



Westport Basketball Association Coaching Manual

Greetings Coaches:

Welcome to the Westport Parks and Recreation Department's coaching staff! We are grateful to you for volunteering your time to help our young athletes develop their skills and enjoy participating in the sport of basketball. Whether you are in charge of a team or assisting, everything you do and say will have an impact on your players.

As coaches, you are in a unique position to create positive memories about youth sports for the children in your charge. Our aim is to have players return again and again, year after year, to participate in our programs because the experience was fun for them, and they remember being allowed to just be kids and play the game. When their parents ask them, "How was your practice/game?" we hope they'll answer, "*It was FUN!*"

We encourage you to consider yourself a *teacher first and a coach second*. You volunteered because you care about kids and sports. As you know, participation in organized sports is just one part of a child's overall development as a person. Building self-esteem, teamwork, problem-solving, social development--these things will all take place throughout the season along with learning sports skills. You are the vehicle through which this learning will occur. Keep the focus on what's best for the players and what would be fun for you if you were their age! **Remember, as members of NYSCA, you are obligated to follow the code of conduct and code of ethics.** If necessary, reminders will be given throughout the season to those in need.

Finally, please don't hesitate to contact us if you think we can help make your season a better one. We support you in your efforts to make the youth sports experience a positive one for your players. Have fun out there!

PLEASE UTILIZE OUR WEB SITE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN AS WE TRY TO HAVE ALL QUESTIONS ANSWERED ON THIS SITE....westportbasketball.org

Sincerely,

Cyndi Palaia
Program Manager
President WBA
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Westport Parks and Recreation Mission Statement

MISSION

The mission of the Westport Parks and Recreation Department is to develop and/or maintain a sense of well-being and self satisfaction through activities and experiences that are conducted either for pleasure or for achievement of certain physical, social or emotional successes. Our programs are developed and planned to emphasize education and entertainment in a safe and positive leisure setting for nominal fees. Our ultimate goal being, to have fun and create a feeling of well-being through organized activities where health, education and social adjustment are the underlying foundation.

To further carry out our mission, we have focused our philosophy of youth basketball on providing a comprehensive schedule of recreational basketball to all children in grades 2 - 12. This program is aimed to contribute to the increased learning and better social adjustment of each participant. The goal is to have fun, learn the skills necessary to play basketball, become more proficient with the game and to feel good about themselves. The development of a positive attitude within every team will be accomplished through the direction and role modeling of coaches, parents, staff and officials. In order for us to achieve this, we must provide enjoyable team activity and present the opportunity for our participants to experience building character and self-esteem. The skills, drills and fundamentals we teach must help develop desired positive social traits such as self-control, friendliness, courtesy, obedience, positive self-esteem and habits of fair play. While providing these teachings, we must hold the player's interest.

The promotion of all-around development of the participants and meeting their needs and desires is essential. To accomplish this, we must instill a high level of motivation and personal satisfaction within staff members and the participants. The idea of having fun through basketball while putting emphasis on health, physical fitness and a feeling of well-being is our ultimate goal. We want every participant to gain something from his/her experience in youth basketball that promotes a positive attitude, fosters self-confidence and contributes to their social and emotional needs.



WBA Coaching Manual

Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as a NYSCA Coach by following the NYSCA Coaches' Code of Ethics:

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I promise to review and practice basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for all of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not for adults.



WBA Coaching Manual

Job Description

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES

Instructs and teaches the fundamentals and skills needed to play the game of basketball. Responsible for the children on his/her team and the organization of team practices. Coaches are responsible for providing a safe and comfortable environment for members of the team as well as offering a positive experience. Serves as a role model for good sportsmanship and provides leadership to all young athletes.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Coaches will work under the direction of the appropriate league commissioner and the Parks and Recreation Program Manager. General direction is also received from the practice night supervisors and the game day supervisors and, if needed, the officials.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Directs the players on his/her team.

