

**LYNNFIELD YOUTH SPORTS**

**YOUTH  
BASKETBALL  
LEAGUE**



**COACHING MANUAL**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION – “Setting Goals Higher Than Winning”	1
PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND GUIDELINES	2
COACHING PHILOSOPHY	4
GAME RULES	6
COACHING TIPS	11
CODE OF CONDUCT	12

## **INTRODUCTION- "SETTING GOALS HIGHER THAN WINNING"**

Welcome to the Lynnfield Youth Sports' Youth Basketball Program. Being a volunteer youth coach will bring many rewards. We hope that your experience in the program is enjoyable.

This instructional program teaches the fundamentals of basketball, but there are many other benefits to youths, which are emphasized. Although people agree that it is a pleasure to play on a winning team, other objectives should come first. In particular, Lynnfield Youth Sports values the approach that says everybody plays, regardless of ability. Cooperation is valued over competition. Fair play is valued over winning at any cost. Character development is valued over developing the next "superstar."

The Lynnfield Youth Sports Basketball League seeks to bring out the best in every participant. Players learn lessons in how to work with teammates. The responsibilities carried out at a single position affect the entire team. The discipline of hard work, the necessity to trust others, and the art of blending one's skills with those of others in a common pursuit, should all be taught and will make for a better team. Team members who get along and help each other can improve their level of play.

With the foregoing in mind, the important goals of the basketball program are as follows:

- to build a player's self-esteem
- to teach social skills and human relations
- to develop a sense of responsibility and decision-making
- to enhance leadership skills
- to build relationships among peers
- to create a fun experience for youths and their families

On the following pages of this manual is all the information needed to be a successful coach in the Youth Basketball League. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the League's Director.

## **PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND GUIDELINES (Boys' & Girls')**

1. **Organization:** The Lynnfield Youth Sports Youth Basketball Program is divided into Boys' and Girls' Leagues with each League separated into Junior (Grades 4&5), and Senior (Grades 6, 7&8) Divisions. No player in the Junior Division is allowed to "play up" in the Senior Division.
2. **Team Rosters:** Each team is made up of a roster not to exceed 10 players. However, special circumstances involving the number of registered participants may result in 11 players being placed on one or more teams.
3. **Tryouts:** All coaches are requested to attend the tryouts. At that time, each coach will evaluate the players in order to determine their skill level. The coaches will then meet privately and collectively to create teams with an equal distribution of talent. No coach will inform any player at what level the coaches evaluated their skills.
4. **Practices:** Practices are scheduled (typically two per week) prior to the commencement of League games. Additional practices are also scheduled during the regular season. All practices are conducted in gymnasiums designated by Lynnfield Youth Sports and run for a duration of one hour. Generally, court times are shared with another team. **No coach may independently make arrangements for practices other than those scheduled by Lynnfield Youth Sports.**
5. **Games:** Practices and game times are scheduled for Monday through Thursday from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The earliest time slots are reserved for the Boys' and Girls' Junior Divisions. No coach may independently make arrangements to play games other than those scheduled by Lynnfield Youth Sports.
6. **Cancellations:** In case of inclement weather, every effort will be made to announce all canceled games and practices at school. **If school days are canceled, then all games and practices are also canceled. Each head coach is ultimately responsible for contacting his or her players.**

- 7. Responsibility of Coaches:** Lynnfield Youth Sports select all head coaches and their assistants. Although every coach in the program is a volunteer, he/she is considered to be a representative of the Lynnfield Youth Sports Basketball League and, therefore, is subject to its guidelines, rules, and code of conduct. Each head coach is responsible for the action of his/her players while attending practices and games. Every effort should be made to supervise a player(s) before and after games and practices at the gymnasium. No defacing or destruction of school-owned property will be tolerated.
- 8. Referees:** The success of the Youth Basketball League depends upon having good referees present at all games. Therefore, each head coach is expected to contribute his or her time as a referee for a minimum of two evenings during the basketball season, if needed.

