

The Role and Responsibilities of Parents of Children participating in St. Joseph Parish and School Interscholastic Athletics

The communal approach to a Catholic school fosters shared values and common priorities, and creates a community of believing and learning. Actively engaged parents help nurture a partnership that focuses on personal development.

Parental support is valued and encouraged in all aspects of a child's development. Participating in sports is one aspect of a child's development, and it is expected that parents/ guardians and spectators conduct themselves in an appropriate manner - acting as positive role models for all participants during sporting events. Therefore, it is critical for parents/guardians to display the following behaviors:

1. Trust in their child's ability to have fun as well as to perform and achieve excellence on their own
2. Help their child to learn the right lessons from winning and losing and from individual accomplishments and mistakes
3. Respect their child's coaches, teammates and fellow parents as well as the players, parents, and coaches from opposing teams
4. Give only encouragement and applaud positive accomplishments, whether for their child, his/her teammates, their opponents or the officials
5. Show respect towards officials and their decisions
6. Never coach their child or other players during games and practices, unless they are one of the official coaches of the team

There is a set of expectations to which the parents of participating student athletes are expected to conform.

1. Act in Accordance with Catholic Values.

Parents/guardians are expected to support and encourage their child's efforts. All comments from the stands should be supportive of the team's efforts. No negative comments and criticisms should ever be directed towards student-athletes. In addition, public criticisms directed towards the coaches, the athletic director, and the school administration are absolutely unacceptable. In addition, it is expected that parents/ guardians act as role models for their children by putting wins and losses in their proper perspective.

2. Commit to the Demands of the Sport.

Although there is a recommended fixed limit to the number of games that any team can play, it is important for parents/guardians to understand that participation in an interscholastic athletic program is a significant commitment. This commitment includes adhering to all school and league policies, athletes attending every game when possible at all locations at which their team is scheduled to play, driving student athletes to "away games" or tournaments that are a good distance from the school, and possibly participating in tournaments during the holidays. If parents/guardians cannot make such a commitment, they should be encouraged not to enroll their child in the sports program.

3. Let the Coaches coach and the Officials officiate.

Parents/guardians should make no attempt to instruct players or the team from the stands. In addition, questioning, criticizing, or berating the coach and/or the referees does not set a good example for the young athletes involved in the contest. It is up to the athletic director or athletic committee and/or the school administration to help parents/guardians realize that they will be

asked to leave a game or be suspended from attending games if they are not able to maintain a standard of acceptable behavior.

4. Volunteer their Time

Parents/guardians may be expected to contribute their time and service in support of the team and the interscholastic athletic program. A viable volunteer program is dependent upon everyone's willingness to maintain a high level of quality and success. Parents/guardians may be asked to assist as scorekeepers, timekeepers, ticket or money takers, refreshment sellers, crowd control monitors, or to help with set-up or clean-up. When appropriate, parents/guardians may be asked to serve as team liaisons and assist with phone calls or provide a schedule to see that all tasks are filled and rotated in an equitable manner. In addition, parents/guardians may also be asked to help with and support fund-raising. Any expectation that is mandatory must be clearly communicated to parents before the season begins.

5. Provide Transportation to and from Games

In most cases, parents/guardians are expected to provide transportation for their children to and from games and practices. Coaches are not covered with liability insurance for transporting students. Therefore, they are not allowed to transport athletes at any time. Parents who coach should use their own discretion.

6. Engage in Respectful Communication

Parents/guardians should communicate directly with the coach, athletic director, and/or the athletic board/ committee on matters of concern. They must do so at appropriate times, and not immediately before, during, or after a game. While it is a given that parents/guardians act as advocates for their own child, it is important for parents/guardians to understand that coaches, athletic directors, and school administrators make decisions that benefit the group, not the individual. Sometimes decisions that benefit the group conflict with individual needs and desires, but such is the reality of being a member of a team. Under no circumstances should parents/guardians be verbally abusive towards coaches, athletic directors, and school administrators. Parents/guardians must be respectful with their tones of voice, as well as thoughtful with the words they choose to use.

7. Return all uniforms and/or borrowed equipment by the specified dates for each sport.

The athlete is responsible for the uniform issued. If it is lost, stolen or damaged, an appropriate assessment can be made to replace the uniform. At the end of the season, uniforms should be returned in clean, reusable condition. A fee to replace the uniform may be imposed.

