



RYA COACHES MANUAL

Youth Sports in NRH since 1964



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Additional information available at ryasports.com



Dear Youth Sports Coach,

Welcome to the Richland Youth Association!

RYA was introduced many years ago to promote recreational sports in North Richland Hills. Our program goal focuses on the child and their involvement, rather than the final score.

Through participating in youth sports, our children are winning by developing social skills, learning the value of teamwork, and physical fitness while having fun. There is a saying, “it takes a village to raise a child.” By working together as coaches, league administrators, and officials, these children will benefit from all aspects of the program and witness firsthand what being a role model is all about.

Our program's goals are to provide a safe, supportive, and encouraging environment for kids to enjoy playing sports. This handbook will provide information about our program, ways for you to become involved as a coach, and guides for youth sports development.

Teaching and learning are both lifelong tasks. Your involvement and encouragement for the team will confirm our “playing is winning” philosophy.

**“You don’t stop playing because you grow old,
you grow old because you stop playing.”**



RYA Vision Statement Sports Empowerment

Style – Individual expression

Play – Participate in fun activities

Order – Unite as a team

Respect – Honor each other

Teach - How to play the game!

Succeed – Accomplish team goal

RYA Mission Statement

The mission of Richland Youth Association is to foster creative lifestyles through sports development and a positive self-image.



RYA Board Members

President	Mike Cowan
Vice President	Lisa Willis
Director of Administration	Currently Vacant
Director of Accounting	Richard Stutheit
Director of Basketball	Tremaine McGill
Director of Rec Baseball	Andrew Rivera
Director of Football	Eric Gomez
Director of Cheer	Missy Schulz
Director of Softball	Andrew Rivera
Director of Special Events	Emily Standifer

Main office number for all sports leagues (817) 656-4004.



Coach Training Requirements

What are the requirements to volunteer as a coach?

- Coaching is a time commitment and coaches need to be available for practices and games during their sports season.
- RYA requires all coaches to complete a background check annually.
- The volunteer must pay the \$20.50 fee associated with the background check.
- Volunteers can access the background check link at ryasports.com/backgrounds

What type of training is needed to be a coach at RYA?

- RYA requires all coaches complete an annual membership training through the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS).
- The NAYS training is available online for coaches to complete at their convenience.
- There is an annual membership cost of \$20.00, which covers membership costs, one sport-specific training, and concussion training.
- Additional sport-specific trainings can be added for \$5.00 each.
- Coaches can access the training at www.nays.org/coaches
- Proof of NAYS Training completion must be emailed to the Director of the respective sport the volunteer is coaching.



Coach Training & Membership



Most Important Goals as a Coach:

1. TO HAVE FUN

The main reason youth participate in sports is to have fun. We strongly believe that the experience, development, and safety of our participants come before anything else, including winning. Please help us convey to our players the importance of having fun, building friendships, and enjoying sports in a recreational environment.

2. TO TEACH

Every child has the right to learn sports in a safe and comfortable environment. For many, this will be the only organized sport they play. Stick to the basics - help players build a strong foundation. There are many lessons to be learned besides the rules of the game. Please incorporate teamwork, sportsmanship, and positive thinking in all activities.

**YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO
GREATLY INFLUENCE OUR
PLAYERS!**



Ten Ways to Motivate Your Athletes

1. **Recognize achievement**

The majority of athletes develop self confidence and the motivation to try harder when they receive positive recognition for their efforts. These positive results are even more pronounced when that recognition comes from someone they respect, such as a coach, parent or senior player.

By recognizing athletes' achievements in a variety of areas, in addition to those related to performance or skill development, you have the ability to encourage:

- Positive social behavior
- Regular attendance
- Respect for equipment
- Showing initiative by assisting the coach, official or younger athletes

2. **Set Goals**

Success or failure should not be determined by the scoreboard, or the number of games won. Provide opportunities for all your athletes to experience success by setting goals in both the short term and long term. Goal setting can have a dramatic positive effect on both motivation and skill development. You can set specific performance goals that can be measured.

For example:

- In this activity see how many times you can use only one hand.
- This season try to miss only two training sessions.

An essential feature of goal setting is giving frequent feedback. Otherwise, the tracking of progress may become difficult and minor improvements may not be obvious.