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

- Oversees and manages the players that are assigned to him/her. This includes never leaving a child alone after practice or a game. You must stay with them until a ride arrives.
- Provides a safe environment for all players. Supervising the players during games, practices, in school locker rooms and other facilities, from the time practices are scheduled to begin to the time the players have left the facility.
- Responsible for teaching the basic fundamentals and skills needed to play basketball as well as sportsmanship.
- Sets up and attends all team practices.
- Prepares for and administers all practices and games
- Communicates all information regarding the basketball program to players and their parents. This includes cancellations, practice days and times, schedule news and any important items handed down from the WBA and/or Parks and Recreation.
- Works supportively and respectfully with league commissioner, site supervisors, officials, parents and other staff members.
- Responsible for any equipment provided to the team.
- Responsible for following Parks and Recreation rules, regulations and policies regarding accidents and emergencies.
- Responsible for enforcing the athletic policies of the Westport Parks & Recreation Department, with the exception of the removal of a player from a team. This action should be a last resort, and only implemented by the Westport Basketball Board and the Westport Parks & Recreation Department.
- Serves as a positive role model for team members in the area of sportsmanship, including demonstrating proper respect and restraint in dealing with opposing team members, coaches and officials.
- Inspecting the facility before practices and games to insure that it contains no safety hazards. If something is broken or not in proper order, please inform the site supervisor.
- Insures that all players have properly registered for the program and have paid the necessary fees. **For safety and liability considerations, no player should be allowed to practice or play with the team until the proper registration form has been completed and the fee has been paid.**
- Insures the trash removal and restoring of equipment to the site supervisor following the completion of a game or practice. In the absence of a site supervisor, coaches will make sure the facility is secure.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Ability to work well and communicate with children on a one to one basis as well as in a group
- Must be able to display **a positive attitude at all times**
- Competent leadership qualities and skills
- Enthusiastic, energetic, patient, happy and friendly
- Ability to establish and maintain an effective working relationship with staff, children and parents.
- Must carry a neat appearance and mature attitude.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

Head and assistant coaches must be at least 18 years of age and hold a high school diploma. Coaching apprentices may be of high school age and have the approval of the WBA. All coaches must have a great interest in working with children and helping them develop good character and self-esteem. Should have knowledge of the game of basketball and be able to perform the basic fundamentals and skills needed to teach it. Must show demonstrated ability to perform the duties of the position with a willingness to learn from those involved in the program.

- Completion of the NYSCA online coaching clinic for Youth Basketball and a current membership with NAYS.org. www.nays.org
- Completion of concussion training through www.nays.org. This can be done through your current membership with NAYS.org and is a free online training.
- A current criminal background check through Protect Youth Sports, <https://opportunities.averity.com/westportparkrec>



WBA Coaching Manual Rating Players

Evaluations

During the evaluation head and assistant coaches will evaluate every player in their respective league based on a broad range of criteria including: size, speed, basketball IQ, experience, attitude, leadership, agility, "coachability," etc. For simplicity, players will be rated 1, 2, 3 or 4.

The WBA demands that no scores are made public.

Rating Guidelines:

1 Rating: #1-rated players represent the highest impact players. These players score high on the above criteria. Coaches should consider a #1 rated player that can play both offense and defense. As an example, players restricted to positions due to height can still be rated #1 if they excel above other players at those positions.

2 Rating: #2-rated players are above average in most skills, but not necessarily all skills.

3 Rating: #3-rated players are average players on the court. These players may score high in certain skills, but do not excel in most criteria noted above.

4 Rating: #4-rated players are below average in most skills and need work in terms of their physical development, basketball IQ and/or attitude. These players need the most coaching to bring them up to their teammates abilities.

Team Selection:

Once every player has been rated, League Commissioners will then collect individual coach's evaluations and hold them until he or she holds their draft. To ensure team balance, every team should have equal number of 1, 2 & 3 rated players. Special consideration should be given in the event that one player is rated above all the others.

