



**Harrisonburg Youth  
Football League (HYFL)  
Program  
Handbook  
2019**



All Harrisonburg Youth Football League information may be found at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/football](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/football)

### **Table of Contents**

Page 3	Welcome Letter
Page 4	Mission Statement & Philosophy
Page 5	Roles of the Coach
Page 6	Coaches Responsibilities and Guidelines
Page 7	Youth Sports Player Development Levels
Page 8	Parent Responsibilities
Page 9	League Levels
Page 10	Registration Information
Page 11	Season Information
Page 12	League Rules
Page 13	Important Dates to Remember
Page 14	Youth Sports Parent Code of Conduct
Page 15-16	Youth Sports League Concussion Protocol/Report
Page 17	Player/Participant Expectations
Page 18-19	Volunteer Coach Information

Welcome to the Harrisonburg Youth Football League,

The Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation (HPR) football program fields teams from 6-12 years of age. The Harrisonburg Youth Football League (HYFL) adheres to the rules as set by the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation.

The football program is focused on teaching the fundamentals of football while instilling good sportsmanship, character, and teamwork in a supervised safe environment.

To ensure the success of the HYFL we need the support of parents and volunteers. All coaches are volunteers, and are not compensated for their time. To make your child's football experience the most enjoyable, we encourage you to help our coaches provide a positive experience and atmosphere for all of our participants. A positive environment with positive role models will benefit your child and instill confidence on and off the field.

We hope your child has a great football season! Please contact me if you have any questions.

Tommy Thomas  
Athletic Program Coordinator  
540-433-2474  
[Tommy.Thomas@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:Tommy.Thomas@harrisonburgva.gov)

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Harrisonburg Youth Football League (HYFL) is to enable young people to benefit from participating in team sports in a fun, safe, and structured environment. Through active participation, the young people will learn fundamental values, skills, and knowledge that they will use throughout their lives. The HYFL will strive to inspire youth, regardless of race, creed, gender, or national origin, to practice the ideals of good sportsmanship and physical fitness while familiarizing the players with the fundamentals of football.

## **Philosophy**

Football is just a game. The number one reason children participate in youth sports is to have fun. If you take the fun out of sports, you take the child out of sports. It is detrimental to the player if there is too much pressure placed on them too early to achieve a result rather than simply experiencing the sheer joy of a youth game. As a coach and parent, you want to create a stress free relaxed environment for your team. Let your kids know that it is acceptable to make mistakes. Get to know your kids individually and determine what they need to be successful. For some kids it might be a specific skill. For others it might be encouragement or even something as simple as acknowledgment.

HYFL is not about how many wins or losses are accumulated! Proper football development is achieved by children participating in age appropriate activities so that they can experience, comprehend, and execute the game as it relates to where they are in their cognitive development. It is achieved by all the team members receiving required playing time. It is achieved by teaching the skills, rules, and vocabulary of the game. Finally, it is achieved by teaching sportsmanship. Learning about winning and losing, playing by the rules, and respecting an opponent are just as important as learning football skills.

HYFL and HPR want you to respect the game of football, respect the players, the opponents, the officials, and the parents. Go about your teachings in a thorough, positive, yet humble manner. Players should come out of their experience with the coach as better people and better citizens, not just better football players.

## Roles of the Coach

As a coach in youth sports, one must assume the responsibility of ensuring that each participant has an enjoyable and safe experience learning football. To fulfill these responsibilities, a coach must wear many hats. Listed below are some of the prominent roles a coach may take on.

### Facilitator

- Set up the conditions and environment for learning.
- Give positive feedback (sarcasm and negativity should never occur).
- Encourage players to give each other positive feedback.
- Coaches should be enthusiastic, organized, patient, sincere, and fair.
- Practices should be conducted in a spirit of enjoyment and learning.
- De-emphasize winning and losing and emphasize sportsmanship and fun.

### Positive Role Models

- Work with all players equally.
- Treat each team member with equal regard and respect.
- Demonstrate respect for the opponents, referees, parents, spectators, opposing coaches, and opposing players.
- Show respect and responsibility for the game of football.

### Understand Who You are Coaching

- Children are not defined by chronological age only.
- Each child matures and develops at a different pace.
- Treat each child as a unique individual.
- Recognize that kids participate for assorted reasons. Some may be there because their older siblings play and it is expected in their family that they play. Some may play because they have a parent that is a frustrated athlete and wants to live through their child. Some may play because all their friends do, and they want to be with them. Others may play because they love football.

