

CYO
Catholic Youth Organization

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

2011-2012

ATHLETIC MINISTRY HANDBOOK





**Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Catholic Youth Organization**

***The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Handbook is
published by:***

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Click on Athletic Ministry

“Beloved Young Adults”

**The late Pope John Paul II's words
On Nov. 24, 1984, to Olympians who had
participated in the Los Angeles Games.**

“Beloved young athletes, athletics offers you, among other things, also the opportunity to improve your own personal spiritual state. Called as you are frequently to engage in your competitions in the midst of nature, amid the marvels of the mountains, seas, fields and slopes, you are in the best position to perceive the value of simple and immediate things, the call to goodness, the dissatisfaction with one's insufficiency, and to mediate on the authentic values that are the basis of human life.

These are the virtues that harmonize well with the Christian spirit because they demand a capacity for self-control, self-denial, sacrifice and humility, and therefore an attitude of gratefulness to God, who is the giver of every good and therefore also the giver of necessary physical and intellectual talents.

Sports are not merely the exercise of muscles, but the school of moral values and of training in courage, in perseverance, and in overcoming laziness and carelessness. There is no doubt that these values are of the greatest interest for the formation of a personality which considers sports not an end in itself but as a means to total and harmonious physical, moral and social development.”

Dear Friends of Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports,

For many years, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has conveyed the message that CYO is more than just a sports program. The **C**atholic **Y**outh **O**rganization is most importantly a ministry. CYO is a way for our youth to use their God given talents to play sports, while at the same time carrying out the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Our challenge as adults is to remember our ministry and role as teachers. Our skills and talents need to be built upon and sharpened through training programs. The 'Coaches' Orientation Program' is one of the most important aspects of the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department when it comes time for a new coach to take on the challenge of working with our youth through CYO. The department works in collaboration with approved speakers to help spread the word that CYO is more than just a sport. It helps all coaches transition into their positions as role models and teachers easily, while at the same time impacting the emotional, spiritual, physical, social and athletic needs of our youth.

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department also hosts an 'Athletic Ministry Conference' twice a year. The department encourages any person involved in a parish's CYO Sports Program to attend one of these conferences, which typically takes place the first and third Saturday in October of each year. These conferences are designed, for example, to help a first time parish athletic director or a new CYO Sports board effectively organize a group of people and equip them with the appropriate tools through which they can then share Jesus' word through their sports program,

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia has been designing an 'On-line Registration and Rostering Program' to help meet the needs of everyone involved in CYO. The department, along with the assistance of the Archdiocese's ITS Department, is working on a site to coincide with OYYA's existing site, through which a parent could register his or her child for a sports program. OYYA's existing web site (i.e., www.oyya.org) provides any visitor with the opportunity to see what is happening in the realm of athletic ministry and CYO sports throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We also collaborate with the staff of "*The Catholic Standard and Times*," the archdiocesan newspaper, to help create a heightened awareness of the goodness shared by our youth in their everyday lives while working with others through their ministry as members of their CYO Program.

In closing, we sincerely thank our vast amount of CYO constituents and volunteers that share their talents, abilities and endless amount of hours with the youth of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

We look forward to enriching our relationship with you and building upon the ministry that is the most important aspect of the **C**atholic **Y**outh **O**rganization program.

With warm regards,

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contact Information.....3
“Beloved Young Athletes” Pope John Paul II.....4
Letter to CYO Constituents.....5

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....6-7

CYO Sports Mission Statement.....8

CYO Points of Emphasis.....9

Archdiocesan CYO Organizational Chart.....10

Archdiocesan Administration.....11
Office for Youth & Young Adults (OYYA)
Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department

Regional Administration.....11-14
By-Laws
Parish Assignments
Regional Athletic Board
Commissioner

Regional Geography.....15

Parish Administration.....16-17
The Pastor (pg. 16)
Parish Athletic Director (pg. 16)
Parish Athletic Ministry Board (pg. 16)
CYO Coaches (pg. 17)

Eligibility Standards.....17-25
Parish Eligibility (pgs. 17-18)
Coaching Eligibility (pg. 18-19)
Grade School Athlete Eligibility (pg. 20-23)
High School Athlete Eligibility (pg. 23-25)

General Policies.....25-32
Code of Conduct (pg. 25)
Safety (pg. 26)
Rosters & Fees (pg. 26-28)
Post-Season Competition (pg. 28)
Officials (pg. 28)
Admissions Fees (pg. 29)
General Protests (pg. 29)
Lateness (pg. 30)
Regional Alignment (pg. 30)
Insurance & Liability (pg. 31)
Out of Season Violations (pg. 31)
Summer Season (pg. 31)
Field/Facility Directors (pg. 31-32)
Tryouts (pg. 32)
2011-2012 Black-Out Dates (pg. 32)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CYO Sanctioned Sports.....33-51

Volleyball (pg. 33)
Cross Country (pg. 34)
Football (pgs. 35-36)
Soccer (pgs.37-38)
Field Hockey (pgs. 39-40)
Basketball (pgs. 41-42)
Baseball (pgs. 43-44)
Softball (pgs. 45-46)
Track & Field (pg. 47)
Cheerleading (pg. 48)
High School Basketball (p.49)
High School Volleyball (pg. 50-51)

2011-2012 Special Events.....52-53

The Mass and Recognition Ceremony (pg. 52)
Coaches' Orientation (pg. 52)
Athletic Ministry Conference (pg. 53)

**CYO Coaches, Youth Ministers and Volunteer Steward Requirements
Service Projects for Sports Teams.....54-58**

**CYO/Youth Ministry Directive/Policy Statement Regarding Skills Camps
and Mandatory Overnight Camps.....59**

Insurance Requirements.....60

CYO Coaches, Youth Ministry and Volunteer Stewards Guidelines.....61-64

Virtus Adult Volunteer Code of Conduct.....64-65

Mission Statement Banner.....66

Recommended Reading List.....67

Athlete's Prayers.....Back Cover

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I. Introduction to CYO Athletic Ministry

A. CYO Sports Mission Statement

CYO Sports is:

one component of a parish's comprehensive youth ministry program which

*enables the partnership of parents, coaches, priests, religious, teachers and adult leaders to manage and support a sports program that

*allows youth to grow in their relationship with God and come to better understand themselves and the Catholic faith.

Such a program:

*employs healthy and enjoyable competition to promote the sharing of gospel values among athletes, parents, and coaches

*assists parish leadership in nourishing the emotional, spiritual, social, and physical needs of young people

*encourages young people to appreciate the gifts that they possess and challenges them to share these gifts with their community

*allows youth to witness the life of Christian discipleship in their coaches and adult leaders

*encourages youth to become responsible members of their faith community.

B. CYO Points of Emphasis

MINISTRY— CYO sports provide a unique opportunity for youth ministry with the potential for great Christian influence. All CYO sports volunteers should strive to ignite spiritual development out of the relationship between the youth and athletics. God has blessed the youth with many gifts and talents, and volunteers are called to realize the importance of animating an appreciation for those blessings. We encourage our volunteers to act as ministers by facilitating **prayer before and after practices and games**, attending **Mass as a team**, and creating a team **service project, among other things**. Most importantly, we ask that the volunteers teach values of faith and character development and reflect those values in their own actions. Participation in athletics provides many “teachable moments” and all involved need to be prepared to constructively address those opportunities.

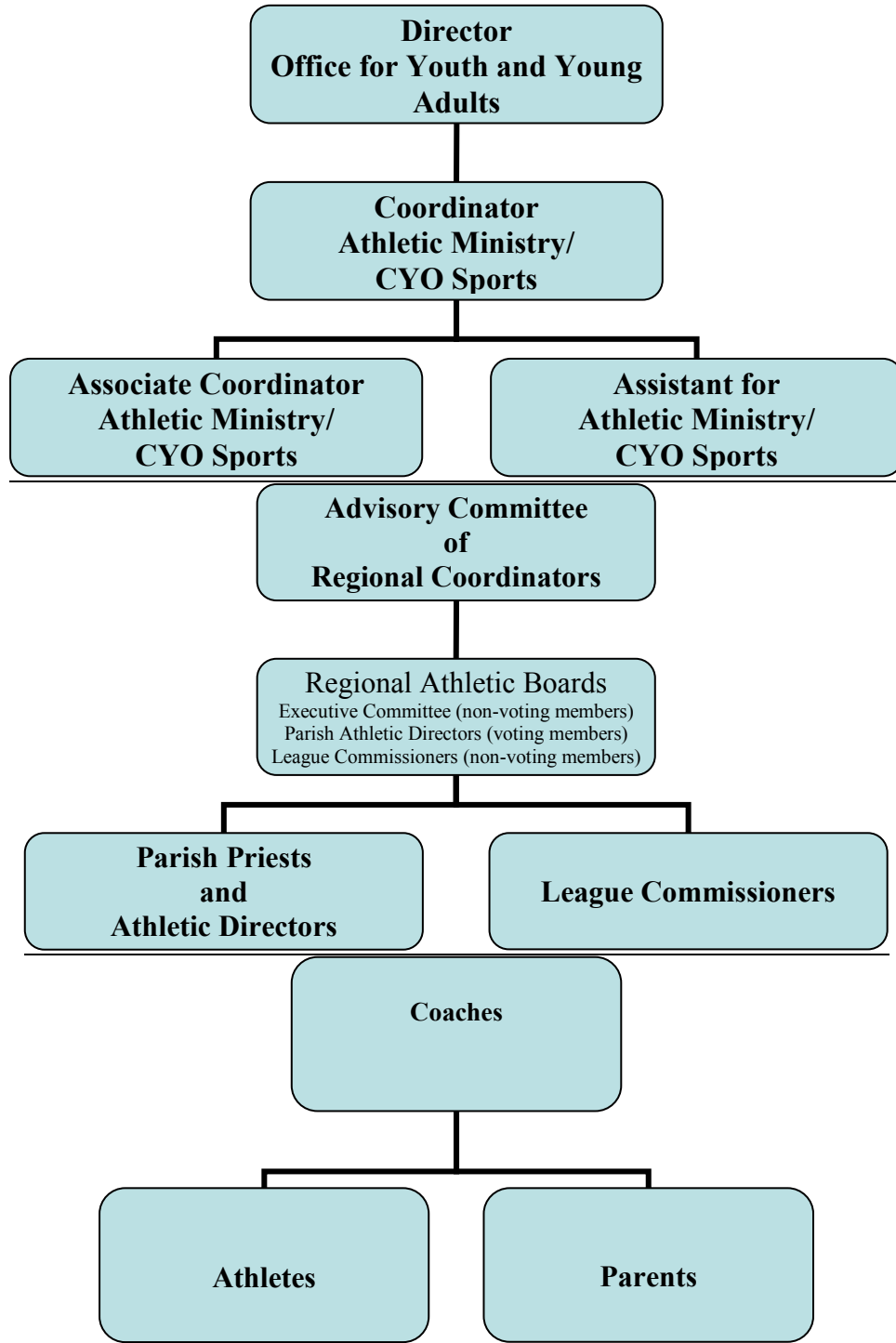
SPORTSMANSHIP— All CYO programs must reflect Christian attitudes and values through coaches emphasizing good sportsmanship. Coaches are expected to set sportsmanship standards with their teams and discuss proper conduct. Part of showing good sportsmanship involves both coaches and their teams shaking hands with the other team before and after each contest. Sportsmanship also includes treating game officials with respect. Officials will make mistakes, and therefore coaches and athletes must be tolerant. The CYO is not tolerant of shouting and criticism nor any negative or derogatory comments toward officials, coaches, spectators and/or athletes. **In short, let players play, coaches teach, officials officiate and parents support.**

ENJOYMENT— **Youth play sports because it’s fun; youth leave organized sports because it’s not fun—it’s that simple.** The CYO is not a spectator sport for the benefit of coaches and parents. All competitions are supposed to be enjoyable for the athletes! **Good CYO coaches “succeed” by enabling youth to develop their talents, not simply by winning. Coaches succeed** by helping each youth become the best they can be through skill development, building a team as part of the parish community, helping youth see beyond themselves to the needs of others, appreciating the social aspects of sport, seeing God as the source of our gifts and praising Him for it, and having fun along the way. Good CYO coaches constructively instruct their athletes. **It is critical that our youth understand that they get their worth from God as a free gift, NOT from “success” in athletics.** We pray that parents will support their children without placing undue pressure on them to win or be the best athlete on their team or in their Region, none of which their child can control. We also ask that spectators cheer in a positive manner. Remember that the participants are not small adults, they are children playing a game.

ORGANIZATION— The creation of Regional Athletic Boards in 2003 helped to bring information, processing, and decision making closer to the parish level—all under the oversight of the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. The tremendous commitment and work by volunteers on the Boards and parish athletic directors has helped strengthen and make CYO more responsive. **The Boards also represent another voice reinforcing the importance of living the Gospel values through sports.**

**The Office for Youth and Young Adults
Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department**

A. Organizational Chart



B. The Archdiocesan Administration

1. The Office for Youth & Young Adults (OYYA)

This Archdiocesan Office is situated in the Secretariat for Catholic Education. The Office, which is comprised of departments for Parish Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, Community Service Corps, and Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports endeavors to connect the young to Jesus Christ, the Church and one another. The staff of these departments also assist parishes in their efforts to help young people grow in their relationship with God and become responsible participants in their faith community. The Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports and the Associate Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports and the Assistant for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports are staff members of the Office for Youth and Young Adults.

2. Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department is responsible for carrying out the Mission of the Office for Youth & Young Adults through the unique avenue of sports. Decisions are driven by the need to support the adult leaders to help our youth “hear and respond to the call of Jesus Christ” and are viewed through the lens of ministering to our youth’s development and building Church community.

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department is comprised of the Director of the Office for Youth and Young Adults, the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, a part-time Associate Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports and a part-time Assistant for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports. The department relies heavily on the good work of the many CYO volunteers, without whom an effective CYO program would not be a reality. We continue to look for ways to work more efficiently and more effectively, given limited resources.

