



# **VOLUNTEER COACH'S HANDBOOK**

## **A Message from our Board of Directors:**

Thank you for agreeing to coach in the Brookline Hollis Youth Soccer League program (BHYSL). This handbook will help prepare you for the upcoming season. Our program focuses on participants learning new skills in both sports and life. We are committed to offering a quality program, in a safe and fun environment, where our participants learn the importance of teamwork, fair play, soccer and social skill development. If you have any questions regarding the program, please reach out to us at [BHYSLadmin@gmail.com](mailto:BHYSLadmin@gmail.com).

Thank you again for committing yourself to the growth and development of not only our program, but more importantly, our program participants. Have a great season and we will see you on the field!

## **Principles for Coaches and Parents**

Coaching is an extremely important responsibility. A good coach always places the best interest of the player before winning. The players and their parents have placed you in a position of leadership, and you have a responsibility to give them your best effort. This athletic experience will play a significant factor in determining whether the players continue participating in sports in the future. If you follow the list of coaching principles, the players and their parents will be better served.

### **Ten Coaching Guidelines**

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He/she should be sensitive to the player's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He/she should be dedicated to serving children and understand sports provide physical and emotional growth for its participants.
2. A coach needs to realize he/she is a teacher, not a drill sergeant. He/she should help children learn and work to improve their skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the player transforms into the best interest of the game.
3. The safety and welfare of the players can never be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push players beyond their limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the athletic experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is supposed to be fun.
5. A coach should care more about the players as people than athletes.
6. A coach should encourage his/her players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from making discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. A coach needs to remember the rules of the game are designed to protect the players, as well as to set a standard of competition. He/she should not circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his/her opponent's team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He/she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he/she gets from his or her players, regardless of victories or defeat. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indications of good coaching.

## Additional Coaching Tips:

- Take time to introduce yourself to parents via email and then in person on the first day. Set “team rules” so everybody hears them and knows what to expect.
- Use mistakes as positive opportunities to learn rather than negative outcomes to dwell on.
- Encourage your parents to attend practice and games.
- Make sure you are creating a fun and pleasant atmosphere for your players during practices and games.
- Play ALL of your players. Remember all players at the game from the beginning should play at least half the game.
- Motivate your players to work toward achievable goals.
- **Keep your players who are not on the field together on the sidelines.**

**HAVE FUN!!** Always Remember: You are doing this for fun and to help the players!

### **Dealing with Parents**

The success of your team involves everyone’s participation. The key to keeping parents involved and happy is **communication**. Encourage parents to talk to you, ask questions and give input.

Dealing with disruptive parents is a dilemma. If the circumstances warrant, please refer the matter to a member of the Board to handle a disagreement or other issue involving a parent.

## Good Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship occurs when teammates, opponents, coaches and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially parents and coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and behave with dignity – whether they win or lose a game.

Parents and coaches can help kids understand good sportsmanship through small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before/after a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully. Displaying good sportsmanship is not always easy; it can be tough to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game, but the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways.

A child who practices good sportsmanship is likely to carry the respect and appreciation of other people into every other aspect of life.

Some suggestions for building sportsmanship on your team:

- If you are your child’s coach, don’t expect more from them than the other children on your team. Don’t be harder on him/her than anyone else on the team, but don’t play favorites either.
- Keep your comments positive. Don’t bad mouth other coaches, players or game officials. If you have a serious concern about a parents’ behavior, discuss it privately with the child’s parent or with a league official.
- When you’re talking to your team after a competition, it is important not to dwell on who won or lost; instead ask your team how they felt during the game. If a child mentions he or she didn’t do well at a particular skill, offer to work on these skills with the child before the next game.

Applaud good plays no matter who makes them.

- Set a good example with your courteous behavior toward the parents of kids on the other team. Congratulate them when their kids win.

- **Do not run up the score – hold your team to no more than a 4 goal lead**

Ideas to keep this from happening include:

- Only allow players to shoot with their non-dominant foot
- Tell players they have to complete 5 passes before anyone can shoot on net
- Players that have already scored need to pass to other players to shoot on net

## **Coach's Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct**

1. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of any personal desire to win and remember the game is for the youth, not adults.

### ***Expected Behavior:***

- Allow and encourage players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
- Fulfill the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a “children first” philosophy.
- Place emphasis on fun, participation and team.

2. I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development for the same.

### ***Expected Behavior:***

- Recognize the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well-being.
- Encourage all players, regardless of skill level.
- Recognize some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.

3. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.

### ***Expected Behavior:***

- Maintain a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Correct or avoid unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- Use appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Report unsafe conditions to BHYSL staff.

4. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

### ***Expected Behavior:***

- Establish practice plans that are interesting, varied, and productive which are aimed at improving all players' skills and individual abilities.
- Devote appropriate time to the improvement of each individual player.
- Conduct practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

5. I will lead, by example, in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship by supporting all players and officials.

***Expected Behavior:***

- Abide by and support the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
- Provide an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
- Use the influential position of a youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect sportsmanship and fair play.
- Use appropriate language at all times. At no time is profanity acceptable.

6. I will use appropriate coaching techniques for each of the skills I teach.

***Expected Behavior:***

- Study and learn the rules of the game for the appropriate age group.
- Review all coaching material provided to coaches.
  - Attend all coaches' meetings/clinics

7. I will not use alcohol and tobacco products during league sponsored events.

***Expected Behavior:***

- Be alcohol and drug free during all league sponsored events.
- Refrain from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- Encourage parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol during team activities.

