

# Youth Sports **BASKETBALL LEAGUES**

*Mighty Mites and Youth Basketball League*



**Bellevue Parks &  
Community Services**



# PARENT LETTER

Welcome to the City of Bellevue Parks & Community Services Youth Basketball Leagues. We are pleased to bring you a quality program with a non-competitive atmosphere. Our goal this season is to take a leadership role in promoting physical fitness and participation through athletics for all youth and parents in Bellevue and neighboring cities.

We must stress the importance of the basic philosophy of this program – **to stimulate the participation of all children by expanding the opportunities for young people to pursue an active and healthy lifestyle.** To achieve the end result, a progression will be used in which playing rules, facilities and equipment are modified or scaled down to fit the needs of individual participant age groups. This program is not to be construed as an all-star program for chosen individuals.

Learning, participation, enjoyment, and physical exercise are the main elements of this program. At all times we shall strive to maintain the conduct of this program at a very basic level for these children. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to stress participation through our Parks & Community Services Department.

Parents are encouraged to attend activities and participate by supporting coaching staff and children, and also by volunteering your time to coach a team.

Through proper guidance and assistance, it is our firm belief and hope that we may positively shape the direction of the future of these children. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of youth throughout the Eastside.

We applaud your commitment to this program and look forward to working with you and your child.

## STEVE GONZALES

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# PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I will enjoy my child's opportunity to experience the benefits of sport.

- I will trust in my child's ability to have fun as well as to perform and achieve excellence on his/her own.
- I will help my child to learn the right lessons from winning and losing and from individual accomplishments and mistakes.
- I will respect my child's teammates and fellow parents as well as the players, parents and coaches from opposing teams.
- I will give only encouragement and applaud only positive accomplishments whether for my child, his/her teammates, their opponents, coaches or staff

I will respect my child's volunteer coach and support his/her efforts.

- I will not instruct from the sidelines unless asked to by the coach.
- I will insure that my child will attend all games and practices possible and, when not possible, I agree to inform the coach in advance.
- I will respect all facilities made available so my child can play games and practice his/her sport.
- I will respect any equipment or uniform that may be loaned to my child so that he/she can participate.

I will respect the volunteer coaches and staff and their authority during games.

I will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behavior or use foul language.

I will be responsible to report to the Youth Sports Coordinator any perceived misconduct by coach, player, parent or official so it can be dealt with in the appropriate manner.

# WHAT TO DO ON YOUR FIRST DAY

- Check in at Coordinators table
- Sign-in your child

## No Child is to Check in Alone Regardless of Age!

- Pick up any information you may need from Coordinator table (packets and/or schedules)
- Youth Sports Staff will help you find your practice location
- Introduce yourself to the children and parents
- Once checked in, HAVE A BLAST coaching our sports stars!



# IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

## Mighty Mites and Youth Basketball Leagues

- **PRACTICES** will begin the week of March 12 (*see practice schedule*)
- **GAMES** will begin the week of March 26 (*see practice schedule*)
- **PICTURE DAY**  
Mighty Mites – TBD  
Youth – TBD

**\* Please note that practices and games are one hour in duration.**  
*Please pay close attention to your schedule as game times and dates may vary though out the season. Schedules are subject to change at any time.*

- **No games will be held the week of April 9 due to Spring Break**
- Team shirts will be issued on your child's first game day
- Bellevue Parks & Community Services will provide award certificates to each participant at the end of the season
- Healthy snacks are encouraged. If the decision to purchase healthy snacks is made by the team, please be advised that this is the responsibility of the coach/parents and not the City of Bellevue.
- **Water bottles only! All snacks must be eaten after the game!**  
**No exceptions!**



# NON-COMPETITIVE RULES OF THE GAME

- 4 on 4 – Mighty Mites League
- 5 on 5 – Youth League
- Each game will consist of two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time
- Each coach will play **all players** in attendance as equally as possible
- Every 5 minutes, an official time out will be called to make substitutions. Clock will stop for substitutions and quick match up of players made by the coaches at the half court line.
- All fouls will result in the team fouled getting the ball out of bounds, nearest where the foul occurred.  
**NO FREE THROWS!**
- Teams will play **man-to man defense only!** Double-teaming is not allowed at this level of play. Players should match-up with a player on the other team with a matching colored wristband
- Player wristbands will be used to identify player match-ups (players must guard the player with the same color wristband). Prior to the start of the game, coaches will assign each of the players a colored wrist band. Coaches and referees will help players from the two teams match up at the half court line prior to the start of the clock.
- **Stealing of the ball is not allowed unless a pass is being made.** Most often, stealing off the dribble is a reaching foul. We would like to encourage good defensive position and the opportunity for the kids to work on good offensive dribbling.
- Defensive team must allow the ball to **completely cross the half-court line** before defensive pressure starts. No full court pressing allowed. Once a player gains control of the ball in the backcourt, that team must be allowed to move the ball past the half-court line.
- **TENNIS SHOES ARE REQUIRED!** No boots or sandals will be allowed!
- **Violations (traveling, double dribble, etc.) will be called at the discretion of the referees.** All rules and infractions shall be briefly explained to the player/team. It is our intent that coaches teach the players the rules of the game, but keep the game flowing
- Inappropriate behavior (i.e. put-downs, excessive pushing or pulling and foul language) will **NOT BE TOLERATED.** The child will have to sit out for 3 minutes or until the coach feels the child is ready to return to the game and the parent's will be notified if behavior occurs
- We do **NOT** record wins or losses
- Do not record final score and if asked, try to be as discrete as possible
- Each player and coach shall shake hands after each game

- If the decision to purchase trophies is made by the team, please be advised that this is the responsibility of the coach/parents and not the City of Bellevue.