The department’s role is to provide the vision and framework from which our administrators, coaches and parents carry out this vital ministry. The department also exercises oversight and governance with regard to Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, an archdiocesan realm of activity which, on a daily basis, is given expression in the parish setting. This Handbook is a reference tool to remind all involved of the mission of Athletic Ministry as well as the structure and rules under which this ministry is carried-out.

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department continues to evaluate the best way to benefit from the vast gifts of its constituents while setting a clear course for the vision of CYO. We continue to seek the expertise and support needed to effectively run the CYO Regions and the Archdiocesan Tournaments. We have Archdiocesan Coordinators and Committees for a few of our sports, which has served all CYO constituents well, and we look to expand that model.

C. Regional Administration

1. The CYO Sports Region

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is currently divided geographically into 14 CYO sports Regions for the purpose of the Athletic Ministry program. All parishes with CYOs are assigned to a Region, and their teams must participate with their Region’s sports league. Failure to do so, without Archdiocesan permission, will result in elimination from Regional, Area, and/or Archdiocesan competition.

a. Regional By-Laws

1. Regional Athletic Boards might identify the need to have by-laws, in addition to rules and regulations provided by the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, to assist in governing parish participation in Regionally-sponsored sports leagues (i.e., issue of 'cuts,' issue of minimum playing time for JV, etc.)

2. Regional by-laws may enable the Region to take steps that are not feasible on an Archdiocesan-wide basis, with the exception of eligibility requirements which are consistent across the Archdiocese. When such might be the case the/each Region needs to provide the by-laws and explanation of any deviations from rules in this Handbook to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department for review and approval prior to the beginning of each CYO Year, and immediately if mid-year changes are being sought. If a Region, parish, commissioner, coach, parent or athlete is found to be in non-compliance to any rule outlined in this Handbook, they will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions or penalizations.

b. Parish Assignments

1. The current assignments of parishes to particular Regions is set indefinitely. However, if a parish **feels strongly** that it should be removed from its current Region and assigned to a new Region, their Pastor and Parish Athletic Director may present a request for an "assignment review" to the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department (See "Regional Alignment" on p. 30).

2. If a Region does not sponsor a league in a particular sport, then the Archdiocesan Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will assign that parish's team to a neighboring Region's league for that particular sport only. As long as the team is in compliance with all Archdiocesan rules outlined in this Handbook, they will be eligible to represent that Region at post-season Archdiocesan competition.

2. **The Regional Athletic Board** serves as the governing body of the Region. The Executive Committee, the Parish Athletic Directors and League Commissioners serve as its membership. Under the direction of the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, they hold the responsibility of coordinating, managing and supervising all Regionally-sponsored CYO sports programs and events. Their responsibilities include:

1. Promoting the purpose and goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8).
2. Providing a forum for communication and decision-making amongst the Region's parishes.
3. Developing a set of Regional by-laws within the domain of Archdiocesan rules and regulations which, again, would need to be submitted to the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports for review and approval.
4. Responsible for facilitating fair voting procedures when necessary.
 - a. Voting privileges are granted strictly on the basis of, "One parish, one vote."
 - b. Non-parishioners may not vote for a parish.
5. Ensuring all volunteers attend the appropriate and required training and education, for example:
 - a. CYO Coaches Training (p.52)
 - b. Athletic Ministry Conference (p.53)
 - c. Safe Environment Session
 - d. PA State Clearance
 - e. Child Abuse Clearance
 - f. Out of State FBI Checks, if applicable
6. Recruiting, screening and hiring Commissioners who demonstrate an understanding of how to conduct a truly "Christian League" .
7. Forming subcommittees to review issues that may need Regional supervision (For example: Behavior, Rostering Review, Financial Procedures).

3. The Executive Committee

- All members may incur more specific duties, other than those listed below, as defined in the Region's approved by-laws.
- All positions are elected by the Regional Athletic Board and may serve term as regulated by the Region's approved by-laws.
- Members:

A. **The Regional Coordinator of Athletic Ministry** is responsible for providing leadership and direction to the Region's parish membership. He or she must:

1. Manage the Region's parish membership, programs and events so they:
 - a. Promote the purpose and goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement.
 - b. Comply with approved Regional by-laws and Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations.
2. Schedule and chair Regional Athletic Advisory Board meetings.
 - a. Minimum of four (4) per CYO Year.
 - b. Create meeting agendas to address current Regional issues.
3. With the assistance of the board, develop a set of Regional by-laws to be submitted to the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports for review and approval, and conduct a yearly review process of approved existing by-laws.
4. Facilitate board decisions on thorough voting procedures honoring each parish membership with one vote. The involvement of the entire board should be encouraged.
5. Serve as a liaison between the Regional Board and the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports via e-mail, phone calls and meetings. He or she must represent the Region at all meetings requested by the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports or designate an appropriate representative.
6. To disseminate to individuals who exercise various roles of responsibility throughout the Region (i.e. Sports Commissioners, Athletic Directors, etc.) all pertinent information, including communiqués from the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports.

B. **The Assistant Regional Coordinator** is responsible for assisting the Coordinator & the Executive Committee in managing the Region's parish membership, programs and events. The Assistant stands in as the Coordinator when he or she cannot be present.

C. **The Coordinator of Mission & Ministry** acts as the keeper of the CYO Sports Mission Statement. He or she must actively promote CYO as 'ministry' through sports, for example: through promoting prayer, liturgies, service projects, retreats, and reflection. He or she serves to remind the Regional board that all decisions are to be made in the light of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8).

D. **The Coordinator of Finance** is responsible for the stewardship of financial resources available to the board. He or she must:

1. Document Regional income and expenses.
2. Disseminate financial reports to the board and Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department.
3. Maintain a Regional checking account.
4. Approve financial expenditures with the board.

E. **The Coordinator of Communication** is responsible for the dissemination of information to all board members. He or she must provide all necessary written correspondence and electronic communication requested by the Region's Executive Committee, as well as the Coordinator for the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. He or she is responsible for keeping all of the Region's athletic volunteers well-informed.

4. **The League Commissioner** derives his or her authority from the Regional Athletic Board. Commissioners are appointed by the Board to manage a Regionally-sponsored sport on a daily basis. Decisions affecting the structure, operation, finances, and/or organization of the league must be reviewed by the Board. The Commissioner assists the Board by ensuring a particular sport is run in a manner that it is consistent with the CYO Sports Mission Statement and compliant with both the Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations outlined in this Handbook and approved Regional by-laws. A Commissioner must:

1. Attend the pre-season sports meeting conducted by the Archdiocesan Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department.
2. Confirm completion of the following by parishes:
 - a. Distribute and collect the following forms for coaches: (All available at www.oyya.org. (See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs 26-28)
 - b. Collect completed “Pastor’s Coaches Eligibility Approval” from each parish.
 - c. Commissioners are responsible for ensuring coaches participating in their league have attended the appropriate level of Coaches Training. (pg. 52)
3. Review the above items to ensure that they are completed and compliant with all CYO “Eligibility Standards” (Coaching— See pgs. 18-19) and present the original to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. Additional requirements may be introduced by the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports at the pre-season meeting.
4. Develop a set of league by-laws and/or conduct a yearly review of existing by-laws.
 - a. League by-laws must be approved by the Regional Athletic Board.
 - b. League by-laws have the flexibility outlined in Regional by-laws, as they relate to coordination with Archdiocesan rules.
 - c. League by-laws should establish policies and procedures for all regular season league administration, Regional playoffs and for determining a representative(s) for Archdiocesan-level competition.
5. Organize and schedule league games, officials, and Regional playoffs.
6. Act as an officer of approved by-laws.

D. Regional Geography

Region 1—Northeast Philadelphia

St. Anselm St. Bernard St. Cecilia Christ the King St. Christopher St. Dominic
St. Jerome St. Katherine St. Leo St. Martha Maternity BVM St. Martin St. Matthew
Our Lady of Calvary Our Lady of Ransom Presentation BVM Resurrection of Our Lord
Redeemer Lutheran St. Timothy St. William

Region 3—Frankford—Kensington

St. Anne Ascension of Our Lord St. George Holy Innocents Holy Name of
Jesus John Paul II School St. Josaphat St. Laurentius Mother of Divine Grace
Our Lady of Consolation Our Lady of Port Richmond Visitation Of Our Lord

Region 5—Germantown—Manayunk

St. Athansius/Immaculate Conception St. Benedict St. Bridget DePaul Catholic School
St. Helena Holy Cross Holy Child School Immaculate Heart of Mary Incarnation of Our Lord
St. John the Baptist Our Mother of Consolation St. Raymond

Region 6—South Philadelphia

Annunciation BVM Mary, Mother of Peace Epiphany of Our Lord St. Gabriel Holy Spirit
St. Mary's Interparochial Our Lady of Mt. Carmel St. Monica St. Nicholas of Tolentine
St. Richard Sacred Heart Stella Maris St. Thomas Aquinas

Region 8—Southwest and West Philadelphia

St. Cyprian St. Donato St. Francis De Sales St. Francis Xavier GESU St.
Ignatius of Loyola St. Malachy St. Martin De Porres Our Lady of Lourdes
Most Blessed Sacrament Our Mother of Sorrows St. Rose of Lima

Region 11—South Buxmont

St. Albert the Great St. Alphonsus St. Anthony Athletics St. Catherine of Siena St. Cyril of
Jerusalem St. David St. Genevieve St. Hilary of Poitiers Holy Martyrs Immaculate Conception
St. James St. Joseph/St. Robert St. John Bosco St. John of the Cross Nativity of
Our Lord Our Lady of Good Counsel Our Lady Help of Christians St. Luke St. Vincent De
Paul Queen of Peace

Region 17—Chester County

St. Agnes Assumption BVM St. Cornelius St. Elizabeth St. Joseph St. Maximilian
Kolbe St. Patrick (Kennett Square) St. Patrick (Malvern) Ss. Peter & Paul
Ss. Phillip & James Pope John Paul II Sacred Heart Ss. Simon & Jude Villa Maria

Region 18—Chestmont

St. Aloysius St. Basil Holy Family St. Mary
Blessed Teresa of Calcutta St. Phillip Neri (Pennsburg) Sacred Heart (Royersford)

Region 19—Lower Bucks County

St. Andrew St. Ann Assumption BVM St. Bede St. Charles Borromeo St. Ephrem
Holy Family Regional Athletic Ministry Holy Trinity St. Ignatius Immaculate Conception
St. John the Evangelist St. Michael Our Lady of Fatima Our Lady of Grace St. Thomas Aquinas

Region 20—Upper Bucks County

St. Agnes/Our Lady of Sacred Heart Corpus Christi St. Isidore St. John the Baptist
St. Jude St. Maria Goretti St. Martin of Tours Mary, Mother of the Redeemer
Our Lady of Guadalupe Our Lady of Mt. Carmel St. Rose of Lima St. Stanislaus St. Laurence

Region 21—Norristown Area

Bridgeport Catholic Conshohocken Catholic St. Eleanor Epiphany of Our Lord
St. Francis of Assisi St. Helena Our Lady of Victory St. Phillip Neri)
St. Teresa of Avila St. Titus Visitation BVM Mother of Divine Providence

Region 25—Mid-Delco

St. Alice St. Anastasia St. Andrew St. Bernadette Blessed Virgin Mary St. Charles
Borromeo St. Cyril of Alexandria St. Dorothy St. Eugene St. Francis of Assisi
School of the Holy Child Holy Cross Holy Spirit St. Joseph (Collingdale) St. Kevin
St. Laurence St. Mary Magdalene St. Pius St. Philomena

Region 30—Southeast Delco

St. Francis De Sales St. Gabriel Holy Saviour/St. John Fisher St. John Chrysostom
St. Joseph (Aston) St. Katharine Drexel St. Madeline/St. Rose Nativity BVM
Notre Dame De Lourdes Our Lady of Charity Our Lady of Fatima Our Lady of Peace
Our Lady of Perpetual Help St. Thomas the Apostle

Region 32—Mainline

St. Aloysius Academy Annunciation BVM St. Colman/St. John Neumann St. Denis
Devon Prep Rosemont School of the Holy Child St. Katherine of Siena
St. Margaret St. Monica St. Norbert Sacred Heart
St. Thomas/Our Mother of Good Counsel Waldron Mercy Academy

E. Parish Administration

1. The Pastor, as the canonical authority with regard to the governance of the parish, has final authority on all decisions pertaining to his parish, however the parish's participation in Regional and Archdiocesan competition is subject to those rules. The Pastor may designate a priest Moderator to work closely with a Parish Athletic Director and is strongly encouraged to develop a Parish Athletic Advisory Board. It should be the goal of parish administration to offer a sports program which promotes the purpose and goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8) and complies with both the Archdiocesan CYO Rules (outlined in this Handbook) and its Regional membership's by-laws (pg. 11-14).

The Pastor must also be knowledgeable of the "Parish Eligibility" requirements outlined on (pg.16-17) and the Grade School and High School Athletic Eligibility Requirements outlined on pages 20-25. The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department stands ready to assist all parishes in their efforts to produce a sports program charged with youth ministry.

2. The Parish Athletic Director is appointed by the Pastor and is guided by parish by-laws as to length of term and specific responsibilities. He or she automatically is a voting member of the Regional Athletic Board which governs his or her parish's CYO sports Region. The Parish Athletic Director is responsible for the following:

- a.** Communicating the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg.8) to parish sports volunteers and working to uphold its purpose and goals.
- b.** Developing a set of "Parish By-Laws," and/or conduct a yearly review of existing ones.
- c.** Ensuring the following:
 - 1.** That only qualified individuals are selected to work with children and that they're aware of their spiritual obligations and "Eligibility Requirements" (pg. 17-19) as a CYO coach.
 - 2.** That the parish sports program is compliant with all Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations (outlined in this Handbook), Regional By-Laws and existing Parish By-Laws.
 - 3.** That the parish meets all "Parish Eligibility" requirements outlined on pages 17-18.
 - 4.** That parish team rosters (pgs. 26-28) and Pastor's Coaches Eligibility Approval are accurate (See Eligibility Standards; pages 17-25), and timely submitted.
- d.** Chairing Parish Athletic Advisory Board meetings, unless a formal structure is in place.
- e.** Representing the parish at all Regional Athletic Board meetings.
- f.** Following through with all other duties as communicated from the Pastor or Priest Moderator.