Disputes:

If head coaches cannot come to agreement over team selections, The WBA Board will be asked to oversee team selections. Head coaches will be asked to present their ratings and projected rosters along with their dispute. To be absolutely clear, the Board will not allow a head coach to dispute the particular rating of a player.

If two teams are balanced and both coaches want a particular player, then the Board will consider whether one of the coaches had the player the previous year and assign the player to the coach that did not coach him or her. If neither coach has had the player, a coin flip will determine who gets the player in demand.

What about the kids? General Program Information

General Program Information

1. Program Specifics:

After evaluations, children will be assigned to a team and must be contacted by that coach to begin practice the week of November 28. From there on, the team will have a one-hour practice once a week and one game per week through March 3. Games begin on Saturday, December 3 for grades 2 – 8 and Wednesday, December 7 for 7th grade.

- Grades 3 and 4 must practice during the week at either 5 pm or 6 pm
- Grades 5 – 8 may practice during the week any time between 5 pm and 9 pm. Usually the earlier time slots are given to the younger participants.
- Grades 9 - 12 do not have scheduled practices. Games only.
- Boys and girls in grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, play games on Saturdays while grade 7 play games on Wednesday evenings.
- Boys 9 – 12 play games on either Tuesdays or Thursdays. These leagues start January 3rd.
Teams will be created in December after the start of the high school basketball season. Those players who will be playing on the high school basketball teams are not eligible to play due to CIAC regulations.
- The youth basketball calendar follows the school calendar. When school is closed for vacations, holidays or inclement weather or dismissed early for inclement weather, our program is also closed.

PROGRAM CANCELLATION: Inclement weather may cancel practices and/or games. Cancellation information may be obtained by calling our cancellation line at (203)341-5074, visiting our website at www.westportbasketball.org, or following us on Twitter @westportparkrec.

2. Program Standards:

There are no requests for team assignments, practice nights or coaches. Once assigned to a team, the child is expected to attend each practice and each game. While we do have rules for equal playing time in a game, coaches have the choice of waiving this rule if the child *HAS NOT* consistently attended practice. Children participating in other sports such as hockey, indoor soccer or skiing or children with consistent conflicts may not be eligible to take part in our program if they can not meet the practice and game commitment. The Basketball Advisory Board will make the decision of dismissing a child from the program if they feel the child's attendance has been poor and there is no commitment to the youth basketball program.

3. Equipment:

Children in grades 2 - 4 will be receiving a team T-shirt. This is to be worn for games and practices along with black shorts, socks and sneakers. Children in grades 5 – 8 will be receiving a team jersey which must be worn for their game. They are also required to wear black shorts, socks and sneakers. Those children receiving jerseys that are sleeveless that choose to wear a t-shirt underneath must have the same color t-shirt as the jersey. We will not tolerate any ripped or baggy clothing. A neat appearance is required.

- A. Sneakers are mandatory – no street shoes, loafers or platform sneakers. We highly suggest having a reasonable pair of sneakers made for basketball. Sneakers like slip on boat shoes are not made to take the abuse basketball puts on your ankles and feet and could cause injury.
- B. Please tell your players not to wear/bring jewelry, watches, etc. to games or practices. We are not responsible for them being lost or stolen and they are not allowed on the court.
- C. A water bottle is allowed only – NO SPORT DRINKS OR FOOD.
- D. You may bring your own basketball to practice but please make sure it is clearly marked with your name and phone number. We are not responsible if you lose it.
 1. Girls, grades 2 - 4 and boys, grade 3 use a junior size ball which is 27.5 inches in circumference.
 2. Girls, grades 5 – 8 and boy's grades 4 and 5 use a standard women's size ball which is 28.5 or an official WNBA ball.
 3. Boys, grades 6 – 8 use an official men's size ball which is 29.5 – 30.0 or an official NBA ball.

4. Transportation:

Children enrolled in the program should be dropped off NO EARLIER than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled practice or game time and must be picked up IMMEDIATELY after their practice or game. Consistent lateness in either dropping off or picking up is cause for dismissal from the program. The police will be notified of children left unsupervised for long periods of time.

