

Zero Tolerance Policy / Parent Code of Conduct

Harrisburg Parks and Recreation will follow a “Zero Tolerance” policy regarding inappropriate behavior. This policy will encompass all interactions during the course of the pre-season, regular season, and post-season which shall include but not be limited to the following: practices, games, opening day ceremonies, tournaments and any other league sponsored event(s). By registering your child with the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation you are agreeing to abide by this policy.

Our sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren far too often watch many of us forget the real reason for being involved in youth sports. In the Department’s and Advisory Board’s opinion, this is reason for a “Zero Tolerance” policy. We must promote fair play, good sportsmanship and teach our children how to play the game. We feel it is everyone’s responsibility to teach the players that there is more to the game than winning or losing and the final score. The entire Parks and Recreation Staff takes this responsibility seriously, and the following statements will represent our position and, more importantly, constitute our “Zero Tolerance” policy from this point forward.

1. All persons involved with Harrisburg Parks and Recreation including parents/guardians, players, coaches/coordinators, staff, and umpires/officials shall abide by the Zero Tolerance Policy and all rules governing the leagues.
2. It is the duty of all coordinators/coaches to control their players and spectators at all times.
3. Coaches and parents should teach their players to respect the dignity of the game, the authority of its officials, the value of the opponent, and the institutions they represent.
4. Coaches shall confine their discussions with the opposing team and game officials to interpretation of the rules and NOT challenge an umpire’s/official’s judgment call. A judgment call is considered ball/strike, safe/out, fair/foul etc.
5. Cursing, obscene or threatening gestures or language, heckling, instigating or harassment of any kind, malicious or personal remarks between opponents, players, spectators or officials on or off the field will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action. Anyone in violation will be immediately removed from the field or field area and forbidden to return until disciplinary action(s)/decision(s) have been made including but not limited to temporary, season, or permanent suspension.
6. Improper use of or deliberate damage to the equipment or property by anyone will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action.
7. Officers, coordinators/coaches, umpires/officials and all staff are responsible for enforcing the rules and regulations on and off the playing field.
8. Telephone/Verbal/Email/Social Media/In-person assaults, harassment and/or threats are strictly forbidden. Coaches/Parents with sensitive questions, coaching/player problems, or moral/ethical issues that may require coordinator or staff intervention, will not email, call, text, Facebook, or Tweet team parents, or coaches. Violation of this policy will result in immediate disciplinary action.

9. 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:

- * I will not force my child to participate in sports
- * I will inform the Parks and Recreation staff and coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or others
- * I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- * My child and I will treat other participants, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- * I will encourage good sportsmanship through my actions by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every practice, game, or other youth sports event.
- * I will place the emotional and physical well-being of the children ahead of any personal desire to win.
- * 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.
- * I will remember that my child is playing recreational sports for his/her enjoyment, not mine.
- * I will support the volunteer coaches and game officials that are working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- * I will remember that all Parks & Recreation coaches are volunteers. They have graciously given of their time for the development of my child, the program, and the sport.
- * I will help the coaches and my child by striving to make sure that they are on time, picked up promptly, and are properly equipped for all practices and games.
- * I will bring problems to the attention of the coaches in private after practices or games. Arguing with the coaches in front of the players or other spectators is detrimental to getting a successful resolution. If problems with coaches cannot be resolved, I will speak to the appropriate Parks & Recreation staff member about the problem.
- * I will show my appreciation for a good play, no matter who makes it, remembering that children learn best by example.
- * I will remember that parents should be cheerleaders. I will allow the coach to coach, the officials to officiate and, most of all, the children to play the game.
- * 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 Parks and Recreation sponsored events.

* I will respect the property and equipment used at any Harrisburg Parks and Recreation facility.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include but is not limited to the following:

*Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or head of league organization.

*Written warning

*Parental game suspension with written documentation of said offense kept on file by organizations involved.

*Parental Season Suspension

10. Any and all questions, concerns or reports regarding a disciplinary problem(s) and or action(s) can be directed to Harrisburg Parks and Recreation athletic staff, assistant director, or director by email at mkirby@harrisburgnc.org; ekegley@harrisburgnc.org; smarble@harrisburgnc.org; jspina@harrisburgnc.org. All information and concerns are strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than the parties involved.