3. The Parish Athletic Board - It is strongly recommended that the parish form a board to assist the Parish Athletic Director and/or Priest Moderator. Length of term and specific responsibilities of the board should be outlined in the parish CYO sports program's by-laws. The Parish Youth Minister should sit on the board.

4. Coaches

Potential coaches must be screened by the Parish Athletic Director and/or the Parish Athletic Advisory Board. All coaches must meet the “Coaching Eligibility” Standards outlined on pgs.17-19. Potential coaches must realize that becoming a CYO coach means acting as a role model to the youth of the Church. Therefore, his/her actions and words must reflect the purpose and goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8). It is the duty of all CYO coaches to be knowledgeable of the Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations outlined in this handbook.

II. Eligibility Standards

While all CYO sports Regions and participating parishes should strive to involve as many young people as possible, there is an inherent part of participation that requires certain rules in order to regulate fair and safe competition. These rules apply to the involvement of adult volunteers as well as the child athlete. At times, these rules may not seem to be in the best interest of the individual Region, parish or athlete. However, they are regarded to be appropriate for the majority of the participants and consistent with the goals of the Office for Youth & Young Adults (pg. 11). It is the responsibility of all CYO constituents, particularly the Regional Athletic Advisory Board, the Parish Athletic Director and/or the Parish Athletic Advisory Board, to ensure that all Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations (outlined in this Handbook) are followed in both letter and spirit.

The primary enforcer of our rules is the honesty and integrity of the CYO volunteer membership.

NOTE: Rationalizing breaking these rules is dishonest and contrary to the purpose and goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8) and certain penalization will follow no matter the intent.

A. Parish Eligibility

In order for a parish to participate in an Archdiocesan CYO sanctioned and Regionally-sponsored sports league, the following criteria must be met:

1. Each parish must charter annually with the Office for Youth and Young Adults (a.k.a. OYYA , see pg. 11). Information will be sent to each parish over the summer, and should be returned by the established deadline listed on the form. Charters indicate the Pastor’s acknowledgement of the following: 1) A CYO sports program exists at the parish, 2) the sports program is under his responsibility, and 3) the sports program should incorporate youth ministry aspects like prayer, liturgy and service. A charter must also list the Parish Athletic Director’s contact information and other ministry contacts as noted. For more information about chartering, please call OYYA at 215-965-4636.

2. Each parish is required to send at least one representative to one of the two Annual Athletic Ministry Conferences (See pg. 53).

3. Each parish team must be in compliance with the registration, rosters and fee procedures as outlined on pages 26-28.
4. Each parish must ensure all coaches are in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” requirements outlined below.
5. All parishes must be in compliance and “good standing” with their Regional Membership’s approved by-laws and their Region’s Athletic Board. (“Good standing” i.e.,: meeting required attendance at Regional board meetings and other Regional criteria.)
6. Athletic eligibility requirements and other standards established by their Region.

NOTE: Non-compliance with any of the above criteria will jeopardize a parish’s sports teams’ eligibility for Regional and Archdiocesan competition, and may result in further penalization.

B. Coaching Eligibility

In order to coach a parish team in an Archdiocesan CYO sanctioned and Regionally-sponsored sports league, all head coaches and assistant coaches must meet the following requirements:

Before coaching any CYO team, all coaches (head and assistants) **must**:

- Attend the in-person **Coaches Orientation** seminar (see page 52 for details.)
- If a new coach is not able to attend an in person coaches orientation before he or she begins coaching, the new coach is required to take the **Online Catholic Coaching Essentials course** before coaching at all **AND** then attend the next available **Coaches Orientation** session within 3 months.

NOTE: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is committed to the implementation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Therefore, **all adults** involved in youth ministry and service to children **must provide required background checks (renewal every five years) and proof of attendance at the Safe Environment Training for their parish.**

For more information and training schedule please visit www.virtus.org. This is NOT handled by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department but through the parish.

2. Age criteria for Head Coaches:

- a. Grade School: Must have reached their 21st birthday before the start of season (For “Start of Season” per sport, see pgs. 33-51).
- b. High School: Must have reached their 25th birthday before the start of the season (For “Start of Season” per sport (see pgs. 33-51).

NOTE: An “Assistant Coach” is defined as anyone who works with and/or instructs individual athletes on a team, one day or more per week. There is no specific age requirement for Assistant Coaches, and having HS students as Assistant Coaches, with proper supervision, can be an excellent benefit to all. **However, ALL coaches over 18 that have any coaching role must complete Safe Environment requirements. Assistant coaches under 18 should never be left alone with athletes.**

3. All coaches must be familiar with and comply with all Archdiocesan CYO Rules and Regulations outlined in this Handbook, or penalties may be levied.
4. All coaches must meet any additional requirements of their parish, their team's league and/or the Region.
5. All coaches must agree to the following pledge and it is recommended that they recite it in the presence of the Parish Athletic Director and/or League Commissioner:

CYO Coach's Pledge

***Upon my honor as a CYO Coach, I pledge myself to the following:
To guide each player to be a better Christian and a better citizen.
To be ethical and sportsmanlike in my coaching conduct
towards all athletes, officials, spectators and coaches.
To motivate each athlete to compete according
to the rules at all times.
To teach each athlete, especially through my own
examples, to be humble
and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.***

C. Grade School Athletic Eligibility

1. Grade School Age/Grade Restrictions:

In order to participate for a CYO parish/school team, all athletes must be in compliance with the eligibility standards listed below. The listing of the Coach, Parish Athletic Director and League Commissioner on a team's submitted roster (See pgs. 16-17) implies that they have thoroughly reviewed the roster for accuracy and compliance with the rules listed below.

a. Grade School Varsity (Class D) - Participants must be 7th or 8th grade students who have **not** reached their 15th birthday before September 1, 2011. Violators will face the penalties outlined in "Eligibility Violations" on pg.17-32.

i. 6th Graders - Only if a parish does not offer a Junior Varsity team, may 6th graders participate on the Varsity team. See "Years of Eligibility" on pg. 19-23.

ii. 8th Graders - Students in 8th grade who have reached their 15th birthday before September 1, 2011 may participate for their parish's "high school" sports teams (See "High School Athletic Eligibility" on pg. 23-25).

iii. 9th Grade and Above - Regardless of age, 9th graders and above may not participate on a Varsity (Class D) team.

Exception - Cross Country and Track & Field, only, are approved to employ different age/grade restrictions (See pgs. 34 and 47).

b. Grade School Junior Varsity (Class E) -

Participants are to be 5th or 6th grade students who have not reached their 13th birthday before September 1, 2011. Violators will face the penalties outlined in "Eligibility Violations" on pg. 17-32.

i. 4th graders - Regardless of age, 4th graders are not eligible to participate on a Junior Varsity (Class E) team.

Exception - Cross Country and Track & Field, only, are approved to employ different age/grade restrictions (See pgs. 34 and 47).

ii. 6th graders who are too old to participate on a Junior Varsity (Class E) team are eligible to participate on a Varsity (Class D) team.

iii. Below Junior Varsity (Class E) *Except for Track & Field and Cross Country, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia does not sanction any programs involving students in 4th grade or below. Therefore, in order to qualify for insurance and liability assistance from the Archdiocese, a parish that is hosting any other athletic team which involves students in 4th grade or below must meet the minimum requirements for *Non-Sanctioned Sports Programs* outlined under "Insurance and Liability" on pg. 31.

2. Years of Eligibility for Grade School Athletes:

a. Junior Varsity - 2 years.

b. Varsity - 2 years.

i. 6th graders participating on a Varsity team because there is no Junior Varsity team - will be credited with one year of Junior Varsity eligibility, rather than a year of Varsity eligibility. They will retain their full Varsity eligibility for their 7th & 8th grade years.

3. Grade School Residence Requirements:

a. General Residence Eligibility

i. Athletes must be either registered members of the parish or attend the parish school, otherwise they cannot participate.

ii. Registered members must be Catholic and must be registered before the start of the sport's season in which they are participating (See pgs. 33-51 for "Start Dates" per sport).

b. Change of Residence

i. Before the Start of the Season - If an athlete moves out of his/her parish prior to the official start date of a sport's season (See pgs. 33-51 for "Start Dates" per sport), the athlete is ineligible to participate with his/her former parish.

ii. After the Start of the Season - If an athlete moves on or after the official start date of a sport's season (See pgs. 33-51 for "Start Dates" per sport), he/she may choose to participate with their new or old parish.

NOTE: After the sport's roster deadline (See pgs. 33-51 for "Roster Deadline" per sport) athletes may no longer change teams. Once an athlete chooses to participate on a team at their new parish (i.e. the change of parish must take place before August 1, 2011), he/she cannot participate for any teams at their former parish. The adjustment period is for that CYO Year only. Also, for CYO purposes, no family may change the parish with which they are registered, without a change of residence, during the current CYO Year.

3. Formation of a New Parish - Athletes cut off from their old parish because of the establishment of a new parish may participate for their former parish during an adjustment period of three years following the official date of the new parish's establishment.

4. Grade School Scholastic Regulations:

a. Parish-School Students

i. A student-athlete who attends a parish's school is eligible to participate on that parish's CYO team.

ii. A student-athlete who attends a separate parish's school from his/her registered parish may, in certain circumstances, participate with either parish's CYO. **The pastor of the student-athlete's parish in which a student-athlete is registered along with OYYA's Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports will provide the appropriate direction.**

NOTE: At no time may a student-athlete participate for the same sport at 2 different CYO entities.

b. Non Parish-School Students

i. A student-athlete who is a registered member of the parish and attends a school (public, private or Catholic which is not part of CYO) other than their parish's school or is home-schooled is eligible to participate for their registered parish's team.

NOTE: It is recommended that non-parish-school students be required to participate in the parish's religious education program. Please contact your parish pastor.

c. Combined Schools

Parishes who share a "combined-school" may either offer CYO sports through their own parish or through the school. However, if the parishes involved choose to offer CYO sports through the school, the following conditions must be met:

- i.** Participation is limited to the students who attend the school and/or those registered members of the parishes involved in the combined-school.
- ii.** All involved parishes' Pastors must submit letters of their acknowledgement and approval of the "combined-school" CYO sports program to the Regional Athletic Board. The Pastor's letter must indicate: 1) the shared responsibility between the parishes for the CYO sports program, and 2) an understanding that none of the parishes involved may field a team on their own and separate from the combined-school team.
- iii.** The Region must then forward the Pastors' letters onto the Coordinator of Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports.
- iv.** This is much like a small-parish merger.

Violators will serve the penalties outlined under "Eligibility Violations" on pg. 17-32.

Note: There are no restrictions as to participation in non-CYO sports or other activities. However, parents are strongly encouraged to help their children reasonably assess the benefits and drawbacks of each activity and whether it is appropriate when viewing the child as a whole through the lens of our shared Catholic faith.

d. The Small Parish/School Merger

Parishes without schools are encouraged to make every effort to maintain their own parish athletic program. However, the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department has long recognized that there is a need to address parishes with declining school enrollments and/or the closing of such schools. Parishes who want to maintain a CYO Sports Program should be offered an option to do so. The need for possible mergers can only be to keep intact a CYO program, NOT to make teams more competitive.

1. Criteria:

- i.** Two or more "small" parishes, in the same Region, may request a parish merger.
- ii.** Parishes without schools may request a merger.
- iii.** The merger must be necessary in order for "all" of the parishes involved to sustain a team.
- iv.** No merger will be granted that gives the parishes involved a "substantial" competitive advantage.
- v.** Parish-schools must have a total enrollment of 250 or less in order to qualify to "request" a merger. Exceptions to this number can be requested, but unique circumstances must be presented.
- vi.** A parish merger is agreed on a sport by sport basis. For example: If two parishes or more form a merger for soccer, they cannot simply elect to play together for basketball – they must apply again.
- vii.** Mergers must also be reapplied for every year.

2. Procedures:

- i.** The cut-off date for requesting a merger is two weeks prior to the start of the season for each particular sport. ("CYO Seasons" per sport are listed on pgs. 33-51)
- ii.** The Pastor and Parish Athletic Director from each parish must present written approval to the Regional Athletic Ministry Board for review.
- iii.** Upon approval by the Regional Athletic Ministry Board, the request must then be forwarded to the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports for final review.
- iv.** Once approved by all levels, merged teams will retain the right to participate in all Archdiocesan events.

e. High School or Professional Athletes

An athlete found to be "rostered on" any high school team (freshman, j.v., or varsity) or professional team and also participating for a CYO team in that same sport during the same scholastic year will be considered ineligible.

5. Grade School Religious Regulations

a. Catholics - Athletes participating for a parish team must be registered members of the parish.

Candidates in the RCIA or similar program are not eligible for CYO sports until they have completed the program. Please speak to your pastor.

b. Non-Catholics - Only if a non-catholic athlete attends the parish's school, may they participate with a parish team.

c. Religious Education (CCD/PREP) - Affiliations with a parish CCD/PREP Program is strongly encouraged, not required. Parishes may establish CCD/PREP enrollment and attendance as eligibility criteria in order to participate for the parish team. Please speak to your parish Pastor.

d. Academic Standards - Coaches are strongly encouraged to request parents to expect minimum academic standards from children. Given the variety of schools attended, the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department is not able to require standards.

6. Eligibility Violations

a. Athletes found to be non-compliant with any of the "Eligibility" Standards outlined in this Handbook may face the following penalties:

- i.** Immediate discharge of the athlete from the violating team and the athlete will serve a one year suspension for all CYO sports.
- ii.** Forfeiture of any competition in which the violating team participated with the athlete.
- iii.** If the season has already ended, then any individual or team awards shall be returned.

NOTES:

If the circumstances of the violation necessitate further investigation the violating individual will be suspended from competition until an informed decision can be made. The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department reserves the right to impose further penalties if deemed appropriate.