The coaches and the staff will be responsible for the child that is registered for the program during the time they are required to be in attendance only. Siblings, friends and/or neighborhood children are not to be left with the child participating in the program. This is cause for immediate dismissal from the program. Children can not be dropped off to watch friends play games as we ask that they be supervised at all times.

5. Gymnasium Rules:

There is no eating food or drinking beverages other than water allowed in the gym at any time. This includes but is not limited to COFFEE, Danish, donuts, soda, juice, cookies, fruit and the like. Water fountains are available for spectators in the gymnasium vicinity. Water bottles are allowed for participants only. Our staff as well as the custodial staff will approach parents and spectators to enforce this rule. We need your help as well to keep reminding your team.

There are no animals or pets of any kind allowed in the school facilities at any time.

We have asked that parents who bring children to the program to watch the participant and are not participating to monitor them and keep them in control at all times. This is not the job of the staff or the coaches. Children are not to be running in the hallways, around the gym, in the parking lots or on stages. Parents who choose not to supervise their children will be expelled from the gymnasium and their child could be dismissed from the program if the situation warrants. Please let the site supervisor know if this becomes a problem.



Coaching Goals & Objectives

GOALS OF THE YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM

1. Every participant will come away with a heightened sense of themselves as people who can strive for great things...who learn that they can fail and get up and try again, and even fail again...who are less afraid, or perhaps, more willing to act in spite of their fear, and more willing to take the risk that achievement and excellence require of all of us.
2. To have every participant understand that true-self confidence comes not from beating others but from a feeling of being in control of self-improvement activities. To do this, coaches should set goals for their team that are independent of winning or making the other teams lose. Examples would include controlling one's emotions, trying a new skill, implementing a defensive/offensive strategy and reducing errors on a certain skill.
3. The program will help develop and enhance the emotional, physical and educational well-being of each participant.
4. The environment will be alcohol, drug and tobacco free at all times.
5. The coaches will be trained and certified.
6. The parents will provide positive support as a spectator and a parent.
7. Parents will be positive role models exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices, team events and at home while giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their coaches.
8. There shall be safe playing facilities, healthful playing situations and proper first aid available at all times.
9. For every person involved in the program to have a fun experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

1. Coaches will provide a positive recreational experience for their players.

2. Coaches will instruct the basic fundamentals needed to play the game of basketball. This includes dribbling, passing, shooting, etc.
3. Coaches will make sure that the players look at the program as an opportunity to develop friendships, have fun and learn the necessary skills needed to play basketball.
4. All participants will play the required minutes designated by the league they are in.
5. There will be no arguments, rude comments, inappropriate behavior or degrading remarks made at all. Coaches, parents, staff or players who exhibit any of the above mentioned behaviors will be asked to leave and the matter will be dealt with by the Westport Basketball Association.
6. Coaches and officials will promote the welfare of the game of basketball and its' players and work together to encourage the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship. Coaches must understand that both high school age officials and certified adult officials are learning, training and developing their skills in the sport of basketball.



WBA Coaching Manual FACILITY INFORMATION

FACILITY

Bedford Middle School	88 North Avenue Court Size: main court – 84'5" x 50'4" (2) side courts – 84'9" x 50'6"
Coleytown El. School	65 Easton Road
Coleytown Middle School	255 North Avenue Court Size: main court – 79'3" x 59'2"
Green's Farms El. School	17 Morningside Drive South
King's Highway El. School	125 Post Road West
Long Lots El. School	13 Hyde Lane Court Size: main court – 84'10" x 48'6"
Saugatuck El. School	170 Riverside Avenue Court Size: main court – 74'6" x 50'7"
Staples High School	70 North Avenue Court Size: main court – 84'5" x 50'6" Field House: main court – 94'8" x 50'3" Field House: side courts – 84'8" x 50'7"



WBA Coaching Manual Emergency Procedures

AMBULANCE

Site supervisors are present at all practices and games. Please alert them to any emergency situation if they do not recognize one and then together, follow these procedures.

