

CODE OF CONDUCT

All Coaches and Parents will be required to sign the Code of Conduct before they can coach or before their children can participate in the YAC Football Program – No exceptions!

Below is the YAC Code of Conduct for Parents & Coaches and I have outlined my “plain English” view on certain aspects of the code of conduct to address specific areas of concern. I want to ensure that there is no confusion over what is expected from both Parents & Coaches with respect to the YAC Football Program

Parents & Coaches Code of Conduct

1. I will have my child arrive on time for all games and practices and let the coach know in advance if my child will be absent, arriving late or leaving early.
2. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
3. I will not engage in any type of physical or verbal abuse of any official, player, coach or spectator at any time.
4. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child, and other children, ahead of my personal desire to win, and keep in mind that the game is for our children - not for adults.
5. I will insist that my child, and other children, play in a safe and healthy environment.
6. I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
7. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
8. I will insist that my child treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect, regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
9. I understand, that in order for my child to be eligible for play, I must complete all required forms and applications, and pay the required membership and sport fees as per the YAC Registrar's direction.
10. I will contact the Sport Program Commissioner and report any type of physical or verbal abuse or non-fair play that I eyewitness.
11. Any concerns about how the league is run, how coaches are coaching or how referees are officiating should be referred to the Head Coach first, and if not satisfied, then to the Sport Commissioner.
12. I will take the time to read and abide by the Y.A.C. Privacy and Terms of Use Policy for use of the www.yacsports.com web-site.

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I truly appreciate the time and effort that the coaches commit to their respective teams, the overall Football program and without the commitment of these volunteer's, we would not have a football program. I believe that the vast majority of the coaches volunteer because they enjoy the game and also enjoy working with and teaching the youth in YAC. I also believe that coaching in youth sports is in many respects a thankless job in which volunteers are held to a higher standard by parents than appropriate. Being on the field with twenty-five to thirty 8 to 13 year olds for a few hours 4 days a week is no easy task and the kids understandably create situations that would be challenging for the most patient person. Add the parents of these kids into the equation plus family commitments/friction, and you start to understand the life of a coaching volunteer. That being said, I thought it important to outline in plain English how I expect each coach to act while they are representing the YAC Football program whether it be during practice or games.

Code of Conduct requirements for Coaches (plain English)

In two words, "Lighten up". We are dealing with 8 to 13 year old kids of varying degree of skill and attention levels. We can strive for but do not expect perfection. As coaches, if we are not spending the bulk of our time on the field enjoying the kids then we are missing the point and should consider removing ourselves from the coaching ranks.

- We should expect the players to be committed to the game and generally speaking to attend all the practices/games. We should expect the players to listen to their coaches and not fool around and talk with other players during practice time. I understand that there will be times where we raise our voices (yell) but it should never be personal and should be done in an appropriate manner.
- Using inappropriate or demeaning language towards a child is never appropriate. Challenging kids, asking for greater intensity/effort is acceptable from a coaching perspective. This includes are own children!
- It may be acceptable for a High School, College or Pro Coach to be a prick, it is not acceptable for a Youth Coach to be one. I want the YAC Football program to be very competitive, not a win at all cost mentality but having the players competing hard and playing to win the game. This does require a commitment on the part of the players and the coaches need to work them hard both physically and mentally. No matter how you try to disguise it, this is football, football is a violent sport and football is not played with training wheels.
- If a player is a consistent discipline problem, the Head Coach should be notified and the issue will be addressed by the Head Coach with the relevant child's parents. We are not running a baby sitting service and players who are not focused on the game of football will not be allowed to be a distraction to the team. We can only make players run so many laps before it becomes a problem that falls outside the responsibility of the coaches and falls on their parents.
- In addition to the players, coaches must respect the parents, the game officials and the opposing team. New for 2011, a violation of the coach's code of conduct will result in an automatic 2 week suspension (games and practices) and a 2nd violation would result in a suspension for the balance of the season. The potential for a permanent suspension from coaching would be considered once the facts of the violation were evaluated and discussed with the YAC Board.