D. High School Athletic Eligibility

1. High School Age/Grade Regulations:

a. Varsity (Class B)

i. Athletes must be 11th or 12th grade students who have not reached their 19th birthday before September 1, 2011.

NOTE: Athletes in 9th or 10th grade but over seventeen (17) years of age may be eligible for Varsity (Class B).

ii. Athletes who would have completed secondary school (chronologically) had they remained enrolled are not eligible.

iii. Parishes with not enough players to form a Junior Varsity (Class C) team (See “Resident of Parish with No Team” on pgs. 17-24), may allow 9th & 10th graders to participate on the Varsity (Class B) team.

iv. Athletes in special schools or who have dropped out of school must comply with the eligibility rules outlined above.

b. Junior Varsity (Class C)

i. All athletes must be 9th or 10th grade students who have not reached their 17th birthday before September 1, 2011.

NOTES:

- 8th graders too old to compete for a Varsity (Class D) team may compete in the appropriate age class for high school.

- Athletes participating for a parish with both a Varsity (Class B) team and a Junior Varsity (Class C) team, may only play for one team.

- Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance to any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions or penalizations.

2. High School Residence Requirements

a. Parish Resident - All athletes must be Catholic and registered members of the parish. For eligibility of Non-Catholics living within the parish boundaries see “Religious Regulations” outlined below.

b. Resident of Parish with No Team— A parish without enough athletes to form a team may request that their athletes be given permission to participate for a nearby parish within their Regional league. The Pastors of both parishes must provide letters of request to the League Commissioner to be reviewed by the Regional Athletic Board. If the Regional Board approves the request, then both Pastors’ letters and a letter of approval from the Region must be attached to the team’s roster.

c. Change of Residence - High school athletes must comply with the “Change of Residence” rules on pgs.17-25.

d. Formation of a New Parish - High School athletes must comply with the rules outlined under “Formation of a New Parish” on pgs. 17-25.

3. High School Scholastic Regulations

a. High School or Professional Athletes - High school athletes must comply with rules outlined under “High School or Professional Athletes” outlined on p. 23-25.

4. High School Religious Regulations:

a. Non-Catholic Athletes - who live within the parish boundaries will be permitted to participate for that parish provided the following criteria is met:

- i.** The athlete complies with the “High School Athlete Eligibility” rules on pgs. 23-25.
- ii.** The Pastor provides a letter of request to the League Commissioner to be reviewed by the Regional Athletic Board. If approved, the Pastor’s letter and a letter of approval from the Region must be attached to the team’s roster.
- iii.** In order to create fairness, Regions may determine a limit on the number of non-Catholic athletes a team may have in order to be eligible for Regional playoffs.

NOTE: Teams rostering non-Catholics may not participate in the PA State Boy’s Basketball Tournament.

b. Non-Catholic Teams - In the spirit of ecumenism, the League Commissioner in coordination with Regional Athletic Board may permit non-Catholic teams to engage in Regional competition with the approval of the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports. The Region may restrict their level of participation within the league.

5. Penalties - See “Eligibility Violations” on p. 17-32.

III. General Policies

A. Code of Conduct

The following are examples of Offensive Actions and Penalties:

No CYO athlete, coach or spectator is permitted to....

- a. Refuse to abide by an official’s decision*
- b. Display objectionable behavior by throwing equipment or any other forceful action.*
- c. Heap verbal abuse upon any athlete, coach, spectator or official*
- d. Lay hands upon, push, shove, strike, threaten to strike or physically attack an athlete, coach, spectator or official.*

This list is not exhaustive.

Any athlete, coach or spectator who is found to be guilty of any of the above violations may face the following penalties:

- a. Violation of Articles a thru c - Minimum five-game suspension for CYO league and/or playoff competitions. (A coach may not coach another CYO team while under suspension.)*
- b. Coach, spectator or athlete in violation of Article d - Minimum suspension for one full calendar year from all CYO sports*
- c. Athlete in violation of Article d – minimum suspension for one full calendar year in that particular sport..*
- d. Violation of above imposed penalties for conduct - If a violator disregards a penalty when properly notified, his or her team will be suspended from all competition for one full calendar year for that particular sport. The parish is responsible for enforcement.*

This list is not exhaustive.

NOTES:

- Penalties will carry over into the next season available in order to follow it to completion.
- If the circumstances necessitate further investigation, the individual in possible violation will be suspended until an informed decision can be made.
- If a Violator would like to protest a penalty, please see “General Protests” on pg. 29.

B. Safety

1. Equipment - Coaches must ensure all players wear the proper and mandated athletic equipment for their sport according to the “Primary Rules” for their sport. The “Primary Rules” are designated per sport on pgs. 33-51 and further defined at the pre-season Commissioner’s Meeting.

2. Competition Sites - Day of Competition Coaches must ensure that all fields and facilities are safe and free from hazards on the day of the competition. Coaches should report any suspicious or unsuitable athletic conditions to the Site Director assigned to that competition immediately. **If no Site Director has been identified, the Home Team coach takes on responsibility for the safety of all involved at that site. It is strongly encouraged that a separate Site Director be available at each competition as it is difficult for a coach to manage that additional responsibility.**

3. Competition Sites - Pre-Competition Day

It is the Commissioner’s responsibility to make safety a priority in running the league that they preside over. It is recommended that the Commissioner make a site visit before the day of a scheduled competition as a safety precaution.

4. First Aid - Every coach is required to carry at least one first aid kit. No game may begin without at least one first aid kit available at the site of the competition.

5. Emergency— Access to 9-1-1 is important in the event of an emergency. A cell phone is typically sufficient.

C. Rosters and Fees

1. The Roster - Every CYO team must complete a CYO sports roster form. (*A copy of the form is available at www.oyya.org/athletics). The Commissioner is to distribute rosters at their pre-season coaches meeting and instruct their coaches on the process for submitting their roster outlined below:

2. Required Information - Coaches must ensure that all of the information required on the roster be provided and that it is honest, accurate and complies with the “Eligibility Rules” outlined on pgs. 17-32. All names must appear in alphabetical order on the roster. The Coaches need to work with the Athletic Director and the Pastor to ensure that all athletes are eligible.

3. Required Approvals - The team's roster is considered complete when submitted and shows by way of signature that the following individuals have approved it and found it to be in compliance with the "Eligibility Rules" outlined in this Handbook (pgs. 17-32):

- a. Head Coach
- b. Parish Pastor or School Principal
- c. Parish Athletic Director
- d. Commissioner

NOTE: All signatures on the roster imply that the party has thoroughly reviewed the roster for accuracy of information and compliance with the "Eligibility Rules" outlined in this book (pgs. 17-25).

4. 2011-2012 Required Fees - Coaches must ensure that they submit their signed Pastor's Coaches Affidavit which should be attached to the roster to their Commissioner with the appropriate roster fee:

a. Grade School & High School

- Varsity & Junior Varsity - \$50.00 per team. Roster fee may increase for 2012-2013.

- All Parish "B" Teams - \$30.00 per team. Roster fee may increase for 2012-2013.

*Leagues may charge parish teams additional fees for participation, this fee is to be communicated to coaches by the Commissioner.

NOTE: The intention of additional fees may only be to cover general expenses of the league. Commissioners must prepare a post-season financial report for the Region's Coordinator of Finance. The Coordinator of Finance in coordination with the Regional Board must review.

5. Deadline - Coaches must submit their completed roster and the Pastor's Coaches Affidavit (attached to the roster) accompanied by the appropriate roster fee (listed above) to their Commissioner before the established deadline (See "Roster Deadline" per sport on pgs. 33-49) or by an earlier deadline established by the Commissioner.

6. Roster & Fee Distribution - The Commissioner must complete the following:

Rosters:

- a. 1 copy to Coach.
- b. 1 copy to Commissioner.
- c. 1 copy to Regional Athletic Advisory Board.
- d. Original to Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. A completed copy of the Pastor's Coaches Affidavit **must be stapled to the corresponding roster** for review when submitted to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department.

Fees:

a. After the Commissioner collects all of the fees from his or her league's coaches, he or she must present them to the Region's Coordinator of Finance.

b. The Coordinator of Finance must then deposit the fees into the Region's Financial Account, and submit one check per Regional league to be sent to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Department before the established deadline. (See "Roster Deadline" per sport on pgs. 33-49).

c. This check must be accompanied by a brief financial summary of the total fees. (For example: 10 Varsity Volleyball Teams x \$50.00 = \$500.00)

d. No individual parish checks will be accepted.

7. ROSTER REVIEW – As stated above, the commissioner must present a copy of his or her league’s rosters to the Regional Athletic Board. In coordination with the board, all rosters must be reviewed for compliance with the ‘Eligibility Rules’ outlined in this Handbook (pgs. 17-25). It is recommended that the board form a subcommittee to assist all sports commissioners with the review of rosters for compliance. Only approved, rostered athletes may participate on teams.

Note: Only rostered players may compete in tournaments. Non-rostered players are PROHIBITED to play in tournaments.

D. Post-Season Competition

1. Varsity (Class D) Leagues and above may host Regional post-season playoffs. Commissioners are responsible for the following:

- a. Establishing, in writing prior to the season, clear procedures for determining the Regional champion and possible at-large teams eligible for Archdiocesan post-season competition.
- b. Reporting which team(s) will be representing the Region at the Archdiocesan competition before the deadline established at the pre-season Commissioners’ Meeting at the Archdiocesan Office Center.

2. Regional invitations to Archdiocesan competition will be determined by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department by mid-season and will be based on various factors including the Region’s compliance with Archdiocesan initiatives and each league’s size (# of parishes participating in the league for that sport). The number of “completed” rosters received before the roster deadline (See “Roster Deadline” per sport on pgs. 33-51) will determine the Region’s size.

E. Officials

League Commissioners are responsible for contracting officials for league competition and Regional play-offs. It is recommended that, in coordination with the Regional Board, the Commissioner hire an Assignor of officials.

1. The Assignor will schedule officials for the season. *It is recommended that the Commissioner work out an agreement with the Assignor so that the Region may pay the Assignor with one check. If so, the Commissioner would add an additional fee to the rostering fee for each team in order to cover the cost of the officials and the assigning.

2. **All funds must flow through the Regional Financial Account.

3. Officials must be proficient and certified in the primary rules of the sport (See “Primary Rules” per sport on pgs. 33-51, as adjusted at the Commissioners Meeting).

a. Coaches must notify the Commissioner, in writing, about any problems or concerns with officials.

b. Coaches may not officiate for any CYO competitions in their Region for the same sport in which they coach unless the following criteria is met:

- Commissioners must request approval from the Regional Athletic Board.

F. Admission Fees

- 1. Archdiocesan Competitions** - may charge an admission fee in order to cover general expenses of the event.
- 2. Regional Competitions** - may charge an admission fee to in order to cover general expenses of the event, only when approved by the Regional Athletic Advisory Board.
- 3. Individual Parishes** - may charge an admission fee at parish-hosted competitions in order to cover general expenses of the event. However, if the Commissioner, in coordination with the Regional Board, finds these charges to be unreasonable or unnecessary, they reserve the right to refuse that parish home games on the league schedule.

G. General Protests

Protests may be filed on the basis of “**rules interpretation**” and/or “**athlete eligibility**,” they **cannot** be filed based on “**judgment**” calls. All protests must follow the process below:

Procedure:

- 1.** Before a competition is completed, the Head Coach must indicate to both the Head Official and the Head Coach of the opposing team that the competition is being protested.
 - a.** The protest shall be noted in the official scorebook when possible.**If the protest is not indicated in the official scorebook, then the protest will be dropped.**
 - b. If the Head Official has left the competition area without being notified of the protest, it will be dropped.**
- 2.** The protesting coach has 24 hours from the completion of the contest to send an e-mail of protest to the Commissioner.

NOTE: “Time sensitive” protests must be made within two hours of the completion of the competition.

- 3.** If the protesting coach does not consider the protest satisfactorily resolved by the Commissioner, he or she may appeal the Commissioner’s decision to the Regional Athletic Advisory Board.
 - a.** This appeal must be e-mailed within 24 hours of the Commissioner’s decision to the Regional Coordinator for review by the Regional Board.

NOTE: A “time sensitive” appeal of a Commissioner’s decision must be communicated to the Regional Coordinator within one hour of the Commissioner’s decision. The Regional Coordinator should make an attempt to communicate with as many Regional Board Members (See p. 11-14) as possible.

The Region’s decision is final on “time sensitive” appeals.

4. If the protesting coach does not consider the protest satisfactorily resolved by the Regional Board, he or she may appeal the Board's decision to the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports who will gather information.

a. This appeal must be e-mailed within 24 hours of the Regional Board's decision to the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. (See 1st page of this Handbook for e-mail addresses).

b. Protocol is important and must be followed to ensure the appropriate people have reviewed a situation and as a practical matter because the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department is not able to respond to all constituents in the more than 175 CYO sports programs.

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department is able to respond only to the Regional Board or other appropriate CYO Sports personnel.

NOTE: The Regional Board must resolve all protests related to a team prior to submitting them for Archdiocesan post-season competition. No team having been disqualified by a Region or by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department may participate in Archdiocesan post-season competition.

H. Lateness

Archdiocesan competitions may be held in any of the five counties within the Archdiocese, therefore coaches should plan for appropriate time when making travel arrangements. For Archdiocesan events, and when not addressed by Regional or league rules, the following policy shall govern teams who are late for a competition:

1. A fifteen (15) minute grace period will be granted beginning at the scheduled start of the competition. At the conclusion of this time, the Facility/Field Director and/or the Head Official may forfeit the game. At which time, the forfeiting team will be held responsible for their portion of the officials' fees.

2. A team with a requisite number of players is not entitled to the grace period.

3. The Field/Facility Director and/or the Head Official may extend the grace period if the team in question has contacted them, is en route and will reach the facility/field in a reasonable amount of time.

I. Regional Alignment

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department reserves the right to assign parishes to the geographic entity known as the Region. When circumstances change within the structure of the Region, it may become necessary for the assignment of a parish(es) to a new Region(s). *In cases where a Region does not offer a sport, see "Parish Assignments" on pgs. 11-14.