DIAL 911 – IF YOU USE YOUR CELL PHONE PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU GIVE YOUR EXACT LOCATION! IF CELL NOT AVAILABLE, FIND PHONE LOCATION BELOW.

(If using a school phone, DIAL 9911)

If you call 911:

1. Give your name
2. Give the location of injured person
3. Describe the injury or situation

PLEASE NOTE: It is always a good idea for at least one team coach to make sure they have cell phone with them during practice or games. Also, refer to "Policy Regarding Injured Players" for complete information on treating injured players.



WBA Coaching Manual

Policy Regarding Injured Players

The Site Supervisor has the initial responsibility for the safety and welfare of each player on the team. The general rule in treating sports injuries is to administer only the first aid treatment of which you have knowledge. The coaches may also assist, again, in treatment of which they have knowledge. The following steps should be taken in caring for an injured player:

1. Administer only the first aid treatment of which you have knowledge.
2. In the case of a suspected neck or back injury, DO NOT MOVE THE INJURED PLAYER. Notify trained medical personnel immediately, who are qualified to treat this type of injury safely. (Dial 911) **Contact Cyndi Palaia, Program Manager immediately at (203)814-9860**
3. When in doubt about the severity of an injury, always call trained medical personnel to administer treatment.
4. In the event a player is transported to the hospital for treatment, the parents must be notified immediately if not present to give permission.
5. A Westport Parks and Recreation personal injury report form must be completed within 24 hours of all injuries requiring medical attention of any kind.
6. Chemical ice packs should NEVER be used on open wounds or any head injuries. The coach and the site supervisor are responsible for insuring that all chemical ice packs are properly disposed of.

WBA Coaching Manual

Public Conduct on School Property

Westport Parks and Recreation Department programs take place all over the town, and use Westport School property on many occasions. Coaches are asked to be aware of the policies as outlined below as they pertain to use of all facilities:

POLICY:

The Westport Board of Education expects adults to know and respect the rules and regulations of the school, to obey all federal, state and municipal laws, and to behave in a manner which models good citizenship for our students. This includes treating adults, students and property with consideration and respect.

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS:

School buildings, grounds and vehicles are Drug Free Zones. Therefore, the possession, use, transfer or sale of such substances is prohibited, as is being on school property or at school activities while under the influence of such substances.

SMOKING:

Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products is prohibited on all school property, including school vehicles and private vehicles while being used in place of school vehicles to transport students to and from school activities. **Smoking is also prohibited in private vehicles when on school property for any purpose.**

WEAPONS:

All weapons, including firearms, are prohibited on school property. The ban on firearms and other weapons extends to all school and private vehicles when on school property for any purpose. Any person found in

possession of a weapon shall be reported to the police. (This ban on weapons does not apply to police performing official duties).

-All organizations using school buildings or grounds must advise their patrons of this policy, including announcements and in written materials if any such material are distributed.

-No animals allowed



WBA Coaching Manual Alcohol and Drug Policy

In keeping with the concept of providing a healthy and safe environment for athletic participation and competition, the following policies will be enforced:

1. The possession, use and/or participation under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs by players, coaches and spectators, including chewing tobacco products is not permitted on school or town property, nor at any practice, game or team function site.

2. Violation of this policy by a coach will result in:

- Immediate dismissal from his/her coaching position for the season by the Westport Basketball Board and the Westport Parks and Recreation Program Manager.

3. Violation of this policy by a spectator will result in the following:

- The spectator will be asked by the site supervisor and coach to dispose of the substance in question or leave the premises.
- The site supervisor is responsible for initial enforcement of this policy. If the spectator refuses to cooperate, the police will be notified.