## Coaches' Responsibilities and Guidelines

Coaches are role models for teaching the fundamentals of the sport, sport skills, tactics, and sportsmanship. Coaches are responsible for their personal conduct and behavior, as well as, the conduct of their players. Coaches are required to follow the HYFL and HPR guidelines always. A coach who does not follow the HYFL and HPR guidelines will need to meet with league administrator to continue to coach. All volunteer coaches shall be "at will coaches" and may be discharged by the HYFL and HPR with or without cause. Only coaches who have been approved by the HPR will be allowed to go on the field of play during practices and games.

Each team will be allowed five (5) coaches on the sideline for games.

Coaches meetings are held in July prior to the season.

### Responsibilities and Guidelines

Coaches participating in Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation youth sports shall:

- Pass a background check based on the policy set by the HPR. These are at no cost to the coaches.
- Each Coach must go through the NAYS football certification program offered by the HYFL/HPR.
- Be reliable, and on time (first to arrive and the last to leave).
- Contact all players to inform them of which team they have been placed on and introduce yourself and welcome them to the team. Coaches, please give parents your contact information.
- Conduct a player/parent meeting at the earliest convenience.
- Be responsible for distributing a game/practice schedule to parents/guardians prior to the beginning of the season.
- Have with you, at all practices and games, the Emergency Contact Information forms for each child on the team.
- Be responsible for making sure first aid kits are at every practice and game. HPR will provide these kits.
- Be responsible for ensuring players' parents/guardians are informed of changes to the game or practice schedule. This includes cancellations the day of the game or practice.
- Ensure each player receives playing time in games according to the HYFL and HPR policy on playing time. Playing time in the program is a mandatory goal.
- Have all players and coaches shake hands after the completion of the game.
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner always, and shall refrain from directing abusive or sarcastic language or gestures towards officials, other coaches, or players.
- Serve as a role model for players and spectators.

- Ensure that HYFL and HPR equipment is accounted for, and maintained in usable condition and returned promptly at the end of the season.
- Leave the facilities in the same, or better condition than they were when the team arrived.

### Coaches Daily Check List and Responsibilities

- Inform them of upcoming practices and what the expectations will be.
- Have a week-long practice plan in place and stick to the schedule.
- Keep practices moving. Keep players attention on task.
- Give each player a practice schedule and game schedule.
- Conduct safe and productive practices.
- Make sure all players are picked up after practices and games prior to leaving the field.
- Coaches are responsible for returning all practice equipment issued to them at the end of the season.
- Football coaches are expected to provide a positive and enriching atmosphere for our players.
- All coaches will make every effort to correct any behavior issues on the field. However, if there are issues a coach cannot resolve, they will seek parental involvement to resolve the situation or conflict. If that does not take care of the issue, a meeting may be scheduled with league administrator.
- Coaches will promote, encourage, and teach their players to the best of their ability in all aspects of football while working together as a team.
- Head Coaches will make sure that each player gets their required number of plays each game. Additional playing time is encouraged.

### Youth Sports Player Development Levels

#### Age Group Characteristics

Ages 7-9:

This is the stage where players begin to understand the concept of passing to a teammate.

From a physical standpoint they still lack a sense of pace and tend to exert themselves hard and then drop. They are now starting to develop some physical confidence in themselves and they are still into running, climbing, rolling and jumping.

From a mental perspective they feel if they tried hard then they performed well (regardless of the activity's outcome). They are beginning to show a limited ability to tend to more than one task at a time.

From a social perspective they have a great need for approval from adults and like to show off individual skills. Negative comments carry a great weight. Their teammates start to emerge and they will start to move towards small groups. They want everyone to like them at this age. You should be positive with everything that you do.

Ages 10-12:

Children at this age are on the edge of childhood and adolescence. It can present a multitude of problems, but also an abundance of potential.

From a physical standpoint strength and power become a major factor in their performance. Their muscles mature and they realize how much more they can do on the field. Their coordination significantly improves and it shows up in the execution of the child's technical ability.

From a mental perspective they can sequence thoughts and perform complex tasks. A coach can expect his players to understand the game and use teammates to solve problems. They are usually eager to learn.

From a social perspective whether a child enters puberty early or late is significant. The manner which they feel about themselves can determine how they relate to their teammates. Sometimes popularity influences self-esteem.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

A successful season depends on the coaches, parents, and league administration working together.

When you support the HYFL, you are considered an ambassador to our community.

Profanity or any threatening, abusive language towards the coaches, parents, teammates, or officials will NOT be tolerated.

Use of alcohol or illegal drugs will NOT be tolerated.

