

THREE LAKES BLUE JAYS 2016 - 2017



**Middle Level Activities
Coaches/Advisors Handbook**

**Adopted By Board Of Education
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Program Philosophy

The mission of the school district of Three Lakes for the middle level activities program is to provide experiences for students which are an integral part of the total educational program. Participation in activities is an enjoyable experience which contributes to the development of the students' self-esteem, citizenship, and responsibility. Activities provided are designed to:

- Protect the worth of the individual for both participants and coaches;
- Teach skills, cooperation and sportsmanship; and
- Provide opportunities for students to participate with their peers in a competitive environment.

Efforts will be made to allow all team members to participate in competitions though individual team guidelines and the effort shown in practices may have an influence on participation. We believe activities are an excellent opportunity to promote a positive value system for the participants, student body, and community.

"FUN": A Pivotal Factor in Staying In Sports

"Fun" is a crucial factor in the decision to remain involved in a sport. Boys and girls agree on the importance of fun in sports. For those who participate, fun entails such benefits as improving skills, staying in shape, taking satisfaction from one's performance, and competing against others.

Toward a Definition of "Fun" in Sports

Since fun is apparently pivotal in experiencing sports, it's clearly important to define the concept. Steve J. Danish, professor and chairman of the Department of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University, has studied, worked with, and written about athletes at all levels, from school-aged youngsters to world-class amateurs and professionals. Here is how he approaches the idea of sports and fun. "Fun in sports might be described as the quest for the balance between challenge and skill. If they are relatively in balance, enjoyment results. The enjoyment is greatest when the individual sets his or her own personal challenges and personally assesses his or her own performance against these challenges."

"Put another way, the best challenges and greatest rewards in sports are intrinsic. They come from competing against yourself - against your own potential or goals - instead of focusing on the outcome of the contest, which is something over which you may have very little control."

INTRODUCTION

Young adolescents are faced with wide-ranging physical, emotional, social, and other changes between ages ten and fourteen. However, not all students will exhibit typical characteristics. This publication focuses only on these characteristics of young adolescents that are effected directly by participation in athletic programs, which can be summarized as characteristics related to growth, development, social, and other needs.

Growth: Height, weight, body proportions, and the size of organs of digestion and respiration change radically during this stage of development and have specific effects on athletic participation.

Development: Physical abilities, sex characteristics, and ethical standards develop during young adolescence, and an appropriate middle-level athletic program can help students adjust to these changes.

Social and other needs: Children in this age group desire positive relationships outside the home and social experiences in peer groups. A good middle-level athletic program can provide for these needs in a positive way that will strengthen children for life.

The following information lists selected characteristics of the young adolescent and describes how middle-level athletic programs should take these characteristics into account. These characteristics and implications have been reviewed and adapted by experts in middle-level athletics and middle-level education for consideration by coaches at this level.

- * growth in height, weight, and body proportions
- * growth in organs of digestion and respiration
- * growth in sex characteristics
- * development of physical abilities
- * need for positive relationships outside the home
- * substitution of peer-group standards for those of family
- * need for social experiences in groups
- * feelings of social and personal adequacy
- * development of ethical standards

GROWTH IN HEIGHT, WEIGHT, AND BODY PROPORTIONS

Rapid increase in height

Children in the middle-level grades tend to display awkwardness and postural defects as they experience the "growth spurt" associated with early adolescence. Size and maturity do not necessarily develop simultaneously. Students need guidance in planning extracurricular activities in harmony with their individual energy and resistance levels. A wide variety of activities should be offered, guaranteeing students a range of choices. Young adolescents should be offered opportunities to learn to be considerate of others and sensitive to their feelings.

Rapid Increase in Weight

Teachers, coaches, and others in the middle-level athletic program should be alert to evidence that students are concerned or worried about their weight and body build. Athletic programs should provide reliable information regarding body development and wide range of individual differences in body proportions during adolescence. Athletics should be used to guide young adolescents and reinforce the basic nutritional facts and good food choices as part of every training program.

Wide Variations in Physical Development within the Normal Range

It is important for young adolescents to understand and appreciate their many different sizes and shapes. A varied program of activities will provide all students, even those representing the extremes of physical growth, opportunities to participate in ways that give them success and self esteem.

Disproportionate Growth of Arms, Legs, Hands, and Feet

The athletic program can provide physical activities that help young adolescents gain better control of their bodies. The awkward and embarrassed young athlete needs sympathetic understanding. Coaches should protect against ridicule, sarcasm, or other measures that increase embarrassment.

Uneven Growth of Bones and Muscles

Bones sometimes grow more rapidly than the muscles adhering to them, which causes muscle cramps. And muscles sometimes grow more rapidly than bones, producing

awkwardness. In either case, patterns of coordination are disturbed. The athletic program should harmonize with student growth and coordination patterns.