## **COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

Lynnfield Youth Sports strongly recommends that coaches adopt a good competitive sports philosophy when working with young players. The essential elements of this philosophy are as follows:

- 1. Know your motives for coaching.** Think about what you expect to gain from your coaching experience. Make sure that your expectations in coaching are compatible with the philosophy of the overall basketball program.
- 2. Make your own education a priority.** Take advantage of every opportunity available to learn more about coaching techniques, teaching skills, and helping players set personal goals and reaches for them.
- 3. Work with every player on your team.** The most highly skilled and least skilled members of your team should be given equal attention. It is more important that all the players participate and have fun than to have a few good players dominate the action. (NOTE: the rules of this manual promote this approach.)
- 4. Work on basic skills.** concentrate on basic skills by helping players become conscious of proper execution without interfering excessively.
- 5. Use positive reinforcement as often as possible.** Early successes are essential for developing self-confidence. Peer recognition and acceptance are very important.
- 6. Teach fair play.** Competing fairly is an essential part of competitive sports. This involves a set of attitudes which includes:
  - taking responsibility for one's own behavior and learning
  - respect for one's teammates and working to become a team member who unselfishly contributes to the good of the whole team
  - respect for the other team by considering them as an essential partner in competition.
  - respect for the rules of the game and the referees who uphold them

7. **Emphasize both learning skills and sportsmanship.** Players need to accept both winning and losing, cooperating with their peers, following a coach's instructions, and giving one's best effort.
8. **Help players set and evaluate individual goals.** Competing against one's self is perhaps the best way to improve skills. Help players to measure their own skills, set goals for the future, and work to reach their goals.
9. **Keep winning in perspective.** Winning games is only one of the many important goals in sports. Help players (and parents) become aware of other important goals such as: learning skills; being a good leader sometimes and a good follower at other times; dealing with the emotions of the sport; and, most importantly, having fun.

## **GAME RULES (Boys' & Girls' Leagues)**

- 1. Length of Game:** A game consists of two, 20-minute halves and is running time. The clock is stopped only for time-outs, substitutions, half time, player injuries, and stopped during the **last minute of the game**. There will be a 3 to 5-minute break at half time. Last game must end at **9:00 PM** with no overtime, except in playoffs. Get your player to be on time for a game. When the official is ready to start a game, it starts no matter how much warm-up time has been used.
- 2. Jump Balls:** The game begins with a jump ball. Thereafter, alternating possessions will be used. The **possession arrow** should be pointed towards the basket of the team who gets the next possession.
- 3. Time-Outs:** Each team will have **2 time-outs per game** (each 45 seconds long). Time-outs can be called by a coach or by a player on the floor whose team possesses the ball. The scorekeeper will record the official number of time-outs used. Under special circumstances, time-outs may also be called by referees to discuss the conduct of players, coaches, and spectators. During the time-out the clock is stopped, all players must remain on the court and no substitutions are allowed. Play is resumed by inbounding the ball.
- 4. Substitutions:** At each 5-minute period the game is stopped and all the **players on the bench must go into the game**. The stopping of play only represents an opportunity to substitute players and does not constitute a time-out. Consequently, there should be **NO** coach's conference with the players. Coaches should have substitutes ready to assure that the game will move along quickly. When substitutions are made the coaches can request a matchup to establish the defensive assignments for the players. If an injury to a player occurs, the coach may select **any player** to substitute. This time is not added to the substitutes time, but is charged against the injured player(s) time. No player shall play more than the **maximum** allowed. No dividing of the 5 minutes between players is allowed. All players on the bench will come in at each substitution. No player shall play more than 2 consecutive 5 minute sections with 7 or more players present.

Coaches should prepare a grid before the game to assure that playing time for all players conforms to the following:

<u># Players Present</u>	<u># Periods Played</u>
10	All must play 4
9	4 play 5 and 5 play 4
8	Each must play 5
7	5 play 6 and 2 play 5
6	4 play 7 and 2 play 6

5. **Playing Offense:** A ball must be put into play within 5 seconds when inbounding. The offensive team must advance the ball past mid-court within 10 seconds after inbounding or lose possession of the ball.

