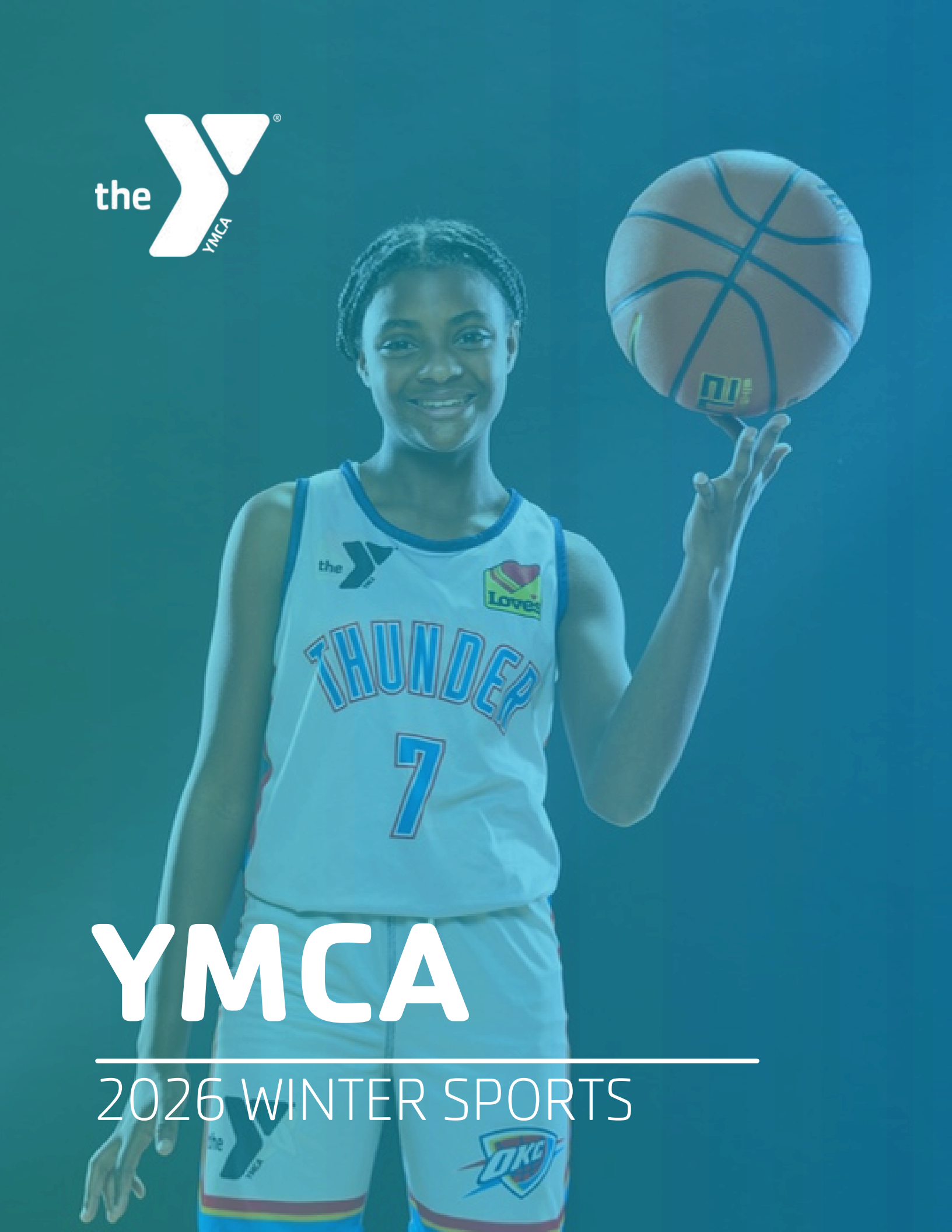



# YMCA

## 2026 WINTER SPORTS

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# YOUTH SPORTS 2026-2027

Save up to $35 when you register early!