GROWTH IN ORGANS OF DIGESTION AND RESPIRATION

Rapid Growth of Heart and Arteries

The heart and arteries grow rapidly during young adolescence. Exercise helps the heart and circulatory system become more efficient and the muscles become stronger. Rapid growth plus an urge to demonstrate physical skill as a means of social recognition may result in overexertion and chronic fatigue or in an unbalanced program of daily activities. It is important that young adolescents receive thorough medical diagnosis before engaging in athletic programs. The middle-level athletic program should guide young adolescents in understanding their own physical development and their own need to develop a lifestyle that includes regular exercise. The program should also provide every boy and girl both the social and physical benefits of participation in team games and other activities.

GROWTH IN SEX CHARACTERISTICS

The athletic program can help young adolescents consider the feelings of other children in their age group by recognizing when they are being considerate and by helping them become aware of the situations that can be embarrassing. Educators, coaches, and others should exhibit a healthy, wholesome attitude. They should avoid evidence of embarrassment when discussing health or development issues with young adolescents.

DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL ABILITIES

Coaches, teachers, and others should observe each middle-level athlete for evidence of fatigue and should understand that so-called "adolescent laziness" is often related to fatigue during periods of rapid growth. Young adolescents need periodic relaxation, and they can learn this in an athletic program. Adequate food intake at frequent intervals will help middle-level students maintain their energy. Also, coaches of athletic activities must never overestimate a child's strength. Offer encouragement but let the child determine whether he or she is strong enough to perform a task.

NEED FOR POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS OUTSIDE THE HOME

Status with peer groups does not replace the importance of close relationships with adults. Outside the home, the young adolescent tends to identify with an admired adult. An adult who handles this relationship wisely and responsibly provides a role model for the adolescent. Middle-level athletic programs offer extensive opportunities for healthy adult modeling as young adolescents interact with coaches. The personality, character, and behavior of adults in middle-level athletic programs influence young adolescents. Adults should be aware of the effects of their behavior on young adolescents. Coaches should exert a wholesome, steadying influence on young athletes.

SUBSTITUTION OF PEER-GROUP STANDARDS FOR THOSE OF FAMILY

Policies that make it possible for athletes from all socioeconomic levels to participate on equal terms ensure that students aren't left out. The athletic program can teach students to offer opportunities to feel accepted to those who are less secure, thus guiding adolescents in becoming sensitive to the feelings of others. Coaches must ensure that differences do not affect the opportunity for all young adolescents to participate in the activity.

NEED FOR SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN GROUPS

Young adolescents are interested in group activities. Clubs, teams, or other social organizations help widen their circle of social contacts and provide opportunities for learning about the give-and-take of group enterprise. Providing reinforcement for socially sensitive behavior encourages young adolescents to be inclusive in their friendships and generous in their desire to share leadership positions with others.

FEELINGS OF SOCIAL AND PERSONAL ADEQUACY

All participants in the athletic program can cooperate to create a social atmosphere that helps all involved with the activity feel accepted. Adults in the athletic program can use situations in which the group faces failure or disappointment for guided group evaluation and for analyzing the variety of responses the situation might elicit. These experiences can guide young adolescents in learning to face failure constructively. By adjusting skills and techniques within athletic activities to the needs of each pupil, the program ensures all participants will feel reasonably successful.

DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

Middle-level athletic programs can help young adolescents become increasingly responsible for their own conduct by teaching them to evaluate their behavior according to the standards established for each activity. Coaches should help young adolescents relate the activities and learning experiences in which they are engaged to larger goals. This helps them learn to generalize from specific experiences and thus encourages them as they attempt to build values to guide them throughout life. Coaches should appreciate the need for consistent behavior and take seriously their importance as role models for young adolescents.

Program Goals

The developmental characteristics of young adolescents should provide the foundation for the middle-level athletics program philosophy and goals. Athletics should offer an opportunity for young adolescents to transfer and reinforce learning from academic areas while improving social, emotional, and physical skills. Athletic participation for young adolescents should build positive self-esteem. "Fun" is an important reason given by young adolescents for participating in athletics. Young adolescents are not varsity level or professional athletes. Experiences in competitive events with the accompanying wins and losses should provide a positive learning experience for the athlete. Coaches/Advisors must provide the positive leadership through effective modeling of their own behavior.

Athletic programs must function within the framework of the School District's goals and objectives. Adults who administer, coach, and support middle-level athletics should meet these goals and objectives. Abusive and foul language have no place in athletic programs. Coaches, parents, participants, and fans must recognize their responsibility to model appropriate behavior for young adolescents.

Winning is not the primary goal of the program. Programs should promote behaviors that include cooperation, sportsmanship, and personal improvement. Middle-level athletics should reward positive effort regardless of the outcome of a contest. Experiences in competitive events should provide an important learning experience for young adolescents as should cooperative events with provisions for team building.

