

## **Parent-Coach Meetings in Catholic-Sponsored Youth Sports**

### **Objectives of the Parent-Coach Meeting**

- To familiarize parents with the purpose, goals and objectives of the Catholic-sponsored sports program.
- To enable parents to support their child in a manner positive for the child without undue pressure.
- To introduce parents to positive coaching philosophy, team rules, game and practice procedures, and allocation of playing time.
- To emphasize the need to be good spectators.
- To organize assistance from parents in supporting the team in various tasks.
- To provide an avenue for feedback and communication.
- To discuss safety concerns, inherent risks of the sport and medical considerations.

### **Outline of the Parent-Coach Meeting**

1. Opening Prayer
  - Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)
  - Introduce coaches to the parents and the parents to one another.
2. Philosophy of the Catholic Youth Sports Program (10 minutes)  
Ideas to mention:
  - The Catholic-sponsored youth sports team is a ministry of the Church to provide a Christian atmosphere of play enabling young people to practice Christian values.
  - Players will be treated by coaches and parents in a positive, encouraging manner to build self-esteem.
  - Players will be encouraged to make friends with their own teammates and with players from other parishes, to play without belittling others.
  - Players and all involved should grow closer to God, the church and to each other.
3. Philosophy of the Coaches (10 minutes)  
Ideas to mention:
  - Coaching will be positive and non critical.
  - Attention will be given to all athletes regardless of talent. Each player will be treated with respect.
  - Explain how playing time will be allocated among players.
  - Discuss team goals for the season.
4. Team Rules and Code of Conduct (15 minutes)
  - Discuss team rules with expected behavior and penalties.
  - Explain "Code of Conduct" for spectators (sample is attached or use league / diocesan code of conduct) and explain expected behavior for coaches, players and spectators. Discuss officials and the need to respect them at all times! Emphasize that Spectators are never to approach game officials.
5. "Nuts and Bolts" Issues (10 minutes)  
Items to mention:

- Safety Issues—permission forms, first aid and safety procedures, inherent risks of the sport discussed.
- Practice schedule—schedule, procedure for changes, expected conduct, arrival and departure process.
- Uniforms—issued, returned and expected care.
- Game schedules—when to arrive, transportation, game change notification procedure.
- Transportation policy.
- Discuss ways that parents can support the team—parent volunteer responsibilities.

6. Sport Strategy and Rules (10 minutes)

Explain the strategy of the sport and those rules that parents need to be aware of to positively support their children and practice good sportsmanship themselves. Cover any rule changes from the previous year.

7. Addressing Problems (10 minutes)

Discuss what the procedure is if problem situations arise. Discuss how decisions are made on the team.

8. Additional Items/Issues from Parents

9. Closing Prayer

## **SAMPLE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPECTATORS**

*The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), through the vehicle of sports, provides youth with an opportunity to practice Christian attitudes and responsibilities and to become friends with other children throughout the diocese. CYO activities should be examples of the meaning of Christian sportsmanship. The guiding principle behind the enforcement of this code is that the behavior of everyone involved in CYO should not detract from the childrens' enjoyment of the sport.*

Acceptable standards of spectator behavior include:

- Remember that the players are children and are playing for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Remain seated in the spectator area during the games;
- Respect decisions made by contest officials;
- Be a role model by positively supporting teams and by not shouting instructions or criticism to the players, coaches or officials. Do not coach from the stands;
- Make no derogatory comments or gestures to players, coaches, parents of the opposing team, officials or league administrators.

Penalties:

- Participating teams and their coaches are responsible for the conduct of their spectators.
- Any spectator who displays poor sportsmanship may be removed from the facility by an official, their team coach, a league official or the host facility person-in-charge.
- Any spectator who interferes with the conduct of a CYO activity may, at the discretion of the spectator's parish, league, or the diocese, be barred from attendance at subsequent CYO activities.

*I (We) have read this Code of Conduct. I (We) agree to follow these guidelines in my (our) participation in all CYO activities.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(This material courtesy of the Oakland Diocese CYO)