
Vertical Sports

OVERVIEW

Our mission:

- Vertical Sports exists to glorify God by surrendering to Him and to the growth of His kingdom through sport.

We are committed to:

- being Bible-Anchored while we practice/play sharing truth from God's Word
- being Christ-Centered as we connect people to the love of Christ through sports
- being Discipleship-Driven by equipping coaches to worship through their God-glorifying service as they build relationships with players and families
- being Unity-Focused as we are all on the same team striving toward the same goal of knowing Christ and making Him known

Who are we? Our ministry uses sports as a bridge to have the opportunity to share the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone and to help strengthen and guide followers of Christ. With intentionality, we engage individuals and their families in the community with the end goal of demonstrating the love of Christ using sports. All of this is done while developing athletes in their knowledge, skill, and character.

We have minimized standalone events and placed priority on ongoing seasons of relationship opportunities with a gospel purpose. Jesus used this pattern with his disciples - time and consistent relational equipping/sharing - to change lives and bring people into the Church.

Vertical Sports has approximately 972 players who registered directly with us last year; approximately 50% marked that they either did not attend church or listed a non-evangelical church. Each player who registers represents a unique family unit, adding to the number with whom we engage.

Where are we going? We continue to prayerfully seek out strategic ministry partnerships in our leagues and would like to be known in the community for our inclusiveness and desire for everyone to join us in the fun.

With this in mind, we have established a set of expectations for those involved in the ministry of Vertical Sports as summarized here:

Ministry Expectations:

1. That each of those involved in the Vertical Sports ministry be a Christ-like example to players and their families, building relationships with them and helping them move toward a deeper relationship, or perhaps a first-time relationship, with Christ.
2. That coaches and assistant coaches comply with all rules, mission, and values of Vertical Sports and submit to its leadership.
3. That coaches and team connectors consider other coaches, volunteers, officials, and staff as teammates in ministering to our community.
4. That connectors be active attenders/members of FBC Millington, and head coaches be active attenders/members of FBC Millington or another local evangelical church. All those involved in youth sports are required to submit/pass a background check. Coaches are asked to review and sign a Coaches Covenant detailing the expectations our ministry has set forth as far as conduct within and commitment to our Vertical Sports vision.
5. That our coaches buy into a “first to arrive/last to leave” mentality with regards to practice/game responsibilities as well as relationship-building opportunities. We encourage them to provide a safe and encouraging environment to teach the sport, life-lessons and most importantly, how to live out the Christian faith on and off the field or court. We hope they will treat all with respect and foster a family environment within their teams and within their leagues.
6. That our team connectors have a desire to spread the gospel and commit to praying for and encouraging not only the team members and their families but the other teams and the league in general.

Our motto, “Reach for Greatness,” expresses our desire to minister to our community by using sports as a means to build relationships which in turn allows us to equip and encourage students and adults to “Reach for Greatness” in their spiritual lives, their personal relationships, and their athletic endeavors.

Youth Basketball Coaches Information

- Practices start **Monday, November 2nd**.
 - Monday, Thursday, and Saturday slots are available. Please sign up online using the QR code provided at the sign-in table and in the coach's email. We will start with 1-2 times until all teams get a spot. Older teams-let younger teams have earlier spots please.
 - Practices during the season will be available on Monday and Thursday nights.
- Games start on **Saturday, December 5th!!**
 - We will have an entire gym pregame devotion shared on game days (at partner sites as well). We will provide devotions on QuickScores under the "Downloads" button on the mobile app or "Devos" button on the webpage for practice nights.
 - Game schedules can be viewed at www.quickscores.com/verticalsports. Share this link with your team and be sure they know they can "subscribe" to the schedule and download it to their own google/outlook calendars so that rescheduled games are automatically updated. This will save you both time.
 - Also, check the app store for the "QuickScores" app.
 - Review league rules and email me with questions! My contact info is tanner.arrowood@fbcmillington.org , 901-873-8939 (office).
- Holiday Schedules
 - No practices or games **November 23th-28th** or **December 21th-January 2nd**.
- The primary form of communication by Tanner to coaches is **GroupMe**. Use this [link](#) to send a join request or search for Vertical Basketball Coaches 2026. Please be sure to check your email on the coaches' sheet and note any corrections and advise your parents to do the same! Keep an eye on your emails also!
- Contacting parents/players
 - Contact all parents/players **by phone** no earlier than **Monday, October 26th** at 4:30pm (to allow for any roster changes) but no later than **Wednesday, October 28th**.
 - Please contact each parent/player each week by phone, email or text.
 - Practice updates
 - Schedule updates
 - Prayer Requests
 - Relationship building
 - Popular group texting apps: We recommend Remind 101. There's also GroupMe, WhatsApp, FB Messenger, Tango
 - Let your team know what your primary method of communication will be!
- Uniforms
 - Each player will receive a jersey.
 - Players/coaches will receive a 20% discount coupon to Dunham's Sports for several weekends in November and December.