A Regional Alignment Review may be conducted during the 2012-2013 season.

J. Insurance & Liability

1. Sanctioned Sports Programs - Archdiocesan parish CYO sports programs and/or CYO sports Regions who sponsor a sport(s) sanctioned in this Handbook and are in compliance with “all” of the rules and requirements outlined in this handbook may receive insurance and liability assistance from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

2. Non-Sanctioned Sports Programs - Archdiocesan parish CYO sports programs and/or CYO sports Regions who sponsor a sport(s) that are not sanctioned in this Handbook or sponsor a CYO sanctioned sport but the age requirements fall above or below the age class regulations sanctioned in this Handbook, must meet the following minimum requirements in order to receive insurance and liability assistance from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia:

a. Sponsorship - Each team must be fully parish sponsored: 1) Teams must provide written approval by the Pastor and the Parish Athletic Director to the Regional Athletic Advisory Board and the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, 2) Teams must roster with their assigned Region (See pg. 15).

b. Finances - All parish team finances must flow through the parish’s account, and all league finances must flow through the Regional account.

c. Rules Compliance - Parish teams and their league(s) must be in compliance with “all” of the rules and requirements outlined in this Handbook.

d. League By-Laws - Any league by-laws pertaining to the sport(s) must be approved by the Regional Athletic Advisory Board and the Department for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports before the start of season. *It is recommended that league by-laws reference a set of national safety guidelines.

e. Under Grade Five - Parish teams and leagues allowing the participation of athletes under grade five may be “developmental” only.

***Playoffs and all-star competitions are prohibited for these levels of competition.**

NOTE: Disregard for the above requirements may result in individual parties who host non-sanctioned sports activities in the CYO name, being held liable for any accident which takes place at these events.

K. Out-of-Season Violations

CYO teams in any form or by any name may not participate in out-of-season competition. CYO teams competing out-of-season (See “Season: Start Date & End Date” per sport on (pgs. 33-51) prior to June 15th or after August 1st will jeopardize their parish’s participation in the following athletic season.

L. Summer Season

CYO teams in any form or by any name may participate together between June 15th and August 1st.

M. Field/Facility Directors

It is recommended that Commissioners assign responsible individuals to oversee and manage league competition, when they cannot be present. The duties of the Field/Facility Director include but are not limited to the following:

1. The Field/Facility Director’s decisions, in coordination with the Head Official, will be final at the time of the event.

2. He or she must ensure the competing teams pray together prior to the contest and preferably after as well.
3. He or she must sign and date the official score-book, where possible, at the completion of the event.
4. He or she must call in the final results to the Commissioner, and report any problems, protests or any other pertinent information regarding the event.
 - a. Field/Site Directors must be familiar with the “Code of Conduct” (See p. 25) and must monitor the behavior of athletes, coaches and spectators. *Coaches are responsible for their spectators. If the Head Official has to stop a game for spectator behavior and/or a coach does not make an effort to correct his or her spectator (s) after proper notification from an official, the Field/Facility Director reserves the right to declare the competition a forfeit for the team whose spectators are in violation.
5. Other tasks may be assigned at the discretion of the Commissioner.

N. Tryouts

Coaches must give all eligible athletes a fair and equal chance to try out for a CYO sport or athletic activity. Tryouts may not be limited to participation or performance at any outside competition and/or membership to any outside team or organization.

When more athletes register for a sport than can be accommodated on one team, the parish is encouraged to create additional teams in order to enable more youth to participate in CYO sports. Regions are encouraged to create additional leagues, when appropriate. When the parish determines that it needs to “cut” players, great care must be taken as this also impacts the development of the student-athlete. At a minimum, this process should value each person and not be a public embarrassment to the youth. The parish should seek other ways to engage these youth, whether as a team manager or other support role or through other ministries throughout the parish. Seeking to help the youth identify, develop and share their gifts is still the goal, even when those gifts may not be through sports for that season.

O. 2011-2012 Black-Out Dates

The following dates are considered to be “Black-Out Dates” set forth from the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. No tryouts, practices, games or competitions may take place on these days. If anyone is found to be in non-compliance to this rule, he or she will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Monday, August 15, 2011 – Feast of the Assumption
Tuesday, November 1, 2011 – Feast of All Saints
Wednesday, November 2, 2011 – Winter Sports Begin
Thursday, December 8, 2011 – Immaculate Conception
Saturday, December 24, 2011 – Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 25, 2011 – Christmas Day
Sunday, January 1, 2012 – Solemnity of the Holy Mother of God
February 2012 – Cardinal’s Altar Server Mass (Date and area to be announced.)
Thursday, April 5, 2012 – Holy Thursday
Friday, April 6, 2012 – Good Friday
Saturday, April 7, 2012 – Holy Saturday
Sunday, April 8, 2012 – Easter Sunday
Thursday, May 17, 2012 – Ascension Thursday

VOLLEYBALL

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Fall
Starting Date	August 1, 2011
End Date	November 6, 2011

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Girls

Primary Competition Rules: PIAA

CYO Competition Rules:

The following rules are amendments to the PIAA rules and must be followed by all CYO Volleyball Leagues:

1. All three games in match play must be played.
 - a. Exception: Regional and Archdiocesan postseason competition
2. Unlimited substitutions will be allowed with proper entries.
3. Teams may have a "Libero" (Defensive Specialist).
4. The following rules have been adopted from USA Volleyball Rules.
 - a. The Center-line Regulation.
 - b. The Serve Rule (with one re-toss per serve & five second count).
 - c. **Kicking of the ball is prohibited.**

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" rules on pgs. 18-19.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Athlete Eligibility" rules on pgs. 19-25.

Roster Deadline:

See "Roster & Fees" on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams which fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all of their games from the date of the deadline until their roster is submitted "complete" to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports, and 3) may face further penalization.

Archdiocesan Tournament:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a Championship Tournament governed by PIAA and CYO Rules. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department (See "Post-Season Competition on pg. 28).

CROSS COUNTRY

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Fall
Start Date	August 1, 2011
End Date	October 30, 2011

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys and Girls, Separate Competition

Primary Competition Rules:

AAU Rules will be used to establish the distances for each group. The Archdiocesan Commissioner for Cross Country, in coordination with the Coordinator for Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports reserves the right to adjust these distances based on age appropriateness and course availability.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" rules on pgs. 18-19.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Eligibility" rules on pgs. 20-23 and the "Age/Grade Restrictions" outlined below.

Age/Grade Restrictions:

Categories

a. Novice - Any boy or girl who has not reached his or her eleventh (11) birthday before January 1, 2012. No athlete may be below fourth (4th) grade.

b. Minor - Any boy or girl who has not reached his or her thirteenth (13) birthday before January 1, 2012.

c. Cadet - Any boy or girl who has not reached his or her fifteenth (15) birthday before January 1, 2012. No athlete may be in ninth (9th) grade or above.

Roster Deadline:

See "Rosters & Fees" on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the roster deadline will not be allowed to participate in CYO Cross Country Meets.

The Archdiocesan Championship Meet:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a Championship Meet on or around October 30, 2011. The meet will be governed by AAU and CYO rules.

FOOTBALL

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice and Competition:

Season	Fall
Start Date	August 16, 2011
End Date	November 20, 2011

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys

Primary Competition Rules:

PIAA and "Archdiocesan CYO Football League By-Laws".

CYO Competition Rules:

The "Archdiocesan CYO Football League By-Laws," are amendments to PIAA rules and must be followed by all CYO Divisions.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" rules on pgs. 18-19.

2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Athlete Eligibility" rules on pgs. 20-23.

a. Player Exemption Form - Any Varsity (Class D) athlete who turns fifteen or Class "E" athlete who turns thirteen between September 1st and November 30 of the current school year must submit an Player Exemption Form to their Commissioner prior to the start of the season. No athlete may participate in any games or scrimmages until this form has been approved by the CYO Football Coordinator. **(Policy under review and subject to change, beginning with the 2011 season.)**

Parish Affiliations:

Parish affiliations are granted in cases where it is necessary for a Host Parish to merge with, at most, four other parishes in order to sustain a football program. Affiliated parishes must be geographically adjoining to the Host Parish, and may not already be affiliated with another Host Parish. The Host Parish and its Parish Affiliations must be listed on the team's "Registration Form" (See below) with each participating parish's Pastor's signature.

Team Registration:

All participating teams must complete a CYO Football "Registration Form" by July 15th. Those teams who fail to register by this date will automatically lose their eligibility for the "Parade of Champions" (See pgs. 35-36) and may jeopardize their overall participation in the Archdiocesan CYO Football League.

1. Registration Fees (must accompany form): Varsity and Junior Varsity \$300.00

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. (*CYO Football roster fees are already included in the registration fee outlined above). Rosters are due to the Football Commissioners by a Commissioner-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Commissioners. Teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the “Parade of Champions” (pgs. 35-36), 2) forfeit all of their games from the date of the deadline until their roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalization.

The Parade of Champions:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor four (4) - five (5) championship football games governed by PIAA and CYO Rules on or about November 20, 2011. The method for determining invitations, as well as more detailed rules, is outlined in the “Archdiocesan CYO Football League By-laws”.

SOCCER

***No tryouts, practice or competition may
begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays***

**Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this
Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and
possible sanctions and/or penalizations.**

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Fall
Start Date	August 1, 2011
End Date	November 20, 2011

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys, Girls and Coed

- 1. Girls** - If a girl's team exists at the parish, all girls must participate on the girl's team.
- 2. Boys** - If a boy's team exists at the parish, all boys must participate on the boy's team.
- 3. Coed** - If it is necessary to roster athletes of both sexes in order to sustain a team, then that team may only participate in a boy's league or coed league.

Primary Competition Rules: PIAA

CYO Competition Rules:

The following rules are amendments to the PIAA rules and must be followed by all CYO Soccer Leagues:

A. Time

1. Halves - Thirty (30) minutes
2. Halftime - Five (5) minutes
3. Ties are final - No Overtime

B. Goalie - Permitted to hold the ball for six (6) seconds before he or she must release the ball.

C. Game Ball - The home team is required to provide a game ball, however the final decision rests with the Head Official.

1. Varsity (Class D) #5 ball
2. Junior Varsity (Class E) #4 ball

D. Use of Hands Girls are permitted, within guidelines, to use their hands to protect their chest. The Head Official has final judgment on this matter.

E. Uniforms

1. All players must wear shin guards. Cut down shin guards are considered illegal.
2. Metal spikes are prohibited.
3. All players are to wear numbered (8") jerseys, no duplicate numbers, and matching uniforms.
4. Sweatpants/shirts may be worn underneath.

F. Red Cards

If an athlete or coach receives a *red card* they are to be ejected from the game by the Referee (athletes - with no substitute). The League Commissioner is to be notified within 24 hours, and the coach and/or athlete will be suspended from their next game.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be compliant with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 18-19.
2. Athletes must be compliant with the “Grade School Athlete Eligibility” rules on pgs. 19-23.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will:
1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all of their games from the date of the deadline until the roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalization.

The Archdiocesan Tournament:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a boy’s and a girl’s Championship Tournament governed by PIAA and CYO rules:

A. The Girl’s Tournament will consist of eight (8) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department typically based on Region size.

B. The Boy’s Tournament will consist of sixteen (16) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department (see “Post Season Competition on pg. 28).

FIELD HOCKEY

***No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before
1:00 PM on Sundays**

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Fall
Start Date	August 1, 2011
End Date	November 6, 2011

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Girls

Primary Competition Rules:

CYO Competition Rules:

Rules shall be determined by a newly-created Field Hockey Committee. A few basic safety rules are included here:

EQUIPMENT: All players must wear mouth guards and shin guards (MANDATORY). No player will be permitted to play without these guards. Officials will make equipment, uniform and jewelry checks of each team prior to the start of the game. No jewelry is allowed, including post earrings, watches, and rings. Varsity level players must (MANDATORY) wear goggles. It is not mandatory that JV players wear goggles, however, it is strongly suggested that they do wear them.

Cleated shoes or shoes with protruding plastic or rubber studs may be worn. The players stick shall weigh no more than 23 oz and must pass through a 2-inch ring. The stick shall have a curved end with a flat face on its left-hand side only. There should be no sharp edges or dangerous splinters. Adhesives or similar tape bindings are permitted on the stick provided the maximum weigh is not exceeded and it shall pass through a 2-inch ring.

Goalies MUST wear chest protector under a goalie shirt of contrasting color of the uniforms of both teams with a visible number, full face mask, throat protector, goalie gloves, leg guards and kickers, pelvic protectors, and mouth guards.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" Standards on pgs. 18-19
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Athlete Eligibility" Standards on pgs. 20-23.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on p. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by this deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all games from the date of the deadline until the roster is submitted “completed” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and 3) may face further penalization.

Archdiocesan Tournament:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a Championship Tournament governed by PIAA and CYO Rules. This tournament will consist of sixteen (16) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Archdiocesan CYO Office (See “Post-Season Competition on pg. 28).

BASKETBALL

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Winter
Start Date	November 2, 2011
End Date	February 28, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys and Girls (Separate Leagues)

Primary Competition Rules: PIAA

CYO Competition Rules:

The following rules are amendments to the PIAA rules and must be followed by all CYO Basketball Leagues:

A. Time Limit

Varsity 7 minute quarters
Junior Varsity 6 minute quarters **or** 20 minute running clock per half with the clock being stopped during the last 2 minutes of each half*
(Note: * Each region should poll the parishes in that region and decide on one or the other.)

B. Thirty Game Limit

1. No team may play more than thirty (30) games in a regular season.
 - a. All tournament games count game for game against this cap.
 - b. Teams are allowed 4 scrimmages that do not count against the cap, and Regional and Archdiocesan playoffs do not count against the cap.

2. Violation Penalties

- a. Teams will be automatically suspended for the rest of the current season and/or post-season and concede all awards won after 30 games.
- b. Coaches will serve, at least, a one full calendar year suspension from all CYO sports.
- c. **Seat-Belt Rule**-All coaches and athletes must remain seated at all times during games.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" rules on pgs. 18-19.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Athlete Eligibility" rules on pgs. 20-23.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” (on pgs. 26-27). Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. . Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all of their games from the date of the deadline until the roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalization.