## WINTER 2026-2027

| Winter Sports | Registration |
|---|---|
| › YMCA Thunder Basketball Leagues<br>▸ Developmental<br>▸ Spirit<br>▸ Champions | Early<br>Sept. 15 – Oct. 18<br>Regular<br>Oct. 19 – Oct. 25<br>Late*<br>Oct. 26 – Nov. 1 |

## SPRING 2027

| Spring Sports | Registration |
|---|---|
| › Flag Football<br>› Lil' Tykes Golf<br>› Pickleball<br>› Soccer<br>› Track & Field<br>› Volleyball | Early<br>Jan. 5 – Feb. 21<br>Regular<br>Feb. 22 – Feb. 28<br>Late*<br>March 1 – March 7 |

## SUMMER 2027

| Summer Sports | Registration |
|---|---|
| › Baseball<br>› Softball<br>› T-ball<br>› YMCA Thunder Basketball Leagues | Early<br>March 9 – April 18<br>Regular<br>April 19 – April 25<br>Late*<br>April 26 – May 2 |

## FALL 2027

| Fall Sports | Registration |
|---|---|
| › Cross Country<br>› Flag Football<br>› Lil' Tykes Golf<br>› Pickleball<br>› Soccer<br>› Volleyball | Early<br>June 8 – July 18<br>Regular<br>July 19 – July 25<br>Late*<br>July 26 – Aug. 1 |




ymcaokc.org/sports

*Late registration is based on availability. Space is limited and not guaranteed once teams are full.

Sports listed may not be offered at all locations. Additional fees apply during regular and late registration. Seasons typically begin 2-3 weeks after late registration closes.



# GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS SEASON WITH OUR NEW MOBILE SPORTS APP

Search for Y OKC Sports in the app store.

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play






# YMCA OKC

## Offers valid 11/06/2026 - 11/09/2026

Valid at Moore, Oklahoma City and House of Sport Oklahoma City store locations.

YMCA OKC
Valid 11/06/2026 - 11/09/2026

**20% OFF YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE** DICK'S

**NEED AN ITEM NOT AVAILABLE IN-STORE?** **Ask a Store Associate about ordering an item(s) through our ScoreMORE kiosk, located inside the store. Receive a 20% discount, plus free shipping, valid on the date(s) listed above. Some exclusions apply.**

**VALID IN-STORE ONLY.** Limit one coupon per customer. Excludes: taxes, prior purchases, gift cards, extended warranties such as the No Sweat Protection Plan, licenses, store credit, services or excluded items detailed in-store or at DICKS.com/Exclusions. Cannot be combined with other offers. No reproductions or rain checks accepted. Valid at DICK'S Sporting Goods and DICK'S House of Sport locations.

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# YMCA OKC

## Offers valid 11/20/2026 - 11/23/2026

Valid at Moore, Oklahoma City and House of Sport Oklahoma City store locations.

YMCA OKC
Valid 11/20/2026 - 11/23/2026

**20% OFF YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE** DICK'S

**NEED AN ITEM NOT AVAILABLE IN-STORE?** **Ask a Store Associate about ordering an item(s) through our ScoreMORE kiosk, located inside the store. Receive a 20% discount, plus free shipping, valid on the date(s) listed above. Some exclusions apply.**

**VALID IN-STORE ONLY.** Limit one coupon per customer. Excludes: taxes, prior purchases, gift cards, extended warranties such as the No Sweat Protection Plan, licenses, store credit, services or excluded items detailed in-store or at DICKS.com/Exclusions. Cannot be combined with other offers. No reproductions or rain checks accepted. Valid at DICK'S Sporting Goods and DICK'S House of Sport locations.

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# NON-MEMBER CHECK-IN POLICY

## Effective Thursday, Nov. 5, 2026

## SPECTATOR PASS REQUIRED FOR ALL NON-MEMBERS

This **FREE** pass is required for all non-members visiting the YMCA.

The safety and well-being of every member, child, and guest is our top priority.

On every visit to the Y, you **MUST** check in to the facility.

the YMCA

We encourage signing up **before Nov. 5, 2026,** to expedite the check-in process and avoid delays.

ymcaokc.org/spectator

the YMCA

ALL ABOUT NOW PHOTOGRAPHY




# PICTURE DAY IS AROUND THE CORNER!

## WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Show up 45 minutes before your game to the photo location fully dressed with proper uniform and equipment.

## TAKE YOUR PHOTOS

Each athlete will take 3-4 photos that will be sent directly to their guardians phone for previewing and ordering.

## ORDER ONLINE

Pick your favorite photos, add a back-ground, and order your atheletes photos and they will shipped directly to you!




## FOR MORE INFO:

EMAIL
contact@allaboutnowphoto.com

PHONE
(405)925-2267

# Sport Snack Game Plan

When it's your turn to bring snacks for the team, it can be tough to decide which options are the best and healthiest. Here are a few tips to help you find tasty and healthy snacks the whole team can enjoy.