Any violation of the rules above may constitute banishment from HYFL games and practices for the remainder of the season.

A parent, guardian, or designated responsible adult must be present for all practices and games.

Parents are expected to allow their coaches to coach. Please do not interfere with the instructional time of practice or at a game.

Parents are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship on and off the field, during practice and games.

If parents have issues concerning their child, it needs to be addressed with the Head Coach before or after practice. Please do not attempt to contact a coach during practice.

Parent are expected to have their child ready to practice at the specified practice times.

Parents are expected to have their child at their game at least 45 mins prior to the scheduled game time or the time provided by the Head Coach.

Parents, siblings, grandparents, family members, and guests must adhere to the Youth Sports Parent Code of Conduct (see page 14) as set forth by the HYFL/HPR. A violation of the Code of Conduct may result in suspension for the HYFL sanctioned activities.

Use of tobacco products is not allowed is the designated football practice/game areas.

Parents are not allowed on the practice/game fields. Certified coaching staff only.

### **League Levels**

#### **Team requirements**

To be placed on a team in the HYFL; a player must attend Harrisonburg City Schools or live in the City of Harrisonburg.

#### **Pee Wee League Football**

Ages 7-9 years as of August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

A physical is required to participate in this league.

Weight restriction of 125 lbs. or less at the time of the physical. Any player above the weight limit may have the option of moving up to the Junior Level after signing a Request for Age Exception Form (see League Administrator for this document).

Players may not advance the football or line up in the backfield if they weigh over 90 lbs. Orange stripes will be placed on the helmet of the players over 90 lbs. This identifying mark will help the officials know who is eligible to carry the football.

### Junior League Football

Ages 10-12 years as of August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

A physical is required to participate in this league.

Weight restriction of 160 lbs. or less at the time of the physical.

Players may not advance the football or line up in the backfield if they weigh over 125 lbs. Orange stripes will be placed on the helmet of the players over 125 lbs. This identifying mark will help officials know who is eligible to carry the football.

### Registration

Football registration for all levels will start the last week of May. Deadline for all football registrations will be August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Registration forms will be delivered to Harrisonburg City Schools by the third week of May. You may also pick up forms at the CFG/CAC, Simms Center, or at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/football](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/football). There is no fee to participate in the HYFL.

### Registration Requirements

- Registration form filled out properly with a parent or guardian signature.
- Parent Code of Conduct initialed and signed.
- Physical forms filled out and signed by a physician.

### HYFL/HPR Provide:

- Helmet
- Shoulder pads
- Pants
- Pads for pants
- Mouthpiece
- Game jerseys
- Helmet decals
- Game schedules

Each player must have these items to participate. These items will be turned in after the last game played by each team.

### Physicals

Each tackle football player is required to have a physical examination to receive equipment. All physicals must be documented on the HYFL physical form (see page 20). This form must be filled out by your physician and signed. The physical form will be gathered during registration and kept on file for the season. HYFL physical forms are available online at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/football](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/football).

### Team Pictures

Each team will be responsible for scheduling their own team pictures. HPR will not be involved in this process.

## **Season Information**

### Evaluation and Draft

Skills evaluation and draft will take place for new players entering the Junior Football League. This will take place the second Wednesday in August. Each player will be drafted onto a team. The purpose is to allow coaches the chance to look at each player's skill level then draft accordingly in an attempt to create an even playing field across the league. Once the teams are drafted, each player will be contacted by the head coach of the team. Returning Junior League players will return to the team they played on the previous year.

Returning Pee Wee League players will return to the team they played on the previous year. New Pee Wee League players will be placed on teams by the league administrator. Once your child is placed on a team, the coach will contact you with more information on practice times, dates, and locations.

### Practice

Football practices start on the last Monday in August. The first week of practices are conducted in helmets, shorts, t-shirts, and football shoes. Players must practice 5 days in shorts prior to practicing in full pads. Practices will be no more than 10 hours per week prior to season beginning. Once the season begins, practices will be limited to 8 hours per week. The days of the week for practices will be up to individual coaches.

### Practice Locations

Pee Wee League practices will be held at 4 locations inside Purcell Park.

Junior League Football practices will be held at 3 locations on the Ramblewood Athletic Fields.

Practices are not optional. Timely and regular attendance at practice is crucial to the success of the player's team and may have a direct influence on playing time.

During practices, players will be allowed to hydrate as needed. Coaches please be aware of the hot temperatures while practicing. Extreme temperatures should be a reason for cancellation of practices.