Archdiocesan Tournament:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a boy’s and a girl’s tournament governed by PIAA and CYO rules. Each tournament will consist of thirty-two (32) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department (see “Post-Season Competition” on pg. 28).

BASEBALL

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Spring
Start Date	March 1, 2012
End Date	June 15, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys

Primary Competition Rules: **Varsity—PIAA (NFHS)** **JV—Little League**

CYO Competition Rules:

The following rules are amendments to PIAA and Little League rules and must be followed by all CYO Baseball Leagues:

A. Pitching Limitations

Out of consideration for the safety of our athletes it is the responsibility of each coach to know, understand and strictly enforce the following pitching limitation rules:

- 1. A Varsity player may pitch in a maximum of seven (7) innings in one day, but no more than seven (7) innings in any seven (7) day period. (JV is 6 & 6)**
 - a. Delivery of one pitch constitutes an inning.**
- 2. Innings Pitched and Rest Required (1 calendar day of rest = 48 hours)**
 - a. 3 innings or less in one day - no rest required (JV-1 day rest)**
 - b. 4 or 5 innings in one day - 1 calendar day (JV-2)**
 - c. 6 innings and above in one day - 2 calendar days (JV- see 1.A above)**
- 3. Sixth graders that are eligible to participate on a Varsity team (See “Age/Grade Regulations” on p. 12) may not pitch.**
- 4. Coaches must monitor the number of pitches:**
 - a. Varsity - pitchers must not exceed 75 pitches in one game. A pitcher may not start a new inning if they have already exceeded 65 pitches.**
 - b. Junior Varsity - pitchers must not exceed 60 pitches in one game. A player may not start a new inning if they have already exceeded 45 pitches.**

* Junior Varsity athletes may not throw curve balls.

NOTE: Violation of any pitching limitations designates the violating athlete ineligible for their next game and the athlete’s team will forfeit the game in which the violation took place. **Repeated violations may bring additional penalties.**

B. Equipment

1. Helmets - All batters and base runners are to wear a certified protective helmet, otherwise they will be declared "out" by the umpire.
2. Cleats - **Metal cleats are strictly prohibited.**
3. Bat-size: **Varsity** (-3) weight/length, 2 3/4 barrel **JV 32 in., 2 1/4 barrel, 1.15 BPF** (*** bat requirements will be discussed at the 2012 Baseball Commissioner meeting.**)

C. Fields

1. Pitching Mound Distance
 - a. Varsity - 60' 6"
 - b. Junior Varsity - 46' (note: some new little league fields pitching mounds may be 50'.)
2. Base Distances
 - a. Varsity - 90 ft.
 - b. Junior Varsity - 60 ft. (note: some little league fields base distance may be 70')

D. Game Length

1. Games are to be seven (7) innings in length. JV is (6) innings in length.
2. If a game is stopped for any reason, it is to be complete and official when either one of the following occur at the completion of, or after the 4th inning:
 - a. If the home team is winning, and the visiting team completes its turn at-bat.
 - b. If the visiting team is winning, and the home team completes its turn at-bat.
 - c. Mercy Rule – after 4 innings – 10 runs or after 5 innings – 15 runs.

Miscellaneous - A JV player may not fake a bunt and then swing away. If this is attempted, the batter is out.

E. The "Slide or Avoid Contact" rule will now be in place beginning March 1, 2011. This rule will apply for all regular season games, play-offs, regional play-offs and Archdiocesan tournament games.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the "Coaching Eligibility" rules on pgs. 18-19.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the "Grade School Athlete Eligibility" rules on pgs.20-23.

Roster Deadline:

See "Rosters & Fees" on p. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by this deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all games from the date of the deadline until the roster is submitted "completed" to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalization.

Archdiocesan Tournament:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a Championship Tournament governed by PIAA and CYO Rules. This tournament will consist of sixteen (16) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department (see "Post-Season Competition" pg. 28)

SOFTBALL

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Spring
Start Date	March 1, 2012
End Date	June 15, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Girls

Primary Competition Rules: ASA

CYO Competition Rules:

The following rules are amendments to ASA rules and must be followed by all CYO Softball Leagues:

A. Pitching Limitations

Out of consideration for the safety of our athletes it is the responsibility of each coach to know, understand and strictly enforce the following rules:

1. No athlete may pitch more than four (4) innings in a game.
2. One pitch delivered constitutes one (1) inning pitched.

NOTE: The first two pitching limitations apply to all Regions that allow windmill pitching, regardless of whether the pitcher is utilizing a windmill style.

3. If a pitcher wishes to “intentionally” walk a hitter, they do so by simply informing the umpire.
4. Pitchers are allowed three (3) pitches between innings.
5. Pitchers need to have two (2) feet in contact with the rubber at the start of a pitch.

B. Teams - Consist of ten athletes, the regular nine plus a short fielder. A game may begin with nine athletes.

C. Entering the Game - Athletes may enter the game twice, but they must bat in the same place in the line-up.

D. Fields

Varsity - the rubber is to be 40' from home plate. (Tournament is 40')
Junior Varsity - the rubber is to be 35' from home plate. .

E. Equipment

1. All batters are to wear a certified protective helmet, otherwise, they will be declared out by the umpire.
2. Cleats - Metal cleats are strictly prohibited.
3. All athletes must wear numbered jerseys.

F. Game Length (There is no time limit)

1. All games are to be seven (7) innings in length.
2. Games are to be shortened by the *Mercy Rule*
 - a. When a team is up by 15 runs after 3 innings, or a team is up by 10 runs after 5 innings.
3. If a game is stopped for any reason, a game is to be complete and official when either one of the following occur at the completion of, or after, the fourth (4th) inning:
 - a. If the home team is winning, and the visiting team completes its turn at-bat.
 - b. If the visiting team is winning, and the home team completes its turn at-bat.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 17-18.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the “Grade School Athlete Eligibility” rules on pgs. 20-23.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season.

Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will:

- 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all games from the date of the roster deadline until the roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 2) may face further penalization.

The Archdiocesan Tournament

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a championship tournament governed by ASA and CYO rules. The tournament will consist of sixteen (16) teams. At least one team will be invited from each Region, and at-large invitations may be granted by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, typically based on Region size.

Track & Field

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays*

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Spring
Start Date	March 1, 2012
End Date	June 2, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys and Girls, Separate Competition

Primary Competition Rules: USA Track & Field Rules

CYO Competition Rules:

For a detailed set of competition rules, obtain a copy of the “2012 CYO Track & Field Packet” from your Commissioner.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 17-18.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the “Grade School Eligibility” rules on pgs. 20-23 and the “Age/Grade Restrictions” outlined below.

Age/Grade Restrictions: (Categories):

1. **Novice** - Any boy or girl born in 2001 or 2002 and must be in the 4th grade.
 2. **Minor** - Any boy or girl born in 1999 or 2000.
 3. **Cadet** - Any boy or girl born in 1997 or 1998, or on or after September 1, 1996.
- **No athlete may be in ninth (9th) grade or above.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for Archdiocesan-level competition, 2) forfeit all awards from the date of the deadline until the roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalties.

Archdiocesan Championship Meet:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a Championship Meet on June 2, 2012. For complete information, check the official “2012 CYO Track & Field Packet”.

CHEERLEADING

No tryouts, practice or competition may begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays

Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and possible sanctions and/or penalizations.

Season:

Cheerleading is considered both a CYO “Athletic Activity” which can act in support for other sports teams and/or a CYO Sport in which athletes perform in competition. Therefore, CYO Cheerleading in support of other sports teams is not restricted to a particular season. CYO competitions are a sport and are subject to the “season dates” that will be established.

Gender: Coed

CYO Competition Rules:

All CYO Cheerleading programs must comply with the following rules:

1. All teams are limited to competing in seven (7) competitions in one CYO Year.
2. All coaches must be familiar with the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Advisor’s (AACCA) national guidelines on competition and safety as well as CYO-specific guidelines. The AACCA website is www.aacca.org.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 17-18.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the “Grade School Athletic Eligibility” rules on pgs. 20-23.

Archdiocesan CYO Cheerleading Competition:

The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will sponsor a cheerleading competition in **March of 2012**.

1. Competition Eligibility:
 - a. Teams must not have competed in five or more competitions before this event.
 - b. Teams must be compliant with the eligibility rules outlined in this Handbook.
2. Competition Rules:

A detailed set of official rules will be available at www.oyma.org

High School BASKETBALL

***No tryouts, practice or competition may
begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays***

**Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this
Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and
possible sanctions and/or penalizations.**

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Winter
Start Date	November 2, 2011
End Date	February 28, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Boys and Girls, Separate Leagues

Primary Competition Rules: PIAA

CYO Competition Rules:

High School Basketball Leagues may implement rules that are amendments to the PIAA rules. These rules must be reviewed and approved by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department prior to November 1st.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 17-18.
2. Athletes must be in compliance with the “HS Athlete Eligibility” rules on pgs. 23-25.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the PA State Tournament, 2) forfeit all games from the date of the deadline until their roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department, and 3) may face further penalization.

PA State CYO Boy’s Basketball Tournament

The Pennsylvania State Board of CYO Directors hosts annual state tournaments for boy’s grade school and high school basketball and for girls grade school. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia may send one representative. The Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department will accept recommendations for teams eligible to compete before the first Saturday in February, which must include:

1. Written recommendation from the Pastor
2. Written recommendation from the League Commissioner. (Must verify the team is in “good standing” with the league, i.e. no technical fouls.)
3. Summary of service project(s) completed during the current season.

**High School
VOLLEYBALL**

***No tryouts, practice or competition may
begin before 1:00 PM on Sundays***

**Anyone who is found to be in non-compliance with any rule outlined in this
Handbook will face a review by the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and
possible sanctions and/or penalizations.**

Tryouts, Practice & Competition:

Season	Spring
Start Date	March 1, 2012
End Date	June 15, 2012

General Policies: Coaches must be familiar with the policies outlined on pgs. 25-32.

Gender: Coed

Primary Competition Rules: NCAA

CYO Competition Rules:

High School Coed Volleyball Leagues may implement rules that are amendments to PIAA rules. These rules must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Athletic Advisory Board and the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department prior to March 1st.

Objective:

Teams and leagues must strive to create a healthy, safe and enjoyable social experience within the framework of an athletic event. Fun, camaraderie and social interaction between athletes should be the major focus.

CYO Eligibility Rules:

1. Coaches must be in compliance with the “Coaching Eligibility” rules on pgs. 18-19.

2. Athletes must be in compliance with the “High School Athlete Eligibility” rules on pgs. 23-25.

a. Exceptions: In order to help to foster the “objective” explained above, teams may request the following:

1. 9th thru 12th grade students on the same team.

2. Inclusion of “non-parish” students who are friends, classmates or relatives of parishioners on the team.

b. Exception Procedures:

1. The Pastor must present a written request to the League Commissioner

2. The Commissioner, in coordination with the Regional Athletic Advisory Board, must review the request.

3. If approved by the Region, the written request of the Pastor and the written approval of the Region must be attached to the team’s roster to be submitted to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department.

Roster Deadline:

See “Rosters & Fees” on pgs. 26-28. Rosters are due to the Regions by a Region-established date and will be frozen as of the time submitted to the Archdiocese. The Regional due date may vary and the Archdiocesan due date will be established with the Regions. The Regional due dates will be about one month after the beginning of each season. Those teams who fail to submit their roster by the established deadline will: 1) automatically lose their eligibility for the Archdiocesan Tournament, 2) forfeit all games from the date of the roster deadline until the roster is submitted “complete” to the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department and 3) may face further penalization.

VI. 2011-2012 Special Events

A. The Mass and Recognition Ceremony

Each year the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department accepts nominations for those coaches who demonstrate exemplary support of the CYO Mission Statement. The **Bill O'Neill recognition awards**, in honor of a man who truly lived the Mission, will be determined in the spring and awarded at the **OYYA Mass and Recognition Ceremony on or around May 9, 2012**. Look for nomination forms to be advertised on www.oyya.org by February of 2012.

B. 2011-2012 Coaches Training Descriptions

As a result of feedback regarding challenges with first year CYO coaches either making the transition to CYO or coaching for the first time, and with some coaches being selected too late to enable them to attend a Coaches Orientation prior to coaching CYO,

Before coaching any CYO team, all coaches (head and assistants) **must**:

- Attend the in-person **Coaches Orientation** seminar (see page 52 for details.)
- If a new coach is not able to attend an in person coaches orientation before he or she begins coaching, the new coach is required to take the **Online Catholic Coaching Essentials course** before coaching at all **AND** then attend the next available **Coaches Orientation** session within 3 months.

Catholic Coaching Essentials is an online course designed to familiarize coaches with both the basic approach to being an effective youth sports coach and the Catholic framework from which we carry out this ministry. Should a coach not be able to attend the Coaches Orientation prior to their first CYO coaching opportunity, this online course is required up front.

CYO Coaches Orientation is a one-day seminar that provides assistance and training for coaches. It is designed to inform and develop the Catholic Coach. It consists of three parts:

- 1) Philosophy & Mission** – Discusses the CYO sports philosophy of coach as athletic minister. Addresses the Mission Statement and provides tips on how coaches can create their own mission statement, define a “successful season” and communicate them effectively, as well as practical tips to manage a CYO team.
- 2) Sports Medicine & CYO Christian Values** – Discusses growth patterns, injuries and youth development in relation to participating in sports. Addresses the responsibilities and blessings of being a Catholic coach.
- 3) Coaching from the Heart** – Discusses the importance of being a baptismal coach in light of the current present realities of the American sports culture. Also gives references and suggestions that give us the freedom to “coach from the heart” both spiritually and practically.

Please communicate these requirements to all CYO coaches.

C. 17th Annual Athletic Ministry Conference

Over the past seventeen years, the Athletic Ministry Conference has served to aid parishes in developing healthy athletic programs that support the goals of the CYO Sports Mission Statement (pg. 8).