Youth Basketball Coaches Information

- Awards
 - End of the year awards will be given out for all 4-5s.
 - 6-16 teams with best record at end of season will get trophies.
 - Coaches will receive player certificates to complete in order to recognize each player and their season accomplishments.
- End of Year Parties
 - I encourage all coaches to have some kind of party for your players, i.e. go out to eat, pizza party in the gym, movie day, attend church wearing jerseys, schedule use of gym, have a bonfire, or go to see a Grizzlies/Tigers game.
- Inclement Weather - In case of weather issues, please contact the hotline number at 901-872-6823, <https://www.quickscores.com/verticalsports> or check the website at <https://fbcmillington.org/vertical-sports/>. We update the hotline by 7:30am on Saturdays and 3pm on weekdays only if there is a cancellation. We will not have answers prior to these times! If we cancel practices/games, Tanner will email league wide as well. Please let your parents know - it will save you time! If the above sites are not updated by the given times, that means games/practices are still ON. Calling/texting/emailing your awesome Sports Minister ☐ or Administrative Assistant isn't recommended, since we are often unavailable or simply have not yet made a decision. We promise to let you know as soon as we can!



Millington First Baptist Church

Vertical Sports – Head Coach Expectations

Mission: We exist to glorify God by surrendering to Him and to the growth of His kingdom.

Core Values: Bible Anchored. Christ Centered. Discipleship Driven. Unity Focused.

Purpose: Teach the fundamentals of the sport while using sport moments to share the gospel, teach biblical truth, create gospel centered relationships, and move from the playing field to Life Group/Worship.

Who Serves as your Overseer: Vertical Sports Pastor.

Time Commitment: 1 Season of 2-3 hours a week (Prep, Prayer, Coaching, Connecting).

Expectations:

Qualifications

- Active attender/member of MFBC or another like-minded local church
- Growing and vibrant relationship with Christ
- Complete Coaching registration, submit background check, review and sign Coach Covenant
- Commit to maintaining a wholesome witness in all social media interactions. If you post something offensive towards the church or the gospel, you will be asked to remove it.
- Love of children/students

Practice Responsibilities

- First to arrive, last to leave mentality
- Provide a safe and encouraging environment to teach the sport
- Develop practice plan or use plans that are given to help participants grow their skill of the game
- Look for teachable moments in practices and games to teach your kids about life and following God
- Lead the pre/post practice meeting – devotion, next practice/game information, team encouragement
- Return all equipment to its original location

Game Responsibilities

- Help create a family environment by treating all with respect
- Adhere to guidelines and rules of the league
- Share a team devotion during pregame/half-time
- Have respectful attitude toward opposing teams, coaches, and fans

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Basic understanding of the sport/teachable
- A willing teacher of fundamentals
- Understand philosophy of league in promoting spiritual growth among players and families
- Be an encourager
- Good with children
- Comfortable leading devotionals/teachable in leading devotions
- Encourage people to attend MFBC for further discipleship

Sign and print name

Date



Millington First Baptist Church

Vertical Sports – Assistant Coach Expectations

Mission: We exist to glorify God by surrendering to Him and to the growth of His kingdom.

Core Values: Bible Anchored. Christ Centered. Discipleship Driven. Unity Focused.

Purpose: Assist the head coach in teaching the fundamentals of the sport while using sport moments to share the gospel, teach biblical truth, and create gospel centered relationships.

Who Serves as your Overseer: Vertical Sports Pastor.

Time Commitment: 1 Season of 2-3 hours a week (Prep, Prayer, Coaching, Connecting).