### **League Rules**

The HYFL By-laws may be found at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/football](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/football). The Leagues will operate under VHSL rules during play. HYFL will use VHSL certified officials for each game.

Games will be played on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Pee Wee League games will be played at 6:00 pm, and Junior League games will begin at approximately 7:15pm.

Pee Wee League games will have one coach from each team on the field during play. Coaches must remain behind the safeties on defense and the backfield on offense once the play begins. Coaches are not allowed to move players before the ball is snapped. Coaches shall refrain from excessive celebration, and should attempt to be a quiet bystander.

#### **Time:**

- Pee Wee League: 6-minute quarters.
- Junior League: 7-minute quarters.
- Halftime will be 5 minutes.

#### **Rules at the Football Field**

- Please stay behind all barriers and off the playing field.
- Please use trash receptacles placed around the park.
- Please show good sportsmanship both on and off the field.
- Smoking is prohibited around practices and games. The designated smoking area will be located behind the fence located near the concession stand and access road to the field.

#### **Playing Requirements**

Each player must play a minimum of 8 plays per game, either on offense or defense. Special teams will not count towards playing time.

The HYFL is an instructional league designed to give all kids of all abilities playing time to learn and develop their football skills.

Home team (team located on the sideline closest to the creek) will be responsible for supplying the volunteer chain crew for the game.

### Injuries

All injuries are to be reported to the league administrator of the HPR. Accident report forms are to be filled out and submitted for each incident.

Please review the HPR Youth Sports League Concussion Protocol (see page 15) and follow accordingly.

### **Important Dates to Remember**

May 28	Football Registration Opens	
July 11	Football Coaches Meeting	6:00pm (CAC)
Aug 15	Junior League Skills Eval. and Draft	5:45pm (Purcell Park)
Aug 20-24	Football Equipment Handout	3:00pm-6:00pm (Hillandale Park Shelter 12)
Aug 27-30	Football Equipment Handout	3:00pm-6:00pm (Hillandale Park Shelter 12)
Aug 27	Football Practice Begins	All Locations
Aug 31	Deadline for Football Registration	
Sept 18	Regular Season Begins	Purcell Park
Oct 23	Awards Night for Junior League	Purcell Park
Oct 23&25	Equipment Collection	Purcell Park

# Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Youth Sports Parent Code of Conduct

## Preamble

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

*I therefore agree:*

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
2. I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, **NOT ADULTS**. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
4. I will learn and abide by the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
5. I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, spectators at every game, practice, or sporting event.
6. I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language or gestures. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
7. I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
9. I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
10. I will teach my child that doing one’s best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner everytime.
12. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a competition. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
13. I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning. I will also de-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
14. I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
16. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during the games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team. ***Initial:*** \_\_\_\_\_
18. By signing this document, I commit to abide by the above guidelines. If I cannot abide by the above guidelines I will be asked to vacate the athletic program venue. If my actions continue, a trespass notice may be issued.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Player’s Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Additional) Player’s Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Player’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Additional) Player’s Signature



## Youth Sports League Concussion Protocol

### 1. Did a Concussion Occur?

- a. Evaluate the player and note if any of the following symptoms are present:
  - i. Headache
  - ii. Nausea or Vomiting
  - iii. Dazed or Confused
  - iv. Balance Problems or Dizziness
  - v. Sensitivity to Light
  - vi. Sensitivity to Noise
  - vii. Abnormal Physical and/or Mental Behavior
  - viii. Cannot Recall Incident that Caused Injury
- b. Emergency treatment needed?
  - i. Loss of Consciousness
  - ii. Spine or Neck Injury
  - iii. Behavior Patterns Change Drastically

### 2. Proceed to Protocol

- a. Remove the athlete from play. After evaluating a possible concussion based on the symptoms above, document any symptoms observed on the Suspected Concussion Report. When in doubt, sit them out.
- b. Report your suspicion of concussion to trainer or league official immediately.
- c. Ensure that parent/guardian understands that the athlete should be evaluated by an appropriate health care professional as soon as possible. Do not attempt to diagnose the severity yourself.
- d. Communicate with the parent/guardian on the length of recovery time and when the athlete is permitted to return to play, based on physician's permission. *(A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has fully recovered from the first concussion can slow recovery and increase the likelihood of having long-term issues).*