***Parents, non-playing players, and spectators are there to enjoy and encourage. Please do not criticize the play of the children, coaching or refs!***

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

- In the event of inclement weather, Bellevue Parks & Community Services Department will make every effort to clearly communicate the status of all facilities and programs to clients.
- If the Bellevue School District is closed due to a weather event, all programs and facilities will be cancelled for the entire day.
- If the Bellevue School District is on a delayed schedule, please contact the recreation office at 425-452-6885 for an updated status report.

## **HEALTHY SNACKS SUGGESTION LIST**

- Fruits
- Pretzels
- Animal crackers
- Graham crackers
- Fruit grain bars
- Trail mix
- Frozen fruit bars
- Fat free popcorn
- Carrot sticks
- Celery sticks



# HEALTHY BEVERAGE SUGGESTION LIST

- Water
- 100% Fruit Juices with natural sugar
- Gatorade/PowerAde

## BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS

### Triple Threat

- From this position, child can...
  - Dribble
  - Pass
  - Shoot
- Feet should be shoulder width apart
- One foot slightly in front of the other (usually the child's dominant foot)
- Knees bent
- Ball held tightly and a little to the side, just below chest height
- Always teach triple threat first, when teaching offense

### When Dribbling, child should...

- Try and keep knees slightly bent
- Keep back straight
- Try and keep head up
- Bounce ball with finger tips NOT palm of hand
- Keep the ball close and under control

### When Passing, child should...

- Chest Pass
  - Slightly bend knees
  - Keep back straight
  - Use both hands to push the ball from his or her chest to the other player's chest in the air
  - Child catching the ball should have hands out in front ready to catch the pass



- Bounce Pass
  - ⦿ Slightly bend knees
  - ⦿ Keep back straight
  - ⦿ Use both hands to push ball out in front of them and bounce ball a little over half way to the other person
  - ⦿ Child catching the ball should have hands out in front ready to catch the pass

### When Shooting, child should...

- Bend knees
- Keep back straight
- Hold basketball with one hand placed behind the ball and one hand placed to the side/front of the ball
- Try and keep elbows at 90 degree angle
- Use legs to jump in order to give more power to the shot
- Flick wrist when releasing the ball to create spin (can explain this by using the “reaching into the cookie jar” analogy)

### When Shooting a Lay-Up, child should...

- Lift same leg as the hand they are going up with, so on the right side of the hoop the right hand should be used and the right leg should be lifted and vice versa on the left side of the hoop.
- Aim for the upper corner of the box on the backboard of whichever side they are shooting from.

## HELPFUL BASKETBALL DRILLS

The following drills cover basic fundamentals of basketball. Alter each one dependent upon age and skill level of your players. It is important that you come to each practice with an idea of what drills you are going to do to minimize the downtime and have an effective practice. Remember, we only have two practices before games, so being prepared and taking advantage of that time is crucial.

**Triple Threat Drill:** Have kids on end line in triple threat stance, on sound of whistle kids take 2 dribbles, jump stop and get into triple threat stance (go up and down the floor two times). Then go up and down, but after they come to a “jump stop” they must then pivot all the way around 360 degrees.

**Partner Passing:** Partner players up and have them stand about 5-10 feet away from each other (depending on age). Have children pass the ball back and forth using first the chest pass and then bounce pass. Make sure they are using the proper form. Turn it into a race by making them complete a certain amount of good passes and then sit down when complete.

**Number Dribbling:** Have children stand on baseline and begin dribbling the ball. Hold up your hand with a number and have the children yell out the number you're holding up. Have them continue dribbling and repeat with a different number. You can have them start moving around while dribbling and do the same. This will help them in keeping their eyes up when dribbling.

**Knock Out:** A dribbling game where each kid has a ball and attempts to knock the ball away from the other kids while trying to maintain his/her own dribble. Have all players dribble inside the three-point line or even inside the key. The less players, the smaller the space should be.

**King of the Circle:** Place two players who are both dribbling basketballs in the center circle at mid court. Both players have to keep dribbling the ball while attempting to steal their opponent's ball. To make it even more interesting, blow a whistle every 10 or 15 seconds and have the players change the hand they are dribbling with.

**Shooting Drill:** On coach's whistle, kids must run around gym, make a shot at each basket and sit in the center circle (kids are racing against each other in this drill).

