parents should volunteer their services whenever possible. This shows the participants the value of being a team player.

Parents should respect the officials and their calls. It is okay to disagree but inappropriate to disparage.

## **Referees' Responsibilities**

1. On the youth level, referees always should be aware that the participants are new to the game. Often, it is their first experience with organized sports.
2. Be familiar with rule modifications and their implementation.
3. A referee can act as a teacher by explaining a rule or call that is made.
4. Make calls consistent with the level of play.
5. Insist that the playing field and equipment are safe for the children. Use good judgment in assessing weather conditions (e.g. cancel games immediately in the event of lightning).
6. Promote good sportsmanship through respectful behavior to both coaches and teams.