3. **Self motivation**

The feeling of pride and self-confidence that arises from success and the feedback gained from the coach and significant others may be more important than the achievement itself. It encourages the development of self-motivation, hence reducing a young person's need for reinforcement.

4. **Provide leadership opportunities**

Providing opportunities for leadership and expecting your athletes to assume (not too great) responsibilities are very important. Acknowledging their efforts through leadership motivates further success.



5. **Be consistent and enthusiastic**

Young people are often heard to say 'I hope the coach is in a good mood today'. This indicates that the mood of the coach can affect how young people enjoy their sport.

The environment a coach creates, what they say and how they say it, should be consistent, caring and enthusiastic. The coach's behavior towards all young people, regardless of their sporting ability, should be the same.

6. **Provide Challenges**

Don't underestimate the motivational value of small-sided competitive activities or seemingly frivolous challenges.

7. **Vary your practice programs**

A variety of practice routines and activities will reduce the chance of boredom.

8. **You can make practices fun**

Regardless of the level of competition or the ability of the participants, most young people take part in sports for enjoyment and fun. Ensuring that young people have fun encourages them to maintain their involvement.

9. **Be organized**

Make sure there is enough equipment for the session. Nothing bores or frustrates young people more than waiting in long lines or watching more talented athletes dominate the equipment.

10. **Discipline**

Discipline may or may not be an effective deterrent to undesirable behavior; but discipline alone, without corrective direction, does nothing to tell young people what behavior is acceptable, or how they can modify their behavior. The threat of discipline can also increase the amount of pressure under which a young person performs, often leading to a mistake as a result of the fear of the consequences of making an error.

"The evidence supporting sports participation for young people is overwhelming...It has the power to combat everything from racism to low self-image, to the high-school drop-out rate."



RULES OF CONDUCT FOR ALL YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS

PROGRAM PURPOSE

- A. Richland Youth Association strives to provide a fun and safe environment where boys and girls, ages 3-14, can learn the fundamentals of sports, sportsmanship and teamwork under the guidance of volunteer leaders. The league will emphasize participation (everyone plays), physical fitness, building self-esteem, the opportunity to meet new friends, and, above all, fun.
- B. RYA recognizes the various developmental stages of boys and girls. Instruction in the teaching of basic skills will be given by volunteers. Height-adjustable goals are used in the basketball program.
- C. RYA will expose the youth to healthy competition, teamwork, and skill, on their level of physical maturity. Individual success should not be measured by winning or losing.
- D. Youth sports should be a positive learning experience. Too often children are immersed in a highly competitive league before they are prepared to handle it.
- E. We believe for the long-term personal and sports success of our youth, a progressive system is essential. Our leagues allow boys and girls to play at the level best suited to their physical and emotional maturity.

YOUTH BILL OF RIGHTS

- Right to participate in sports.
- Right to participate at a level equal with each child's maturity and ability.
- Right to have qualified adult leadership.
- Right to play as a child not as an adult.
- Right to share in the leadership and decision making of their sport participation.
- Right to participate in a safe and healthy environment.
- Right to proper preparation for participation in sports.
- Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
- Right to be treated with dignity.
- Right to have fun in sports.

CLASSIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Leagues will be divided by ages. Consideration will be given to the parent's request for a child to be moved up one division to accommodate playing ability, based on the parent's knowledge of their child's ability.

- A. Participants registered by the deadline, will be placed on a team as follows:
 1. Players will be drafted to a team. Special requests will be honored as long as they do not jeopardize the competitiveness of the teams.
 2. The head coach and one assistant coach may have their own children on their team.
 3. When requested, brothers and sisters will be assigned on the same team.
 4. Participants registered after the deadline will be assigned to teams on a space available basis.
 5. Only registered, rostered players may participate in games.



THE COACH

- A. The volunteer coach is the critical link to ensuring RYA's success. Coaches will be approved only according to their willingness to adhere to the philosophy and rules of the program. Coaches are strongly encouraged to attend coaches meeting as scheduled.
- B. Coaches should set an example for their players and spectators at all times. They must accept that both correct and incorrect calls are part of the game (especially a youth sports game) and teach players to concentrate on playing the game.
- C. Coaches are to encourage players to be on time for all games and practices, and ready to play.
- D. Coaches and parents should be examples of good sportsmanship to the players.