In the Jr. Boys and all Girls Divisions, offensive players cannot remain in the lane for longer than 5 seconds. A 3 second lane violation is used in the Senior Division. Violations result in a loss of possession.

6. **Backcourt Violations:** The Junior Divisions have no backcourt violations. In the Senior Girl's Divisions there is no backcourt violations; however, in the Senior Boys Division there is a backcourt violations. **In the final minute, any ball put in to play in the backcourt, a player can be guarded if a team trails by 5 points or less.** This rule applies to both Jr. divisions and Sr. girls division

7.

**\*Sr. boys Division only may press in the backcourt in the final minute of the regulation game and/or final minute of overtime during the season. If a time out is called by the offensive team the ball may be put in play in either the front or back court (pressing is allowed at this time). \*\* No pressing if the score difference is 6 points or more.\*\***

8. **Offensive Violations:** Traveling, charging, double-dribbling, palming and backcourt violations result in a loss of possession. The ball is awarded to the opposing team, which inbound the ball at a point nearest to the violation.

If a player holds the ball in the front court for more than 5 seconds and is closely guarded, possession of the ball is awarded to the opposing team.

9. **Playing Defense:** In the Junior Divisions, straight "man-to-man" defense must be played. Zone defenses may be used in the Senior <sup>Girls</sup> Boys, Girls + Jr. Boys, Divisions ~~and~~. The defensive player picks up the person they are guarding at the top of the key! A full court press is not allowed, except in the final minute of a Senior League game. There is no double-teaming a player, except in the <sup>(area)</sup> lane. A double-team violation results in the offense retaining possession. However, in cases where the offensive player is left open or has clearly proceeded past the defender, the defensive players may switch assignments to pick up the open person. (NOTE: double-teaming is often difficult for a referee to call; nevertheless, the referee's view and decision is final.)

In the Senior Division, both man-to-man and zone defenses are allowed. Double-teaming is also permitted.

In instances where a team elects to fast break, any pass in the front court can be intercepted anywhere, not in the backcourt.

10. **Defensive Violations:** Hacking, blocking, reaching in, holding and hand checking constitute fouls. Possession of the ball is unchanged with the ball awarded out of bounds at a point nearest the violation. Fouls committed in the act of shooting result in two free throws.
11. **Fouls:** Any player assessed 5 fouls will be removed from the remainder of the game. (NOTE: Care should be taken by coaches to avoid having a player foul out of a game.) There will be penalty free throws awarded when a team exceeds 6 fouls per half. For fouls 7, 8 and 9 they will shoot 1 and 1, and for fouls 10 and higher 2 shots will be awarded.

A technical foul on a player is counted as a personal foul. A coach's and player's technical foul results in the opposing team receiving two free throws and being awarded the ball.

**12. Breakaway Rule and Intentional Foul:** A player fouled intentionally on a breakaway is awarded two free throws and also retains possession of the ball. The ball will be inbounded at the nearest point to where the foul occurred. Furthermore, if a continuation of the shot following an intentional foul results in a basket, the points count.

**13. Free Throws:** To remain in play, free throws must hit the rim of the basket. Also, before players can enter the lane when the ball contacts the rim or is over the rim cylinder. Failure of a defensive player to do so gives the foul shooter another attempt, if the free throw was missed. If an offensive player enters the lane early, a successful free throw is not counted.

The Boys' and Girls' Senior Division and Junior Boys Division, shooting free throws must start behind the line. If they go over the line the shot is allowed. In the Girls Junior Division, the minimum requirement is that the player must have her heels touching the front edge of the foul line to start.

**14. Basket Height:** The basket will be lowered to **9 feet** for Junior Girls. All other leagues are at 10 feet.

**15. Ball Size:** A youth (28.5 inch) basketball is used the Boys' and Girls' Junior Division as well as the Girls' Senior League. A regulation size basketball is used in the Boys' Senior Division.