8. I will remember that children play, referees call, fans cheer and coaches TEACH.

***Expected Behavior:***

- Exercise your authority/influence to control behavior of fans and spectators.
- Treat parents and coaches of other teams with respect.
- Treat officials and league administrators with respect.

9. As the coach, I will respect and support the decisions of the contest officials.

***Expected Behavior:***

- I will back and support the decisions of league officials and assist in enforcing all league rules.
- If I have concerns or questions, I will direct them to the league administrator at an appropriate time. I will not criticize another coach, game or league official.
- I will cooperate and offer assistance whenever I can.

10. I am aware I have a tremendous influence on my players and I will not place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

## Enforcement

BHYSL is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth through the enforcement of this Code of Ethics. Our Code of Ethics defines the expectations for individuals serving as coaches in our program. It also provides the tools to be used by BHYSL, when necessary, to check behavior and to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

BHYSL firmly believes the youth sports experience should be positive, safe and provide learning opportunities. For this to be possible, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children. Every volunteer coach is required to adhere to the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge. It is the duty of the BHYSL to ensure all volunteers successfully pass a criminal background check. It is also the duty of BHYSL to respond to complaints against any volunteer coach in a youth recreation program. This is accomplished by initiating the "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure" detailed in the next section. The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the coach's behavior.

In the event a coach is found to have violated the Code of Ethics, a list of possible disciplinary actions has been compiled to accompany the Code of Conduct. BHYSL reserves the right to reprimand violators of the Coaches Code of Ethics. This list is not all inclusive and is subject to change.

Possible actions include:

- Warning to and/or apology from the coach
- Probation
- One game suspension
- Multiple game suspensions and a meeting with the BHYSL Board
- Season suspension and a meeting with BHYSL Board
- Indefinite suspension

Factors that will result in a harsher penalty include:

- Child endangerment
- Violation of law
- Prior complaints/review action
- Number of expected behaviors violated
  - Breach of duties as a role model

## **Enforcement Procedure**

This section outline the procedures BHYSL will use when a complaint against a coach is received. When BYSHL receives a complaint about a coach of a possible Code of Ethics violation, within 48 hours, the BHYSL Board will initiate a review process consisting of:

1. Gather written reports and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from individuals involved to determine if a violation of the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include game officials, other coaches, parents and/or children, with parental consent.
2. The BHYSL Board will review all information gathered and will determine severity of the penalty as outlined in this manual. BHYSL has the authority to decide the severity of the situation and whether or not the effected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined in the Code of Ethics Pledge.
3. The coach will be informed by the BHYSL Board of the penalty for the violation. At this time, a meeting with the involved coach may be scheduled.
4. The BHYSL Board has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Coaches' Code of Ethics/Conduct. If disciplinary action is taken, the information will be logged in the coaches file.



# First Aid

## Care for Common Minor Injuries

It is the coach's job to maintain as safe an environment as possible.

When an injury does occur:

1. Stay calm
2. Administer basic first aid as soon as possible.
3. If injury is serious or the extent is unknown: CALL 911
4. Notify Parent
5. Fill out accident form completely at [www.bhyouthsoccer.com](http://www.bhyouthsoccer.com) (in the "Resources" section) and forward the report [bhysladmin@gmail.com](mailto:bhysladmin@gmail.com). We will submit the injury report to the appropriate parties

## Conditions Requiring Medical Attention

- Significant swelling/dislocation of any extremity
- Loss of sensation in an extremity
- Any obvious deformity
- Severe pain
- Inability to bear weight on a lower extremity
- Significant lacerations, with or without fracture
- Significant swelling of a joint (knee, elbow etc.)

## Conditions Mandating Only Qualified Medical Personnel Move the Athlete

- Loss of consciousness.
- Neck or back injury with loss of sensation in arms or legs.
- Head injury with disorientation and/or visual changes.

## Heat Emergencies

These problems often occur when athletes play too long and hard or stay too long in the sun. Sunburn can occur on overcast days as well as sunny days. When athletes are in the sun, they should wear water-resistant sunscreen, which provides maximum protection.

1. Heat Stroke
  - *Signs and Symptoms:* Hot, red skin; very high body temperature; shock or unconsciousness.
  - *What to Do:* Treat heat stroke as a life-threatening emergency, and CALL 911. Get the victim to a cool place and wrap him/her in wet clothing. Care for shock by laying the victim down and elevating their feet. Give nothing by mouth.
2. Heat Exhaustion

- *Signs and Symptoms:* Cool, pale, moist skin; rapid, weak pulse; weakness/dizziness; nausea/vomiting.
  - *What to Do:* Treat heat exhaustion as an emergency, and CALL 911. Get the victim into the coolest place available. Place the victim on their back with their feet elevated. Cool victim by applying wet sheets or towels to the body and by fanning. Give  $\frac{1}{2}$  glass of water to drink every 15 minutes if the victim is fully conscious and can tolerate it.
3. Heat Cramps
- *Signs and Symptoms:* Muscular pains and spasms, usually in the legs or abdomen.
  - *What to Do:* Get the victim into the coolest place available. Give  $\frac{1}{2}$  glass of water to drink every 15 minutes for an hour.
  - *Prevention:* Seek protection from the sun and extreme heat. Replace fluids by drinking water, sports drinks or fruit juices.

### **Inclement Weather**

Games will be postponed with the BHYSL determines the fields to be unplayable. In the event of a game cancellation, coaches and parents will be notified via email and the information will be posted on our Facebook page. We strive to make all calls regarding postponement or cancellation at least 75 minutes prior to game time. If games are made up, a make-up schedule will be provided to the coaches who will provide that information to their team.