

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
Department of Recreation and Parks

November, 2009

Dear Parent,

We are pleased that a child in your family will be participating in the City of Rockville youth basketball program. The staff at the Recreation and Parks Department wish to welcome you and your family.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this league is to provide a safe, fun and wholesome recreational and learning experience to the players. League rules that address rules of conduct for players, coaches and spectators are distributed to all coaches at the beginning of the each season. A key responsibility of every coach is to make sure that these rules are reviewed and understood by the all team members and parents. Players and parents sign a Player Agreement in which they acknowledge this understanding of these rules. Expectations for behavior of the coaches and parents spectators are also covered in the Coaches and Spectator Code of Ethics. Copies of each of these important documents are available from the Sports Office - 240- 314-8651.

Given past years national media attention to inappropriate behavior by coaches, parents and players in youth sports, we wish you to know that we will be setting a zero tolerance level for behavior that is unacceptable according to league rules, Codes of Ethics, or common sense.

Bottom line, all the adults in their various roles are expected to be role models for the children and young adults in the basketball program. Players are expected to play by the rules and treat each other, their coaches and the officials with dignity and respect. If everyone will keep these objectives in mind, this season – and every season – we will close out as an outstanding success.

GENERAL LEAGUE ORGANIZATION:

All of the teams in the league are coached by volunteer parents, brothers, sisters, neighbors, or just interested individuals. During the 2008-09 season over 120 teams were coached by such volunteers. Coaches assume much responsibility and will need your honest support and understanding. Throughout the season, help is often needed in many areas, including transportation to and from games. For the success of this program, it is essential that parents contact their child's coach to offer assistance.

Practice makes perfect. During the season, through arrangements with the City, each team practices once per week. Teams are allowed independent of the City, to obtain other accommodations to practice facilities. Teams who wish to schedule additional practices may encouraged to contact the Community Use of Schools Office (phone #240-777-2706), to determine options and availability of other indoor practices. Parents should discuss practice plans with the team coach and be prepared to set up and help with additional practices, if needed.

Practices will not be held when schools are closed for holidays, or when inclement weather conditions force closings. **Most practices start on the hour and end on the hour. Players are not allowed in the gymnasium before or after their scheduled time and should be picked up promptly after practice.**

All teams are furnished 'City of Rockville' basketball shirts for league play. We also encourage sponsors, so that teams may acquire additional equipment/uniform items. Teams may include sponsor recognition on their shirts; however, the cost of the screening is the team's responsibility.

The basketball season will start the weekend of January 9 & 10 , 2010. Boys participating in the Pee Wee, Bantam, or Midget divisions, as well as, all the girls divisions, will have league games scheduled on Saturdays. League games for boys in the Junior, Intermediate, and Associate Divisions will be scheduled on Sundays. All teams will participate in a post-season, single-elimination tournament with to exception of the Mighty Mites.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

If inclement weather causes a school closing, no basketball practices will be held. The ICB and MCPS determine whether or not to close facilities on the weekends. If they decide to close facilities, NO activities, including Youth Basketball, will be permitted. A decision regarding closings will be made by 7:30 a.m. and announced @ (240)-777-2706. School closings on Saturdays do not affect school operations and scheduled activities for Sunday. Listen daily for school closing information.

OFFICIALS:

All league games will be officiated by individuals who have received in house training provided by the Sports Division. The officials are local people, many of whom have participated previously in the program as coaches or players. Officials receive stipends which are small in comparison to stipends paid by other jurisdictions. However, because of the commitment of these special people, we can offer this program to our participants at a relatively low cost. We ask that you be temperate and fair in any criticism you may have regarding the officials working your child's game. Without them, there might not be a program.

CONDUCT:

The Sports Division, the coaches, gym directors, officials, and especially the players, need your support and understanding during the games. Fans and spectators can be the greatest asset or the greatest detriment to a program.