This year will be the 17th Annual Athletic Ministry Conference. This year's Conference will build upon prior years', providing both information and an opportunity for discussion. Our goal is for you to leave with practical applications for producing an athletic program with a truly Catholic message.

The Conference offers motivating Catholic youth sports related material that will be backed up with practical applications that you can bring back to your parish. We strongly encourage you to send more than just one person.

Attention: Pastors and Parish Athletic Directors!

Your parish is responsible for having at least one (1) participating representative at one of the two Athletic Ministry Conferences listed below.

Parish sports programs that do not comply will jeopardize their participation in Regional tournaments/play-offs and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia CYO Tournaments.

The Athletic Ministry Conference are scheduled for the following dates:

Saturday, September 24, 2011

Site: St. Helena Parish, Blue Bell, PA

Saturday, October 22, 2011

Site: Neumann University, Aston, PA

CYO Coaches, Youth Ministers & Volunteer Stewards Requirements

Anyone working with youth must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work. They must also know that God's goodness and grace support them in their ministry.

Requirements:

Anyone 18 years or older working on a regular basis (at least once a week) or serving as a chaperone or volunteer during an overnight experience with youth must complete the following:

- Safe Environment Training.
- Pennsylvania Dept. of Public Welfare Child Abuse Clearance check (Must renew every 5 years)
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record check (Must renew every 5 years)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Clearance
 - This national background check is required if the volunteer does not live in Pennsylvania or is currently living in Pennsylvania, but has lived somewhere else during the past two years.

Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries Requirements:

- a. All staff and volunteers must have a copy of the “Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries” information and “Communication Technology Addendum” acquired at the Safe Environment Code of Conduct Training that all adults involved in ministry and service with youth must attend. It can be found online at www.arch/phl.org under Archdiocesan website, click ‘Children and Youth Protection’, click ‘Policies’. Refer to this document for detailed guidelines on Archdiocesan policies.
- b. All adults working with youth must be aware of their responsibilities, limitations and vulnerability.
- c. All staff and volunteers have a duty to report their own ethical or professional misconduct and the misconduct of others.
- d. When there is an indication of misconduct, the person who obtains knowledge of the misconduct should notify his/her supervisor or other appropriate Church authorities.
- e. All staff and volunteers working with youth must be aware of the Archdiocesan policy: “Limited, Controlled Access of Elementary Schools, PREP and Youth Ministry Programs for Parents Identified as Sexual Offenders”. This policy is available from your pastor and the Office for Child and Youth Protection.
- f. Overnight Adult chaperones and event staff must be in compliance with Archdiocesan child protection policy.

Disclosure of Child Abuse - Mandate to Report Suspected Child Abuse Requirements:

- a) Any person who comes in contact with children in the course of his or her employment, occupation, or professional practice must report suspected child abuse. **Parish and school personnel, youth ministers, athletic coaches and catechists are included in this group.**
- b) Pennsylvania law makes no distinction between paid and non-paid personnel. Volunteers who come in contact with children in the course of their volunteer duties are mandated to report.
- c) Child abuse is not limited to sexual abuse. It includes inflicting or creating an imminent risk of serious physical injury, serious mental injury, sexual abuse/exploitation or harmful physical neglect. A child is any individual under the age of 18.
- d) If you have “reasonable cause to suspect” that someone is the victim of child abuse, you must report it immediately. First hand observation is not required.

- e) For complete information on how to make a report, visit the Archdiocesan website at www.archphila.org. Access the “*Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*” brochure by clicking the Office for Child and Youth Protection. The link to the brochure is on the bottom of the page.
 - a. The first step of the process is notifying the person in charge of the institution (e.g. pastor, principal, DRE, head administrator). The person in charge will make the report.
 - b. The person in charge of the institution must immediately report suspected child abuse to the 24 hour Pennsylvania Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-932-0313
 - c. If the suspected abuser is a member of the clergy or is a church official, employee or volunteer, please also contact the Archdiocesan Office for Child and Youth Protection at 1-888-800-8780.
 - d. Resolve any doubt in favor of a report.
 - e. If the person in charge of the institution is the suspected abuser, you must make the report yourself.
- f) Failure to report a case of suspected child abuse in the state of Pennsylvania is considered a misdemeanor of the third degree (up to one year of incarceration.)

Handling Disclosure of Child Abuse Requirements:

The role of a mandated reporter can be challenging. Youth may feel betrayed by the adult in whom they have confided.

- a) Make the young person aware that you are a mandated reporter:
 - a. *Before a disclosure:* If a young person asks, “Can I tell you something in confidence?” inform the young person that you have a legal obligation to report child abuse.
 - b. *During a disclosure:* If you hear words that indicate that a young person is about to make a disclosure, remind the young person that you mandated to make a report.
 - c. *After a disclosure:* If a young person requests that you not report the abuse, remind the young person that you must report the abuse. You have no discretion in this matter.
 - d. Remember, a young person usually disclose abuse to a trusted adult. They want the adult to take action on their behalf.
- b) Create a safe and secure environment for disclosure . Ensure physical and emotional safety.
 - a. You may need to assess the physical space. If the young person begins the disclosure in a public place, suggest moving to a place that offers some privacy.
 - b. Responses that promote safety and security: “It is good that you told me.” “With your permission, I would like to move to a place where we can talk privately.”
- c) Provide the opportunity for ventilation and validation:
 - a. Provide ample time for individuals to share their experience. Convey belief in the young person and validate his/her reactions. Allow the young person to talk, and follow his/her lead. Listen to the young person.
 - b. Responses that communicate validation: “I am sorry that this happened to you.” “Your reaction is a normal response.”
- d) Address the young person concerns about the outcomes of the disclosure.
 - a. Young people have a right to know what may happen. This often helps survivors of abuse to regain a sense of control. It is beneficial to inform the young person about whom you have contacted and what will happen next.
- e) Interacting after the disclosure:
 - a. Confidentiality and respect must be the foundation of your professional relationship with the young person. Ask general questions, such as, “How’s it going?” to respect the young person’s privacy and communicate your concern. Offer the young person your availability for further discussion.

Please Note:

The staff of the Office for Child and Youth Protection is available to assist with any questions or concerns that you may have about the safety and well being of a child entrusted to your care. The telephone number for the Office for Child and Youth Protection is 215-587-2466.

Information and Communication Technology

Electronic Communication with Minors

Regardless of the manner or method, all communication with minors must be faithful to the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. As leaders and role models for children our communication with minors must respect the psychological, physical and behavioral boundaries of the young person and be appropriate to the ministerial and professional relationship. Permission of the parent or guardian must be obtained, in writing, in order for an adult leader to communicate with minors via telephone, cell phone, text messaging, e-mail, social networks, or other electronic means.

In order to protect the privacy of youth, permission must also be obtained, in writing, from the parent or guardian before sharing/posting pictures or videos of minors, and before sharing e-mail, telephone numbers, or other contact information with other minors or adults who are part of the class, group or organization. Adults should never consider typed conversations that take place via electronic means (e-mails, social networking sites, text message, etc.) to be private. Electronic communication between an adult and a minor should not be used to address/discuss confidential matters. These are to be discussed in a face to face meeting which is more appropriate and professional. Remember young people often feel that electronic communication is more private and gives them a sense of availability and anonymity. However, records of these conversations can be obtained and accessed. These means of communications can also be saved and forwarded. If a minor sends an adult an inappropriate message, the adult should not reply to it. The adult should print it and notify his/her immediate supervisor. A minor may also send a message that causes the adult leader to have concerns for the health and safety of that young person. Adult leaders should notify their immediate supervisor for direction in these cases. Adults must set appropriate boundaries around the times when phone calls will be made and electronic communications will be sent. Adults should take time to review internet safety with minors in their classes, groups, organizations, etc., especially if they are utilizing web-based technology

- *The following sections refer to specific uses of technology tools. For use of these tools, those working in parish, regional and secondary schools of the Archdiocese need to refer to the Office of Catholic Education Appropriate Use Policy for Technology (AUP) in place. There may be other organizations and institutions with additional policies related to information technology which need to be referenced as well.*

E-Mail, Instant Messaging, and Text Messaging (SMS—short message service)

Teachers and administrative staff should communicate with students through the use of school based e-mail accounts and/or school sponsored websites. Parish staff involved in youth ministry should have a parish based

e-mail account, whenever possible. If it is not possible for an adult leader or volunteer to obtain a parish or school based e-mail account, the adult leader or volunteer will need to establish an e-mail account that is separate from his/her personal e-mail. In order to protect the e-mail addresses of minors, the adult leader should use the blind carbon copy (BCC) feature when sending an e-mail to more than one minor. If a group of youth need to be in contact with each other via e-mail, permission must be obtained from the parent or guardian before sharing a minor's e-mail address with other members of the group. (A youth leadership team would be one example of a situation where adult leaders may seek permission to share e-mail addresses among group members.)

Adults should never consider electronic mail to be private. Adult leaders may wish to copy another responsible adult (parent, supervisor, athletic director or alternate youth ministry leader) when sending an electronic message to a minor. This action demonstrates transparency and appropriateness when communicating with minors. All electronic messages should be relevant to the ministerial/professional relationship the adult has with the minor with due consideration for the age of the minor.

Adults should be brief in one to one, electronic conversations with a minor. Messages should be kept short, and to the point, and related to the professional/ministerial relationship between the adult and minor. *When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.*

Video Chatting (i.e. Skype)

Adults may communicate with minors using video chatting. There are educational benefits to utilizing this technology appropriately. Distance or disability may create some instances when this type of communication is necessary. If the minor is engaged in a video chat session that is private, care should be taken to make sure that the parent/guardian gives permission for the minor to participate. Another adult may supervise the interaction by either being present with the minor or the adult leader during the chat. *When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.*

Social Networking

A social networking service utilizes software to build online social networks for communities of people who share interests and activities. Most services are primarily web based and provide various ways for users to interact, such as chat, messaging, video, file sharing, blogging and discussion groups. The most popular sites for this activity have been Facebook and MySpace.

Interaction with minors on MySpace is prohibited because of the lack of privacy protection inherent in this social networking site. The pastor, administrator or immediate supervisor must give permission for an employee or volunteer to establish a social networking site related to the parish, school or organization.

A supervisor or another adult leader must have access to the site so that there is more than one adult monitoring all activity on the site. The site must be monitored regularly by both adults for appropriate use. Inappropriate or hurtful comments need to be removed. Adult leaders who use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to communicate with minors about their ministry should create a separate account and/or group for this specific use whenever possible. For example, in Facebook where maintaining more than one account is currently prohibited by the company’s policy, the creation of a group would provide an appropriate way for an adult to establish a means to communicate with minors. Precautions should be taken to guard the privacy of any one who has access to the page. The highest privacy settings must be used. In addition, adults should encourage minors who join the online community to set their privacy settings at the highest levels. Written permission from a parent/guardian should be obtained prior to a minor’s participation on a social networking site, such as Facebook, sponsored by a parish organization. Minors should not be given access to the private or personal postings of an adult. All interactions should reflect the ministerial/professional role of the adult.

When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.

Blogs and Microblogs (i.e. Twitter)

Blogs are web logs, which are public and can be accessed by anyone. Blogs are used for many reasons—to share information, educate or express opinions. Those who wish to publish and utilize a blog for an educational or ministerial purpose, should make their pastor, principal or supervisor aware of the blog and make contents easily accessible.

Blogs used for educational or ministerial purposes should be conducted in a professional manner and the content should reflect the purpose. It is recommended that the blog be set up so that comments are not posted until they are reviewed and approved by the owner of the blog. The practice prevents inappropriate and hurtful comments from being posted (i.e. bullying). Personal blogs should not be shared with minors. *When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.*

Websites

Websites used to represent a parish or parish organizations must be owned and managed by the parish. An adult leader must obtain permission from the pastor or pastor’s delegate to set up a web page that represents the parish. Websites may be linked to other sites. It is recommended that all persons add this statement to any site created: “Links to other sites are provided on this site. These sites are provided for informational purposes only and are not necessarily sponsored by the parish or church organization.” *When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.*

Videos, Photographs, Other Images

Adult leaders must seek permission from a parent or guardian to share a photograph or video with another party for any reason. Videos and photographs, which are posted by electronic means with the permission of the parent or guardian, should not give identifying information about the child (i.e. full name, addresses, birth date, etc.).

On-line Gaming

This recreational activity is used by peers to play games and socialize. Adults involved in service and ministry to youth are not peers of the youth. For this reason, adult leaders should not be involved in on-line gaming with the youth whom they serve. *When using this technology, care must be taken to adhere to the guidelines for “Electronic Communication with Minors” stated in this document.*

Illegal or Immoral Materials

Adults should never access, transmit, or create materials that are illegal or immoral. These include but are not limited to pornographic, stolen, sexist or discriminatory materials. Illegal activity such as “sexting” or the transmission of illegal material must be reported immediately to the proper authorities.

Important Reminders:

Electronic communication is not private. E-mails, text messages, and web postings establish a permanent record, which can be obtained and accessed. These means of communications can also be saved and forwarded. Anything of concern should be brought to the attention of the pastor, principal or program administrator. All expectations regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse are in effect regardless of the method by which the information reaches the adult ministering to youth. All questions concerning this can be directed to the Office for Child and Youth Protection at 215-587-2466.

**CYO/YOUTH MINISTRY *DIRECTIVE/POLICY STATEMENT* REGARDING
SKILLS CAMPS AND MANDATORY OVERNIGHT CAMPS**

Parishes, through their CYO representatives (i.e., pastor/priest moderator, CYO board members, coaches, or designated volunteers) may not require attendance at outside skills camps or overnight camps as a prerequisite for participation on a team or in a specific activity.

CYO representatives frequently receive information from colleges and athletic organizations regarding skills camps or overnight camps. CYO representatives may share information with players and their parents. This should not be viewed as an endorsement of the program or that the CYO representatives have reviewed the camps' safety policies. Parents are encouraged to review any outside program to determine its suitability and safety for their children.