Expectations:

Qualifications

- Complete Coaching registration, submit background check, review and sign Coach Covenant
- Commit to maintaining a wholesome witness in all social media interactions. If you post something offensive towards the church or the gospel, you will be asked to remove it
- Love of children/students

Practice Responsibilities

- First to arrive, last to leave mentality
- Provide a safe and encouraging environment to teach the sport
- Develop practice plan or use plans that are given to help participants grow their skill of the game
- Look for teachable moments in practices and games to teach your kids about life and following God
- Assist the Head Coach with the pre/post practice meeting – devotion, next practice/game information, team encouragement
- Develop practice plan or use plans that are given to help participants grow their skill of the game
- Return all equipment to its original location

Game Responsibilities

- Help create a family environment by treating all with respect
- Adhere to guidelines and rules of the league
- Be teachable in sharing a team devotion during pregame/half-time
- Have respectful attitude toward opposing teams, coaches, and fans

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Basic understanding of the sport/teachable
- A willing teacher of fundamentals
- Understand philosophy of league in promoting spiritual growth among players and families
- Be an encourager
- Good with children
- Comfortable leading devotionals/teachable in leading devotions
- Encourage people to attend MFBC for further discipleship

Sign and print name

Date



VERTICAL SPORTS

BIBLICAL PEACEMAKING

Personal Peacemaking

- Whenever we are faced with conflict, our primary goal will be to glorify God with our thoughts, words and actions (1 Cor. 10:31).
- We will try to get the “logs” out of our own eyes before focusing on what others may have done wrong (Matt. 7:3-5).
- We will seek to overlook minor offenses (Prov. 19:11).
- We will refrain from all gossip, backbiting and slander (Eph. 4:29). If we have a problem with others, we will talk *to* them, not *about* them.
- We will make “charitable judgments” toward one another by believing the best about each other until we have facts that prove otherwise (1 Cor. 13:7).
- If an offense is too serious to overlook, or if we think someone may have something against us, we will go promptly to seek reconciliation (Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15).
- When we offer a word of correction to others, we will do so graciously and gently, with the goal of serving and restoring them, rather than beating them down (Prov. 12:18; Eph. 4:29; Gal. 6:1).
- When someone tries to correct us, we will ask God to help us resist prideful defensiveness and to welcome correction with humility (Ps. 141:5; Prov. 15:32).
- When others repent, we will ask God to give us grace to forgive them as he has forgiven us (Eph. 4:32).
- When we discuss or negotiate substantive issues, we will look out for others’ interests as well as our own (Phil. 2:3-4).

Assisted Peacemaking

When two of us cannot resolve a conflict privately, we will seek the mediation of the Recreation Staff and listen humbly to their counsel (Matt. 18:16-17; Phil. 4:2-3). If our dispute is with the Recreation Staff, we will look to the Biblical Guidance Ministry for assistance.

I fully understand my responsibilities to uphold these principles of conduct and peacemaking by allowing the Holy Spirit to rule in my life.

Signature

Printed Name

Date



VERTICAL SPORTS

PARENT'S PROMISE

As a parent of a child participating in Millington First Baptist Church's Vertical Sports program:

- I will encourage my child in all aspects of the game, teaching by my example the proper attitudes in sports (...set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12).
- I will do my best to make a fun sports experience for my child a higher priority than my personal desire to win.
- I will encourage my child to have a wholesome attitude toward his/her peers, teammates, and competitors through teaching fairness, selflessness and respect.
- I will support and encourage my child's coach and treat him or her with respect, teaching my child to do the same. I will do my best to make myself available to help our coach when needed.
- I will display nothing short of the highest respect for umpires/officials, showing sportsmanship in any given situation.
- I will expect a safe environment for my child physically as well as one free of the dangerous influences of drugs, tobacco and alcohol. As such, I will refrain from these substances at all team events.
- I will commit to praying for my child, the team, the coach, my role as a parent, and that the Vertical Sports Ministry as a whole would please God and glorify His name.

By agreeing to this promise, I understand that, under God's grace, I will uphold these principles to the best of my abilities.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

3D Devotionals

SPORTS—LIFE—TRUTH

Remember! *Integrate* this during practices. You don't have to wait for a water break to share Jesus and the Bible with the players!

1) **Layups**

Sport to Life- The layup is the easiest yet most important shot you can take.