## SNACK & DRINK SUGGESTIONS

Fruit and water are always the best snack choices for kids on the move. Try these popular options:

>> Orange & apple wedges

>> Fresh peaches, pears, watermelon or other seasonal fruit

>> Dried fruit and Raisins

>> Bananas, grapes & strawberries

>> Fruit cups (packed in juice) or sugar-free applesauce

>> Ice cold water - no need for sugar packed sport drinks

## GRAB & GO - THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

>> Not only is grabbing fresh fruit and water fast and easy, it's cost effective too. Check out this price comparison for a team of 12.

**Healthy Snack -**

> Fresh bananas/oranges/apples - $3 to $4 a bag

> 16 oz. natural spring water bottles (15 pack) - $3.29

**Total = $7.29**

**Typical Snack -**

> Mini bags of cookies (12 pack) - $4

> Two boxes of 7 oz. Capri Sun drink pouches (10 packs in each) - $6.25 each

**Total = $10.25**




The Wake County Council On Fitness & Health

Advocates for Health in Action

www.advocatesforhealthinaction.org

## Game Rescheduling Process

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair, consistent, and transparent process for rescheduling league games while respecting the time and commitments of all teams, volunteers, officials, and facilities.

### Rescheduling Request Timeline

- All rescheduling requests must be submitted at least 3 days in advance of the scheduled game times for ages 8 & Under.
- All rescheduling requests must be submitted at least 7 days in advance of the scheduled game times for ages 9 & Above.
- Requests submitted less than the times identified above, may not be considered.
- Additional fees may be assessed for late changes due to facility rental and game official costs.

### Rescheduling Options

1. Game Swap with Another Team

- Teams may arrange to switch game dates with another team scheduled to play the same opponent.
- Once both teams agree, email sportsinfo@ymcaokc.org with all affected teams copied and include full details of the change.

2. Mutual Agreement with Opposing Team

- Contact the opposing coach to request a new game date and time.
- If both teams agree:
    - Contact sportsinfo@ymcaokc.org to request available game dates/times.
    - The YMCA will provide options for both teams to review and confirm.
- If a mutually agreed-upon date cannot be reached, the game will be played as originally scheduled.

### No-Show & Forfeit

Definition of a No-Show

- A team is considered a no-show if they are unable to field the minimum number of players and are not ready to begin play within 10 minutes of the scheduled game time.

Forfeit Guidelines

- If a team does not meet the minimum player requirement within the 10-minute grace period, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- The opposing team will be awarded a win.

Sportsmanship & Participation Option

- If both teams are present but one team is short players, coaches may mutually agree to play a scrimmage-style game for participation and development purposes. However, the game will still be recorded as a forfeit in official standings.
- Length of scrimmage will be determined by YMCA Sports Leadership.
- When possible, officials will be provided for the scrimmage time.

**Additional Notes**

- Rescheduled Games will become final once posted to the online schedule
- Teams may not play more than 2 games in a day (exception tournaments)
- Games may not be stacked (ex. 2 games every other week)
- Rescheduling Games cannot create multiple Bye Weeks for Opponent
- Tournament Games are unable to be rescheduled
- Requests are not guaranteed
- YMCA will reschedule weather cancellations following our Sports Weather Policy
- YMCA will have final decision in approving all reschedule requests

# YMCA PLEDGE

WIN OR LOSE,

I PLEDGE BEFORE GOD

TO PLAY THE GAME

AS WELL AS I KNOW HOW;

TO OBEY ALL THE RULES,

TO BE A GOOD SPORT AT ALL TIMES,

AND TO IMPROVE MYSELF

IN SPIRIT, MIND, AND BODY.



# Parents´ Packet

## 2026 WINTER SPORTS

# YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City
# Parents Code of Ethics

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.

I will place the emotional and physical well being of each child ahead of a personal desire to win.

I will support the implementation of the YMCA's four character development values-caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will attend all practices and games for my child, or make appropriate arrangements for an adult to be present.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco (all forms) and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all YMCA youth sports events.

I will remember the game is for youths – not for adults.

I will do my very best to make the youth sports experience for my child.

I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching or character development or providing transportation.