### 3. A Release Letter or Note from Physician Must be Presented to League Official Prior to Return to Play.



## Youth Sports League Suspected Concussion Report

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

Player's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

### Signs and/or Symptoms

#### **Signs Observed by Coaching Staff Member**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

#### **Reported by Athlete**

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

Description of How Injury Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Report Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: Your child has been temporarily removed from all sports activities provided by the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Department due to the possibility of a concussion. Based upon the evaluation of your child, using recommended policies and procedures for recognition of potential concussions, your child will not be allowed to return to any sports activities provided by the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation until a professional physician has provided clearance. It is recommended that your child is evaluated by a healthcare professional as soon as possible. Please bring a copy of this form to the evaluation.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation – 305 South Dogwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 – (540)-433-2474



## Player/Participant Expectations

### Responsibilities

Participation in youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation to provide quality athletic programs to ensure that a child's experience with sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen. The Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

1. Players will listen to their coaches and be respectful of their elders.
2. Players will take care of the facilities, equipment, and uniforms, which they are given for participation.
3. Players will avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
4. Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.
5. Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
6. Players will participate for the love of the game and social interaction with peers.

### Players Code of Ethics

Players are expected to conduct themselves in a positive manner regarding their youth sports experience and accept responsibility for their participation by following the Players Code of Ethics:

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
2. I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
3. I will expect to receive a fair and just amount of playing time.
4. I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
5. I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
6. I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
7. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sporting events.
8. I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.
9. I will do my very best in school.
10. I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.



## Volunteer Coach Information

### Background Screenings

Every coach will be subject to a background screening before being allowed to coach in any Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Athletics Program.

### Coaches Job Description

Any coach that works under the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation, regardless if paid or volunteer, is considered an associate of the City. With this in mind, job descriptions have been provided for the Youth Sports Coach volunteer position.

Title: Youth Sports Coach

Service Area: City of Harrisonburg

Purpose: Provide instruction, leadership and supervision to children ages 5-12 in a variety of sports including soccer, baseball, softball, football, basketball and cheerleading.

Duties: Plan, organize and supervise practice sessions; assist coordinator with planning, organizing, distributing and collecting uniforms and equipment; organize and supervise game situations; communicate information with parents regarding their child's athletic experience and behavior; work closely with Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Department staff to ensure all department and sport specific rules and policies are being observed; performs related tasks as required.

Qualifications: Ability to work well with children of various ages; basic knowledge of the sport or activity to which they are assigned; willingness to learn and follow department rules and guidelines regarding youth sports; prior coaching experience helpful but not required; must pass a background check.

Time Commitment: 6-10 hours per week depending on practice and game schedules; as a general rule, practices are held Monday-Saturday with limits on the number of practices per week set in each sport; 1-2 games per week; 2 games in one week is rare but possible.

Supervisor: League Administrator from the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation.

## Additional Coaching Expectations

1. No coach shall leave practice until all players have been picked-up by a parent or guardian.
2. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He or she should be sensitive to the children's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He or she should be dedicated to serving children and understand that youth sports provide physical and emotional growth for participants. Remember, youth sports are for the children.
3. A coach needs to realize that he or she is a teacher, not a drill sergeant. He or 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 child transforms into the best interests of the game.
4. The safety and welfare of the children never can be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
5. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push children beyond limits in regard to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the youth sports experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is meant to be fun.
6. A coach should care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth sports program is a means to an end, not an end to itself.
7. A coach should encourage his players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
8. A coach needs to remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect the participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. He or she never should circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his or her opponents' team at risk should not be involved with children.
9. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He or she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
10. 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.
11. A coach can measure success by the respect he or she gets from the players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.
12. A coach must always Be Early, Be Prepared and Make It Fun! It is your leadership as a coach that children will remember over the games themselves.
13. Coaches are required to keep emergency phone numbers and medical information on their players at all times.

## NYSCA Coaches Certification

The National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) is a membership organization and the most widely used volunteer coach training program in the nation. The NYSCA volunteer coach training program is designed to sensitize volunteer coaches to their responsibilities and hold them accountable to a strict Code of Conduct defined by the NYSCA Coaches Code of Ethics Pledge. In order to complete the program, coaches must read and agree to this code of ethics pledge. This certification is required for all coaches. Certifications are available online at [www.nays.org](http://www.nays.org). Coaches' certifications are active for twelve months from the time the coach views the videos, pays their \$20 membership fee and receives a certification card. After 12 months, a coach only has to update their membership by submitting the \$20 renewal fee. If a coach has interest in becoming NYSCA certified an additional sport, they need only to view the additional sport specific video.



**Harrisonburg Youth Football League**

**Physician's Certificate Form**

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

The person listed above is physically able , or is physically unable  to participate in Harrisonburg City Youth Football programs.

Physician's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parental Permission Form**

Player's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

New/Returning Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Physical Exam Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_