Life to Truth- The easiest and most important decision you can make is to accept the free gift of salvation through Jesus. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

2) **Footwork/Triple Threat**

Sport to Life- It is important to be ready for what life may throw at you. We have to be prepared to do the right thing even when we face difficulty.

Life to Truth- Be on guard against sin, hold firm to what God says is right and be the same person no matter what you face. (1 Corinthians 16:13-14)

3) **Shooting**

Sport to Life- You can't succeed without using the proper form. There is a right way to do things and a wrong way.

Life to Truth- The Bible calls wrong things "sin". Our sin separates us from a perfect God and prevents us from going to Heaven. (Romans 6:23)

4) **Get Open/Set Screens**

Sport to Life- When we set a screen we are being unselfish and helping the team win. This is more important than us getting open every time. We must learn to work together on and off the court.

Life to Truth- Jesus set the ultimate example of being unselfish by dying for you. His death gave you the opportunity to spend eternity in Heaven. (John 13:34, John 15:13)

5) **Ball Handling**

Sport to Life- The most important things we hold closest to us. Like the basketball when dribbling, we keep our family and what we value most close.

Life to Truth- The most important thing in our life must be God and our relationship with Him. We can know God by reading the Bible, being active in a church, and having close friends who also love Jesus. (Matthew 22:37-38).

6) **Passing**

Sport to Life- It is the holiday season and when we exchange gifts we are giving of our time or money to help someone else just like we do when we pass to our teammates. It is better for the team when we pass (give) more than we shoot (take).

Life to Truth- Jesus said that it is more blessed to give than to receive. We are to look for ways to love and help others because Jesus did. (Acts 20:35)

7) **Conditioning**

Sport to Life- We don't run just for the sake of running. We run to be better players. In life should live with purpose and have a goal to accomplish.

Life to Truth- God tells us in the Bible to live our lives for the purpose of making the name of Jesus, His life, death, and resurrection, known to others. We must live our lives with an eternal purpose, not one that is temporary. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

8) **Defense**

Sport to Life- Know where your opponent and the ball are at all times just like you need to be aware of your surroundings and who you are coming in contact with.

No clowns!! Life to Truth- We must be involved with a local church to surround ourselves with people who will help us grow and develop in the ways of God. (Proverbs 13:20, Hebrews 10:25)

9) **Scrimmage**

Sport to Life- We have to put into practice what we learn in school, from parents, in basketball. It does us no good to know something in our head, but never actually do it. Life to Truth- The same is true in our spiritual lives. Just knowing the answers in church or knowing what the Bible says does not make you a Christian. A relationship with Jesus means we not only know what he says about how to live, but that we actually live that out each day. (James 1:22)



RESOURCES

[CLICK HERE FOR VERTICAL SPORTS COACH VIDEO](#)

League Rules:

[4/5S & 6/7S COED YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[8-10 GIRLS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[11-13 GIRLS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[8-9 BOYS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[10-11 BOYS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[12-13 BOYS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

[14-16 BOYS YOUTH BASKETBALL RULES](#)

General League Information:

[CLICK HERE FOR QUICKSCORES \(PRACTICE/GAME SCHEDULES\)](#)

Practice schedules will be posted by Wednesday, October 28th - after online practice sign-ups. Game schedules will be posted in the middle of November or sooner, once we finalize our schedule.

If this is your first time coaching and you haven't used QuickScores previously, you will need to create an account. Our team will add you into the QuickScores system, so you should receive an email with instructions on how to register as a coach next week. If you do not receive an email before the coaches meeting, please let our team know and we will make sure we have the correct email address.

GroupMe will be our primary form of communication, see link on page 3 of this document, **Coaches Information**.

[IF YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED AS A COACH ONLINE PLEASE CLICK HERE](#) (You will be asked to complete a background check - for those that haven't completed one in the last 2 years.)

[BACKGROUND CHECK FORM](#)

PRACTICE PLANS

4/5S & 6/7S PRACTICE PLANS

<https://jr.nba.com/basketball-practice-plans/rookie/>

8-10 GIRLS, 8-9 BOYS, 10-11 BOYS

<https://jr.nba.com/basketball-practice-plans/starter/>

12-13 BOYS & 14-16 BOYS

<https://jr.nba.com/basketball-practice-plans/all-star/>