WBA Coaching Manual Increasing Self-Esteem in Your Players

If my self-esteem is highest when I am among friends who like and endorse me, couldn't I increase self-esteem in others by helping them to feel that they are also among friends? I've approached the question of how coaches can increase self-esteem in their players by asking two questions: Who are the people I enjoy being with? What is it that they do that causes me to feel accepted and valued by them? These questions have led me to a variety of actions my friends and family members take which help me feel great about myself. A youth sports coach can increase the self-esteem of players by the same means.

1. NAMES: Kids respond to adults who take the time to learn their names and call them by name often. It is also important to get your players in the habit of using each other's names. At the first practice of the year do a name game ice breaking activity so everyone can learn names. Every kid should be greeted by name when he arrives at a practice or game. Whenever a player leaves a game or practice, she should be bid farewell by name. Players should hear their names spoken in a friendly tone of voice often. It's music to their ears.

2. SMILING: My friends smile at me often. Many coaches act as if too much smiling is unsportsmanlike. Coaches can communicate that they like a player perhaps more easily by smiling than any other way.

3. JOKING: Humor that does not make fun of someone is something that typically only goes on between people that like and care about each other. Friendly humor causes people to enjoy each other's company, something that can be important in a stressful setting such as an athletic team.

4. EYE CONTACT: Ross Campbell's book, *How to Really Love Your Child*, expresses that "The more parents make eye contact with their child as a means of expressing their love, the more a child is nourished with love." Eye contact of a friendly nature communicates caring.

5. APPROPRIATE TOUCHING: Touching kids can be a controversial issue in a time when so much sexual abuse of kids is being uncovered. But a coach who tousles the hair of her players, who appropriately puts her arm around kids' shoulders during a huddle, who pats players on the back, who exchanges "high fives," and who shakes hands with players after good efforts is communicating that she likes and values her players. People simply do not choose to touch people they don't like. Kids know this at some level and respond to an adult who knows how to communicate through touch. Examples of inappropriate touching would include "pats" on the child's rear and non-spontaneous hugging.

6. INFLUENCE-ABILITY: A coach who can be influenced by his players is communicating that he cares about them and values their ideas. Nowhere is a lack of influence-ability more a problem than with playing positions. Often there may be solid reasons why a particular child should not play a particular position. For example, a weak fielder might get hurt at first base if the shortstop has a powerful arm. In cases like this it helps if the coach simply communicates the reason to the player and gives the player an idea of what he can do to get to the point of playing this position. As a coach, ask your player's advice about what to do in a given situation and whether or not they have any ideas. When you do ask, a message is transmitted that you care about them enough to get their advice.

7. LISTENING: Implicit in influence-ability is being heard. There are times when a coach simply has to make a decision that the athlete is not going to like or agree with. But it can make an incredible difference if the coach will give the child a chance to say his piece. Just listening without interruption can communicate caring to the player, whether or not the decision goes his way. Sometimes the power of simply listening is more important to a kid than the specific problem he is upset about in the first place.

8. APOLOGIES: Coaches make mistakes. Young athletes are sometimes hurt by those mistakes. A grown-up who finds the humility to apologize to a player is communicating in a direct and clear way that he values the player.

9. FORGIVING: The flip side of apologizing is forgiving children when they hurt us. Being able to forgive and move on to dealing better with each other in the future is an advanced skill, for a coach and for adults in all relationships.

10. ASKING FOR HELP: A coach can build a young athletes' self esteem by simply asking them to help. Sometimes the player on your team that is the least likely candidate to be a star player may be the one who will benefit the most from being asked for help.

11. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION: When someone notices what I have done or an effort I have made, I feel great and am more inclined to make additional efforts. I've developed some guidelines for recognizing and appreciating my players. These include being accurate, being behavior-specific, tying recognition to the goals of the group, putting it in writing, and avoiding the temptation to try to be humorous while recognizing players.

12. BRAGGING: Kids need to be bragged about by important adults in their lives. As a coach I try to tell parents something good about their kid's play every time I see them.