**Spot Shooting:** Set up different "hot spots" around the basket. Have children lined up in a single file line behind the top of the three point line. First person in line should dribble to the first designated "hot spot", jump stop, and shoot the ball. Child then gets his or her rebound, dribbles to the end of the line and next child goes. Continue this for as long as you choose and then switch "hot spots". Make sure when they are closer to the hoop that you encourage them to use the backboard.

**Lay-Up Drill:** Kids begin beneath basket. They dribble to the foul line, jump stop, pivot and dribble in for a lay-up. Have each player make try to make five shots.

**Side-to-Side Slide:** Set up two single file lines, one to the right of the free-throw line, the other to the left. the first player in line assumes the defensive position. The next player dribbles down the court in a zig-zag – three dribbles to the right using the right hand, three dribbles to the left using the crossover to go from the right hand to the left hand and so on down the court. The defensive player slides from side to side staying in front of the dribbler.

**Red Light – Green Light:** Have a group of kids start at one baseline, don't bunch them too closely together. Each child in the group has a ball. When the facilitator shouts green light the children dribble forward, blue and they dribble left, yellow they dribble right, and of course red they stop. All during this youth basketball drill the children keep dribbling.

## **MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE**

Youth Sports is dedicated to making each child's experience one that he or she will remember, thus it is our goal to create an atmosphere which each child will want to revisit week after week. We expect our coaches to possess the qualities which will provide for a positive and energetic atmosphere with each new day. Following is a list of guidelines which can be helpful in maintaining such an environment.

- **Positive Learning Environment:** Children must be provided with a positive, non-threatening, learning environment in which they receive a great deal of encouragement.

- **Children are Unique:** Understand that all children are unique and learn in different ways and at different rates.
- **Maximum Involvement:** Each child needs many practice trials and must be maximally involved in practicing various tasks. Thus, it is important to perform drills which all of the children can be involved in the entire time. (Try to avoid drills which children wait in line for long periods of time).



- **Importance of Success:** The child should experience high rates of success, thus if some drills appear to be too difficult they may need to be modified.
- **Keep it Simple:** Keep instruction simple, break it down and make it fun for them.
- **Complete Tasks:** All children should complete one task successfully before moving on to the next activity.
- **Review Tasks:** Children will benefit from reviewing previously completed tasks, so discuss with them after each drill the importance of the exercise.

## WORKING WITH HARD TO REACH CHILDREN

Youth Sports urges coaches to work with all children at the same level and not to play “favorites”. There are children in our program which may be more difficult to coach than others, and sometimes they are the ones in most need of encouragement. Following are some ways to work with such “hard-to-reach” children.

- **Be truthful and sincere:** Tell them why you are reaching out to them and why you care.
- **Think about why some kids are hard to reach:** Challenge yourself to step outside your comfort zone and try to understand his or her situation, reach out.
- **Once you successfully reach out, ask other children to do the same:** Create an atmosphere which all the children can work together as a team and feel a sense of belonging.
- **Be authentic:** Be yourself. If you’re not yourself they may sense something is wrong and not trust you.
- **Always make time:** When they have a question or concern create the time to talk them through things.
- **Focus on drawing out their strengths:** Rather than changing what you think is wrong with them, accept them for who they are and notice their strengths.
- **Learn more about them:** Find out about other activities they are involved in and encourage those as well.
- **Give them the opportunities to be a leader:** Make them feel special and needed.

# TEAM BUILDING IDEAS

Youth Sports is not only dedicated to teaching children about game rules and strategies, but life lessons as well. Our coaches can help kids develop confidence, communication skills, self-esteem, resolve conflicts peacefully, and feel a sense of belonging. Following are some ideas to help you in working toward these goals.

- **Learn the names of all the players on your team.** Call them by their name and make a point to talk to each child at every practice or game.
- **Create and maintain a positive atmosphere.** Winning is not everything, make sure you are creating a fun and exciting atmosphere for them.
- **Focus on helping players get better, not to be the best.** It will reduce their fear of failure and give them permission to try new things and stretch their skills.
- **Know that too highly competitive sports are stressful.** Continually trying to be the best results in unhealthy outcomes, thus do not push them too hard, just have FUN!
- **Care about your team's lives outside the sport.** Show them they are important people as well as team members.
- **Adapt your teaching style and language to the player's age level.** You may have to change your terminology, some children do not understand all sports terms so speak to them in ways which they will understand.
- **Set goals both for individuals and the team.** Include everyone in setting these goals.
- **Catch kids doing things right.** Be quick to praise a player's efforts. The best feedback is immediate and positive.
- Use the sandwich method to confront players' mistakes. First praise, then constructively criticize, then praise again.
- **Always preserve players' dignity.** Sarcasm does not work well with children. They may not remember what you say, but they'll always remember how you said it.
- **Insist that all team members treat each other with respect.** Model, monitor, and encourage respect. Have zero tolerance for teasing.
- **Be specific about expectations and rules.** For both athletes, parents, and spectators.
- **Find ways each child can participate.** Even if he or she isn't particularly skilled in the sport.
- **Split up cliques on the team.** By mixing up groups for drills or scrimmages.