I will treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

**League Formation Guidelines**

## Age Division

The YMCA wants every child to have a positive, safe, and meaningful sports experience. To help create fair competition and ensure athletes participate with peers at similar developmental stages, the YMCA uses an age cut-off date for youth sports team placement.

The YMCA uses August 31 as the official age cut-off date for youth sports programs.

Your child will participate in the division that matches their age as of August 31, 2026

- Examples:
    - If your child turns 8 years old on or before August 31, 2026, they will participate in the 8U division.
    - If your child turns 8 years old after August 31, 2026, they will remain eligible for the 8U division for that sports year.
    - The YMCA Sports Year starts with Fall Sports/School Year.

## Age Cutoff Chart

| Division | Player Age on 8/31/2026 | Eligible Birth Date Range |
|---|---|---|
| 3U | 3 years old or younger | September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023 |
| 4U | 4 years old or younger | September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022 |
| 5U | 5 years old or younger | September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021 |
| 6U | 6 years old or younger | September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020 |
| 7U | 7 years old or younger | September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019 |
| 8U | 8 years old or younger | September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018 |
| 9U | 9 years old or younger | September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017 |
| 10U | 10 years old or younger | September 1, 2015 – August 31, 2016 |
| 11U | 11 years old or younger | September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015 |
| 12U | 12 years old or younger | September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014 |
| 14U | 14 years old or younger | September 1, 2011 – August 31, 2013 |
| 16U | 16 years old or younger | September 1, 2009 – August 31, 2011 |

## Age Verification

The YMCA reserves the right to request documentation to verify an athlete's age. Families are responsible for providing accurate participant information during registration.

Acceptable documentation may include:

- Birth certificate, Government-issued identification, school records, or other official documentation approved by YMCA staff

**90-Day Age Exception**

Participants who are within 90 days (6/2) of the August 31 age cutoff may be eligible for an age exception request. The participant must meet all other YMCA registration requirements, and the request must be approved by YMCA Sports Leadership prior to participation.

Age exceptions are considered on a case-by-case basis and may consider:

- Participant's birth date
- Safety and physical development considerations
- Skill level, experience, division balance and roster needs
- The overall best interest of the participant and league

Approval of an age exception is not guaranteed. The YMCA reserves the right to deny requests that may create an unfair competitive advantage or impact on the safety and experience of other participants.

All approved age exceptions must be documented by the YMCA prior to the participant's first game. Coaches may not independently approve or allow participants to play outside their assigned division.

**Age Exception Allowances**

To provide limited flexibility while maintaining competitive balance, the YMCA allows age exceptions based on the format of play:

- Sports playing 5v5 or fewer: Each team may have one (1) approved age exception on its roster.
- Sports playing 6v6 or more: Each team may have up to two (2) approved age exceptions on its roster.

**Requests to Play in an Older Division ("Playing Up")**

The YMCA recognizes that children develop at different rates. In some situations, a family may request that an athlete participate in an older age division.

Requests will be reviewed by YMCA staff based on:

- The child's safety and overall well-being;
- Social and emotional readiness;
- Skill development needs;
- Impact on other participants;
- League or competition requirements.

Approval is not automatic and will be determined by YMCA program leadership.

Players will only be allowed to play up 1 Division.  Example. 8U player could play in 10U, 8U player could not play in 12U

**Requests to Play in a Younger Division ("Playing Down")**

Requests for an athlete to participate in a younger division are reviewed carefully and are generally limited to situations where accommodation is needed to support the athlete's participation.

Requests will be reviewed by YMCA staff based on:

- The child's safety and overall well-being;

- Social and emotional readiness;
- Skill development needs;
- Impact on other participants;
- League or competition requirements.

Approval is not automatic and will be determined by YMCA program leadership.

The YMCA is committed to providing inclusive opportunities for youth of all abilities while maintaining a safe and positive experience for everyone.

**Multiple Sport Registration**

Players are allowed to register for multiple sports in a season.

- Ex. Football and Soccer or Soccer and Volleyball, etc.
- The YMCA is unable to guarantee there will not be conflicts with game schedules for players.

**Multiple Team / Same Sport / Division / Branch Registration**

Players are not allowed to play on multiple teams, ages groups or different branches of the same sport.

- Ex. Player cannot play on a 10U and 12U Team during the same season
- Ex. Player cannot register at 2 different branches for the same sport / same season
- Ex. Player cannot register for Spirit League and Developmental League of same sport

**Roster Formation / Team Placement**

Players are assigned to teams based on registration information:

- Coach Request, Player Request, School Request, Zip Code, and Open Roster Spaces
- All requests are considered preferences only and are not guaranteed.
- The only way to guarantee team placement is to volunteer as a coach.