PARENTS/ SPECTATORS

- A. RYA encourages the positive support of parents and spectators at all youth recreation games. Some points to remember:
 1. Do not take the outcome of the game too seriously. The focus is **kids first**, winning second.
 2. Make positive comments. Criticizing of players, opponents, coaches or officials does not create a positive experience. This type of behavior will not be tolerated.
 3. Accept the official's decisions. The officials strive to contribute positively to our youth sports leagues.
 4. **Verbal abuse, loud or intimidating behavior is prohibited.** Those displaying this behavior will be asked to leave the facility or playing field, and possibly face suspension.

PRACTICES

- B. Practices will be held at a location designated by the team coach and parents.
 1. Practices times will vary depending on the sport.
 2. Practices can take place at a school, park or recreation center.

PARTICIPATION RULES

- C. It is our goal for **all** players to participate equally during games.
- D. Participation rules apply except for disciplinary action and injury.



EQUIPMENT

1. If equipment for all sports is provided it will be handed out at the beginning of the season.
2. Shoes: For leagues in the gym, players must wear non-marking rubber soled athletic shoes. Proper tread on the shoes ensures traction for the youth while playing.
3. Team uniforms are NOT provided by RYA in all leagues but are the required uniform for games. No jewelry allowed during games.

TEAM ROSTERS

- A. Players are allowed to play on only one team during the season.
- B. The responsibility of moving players from team to team will be at the discretion of the League Director. Coaches cannot move/trade players unless approved by the League Director.
- C. Should it become necessary to add players to a team, the RYA Sport Director will make the addition. **Coaches cannot add players to their rosters without knowledge or permission of the RYA Sport Director!**

SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. Sportsmanship is major part of this league. It is expected that coaches will exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. It is the coach's responsibility to see that their players, parents, and spectators show proper sportsmanship. **Flagrant fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.**
- B. Teams will shake hands with the opponents after every game.
- C. Sportsmanship goals:
 1. Accept the official's decisions. Mistakes will be made...stay focused on the game.
 2. Keep sideline conduct under control and make positive comments.
 3. Cooperate with staff.
 4. Avoid flagrant fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct.
 5. Respect your opponents.
 6. Do not criticize.
 7. No trash talking. Players, coaches, and spectators are to refrain from using harsh, derogatory, or abusive remarks. Trash talkers will be warned one time. If other instances occur, the participant, coach or spectator may be ejected from the game.
 8. Any player, coach or parent/spectator who is, at the discretion of the Coach or Athletics Manager, deemed out of control will be asked to leave the gym or facility in which the game is being conducted.



Program Expectations

What you can expect from us:

- RYA will provide the necessary training materials for youth sports coaches.
- RYA will set a practice schedule for basketball and baseball.
- Games will begin and end on time, unless there are unforeseen or extenuating circumstances.
- RYA officials will strictly enforce the rules of the various sports, especially rules of sportsmanlike conduct.
- All RYA volunteers and officials will treat players, coaches, parents, and spectators fairly and equally.
- RYA will promptly address any concerns or questions you have.

What we expect from you:

- It is expected that volunteer coaches will abide by the regulations outlined in this Coaches Manual.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches set examples for our youth participants of sportsmanlike conduct, teamwork, and respect for others - including officials and the other teams' coaches and players.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches will communicate any and all important league information to their team.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches' first concerns is the safety of the youth in the program and their overall experience.
- We expect that our volunteer coaches provide positive coaching for all participants.

Winning should not be the primary focus!



HELPFUL HINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COACHING

1. Learn the names of all the children on your team.
2. Ask one of the parents to be an assistant coach so they can step in, in the event you cannot attend a game or practice. Only approved coaches will be allowed to coach in your absence. Please plan ahead!
3. Have extra copies of practice/game schedules.
4. Encourage parents to be prompt for practices and games.
5. Recruit a team Mom or Dad.
6. Establish team rules. Have the players assist in developing the team rules.
7. Have FUN at practice.
8. End each practice with a team breakout. IE 1,2,3 TEAMNAME!
9. Encourage players to bring water bottles to games and practices.

“When you serve as a parent leader for your children’s teams, you find many opportunities to create positive experiences for the entire sports community.”

From the Bleachers With Love

by David Canning Epperson and George Selleck

“Encourage sportsmanship in your children and others by living good sportsmanship yourself.”

