



Dear Panther Parents:

We wanted to take this opportunity to put in writing our coaching philosophy and goals for your child and the team this season. Youth football can be an exciting and fun opportunity for your child to learn new skills, make new friends, and have fun. As fun as it can be for your child, different expectations from the coach, parent(s), and player can take away from that positive experience in a number of ways. As you read through this document please make sure that the philosophy fits with your expectations of what you want for your child and how you believe the team should be run. If not, this is your opportunity to let us know.

## **Coaching Philosophy**

1. We believe that kids gain confidence and a love for the game through positive feedback from parents, coaches, and other players. Skill level develops at different rates for kids, but effort and having fun can always be achieved. We try to always provide positive feedback for effort.
2. We think it's important that a coach takes more than a casual interest in the players. We will strive to talk with all the players 1 on 1 at some point during the practices and games. We may not be successful getting to every player each day, but want them to know that we are interested in what they have to say and more importantly, want them to know that their coaches likes him/her as a person.
3. We believe in trying to make practices as fun and entertaining for the kids as possible, while providing the practice and instruction that they need to improve. I've found that kids expect and respond to well-structured and organized practices. Attention span is often limited with this age group, so I will strive to keep them moving, focused and active.
4. Teamwork and developing friendships is an important part of any team sport. We always try to tell the kids how important it is for them to support each other and to always be positive towards their teammates.
5. Competition is an important element of any sport and as kids grow they naturally become more competitive. We don't talk to the kids about "needing to win a game" or "how important it is that we win". Our role and that of the parents is helping the kids develop the ability to deal with competition in a healthy way. Effort and attitude is the focus. If we can achieve that, then chances are we'll win the number of games that we are capable of winning.
6. We will work on teaching fundamentals and skills during practice, but believe the game is their time. We will give instruction during the game if it will help with performance during the game, but in general we try letting them enjoy the game. We don't think any of the kids want to be told what they did wrong during the game. Hopefully, as parents you will do the same. At this age, one missed block or tackle can ruin the game for some kids. If your child misses a block or tackle, tell them how proud you were of the effort they gave. Strive to make them feel good about their contribution. Our goal is to have every child feel that they played a great game that day.

## Objectives

With this age group, there are 5 primary coaching objectives which are equally important.

1. Help your child develop the skills necessary to be successful at this level and to prepare them for next season.
2. To have fun and have the kids develop a love for the game.
3. Learn about the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
4. Give positive reinforcement based on effort rather than results.
5. Provide a safe and healthy environment for all the kids on the team.

## Playing Time and Positions

For this age group there is a drastic difference in skill level among the kids. We want to give them an opportunity to play a number of positions and will make sure each player gets a chance each game to play for a couple of downs. Our goal is to have every player participate during regular game time. We will not have a player play a position that we don't feel he has the ability to play at that position at that time. This really is a safety issue as much as anything. Plus, we want to put kids in positions where they have the best chance of being successful. That doesn't mean they won't have the ability by the end of the season and will always work with the kids at those positions during practice if they are interested.

## Academics

Football is a Privilege and School is Priority. Should at any time a player's grades become an issue, and they need to miss practice or a game to study please let me know. Based on what you think is best for your child, playing time might have some consequences.

## Team Rules and Discipline

We have a few team rules that will be explained through out the first days of practice. As the season goes on and situations arise, new rules will be put in effect. Failure to follow the rules could result in loss of play time in a game.

## Player Expectations

1. Have fun and always give your best effort.
2. We expect players to always show respect for the coaches, parents, and other players on the team both on and off the field.
3. Spend time outside of practice playing football or just playing catch.

## Parent Expectations

1. Please try to get your player to practice and games on time. This can be difficult at times and impossible at other times, but it's really hard to conduct practice or get ready for a game when players continually show up late. If you know they will be late or won't be able to make it to a practice or game, please let me know in advance if possible.

2. Help out with team volunteer opportunities. We have a number of items that require parent help.
3. Get involved in playing football with your child. This may be helping out with at practice or playing catch in the yard on days we don't practice. Kids love it when their parents get involved. Repetition is also crucial for skill improvement. There simply isn't enough organized practice time for the kids. They need to work on the skills they learn at practice at home also.
4. Please encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game and practice. Please cheer for your child during games, but try to keep from yelling instructions to them. Remember this is their opportunity to enjoy playing in the game and show you what they have learned. They love to make their parents proud and much of the fun is lost if their Mom or Dad is always yelling instructions.
5. Please let us know if you have a problem with anything we have done or something that is happening. Same holds true if your child isn't happy about something. We want to know if there is a problem right away. With this age group, very small things can cause a child to be upset. These problems can be fixed very easily if we know about them.
6. Safety is a primary concern for. Unfortunately, we can't watch every child every second. If you see any situation that you believe is a safety concern, please step in and help. Make sure you follow up with us so we know what has happened.

We are looking forward to a fun and rewarding season. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Panther