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The role of the non coaching parent(s) is also an important part of the success of the Football Program. We understand the commitment required to get your children to practices and games on time when many of you have other children, commitments etc. that often make this extremely challenging. As Commissioner, I also appreciate your support in many of the non football related activities that you volunteer over the course of the season. As commissioner of the Football Program, I would prefer that there would be no complaints from parents but I understand that this will never be the case. Issues such as playing time, coaches behaviour etc. should be addressed in the first instance with your head coach and if that is not possible or does not give you satisfaction then should be addressed to me as commissioner. I hear through the grapevine throughout the season and off-season complaints that never make their way to me which is a problem. I will in most cases not react to Yorktown gossip until someone steps up and brings it to my attention. I have never ignored nor not responded to a complaint when raised. You may not always like my response but I will give all complaints due consideration, often consulting with other coaches or YAC Board Members before responding. Parents should NEVER be afraid to raise issues to my attention and there will NEVER be repercussions to the children of this program no matter what you may think or have heard from someone else. I am also friends with many of the coaches but I can tell you that I would not hesitate to address problems with these coaches regardless of our personal relationship. If I cannot criticize or require a behavioral change of one of the coaches in this program, especially a friend, then that coach will not be long for the program. Playing time is probably the most common issue in Youth Football and the YAC Football program is no different. Playing time issues are personal and quite often the explanation is not something that the parents want to hear and certainly not something that I would think they would want a coach or commissioner to share with a broader audience. Playing time discussions should be handled by the head coach and the parents. In addition, parents need to be realistic about their child's abilities and the risks associated with contact sports. In addition, there are players on every team that to be honest are afraid of contact. Some of these players are very good athletes but football is not like any other sport and quite often you don't know how child will react until they strap on the equipment and start to hit and get hit. This is a serious safety issue and something that we can address in part during practice time by not matching them up against the more aggressive kids but something that we cannot address during games where the opposing coaches/players prey on these kids. Some kids eventually get over the fear but far more do not.

Playing time considerations:

- Skill level definitely impacts playing time.
- Effort given by a player primarily during practice but also games definitely impacts playing time.
- Ability to understand the plays, responsibilities of your position etc. definitely impacts playing time.
- The ability of the player to protect themselves and their team mates definitely impacts playing time

Additional Code of Conduct requirements for Parents (plain English)

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- YAC Football has always had a 24 hour rule that all parents and coaches must obey (no exceptions) when it comes to speaking to each other to address concerns, issues etc. For the 2011 Season, the rule has been changed to 48 hours. If for example, there is a game on Sunday, a parent cannot approach a coach with an issue or problem (in person, via phone or e-mail etc) until Tuesday. Head Coaches will outline the specific team approach towards addressing parent issues with their teams so that it does not impact practice day activities.
- Parents will have NO interaction with Referees or with the opposing team's coaches or players (you can say hello but no confrontational situations).
- New for 2011, a violation of the parent's code of conduct will result in an automatic 2 week suspension (games and practices) and a 2nd violation would result in a suspension for the balance of the season. The potential for a permanent suspension from attending games/practices would be considered once the facts of the violation were evaluated and discussed with the YAC Board.
- Field of Play– I have been somewhat lenient when it comes to practices and will continue to do so as long as parents, siblings etc do not become a distraction to the players/coaches on the field. However, for games, the following rules will be strictly enforced:
 - In general, no unauthorized parent, relative, friend, sibling, cousin etc. are allowed on the field area during any home or away game. Most fields have some sort of barrier, fence, string etc that separates the players/coaches from the fans. As it relates to home games, the following rules apply:
 - At Yorktown H.S.– There is a fence surrounding the track and football field. Only authorized coaches, players, play monitors, EMT's, chain gang members etc are allowed within the confines of the fence. Non authorized people cannot be on the track or field of play – NO EXCEPTIONS. Also, please watch your kids, friends kids etc as they are not allowed inside the fence as well.
 - At Legacy Field– There is a fence surrounding the football field. Only authorized coaches, players, play monitors, EMT's, chain gang members etc are allowed within the confines of the fence. Non authorized people cannot be on the track or field of play – NO EXCEPTIONS. Also, please watch your kids, friends kids etc as they are not allowed inside the fence as well. Also, no parents/kids etc should be behind the fence on the far sidelines (sideline opposite the parking lot)
- Head Coaches– you must identify team photographers, videographers etc who are allowed on the sidelines. Just because you have a camera does not mean that you can be on the field taking pictures. I will ask the Head Coaches for a list of specific parent or non parent photographers etc who are performing this task on behalf of the team. It should be limited to one person taking photographs and one taking video.
- Head Coaches– It is ok to have ball/water boys on the sidelines but please use judgement in who you allow on the field. I don't want 10 kids on the sidelines in addition to your coaches/players etc. Please manage the situation.