From the Bleachers With Love

by David Canning Epperson and George Selleck

“Assume leadership in helping sports become a sanctuary from the normal stresses of everyday life, a place where a good time is had by all.”

From the Bleachers With Love

by David Canning Epperson and George Selleck



COACH QUALIFICATIONS

- All coaches will become a registered coach at ryasports.com/ryacoaches
- All coaches must pass the criminal background check done at time of registration.

COACHES DUTIES

As a youth coach you are a teacher, a manager, and a representative of RYA. The coach is responsible for development of the players and their participation in the program.

In these roles you:

- Will be of good moral character
- Able to deal with children, assistant coaches, parents, game officials, and league administrators in a positive manner.
- Be responsible for equipment issued by RYA.
- Return all equipment in good condition at the end of the season.
- Be responsible for the team's actions, including parents and fans, and representing the team in communication with the officials and opposing team before, during, and after games.
- Must be informative/positive and never harassing at any time.
- Must be at the game or practice facility with their team throughout the activity.
- Coaches must have the NAYS ID Cards at all times while in a coaching capacity.
- Organize and conduct weekly practices
- Insure games and practices are conducted safely
- Instruct players on the basic techniques and rules of the sport
- Communicate with the parents about the team and the program
- Insure proper behavior and sportsmanship is present

All coaches in the RYA program must have a complete coach application and a background check. Coaches are expected to abide by the rules and regulations for the league.

The first concern of the coaches should be the safety of the youth in the program and their overall experience.

Winning should not be the focus. Volunteer coaches must provide positive coaching for all participants.



PRACTICE FORMAT

It is up to the coaches to determine how practices are run. Here are some suggestions for an effective practice:

1. Have an outline of what will take place before practice begins.
2. Warm-up (10 minutes). This will reduce the chances of injuries.
3. Skill Warm-up (10 minutes). Revise a skill taught in an earlier session and reinforce the key points as players warm up. Remember to use praise.
4. Skill Development (20 minutes). Demonstrate the new skill you have planned for the session. Remember to stick to the basics. Demonstrate slowly and in pieces if needed. Practice the skill. Observe all players so that you can praise good technique and spot basic errors. Be positive and supportive as you correct mistakes.
5. Modified Game (20). Play a game. Make sure there isn't anyone sitting out for long amounts of time.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE GAMES

Before games: Games are scheduled with limited leeway time. Please make sure that your team is on time and ready to play at your assigned time. Remind your players that only water is allowed on the benches. Introduce yourself to the referees of the game. Ask parents to sit in the stands.

After games: Quickly do a cheer and hand shake with the opposing team. Clear off the field/court quickly, pickup all your trash and ask parents to do the same, so that the next game can begin on time. Compliment your team on their playing. If your team has chosen to have snacks, please pass them out off the courts or fields. **Please dispose of any trash in the available trash cans.** Remind the players and participants of the next game/practice.

SNACKS

RYA does not provide snacks for league play. A successful suggestion has been that the coach brings snacks the first game and then creates a schedule for the rest of the season, assigning a different family each week. Another suggestion is requesting a parent accept the role of "Team Parent" and coordinate snack duties.

UNIFORMS AND DRESS CODE

RYA will provide uniforms in some sports. If the uniform is included it will be added in the price of the registration. Please remind your players to wear their uniforms to the games. Encourage them to tuck in shirts and keep pants at their waist. Participants do not need to wear their uniforms to practice. The safety of our participants is very important. All players need to remove jewelry before playing and need to have appropriate athletic shoes.



PICTURES

Team pictures will be taken every season. These pictures are optional and are not included in the price of the program. A picture time will be assigned to your team. Please make sure you are there 15 minutes early. To ensure that all team members' show up for the team picture, each coach (or designated parent) should make reminder calls or emails the night before. Even if families aren't buying pictures, encourage them to be in the team picture. If there are problems with the photos, the photographer needs to be contacted directly. This information is located on the picture envelope and RYA website.

*Pictures only taken for Spring Baseball, not for Fall Baseball

AWARDS

RYA provides individual trophies/medals/rings for top 2 teams in each sport. These will be given to coaches at the end of the season. Participation awards may or may not be handed out to other teams

PARENTS

Parents are not allowed on the court/field unless they are an assistant coach. Parents are under the same sportsmanlike conduct rules as the coaches and players are. Coaches should encourage parents to cheer and support **all** teams in a positive way.