13. INDIVIDUAL TEACHING TIME: Going beyond the group instruction setting to single out a player for special instruction time communicates valuing above the expected level. One way to structure this is to have a different player or players come early or leave late for each practice.

14. NEGATIVE FEEDBACK GENTLY DELIVERED: While we may not want to hear negative feedback from anyone,

it is true that a gentle word about how we might improve ourselves is a sign that someone cares about us. Coaches need to intervene to eliminate or reduce inappropriate behaviors by their players in a way that actually helps the child change, rather than come across as simply one more grown-up dumping on a kid who already may feel like she is being picked on.

15. HELPING SEE ONE'S POTENTIAL: With many young athletes a coach is often in a better position than a teacher to credibly communicate and help an athlete to see the potential that they somehow were unaware of. Sometimes it is as simple as just telling a kid what you are thinking. Most of us would work so hard for someone who helps us see our potential and cares enough to share his perception with us.

16. PHOTOGRAPHS: Take pictures. The very act of someone asking you to pose for a picture sends a message of caring. At the end of the year pictures can be put into a booklet commemorating the accomplishments of the season. Or the pictures can be given to the players to take home and show their parents.

17. YOU PICK THE REST: All of the above practices might not feel right for you. Even more importantly, there are probably others that you can discover by looking at your own experience. I encourage you to do so and then incorporate those methods into your coaching style.

Excerpts from the book Positive Coaching by Jim Thompson.



WBA Coaching Manual Common Issues Experienced by Coaches

- 1. USE OF VOICE:** Many voices are high and thin, and in projecting, the voice becomes still higher. Practice speaking with confidence and flexible use of the voice for emphasis. Use volume for specific purposes such as emergencies and discipline. Don't leave sentences hanging up in the air.
- 2. USE OF SPACE:** With an entire field or gymnasium, group formations tend to be too close together, many times inhibiting group safety and creating confusion and distractions. Position your groups a safe distance apart.
- 3. LARGE GROUPS:** When there are long lines taking turns at a piece of equipment or performing a drill, children become bored and disruptive. Squads of 4-6 are large enough when taking turns is required.
- 4. TALKING TO THE ENTIRE GROUP:** Position yourself in a place where you can see and talk to the entire group and talk to the entire group. Make eye contact.
- 5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR AN ENTIRE GROUP:** In a group situation where there are 4-5 stations, coaches often work with an individual group and are completely oblivious to the other groups. Position yourself facing the rest of the group and observe what is going on to make comments as you move to other groups.
- 6. ANALYSIS OF A GROUP:** Coaches usually make fine presentation of skills, but when the groups starts practicing, tend not to observe and correct errors as they occur. Use positive reinforcement, i.e., "your positioning was great, but next time work on your follow through."
- 7. TALKING OVER NOISE:** This is universal. One of the most common mistakes is giving directions for groups to move and allowing them to begin moving before directions are completed. Begin directions with, "When I say 'GO', and end with "Any questions?"
- 8. MOVING AROUND:** Move around the group during drills and exercises to give players advices and praise, and to correct errors.
- 9. REPETITIOUS IDIOMS:** Used occasionally, they create no problems, but constant overuse gets in the way of

good listening and teaching. The most common are "OK", "Alright", "Now", "Spread Out", "Listen Up", "UMMMM", and "Ya Know".

10. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS: Coaches should face the sun when giving instructions so players can see all demonstrations without squinting. The same goes for other distractions--traffic, playgrounds, and other teams.

11. LOOK FOR THE POSITIVE: This is difficult unless practiced--our tendency as teachers and coaches is to find errors, notice misbehavior, correct mistakes. It's amazing how players respond when a coach recognizes their "good" behavior. Helping with equipment, listening attentively, cooperation with teammates--these behaviors can all be recognized, and occur just as frequently as unwanted behaviors. Constant focus on players who misbehave detracts from teaching and is a disservice to the well-behaved players. But remember, players have "off" days just like coaches. Give kids a chance to do well and don't label them.