**16. Tie Games:** A tie score at the end of playing time will remain a tie. There will be no overtimes, except in playoffs. Two points are awarded for a win and one point is awarded for a tie.

**17. Scorers and TimeKeepers:** Each team will supply one person (not a player) to be either a scorer or a timekeeper at their game. **Coaches must keep all players away from the scorer's table.** In the Junior Division, the score of a game will be kept until the difference exceeds 30 points.

The Scorers book at the table is the only book recognized by the officials and is final.

18. **Winning Scores:** Winning scores must be submitted to Division Representative within 4 days after game is played.
19. **Playoffs/Overtime:** Overtime during the playoffs is **4-minutes** running time with the last minute stop time. Each team gets one additional timeout per overtime period. Those time-outs left over from regulation will be carried over into the overtime period. Pressing is allowed in the final minute of the second half and overtime period. Substitutions are at will during overtime. Clock stops for subs in overtime.
20. **End of Season Seatings:** All teams qualify for post-season play. 2 Points are awarded for a win, 1 for a tie. Seatings will be determined as follows in order:
- A. Most points
  - B. Most wins
  - C. Head-to-head competition
  - D. Coin toss

**\*\*Division brackets will be determined by the Director.**

## COACHING TIPS

- In games, always strive to match players with equal abilities. This is not only fair but makes the game more realistic.
- Teach everyone to make lay-ups whenever they can (both left and right-handed).
- Try to have defensive players stay between their man and the basket.
- Encourage players to dribble the ball with their heads up.
- Encourage players to pass the ball to other team members.
- Make sure that more experienced players spend time practicing with less experienced ones. This “partnering” helps both players’ self-esteem and ultimately raises team morale.
- Give each person an identity on the team. Even something as simple as being recognized as the team’s inbound specialist is important to a player struggling to find their place among peers.
- Give encouragement and praise to players for good play. Correct mistakes in a positive manner. Generally, it is a good idea to criticize the group but praise the individual. The singling out of an individual for criticism in front of the team seldom works in the long run; however, talking about team weaknesses or problems is often very effective.
- Stay positive and act as a winner. Nothing good comes from being negative. A coach who projects a positive image will transmit that feeling to the players.
- Again, if you as coach gather one theme from this manual, it must be that the Lynnfield Junior Sports Basketball Program is for the players- **ALL THE PLAYERS**. The coaches are here to teach the game of basketball and make it a fun experience. Our lowest priority is to win games. A mentality, which stresses “win at all cost”, or “the opponent is your enemy” is counterproductive to the goals of the basketball program.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Under no circumstances will vocal outbursts be tolerated. Coaches will remain in the team area and not wander the sideline or baseline.
2. The coaches are responsible for the sportsmanship of their players, parents and themselves. Continuous inappropriate conduct can result in a referee stopping the game. The offending team will be assessed a forfeit. This rule of conduct applies to all games, practices, and related basketball activities within the confines of the facility. It is a coaches responsibility and duty to intercede and terminate any situation that could result in verbal abuse, injury and unsportsmanlike behavior.
3. A player(s) or coach may be ejected from a game due to poor sportsmanship which includes, but is not limited to, profanity, obscene gestures, physical abuse, destruction of property, or fighting. Any player(s) or coach ejected from a game by a referee due to poor sportsmanship is also suspended from participating in the next scheduled game. Verbal abuse of referee or League officials following an ejection will not be tolerated. At the discretion of the League's Director, the offending player(s) or coach may be suspended for the remainder of the season. A second ejection during the season will result in immediate suspension for the remainder of the season. No tolerance rule towards the above conduct will be followed by Lynnfield Youth Sports.
4. All spectators in the gym area are also subject to the "**No tolerance rule**" as outlined above in section 3. Spectator abuse will result in immediate removal from the gym and will be reported to the Director. Any spectator/parent ejected from a gym will not be allowed to attend any game for the remainder of the season.