Parents like to be informed. Please clearly communicate information to them. A suggestion is to have a coach-parent-player meeting. This meeting can take place following the Informational Meeting or at the first practice. Here is a recommended check list of what to go over:

- Introduce yourself and give parents your contact information.
- Explain your goals for this season. (They should reflect those goals established in this manual.)
- Have the team introduce themselves and introduce their parents.
- Recruit an assistant coach and/or a team mom or dad.
- Hand out all game/practice schedules (Make sure the group can practice on the night you have chosen, it not discuss a night with the group).
- Explain snacks.
- Go over any rules you have as a coach.
- Establish rules as a team.
- Address any concerns or questions they may have.

Hint: Focus on the kids! This is their team, not their parent's team.



Preseason Team Meeting

It is important to have a preseason meeting with parents and players to explain the program expectations and your coaching expectations and philosophy. This is the coach's opportunity to avoid issues in the future by establishing clear rules and expectations.

What to cover at the meeting:

- Introduction
- Introduce yourself and the other coaches.
- Many parents like to know a little bit about your background with the sport and coaching.
- Have players and parents introduce themselves

Team Plans

- Practice times (when and where and how often)
- Equipment needed (water bottle, helmets, etc.)
- Information about game days (Schedule)
- Goals for the team (what skills you would like to see players develop this season and what team play you are looking for etc..)
- Team rules (adapt these to your coaching style)
- Players must call in advance if they will miss either a practice or game
- Players should be at the field 15 minutes prior to game time
- Players should be at the field ready to play at the scheduled practice time and players need to be picked up at the scheduled end of practice.

Information to include on a handout

- Game schedule
- Listing of players, parent's name and numbers. Including coach's numbers.
- After game snack assignments
- General information about team goals.
- League contact information, Rain out line etc.

Note that in general; information that the coach wants to communicate to parents should be given directly to the parent or sent home on a handout or emailed. Do not expect that children at this age will correctly hear and report accurately a general announcement made at a practice.

Do not substitute email for face to face interaction. Take the time to know your players and their parents. It will help your team unity and establish new friends.



Team Building Activities

A successful season has many components. None of these components involves who wins the most games. A successful season starts with everyone feeling a part of the team.

Throughout the season provide activities to help include everyone as an important part of the team. These might include:

- Prior to the season have a team meeting.
- Send home an occasional newsletter
- Have parents versus kid game. Keep parents in perspective.
- Have an end of season party. This can be as simple or extravagant as you wish.
 - Ask RYA's Special Events Director about team party ideas.

Address and stop unsportsmanlike behavior before it can get started by parents and players immediately. This can disrupt a team and ruin a season for the players.

Let your Sports Director or another board member know if you need assistance in speaking with a parent.



Developing a Positive Relationship with Youth Sport Officials

Coaches and officials never seem to be on the same page. There always seems to be some tension between them. It often seems to coaches that the person officiating must be seeing a different game than they are.

Please remember that Officials are people Too!

When you hear the typical comments after the game.....

“It is the ref’s fault we lost the game. If he hadn’t made that call, we would have won the game”

Remember:

No matter the sport, there will always be older people on the field to see that the game is played fairly and by the rules.

Our officials are trained and have many years of experience.

They must keep in mind the rules, the age level of each team, and the concept of a fun positive experience for all players in the game.

Last words of wisdom.....

Your expectations may not equal a parent's or player's commitment to the sport!



Emergency Considerations

Coaches and parents should all have a general knowledge of what to do in an emergency. RYA has emergency lifesaving tools in our concession stands - including an AED machine and Stop The Bleed kits.

For training on Stop The Bleed:

<https://www.stopthebleed.org/training/>

For training on CPR / AED usage:

<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/aed/aed-training>

Perry Weather Websites:

The city of North Richland Hills has Perry Weather monitors at various city-owned parks.

Richfield Park:

<https://widget.perryweather.com/?id=cdfaafac-eb7-4a99-8b56-4c352ae752a5>

Cross Timbers Park:

<https://widget.perryweather.com/?id=10c9c26b-9813-4361-b9cb-384d99934923>

Walker's Creek Park:

<https://widget.perryweather.com/?id=85d5c715-d344-4706-84d9-d4688b33d775>

For more information on emergency training opportunities, please contact the board of directors.