8. Respectful Behavior

It is important for parents/guardians to realize the amount of time and effort it takes to run effective and efficient interscholastic athletic programs. The level of commitment that coaches, athletic directors, athletic committees and school administrators put forth demands the respect of all parents involved. Parents/guardians who cannot adhere to a reasonable level of respectful behavior and expectations should have their privileges of attending games revoked. In addition, under no circumstance should parents/guardians sit in and around the bench area or speak with their child during games. Parents/guardians do not have these rights and privileges unless they are asked to serve as an official volunteer coach.

PARENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows end users to engage in multi-directional conversations in or around the content on the website. A large percentage of internet traffic is centered on the use of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, Ning, Twitter, Second Life, YouTube, Linked In, blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, document sharing and email.

The spirit of social media is about leveraging the positive ways in which email, Facebook, Twitter, etc. can benefit the school community. In all aspects of social media, the individual should keep in mind that everyone does have the right to self-expression; however, such expressions can have possible consequences, both positive and negative.

For interscholastic sports at St. Joseph Parish and School, pictures of individual students may only be published in printed and social media with written and dated permission from the parent or guardian. Permission is not required for group pictures (6 or more persons) as long as the names are not provided. No student information regarding phone number, address, family members or other personal information should be published in social media.

St. Joseph Parish and School expect that its parents and families will act responsibly and exercise good judgment (regardless of personal opinion) and discretion when placing on any Medium information concerning or otherwise identifying the school, team or any of its players. If the parent fails to act responsibly in that regard, the information and content placed on or communicated via a Medium can have a harmful effect on the school, the team and players and others associated with the team.

CHILDREN AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In a *Clinical Report – The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families* from the American Academy of Pediatrics many parents are aware that 13 years is the minimum age for most social media sites but do not understand why. There are 2 major reasons. First, 13 years is the age set by Congress in the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), which prohibits Web sites from collecting information on children younger than 13 years without parental permission. Second, the official terms of service for many popular sites now mirror the COPPA regulations and state that 13 years is the minimum age to sign up and have a profile. This is the minimum age to sign on to sites such as Facebook.

Using social media becomes a risk to adolescents more often than most adults realize. Most risks fall into the following categories: peer-to-peer; inappropriate content; lack of understanding of online privacy issues; and outside influences of third-party advertising groups. Specific examples include cyberbullying and online harassment, sexting, a new phenomenon called “Facebook depression,” and privacy concerns.

In general, if a Web site specifies a minimum age for use in its terms of service, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) encourages that age to be respected. Falsifying age has become common practice by some preadolescents and some parents. Parents must be thoughtful about this practice to be sure that they are not sending mixed messages about lying and that online safety is always the main message being emphasized.

St. Joseph Parish and School expect that its students who engage in various forms of social media will act responsibly and exercise good judgment (regardless of personal opinion) and discretion when placing on any Medium information concerning or otherwise identifying the school, team or any of its players. If the student and subsequently the parent fail to act responsibly in that regard, the information and content placed on or communicated via a Medium can have a harmful effect on the school, the team and players and others associated with the team, and the student who posts the information. They could also face possible consequences.

DUTY TO REPORT DEPENDENCY, NEGLECT OR ABUSE

Kentucky Revised Statute 620.030 requires any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent, neglected or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made to a local law enforcement agency or the KY State Police; the cabinet or its designated representative; the Commonwealth's attorney or the county attorney; by telephone or otherwise.

SPORTS PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the following Sports Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct is to help define appropriate parental/guardian actions that support the mission of the parish, school and athletic program.

Parents/guardians should read, understand, and sign this form prior to participation. Any parent/guardian who does not follow the guidelines below may/will be asked to leave the sports facility and may/will be suspended from the privilege of attending games.

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these pillars of character.

As a parent/guardian, I therefore agree to the following:

- I will not force my child to participate in sports.
- I will remember that the game is for youth, not adults.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy towards all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at all games and practices.
- I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct (booing, taunting, etc) or any other form of harassment towards any official, coach, player or parent.
- I (and my guests) will not use any profane language or gestures.
- I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of the athletes.
- I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will insist that my child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect.
- I will teach my child the importance of hustle, playing fairly, and doing one's best.
- I will not ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will emphasize the importance of skill development over winning and losing.
- I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my own child.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games, and will not publicly question their decisions.
- I will respect the coaches for the time they donate, and I will not publicly confront, question, or criticize them.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches for the team.

Athlete's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____