If a CYO representative (or youth leader), with the approval of the pastor, makes arrangements for members of a team (or a youth group) to voluntarily attend a skills camp or overnight camp, then the CYO representative (or youth leader) must adhere to all Archdiocesan guidelines concerning the ratio of chaperones to youth. All adults must have the required background checks and Safe Environment training. If there is a parish sponsored youth skills camp (or youth activity), Archdiocesan Safe Environment directives and guidelines are to be in effect.

**THE ARCHDIOCESAN GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE RATIO OF CHAPERONES TO YOUTH ARE
AS FOLLOWS:**

- Two adults for the initial seven youth for 8th grade and below
- Two adults for the initial ten high school youth
- One adult per each additional ten youth in all age groups
- Never one adult working alone with youth

Insurance Requirements:

- a. The Office for Insurance Services is available to answer any insurance-related questions and to provide assistance with property, liability, automobile, worker’s compensation, and all other insurance coverages and related claims.

The office hours are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays, and the following staff is available by calling:

Charles Debevec, Director	215-587-3644
Margo Toland, Assistant Director	215-587-2494
Teresa Kerins, Insurance Specialist	215-587-3640
General Office Number	215-587-3640
Fax Number	215-587-2498
Emergency Phone Number, 24 hours a day	877-85-CLAIM

- b. The Office for Insurance Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia does not approve or authorize any parish, school or youth group to sponsor ski trips, or other high risk sporting activities, like rock climbing, bungee-jumping, white-water rafting, etc., or any activity which requires a release waiver to be signed. The Office for Insurance Services recommends that group leaders or organizers of high risk activities should clarify for all concerned that such activities are not a parish/school sponsored activity. In no event should the parish or group assume any of the risk associated with ski trips, or other similar high risk events.
- c. All drivers of parish/school/agency vehicles must be pre-approved by the Office for Insurance Services. Please contact the Insurance office for the necessary forms. A minimum of 2 weeks is needed for the review and approval process.
- d. When employees or volunteers drive their own cars for parish or school events, the car insurance is primary. It is recommended that the car owner maintains auto insurance limits of \$100,000/\$300,000 with matching limits of uninsured/underinsured or higher.
- e. Any vehicle that holds more than 11 passengers (10 plus the driver) are not allowed under the Archdiocese Insurance Program and should never be used to transport youth or students. For example, 15 passenger vans are not covered under the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s insurance policy.
- f. When driving parish/school/agency vehicles with no passengers, in general, drivers must be at least 21 years old and have three (3) years of driving experience. If passengers are involved, the driver must be at least 25 years old and have five (5) years of driving experience.

CYO Coaches, Youth Ministers & Volunteer Stewards Guidelines

Volunteer Guidelines:

- Volunteer Application (optional) sample form provided in packet.
 - Volunteer Code of Conduct (optional) sample form provided in packet.
- The person who is supervising the volunteer steward should meet with him/her to discuss the role that the volunteer will have in the program. A clear job description and training program should be provided for the volunteer. In addition to job related functions, opportunities for spiritual development should be offered.

Youth Supervision Guidelines:

- a. Chaperones must be 21 years of age or older.
- b. Anyone under the age of 21 can volunteer but must have supervision and may not be considered a chaperone. They must be considered a volunteer and not a participant and must be cleared as a volunteer. They should avoid any situations that may jeopardize the youth/young adult relationship.
- c. It is recommended that every activity have at least two chaperones. If both genders of youth are present at the activity, it is recommended that both genders be present among the chaperones.
- d. Utilize the buddy system. Youth participants should never be alone.
- e. One staff member or volunteer should not be left alone with one youth. If an adult finds him/herself alone with a youth, the adult should act in a prudent manner. For example:
 - a. The adult and youth should move to an open area where their interaction could be observed.
 - b. If it is necessary to meet one on one with a youth, the adult should take measures to ensure that there is an open door and another adult nearby.
 - c. To prevent one adult being left alone with one youth who is waiting to be picked up, the adult should ask the parent who arrives to pick up the next-to-last youth to wait until the last parent arrives.
- f. Maintain the following ratio of adults to youth participants:
 - Two adults for the initial 7 youth for 8th grade and below.
 - Two adults for the initial 10 high school youth.
 - One adult per each additional 10 youth in all age groups.
 - Never one adult working alone with youth.

Permission Guidelines:

- a. The intent of a permission slip is to obtain permission for events and activities, acquire important information such as emergency contact numbers and medical insurance information and gain permission to obtain medical assistance if needed. (A sample form is provided in packet.)
- b. All activities held outside the parish and all activities that include an overnight, require a permission slip for any youth under the age of 18.
- c. It is not recommended that one permission slip be used for several different types of activities occurring throughout the year.
- d. One permission slips to cover multiple meetings for the same activity, for example regular meetings and bible study, would be appropriate.
- e. A permission slip should be accompanied by an information sheet for the parents/guardians, outlining the program activity and noting emergency phone numbers.
- f. Obtain emergency medical information for each participant to be kept on file and available at all activities. (A sample form is provided in packet.)

Overnight Guidelines:

- a. All youth participants and parents should read and sign a code of conduct for the event. (A sample form is provided in packet.)
- b. There will be no mixed gender sleeping quarters.
- c. There must be both gender adult chaperones if both gender youth are participating.
- d. Except for large dormitory sleeping accommodations; for example a work camp experience, adults should not share sleeping accommodations with the youth.
- e. Chaperones should set a curfew and continue supervision after 'lights out' to ensure safety of youth.
- f. Techniques such as placing a piece of scotch tape over the door can be used as a deterrent from late night activities.
- g. Youth should know where the adult chaperones are at all times.
- h. When acquiring hotel accommodations, it is recommended that if possible, all the rooms be on the same floor.
- i. No youth should be allowed to leave the property without adult supervision.
- j. When making reservations pay TV and long distance lines should be turned off at the hotel desk.

Transportation Guidelines:

- a. Preferred transportation for all youth events is a commercial bus.
- b. If individual privately owned vehicles will be used:
 - The drivers must be 25 years of age or older. Exceptions are made for drivers under 25 to transport passengers if the driver has a clean driving record.
 - If the driver is a regular driver, they must be pre-approved by the Office of Insurance Services. Please contact the Insurance office for more information.
 - The driver must have proper insurance.
 - The driver must have a good driving record.
 - Every passenger must have a seatbelt.
 - It is recommended that the driver have the permission slips and medical forms of the youth passengers in his/her vehicle in case of an emergency. It is recommended that the permission slip indicate the driver.
- c. Under no circumstances should a youth drive to any off site event without written parental permission.
- d. It is recommended that all participants ride together as a group to any events other than regular meetings.
- e. When more than one vehicle is used to transport youth to activities, it is highly recommended that each driver must have a map and directions to and from the activity along with cell phone numbers of the other drivers if possible.
- f. It is recommended that no adult should be alone in a vehicle with a youth without parent permission.
- g. When renting a vehicle, it should be in the name of the parish and not the parish employee. This allows the insurance to cover the vehicle.
- h. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia will not cover 15 passenger vans, and they should not be used for transporting youth.
- i. Please refer to the Rules of the Road document provided by the Office of Insurance Services for additional information regarding transportation.

Disclosure of Personal Information Guidelines:

- a. Youth ministers, unless certified as a counselor, are not governed by laws regarding disclosure.
- b. The youth participants should be made aware that the youth minister or volunteers are not restricted by law from disclosing information to parents, public authorities or parish staff.
- c. On the other hand, youth ministers or volunteers need to respect the trust that is given to them by the youth.
- d. The youth ministry coordinator should have a list of referral services in the area.
- e. Some guidelines to follow when a situation arises:
 - Always inform a third party, the youth minister or pastor, for advice and assistance especially in instances where parent involvement is not necessary.
 - Always encourage parent involvement.
 - Assist the youth in addressing their parents. Be present if necessary.
 - State law requires that all suspected child abuse be reported to the proper authorities.

Discipline Guidelines:

- The goal as youth ministers is to create a faith fostering environment that is both fun and safe where the youth can come to form relationships with their God, their peers & caring adults. Being proactive and creating standards of behavior will help the youth and adults know what is expected of them which helps create an environment that is consistent with the mission of youth ministry.
- a. It is strongly recommended that all youth participants read and sign a code of conduct. (A sample form is provided in packet.)
 - b. Youth ministers should keep their direct supervisors informed of any discipline issues and consult them before making final decisions about a course of disciplinary action, ie. suspension or removal from a program.
 - c. Below are actions that can create discipline problems and suggestions on how to address the actions. However, it is at the youth minister's discretion to dismiss anyone who is behaving in an improper manner.
 - Drugs / Alcohol
 - If the youth has possession, the incident should be reported immediately to their parents, and the youth should be asked not to return to the activity. In some cases, the incident may need to be reported to the authorities.
 - If the youth comes to an activity under the influence of drugs / alcohol, the parents should be notified immediately and the youth should be asked to leave the activity.
 - Leaving the premises
 - Students are not allowed to leave the premises during a youth activity without permission.
 - If a student leaves the premises, his/her parents should be notified.
 - If the incident happens again, the youth minister can request that the youth not return.
 - Arguments among youth
 - When arguments occur and the youth cannot resolve the conflict themselves, it is suggested that the adult leaders sit the two parties down and help mediate the conflict.
 - Resolution usually comes when both parties genuinely own up to some part of the problem and apologize.

- Physical fighting
 - No physical fighting is permitted.
 - If a fight occurs, the parties concerned should be separated from the activity with the youth minister there as a mediator and the parents should be notified.
 - If an incident happens again, the youth minister can request that the youth not return.

Alcohol / Drugs & Tobacco Guidelines:

- a. The youth ministry coordinator must inform the parents of any youth that attends a youth ministry activity and that is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- b. Every adult leader should refrain from any consumption of alcohol any time they are in the presence of youth at youth ministry activities.
- c. It is recommended that gatherings that are primarily youth oriented not serve alcohol.
- d. Parishes or schools that have intergenerational participants where alcohol will be served have the responsibility to insure that no underage drinking will occur and that the parents are aware that alcohol will be served.
- e. An underage person should never be placed in the position of tending bar, or serving alcohol.
- f. Any youth will not be allowed to use tobacco products at any youth ministry activity.
- g. Any adult volunteer that attends a youth ministry activity under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave. The youth ministry coordinator has the right to restrict the adult volunteer from attending any other parish sponsored youth ministry activities.

Virtus Adult Volunteer Code of Conduct

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a volunteer, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Volunteer’s Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of our [*parish, school, facility, diocese, etc.*] and understand that this list is not exhaustive. **As a volunteer, I will:**

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at Church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- Report suspected abuse:
 - Those in paid or volunteer positions in a Church – related institution are obligated to immediately notify the person in charge of the institution (e.g., pastor, principal, director of religious education, head administrator) when child abuse is suspected.
 - The person in charge of the institution must immediately report suspected child abuse to the 24-hour Pennsylvania Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-932-0313.
 - If the suspected abuser is a member of the clergy or is a church official, employee or volunteer, please also contact the Archdiocesan Office for Child and Youth Protection at 1-888-800-8780.
 - Resolve any doubt in favor of a report.
 - If the person in charge of the institution is the suspected abuser, you must make the report yourself.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth.

Volunteer's Printed Name

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Service Projects for CYO Sports Teams

Many projects are very effective with young adolescents. Think local. The ideas below may spark your own creativity. Have your athletes share their thoughts and ideas too!

Examples

- Cleaning the Church
- Helping with an already existing service project
- Raking leaves or shoveling snow for the elderly
- Visiting retirement or nursing homes
- Serving at a soup kitchen
- Distributing items to a food bank
- Working at a homeless shelter
- Working with a community program
- Participating or initiating environmental programs
- Collecting food, clothing, money or supplies for a specific cause or organization
- Developing pen pal relationships with other youth or soldiers stationed abroad
- Delivering Easter or Christmas cards, gifts or flowers to the homebound

Most Importantly!

Take the time to make service count for kids!
If you're going to do it, do it right by following
the **Three P's** below:

Preparation:

Place the activity in the context of faith and discipleship. They need to know why the project is important

Participation:

Include adult supervision for guidance.
Focus should be on those being served and the purpose of the project.

Processing:

Share insight and feelings. Reflect on applicable scripture/faith issues. Celebrate the work done and the service provided.

*If you need assistance, please call the Athletic Ministry/CYO Sports Department at 215-965-4638.

Remember to Remember God

ORDER YOUR PARISH
A CYO SPORTS
MISSION STATEMENT
BANNER!

Located in Kimberton, PA
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CYO Sports Volunteer Recommended Reading List

Wooden

By Coach John Wooden (UCLA Bruins Basketball)

The Double-Goal Coach

By Jim Thompson (Positive Coaching Alliance)

Just Let the Kids Play

by Bob Bigelow, Tom Moroney and Linda Hall

Values of the Game

by Bill Bradley

Character Development and Physical Activity

by Brenda Bredemeier and David Shields

My Losing Season

by Pat Conroy

Coaching for Character

by Craig Clifford and Randolph M. Feezell

Raising Cain

by Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson

Coaching Catholic: Gospel Values in Youth Sports

by Rev. Richard J. McGrath, OSA, Ph.D.

The Parent's Guide to Catholic Youth Sports

by Rev. Richard J. McGrath, OSA Phd.

**Positive Coaching: Building Character
and Self Esteem Through Sports**

by Jim Thompson

Shooting in the Dark

by Jim Thompson

Reviving Ophelia

by Mary Piper

Spirituality of Sport: Balancing Body & Soul

by Susan Saint Sing, Phd.

Way To Go, Coach!

by Ronald E. Smith and Frank L. Smoll

**Good Sports: The Concerned Parent's
Guide to Competitive Youth Sports**

by Rick Wolff

Dear God,

**Bless our team here today
and all those who are about to compete.
Help us to know our talents
that you've blessed us with
and to be supportive of others.
Grant us the courage to do our best
and not give up when we fall behind.
Help us, Father, to have self-respect
and give credit to those who do something right.
Let us love and support our competitors
just as Jesus taught us to do.
Thank you, Lord, for all that you give us
and for listening to our prayers.**

Amen.

*Prayer written by Kelsey Schepise, former
student-athlete of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish School.*