The program should be open to all young adolescents and provide a positive experience. All young adolescents should have the opportunity to participate, play, and experience skill improvement. Activities should promote participation. Appropriately designed and coached programs can be satisfying for young adolescents exhibiting various skill levels. Athletic activities are valuable for all young adolescents.

Athletic activities, including practice schedules, should be flexible, with concern for student conflicts and family schedules. Young adolescents need experiences that encompass a wide range of activities. This should be a period of exploration rather than specialization.

Coaches' Leadership Style Can Affect Children's Self-Esteem

As youngsters undertake competition, a supportive coach may be critical to their self-esteem.

Supportive coaches reinforce players by responding positively to a good play or good effort and encourage players after mistakes. Supportive coaches are also more likely to emphasize intrinsic motivation such as perfecting skills, rather than social motives such as impressing peers and pleasing parents. Coaches play vital roles in the lives of many children.

Coaches' Responsibilities

Coaches must:

1. Teach and conduct good sportsmanship at all times.
2. Make sure that all players participate in practices and games, giving all the best possible coaching and making sure each player feels important.
3. Be willing to give ample time for practices each week and for league play.
4. Be able to relate to players' parents the goals and philosophy of the program.
5. Be willing to put the program's objectives before their own personal goals.
6. Have a plan for emergency procedures, in written form, present at all practices and contests, and report all injuries to the activities director.
7. Keep team rosters up-to-date and inform the Activities Director of which team members change.
8. Make sure all players understand the game rules.
9. Remain at practice sessions and scheduled games until all team members are picked up by a parent/guardian or taken home.
10. See to it that all players wear proper equipment.
11. Foster and model the attitude that unsporting behavior will not be tolerated. They must maintain their composure and behavior during all contests and practices.
12. Any coach who attends a practice session or scheduled game intoxicated will be expelled permanently.
13. Verify eligibility with the activities director before allowing a student to participate in practice or contests.
14. Turn in emergency medical contact cards, a participation award list, and a complete inventory to the activities director at the conclusion of each season.

15. Turn in a set of coaches' rules to the activities director prior to the start of the season for approval. These rules, once approved, must be given to each student-athlete to be reviewed with their parents. Rules are to be signed by parent and student-athlete, then returned to and kept on file by the coach.
16. See that all participants travel to and from contests on school-provided transportation. Participants living along the route to the contest may be picked up or dropped off at a prearranged spot. Parents may transport their children home from a contest by notifying the head coach/advisor in person, and state in writing that they will take responsibility for their child. Participants who will ride home with other parents must have a permission form approved by the activities director or principal prior to the day of the contest.

Coaches' Code of Ethics

1. I will treat each player, opposing coach, official, parent and administrator with respect and dignity.
2. I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills, teaching and evaluation techniques and strategies of my sport.
3. I will become thoroughly familiar with the rules of my sport.
4. I will become familiar with the objectives of the youth sports program with which I am affiliated. I will strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them to my players and their parents.
5. I will uphold the authority of officials who are assigned to the contests in which I coach, and I will assist them in every way to conduct fair and impartial competitive contests.
6. I will learn the strengths and weaknesses of my players so that I might place them in situations where they have a maximum opportunity to achieve success.
7. I will conduct my practices and games so that all players have an opportunity to improve their skill level through active participation.
8. I will communicate to my players and their parents the rights and responsibilities of individuals on our team.
9. I will cooperate with the Activities Director in the enforcement of rules and regulations, and I will report any irregularities that violate sound competitive practices.
10. I will protect the health and safety of my players by insisting that all of the activities under my control are conducted for their psychological and physiological welfare, rather than for the secondary interests of adults.

The 11 Most Important Reasons I Stopped Playing a Sport

- * I lost interest
- * I was not having fun
- * It took too much time
- * Coach was a poor teacher
- * Too much pressure (worry)
- * Wanted non-sport activity

The 12 Most Important Reasons I Play My Best School Sport

Boys

- * To Have fun
- * To improve skills
- * For the excitement of competition
- * To do something I'm good at
- * To stay in shape

Girls

- * To have fun
- * To stay in shape
- * To get exercise
- * To improve skills
- * To do something I'm good at
- * To be part of a team

- * I was tired of it
 - * Needed more study time
 - * coach played favorites
 - * Sport was boring
 - * Overemphasis on winning
- * For the challenge of competition
 - * To be part of a team
 - * To win
 - * To go to a higher level of competition
 - * To get exercise
 - * To learn new skills
 - * For the team spirit
- * For the excitement of competition
 - * To learn new skills
 - * For the team spirit
 - * For the challenge of competition
 - * To get to a higher level of competition
 - * To win

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**I have read and understand the Three Lakes 2015-2016 Middle Level Activities
Coach/Advisor Handbook**

Print Name

Signature

Date

Sport