Parents' Responsibility: Many parents enjoy watching their children compete in sports. Sometimes this involvement produces intense and anxious moments and their behavior becomes embarrassing to other parents, officials, and more importantly, to their own children. Parents are encouraged to watch their children participate, provided their behavior meets acceptable standards as noted below:

- A. Parents should remain seated in the spectator area during the contest.
- B. Parents should not yell instructions or criticisms to the children.
- C. Parents should not make derogatory comments to players, coaches, or other parents about the opposing team or officials.

- D. Parents must not interfere with their child's coach. They must be willing to relinquish the responsibility for their child to the coach for the period of the contest.

Parents are requested to read and sign a "Parents' Code of Ethics" which has been developed and prepared by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA). The signed pledge should be returned to your child's coach.

The guiding principle for parents is that nothing in their behavior should detract from any child's enjoyment of the sport. Remember, as parents you have a good opportunity to teach sportsmanship. Children imitate not only what you say, but what you do.

While parents must not interfere with their child's coach during the course of games and practices, parents continue to have primary responsibility for their child. (You are expected to transport your child to each practice and game on time, and to pick up your child promptly after each session.) Never allow your child to be transported at any time in an open pickup truck--it's against the law. Parents are strongly encouraged to stay and observe their child and to assist the coach, if asked.

Coaches' Responsibility: It is the responsibility of the coach to control his or her own behavior and that of assistants and spectators. No coach or spectator may enter onto the court without the referee's permission.

All head coaches and many assistant coaches have participated in a coaches' training program provided by NYSCA. This certification program gives instruction on the psychology of coaching youth sports, improving performance through proper conditioning, first aid, and a variety of techniques for organizing practices. NYSCA has established a Code of Ethics pledge which coaches sign, pledging to act in a sportsmanlike and fair way towards opponents and officials. Coaches are constantly being observed and evaluated for conformance with the Code of Ethics.

SPECIAL LEAGUE RULES

The basketball program has special playing rules which govern player participation. For most of the leagues, specific rules have been established and we request you to familiarize yourself with them.

- A. **An Equal Play Rule** is the goal for all boys and girls league play. It is our intent that all team players in attendance at games and entered in the official scorer's book should participate equally in every game, unless the player has a health-related circumstance or fails to attend practices and/or games on a regular basis (unexcused absences).
- B. **Red/Green Rule** applies to boys and girls leagues, Pee Wees, Bantam, Midget, and Junior Divisions. The rule requires that a team be divided into a 1st quarter (red) team and a 2nd quarter (green) team. Red team players are to start and all red team players should play equally in the first quarter. Green team players must start and all green team players should play equally in the 2nd quarter.

In the second half, every player should be experiencing an equal amount of playing time; however, coaches are allowed free substitution.

- C. **Suspension** - Coaches who repeatedly violate the Equal Play Rule may be suspended for a game(s) or the remainder of the season. Also, any player or coach who receives three technical fouls or one unsportsmanlike conduct foul in any one game will be required to leave the vicinity of the players' bench and/or gymnasium, and may be subject to additional suspension if the action is deemed of a more serious nature.
- D. Head coaches who knowingly, and proven to be using ineligible players, will be suspended indefinitely from City youth sports programs. Player birthdate information which is provided to the City and coach must be accurate.

The primary purpose of these rules is to promote participation and a concept of meaningful play. Your coach has been provided a complete set of league by-laws and should be available to answer any additional questions you may have about the program.

The City of Rockville recognizes that **each child is important!** Through programs such as the basketball league, youth have the opportunity to experience teamwork and participation, and come to know their teammates and opponents as people. We hope you, as parents, will accentuate the positive aspects of this experience. Research has shown that children who receive positive reinforcement have higher self-esteems and remember their program experiences as filled with fun and enjoyment.

Sincerely,

The Sports Division Team

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING TO BE RETAINED BY YOUR CHILD'S COACH.

- 1) AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE/ RELEASE FORM***
- 2) PARENTS CODE OF ETHICS PLEDGE***

THANK YOU.