

<b>CITY OF WHITEWATER POLICY</b>		<b>TITLE: YOUTH SPORTS POLICY</b>
<b>POLICY SOURCE:</b> Parks and Recreation Department	Parks and Recreation Board Approval Date: 08/09/10 Updated: 01/07/13	<b>TEXT NAME:</b> G:\Park & Rec\Policy\ Youth Sports Policy

### **Purpose**

It is the purpose of this policy to provide guidelines necessary to administer youth sports programs by the Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department.

### **Policy**

The Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department provides youth sports to allow all children an opportunity to have fun, participate, and learn fundamental sports skills. We are committed to providing both educational and recreational programs and services. Participants will learn sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, fair play and self-confidence. The sports environment will be safe and well maintained. Prudent behavior by adults is mandatory. Whitewater Parks and Recreation youth sports policies and procedures have been developed for:

- Whitewater Parks and Recreation youth sports programs
- Implementation and monitoring program for volunteer coach's certifications and training

### **Essential Components of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Youth Sports Philosophy**

1. All children in our community who meet the basic program registration requirements have a right to participate in youth sports programs.
2. Whitewater Parks and Recreation will offer programs at a reasonable cost in accordance with the Recreation Program Fee Policy
3. Whitewater Parks and Recreation youth sports leagues operate on an equal playing time philosophy for all participants.
4. Youth sports athletes may participate on only one Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department team per sport.
5. Participants in Whitewater Parks and Recreation youth sport leagues are allowed to "play up" only one grade level. Players cannot "play down" a grade.
6. Whitewater Parks and Recreation will recruit volunteer coaches and staff who have the ability to act as role models, mentors, and facilitators for its programs.
7. Youth sport program practices and games should be an enjoyable, challenging, and learning experience for all participants
8. Individuals in coaching and leadership positions in youth sport programs shall lead by example through the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship
9. Youth sports programs focus on the enjoyment of the sport – NOT the score.
10. All Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department youth sports program will embrace the concept of encouraging multiple sport athletes and that seasons will be structured to minimize overlap of programs.

## **Requirements and Accountability**

1. It is required that each team's Head Coach and listed assistant coaches be certified as a youth sports coach by a recognized certification program. The coaches education course must include the following information:
  - coaching philosophy
  - coaching responsibilities including examining your priorities as a coach
  - effective communication with athletes, parents, and officials
  - teaching sport skills
  - provide for safety and respond to injuries
  - practice planning
2. Whitewater Parks and Recreation will complete background checks on all volunteer coaches in cooperation of the Whitewater Police Department. All decisions to not allow an individual to coach will be determined by a committee including the Parks & Recreation Director, Police Chief, and City Manager.
3. Prior to the start of each season, each youth sport operated by Whitewater Parks and Recreation will offer a Parent Orientation Meeting. It is highly recommended that one or both of the parents/guardians attend one of the meetings. The Youth Sports Policy will be passed out and discussed, and other important information will be distributed.
4. The Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department will maintain a database of all youth sport coaches who meet the requirements of completing an education course and background check.
5. Each youth sport coach is required to document receipt of the youth sports policy.

## **Whitewater Parks and Recreation Complaint Against Coach Procedure**

When Whitewater Parks and Recreation receives a complaint about a coach, within three (3) days the Parks and Recreation Department will initiate a review process that includes:

1. Gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from interested parties involved to determine if a violation has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, other coaches, parents and children.
2. Require the coach to attend a meeting with the league supervisor to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident. This meeting will be documented.
3. The Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under the Youth Sports Policy. The disciplinary actions will be enforced and logged.

## **Enforcement of Code of Conduct**

Whitewater Parks and Recreation is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Conduct in youth sport programs. This Code of Conduct defines the expectations for individuals serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used by Whitewater Parks and Recreation, when necessary, to check behavior and to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

Whitewater Parks and Recreation firmly believes that for the sports experience to be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children. It is the duty of the Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department to respond to complaints against a coach in a Whitewater Parks and Recreation youth sports program. This is accomplished by initiating the

“Complaint Against a Coach Procedure” detailed in the section above. The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the Whitewater Parks and Recreation coach’s behavior.

In order to provide Whitewater Parks and Recreation the flexibility to take appropriate action when a coach is found to have violated this policy and/or the Coaches’ Code of Conduct, a range of possible actions have been developed.

Possible actions include:

- Warning to and/or apology from the coach
- Probation
- One Game Suspension
- Multiple Game Suspension
- Season Suspension
- Permanent Revocation of Coaching Certification

Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:

- First Offense
- Remorse
- Apparent Desire to Reform
- Other Good Coaching Attributes
- Dedication to Youth Sports

Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:

- Child Endangerment
- Violation of Law
- Prior Complaints/Review Action
- Lack of Remorse
- Number of Ethics Violated
- Number of Expected Behaviors Violated
- Breach of Duties as a Role Model
- Extraordinarily Poor Judgment Around Children

## **Code of Conduct**

### **Parents Code of Conduct**

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child plays in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a drug-, alcohol- and tobacco 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, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I will promise to help my child 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.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach agrees to the youth sports Coaches' Code of Conduct.

### **Coaches Code of Conduct**

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development.
- I will do my very best to provide a safe play situation for my players.
- I promise to review and practice the necessary first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will lead, by example, in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will insure that I am knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and that I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

### **Athletes Code of Conduct**

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice.
- I will attend every practice and game that is reasonably possible and notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
- I will do my very best to listen and learn from coaches.
- I will treat my coaches with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being FUN!
- I deserve to play in an alcohol, tobacco and drug free environment and expect adults to respect that wish.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.
- I will do my very best in school.
- I will remember that sport is an opportunity to learn and have fun.

**Whitewater Parks & Recreation Youth Baseball & Softball Expectations for Coaches**

These expectations are based on furthering youth baseball and softball in Whitewater. The focus on development of all athletes is the primary goal of these programs. The expectations listed below are for regular season play. Participation in tournaments and the end of season league tournament will follow the rules established by those tournaments.

- All players are expected to be in the batting order.
- Athletes must play 2 innings in the field out of the 1<sup>st</sup> 4 innings played. No player should sit for more than 3 innings.
- All participants are expected to play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield per game.
- No player should play more than half the game at the same position.
- Coaches should make an effort to have the younger grade level pitch throughout the season. The younger grade level should pitch a minimum of 2 innings per game and those 2 innings should be in the first 4. Example: 10 & Under – A 9 year old must pitch 2 innings.
- Pitching Limits:
  - 10 & Under – A maximum of 2 innings should be pitched by an individual player over a 4 day period
  - 12 & Under – A maximum of 3 innings should be pitched by an individual player over a 4 day period
  - 14 & Under – A maximum of 4 innings should be pitched by an individual player over a 4 day period



**Parks & Recreation Department**  
Youth Sports Policy Sign Off

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I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department Youth Sports Policy. I understand that failure to comply with the policy and the coaches code of conduct could result in disciplinary action up to and including my removal as a volunteer coach. I understand that if I have any questions, I should contact the Parks and Recreation Department staff member who supervises the sports program in which I serve as a coach. Thank you for your dedication in working with the youth of our community!

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Coach Signature

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Date

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Coach Name