**Game Locations**

Registering for a program a specific YMCA location does not guarantee that all games will be held at that site. Game locations may vary throughout the season based on factors such as facility availability, scheduling needs, number of teams, and overall league logistics.

We strive to schedule games as conveniently as possible for all participants. However, families should be prepared for games to take place at multiple YMCAs or partner locations during the season.

In some divisions and locations, participation in a metro-area travel league may be required.

**Team Registration**

Teams may register as a full team/group for YMCA sports leagues. A team registration allows coaches and families to request that players remain together on the same roster.

If a team registers with fewer than the required number of players needed to form a complete roster, the YMCA may add additional players to the team to ensure proper participation and league balance.

If a coach or team requests no additional players and chooses to carry an incomplete roster, the team will be responsible for all league fees associated with the open roster spots at the Youth Membership

Registration Price. The minimum roster size is two players less than the maximum roster size. The maximum roster size is two times the number of players allowed on the field/court, based on YMCA League Rules.

**Final Rosters**

Coaches are responsible for reviewing and confirming their final roster posted online. Rosters will be locked after the second game of the season.

Players may only be added after Week 2 with YMCA approval and for approved circumstances.

Players added after week 2 may not be eligible to participate in tournament games, unless approved by the YMCA.

**Roster Checks / Non-Rostered Players**

Roster checks may be conducted prior to any game.

If a team is found using a player who is not listed on their approved roster, the team will forfeit the game and any previous games in which the ineligible player participated.

During tournaments or playoffs, teams found using non-rostered players may be removed and will not receive a refund.

**Final Ruling**

The YMCA will have final ruling in all disputes.

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Winter 2026-2027 Information

- Schedules, Rules, Contact Info, Maps, Etc.
  - www.quickscores.com/ymcaokc
- Download the YMCA OKC Sports App
- Equipment Needed
  - Official YMCA Thunder Basketball League Jersey
  - Non-Marking Athletic Shoes
  - Basketball
  - Shorts/Athletic Pants
- If you have not heard from a coach by November 12 2pm, please contact your local YMCA Sports Department for team information.
- Practices will begin week of November 16 or 30 based on division. Coaches will receive their individual practice nights, times, & locations after the coaches meeting and will provide this information to their players.
- Game Schedules will be posted November 27 by 6:00 PM / Games begin the weekend of December 4-6 or December 11-13 based on division.
- Games will be played on Saturdays. Due to facility events and schedules, Friday Evenings & Sunday Afternoons may be used as needed.
- There are no games or practices December 21-January 3. There may be additional dates when practice or game sites are not available due to school calendars. Your local YMCA Sports Department will communicate these dates.
- For specific game locations, please see your schedule and visit the locations tab on QuickScores.
- An official photographer for the YMCA Sports Programs will be provided to all teams. Pictures will be taken on game weekends. A portion of each sale goes back to the YMCA Community Campaign making sure no one is turned away from the YMCA due to an inability to pay.
- All Players will receive an end of season medal. Coaches will pass these out after the final game.

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT 2027

**Ages**

8 & Under Boys and Girls
10 & Under Boys and Girls
12 & Under Boys and Girls
14 & Under Boys and Girls
16 & Under Boys and Girls

Tournament is Gender Specific
Age cut-off is how old the child was on August 31, 2026

**When**

Saturday February 27 & 28

**Where**

All tournament games will be played in the Oklahoma City Metro Area. Specific locations will be listed at release of the tournament bracket by February 24.

**Cost / Registration**

$200 for double elimination tournament
Register online at www.quickscores.com/ymcaokc
Registration is open February 1-18.

**Contact**

For more information contact Norris Williams nwilliams@ymcaokc.org
or Chris Berry cberry@ymcaokc.org

**Additional Info**

- The Sports Director from each branch will determine the process for sending their representing team. Teams will not be handpicked “All Star” or combined teams. Players will be required to have played at their local YMCA and played the regular season on the participating team.

- Brackets will be posted online by February 24 at 5 PM. Bracket seeding is random and in the event of 2 teams from one location the seeding may not match regular season final standings.

- $5.00 Gate Fee for all spectators 8 & above, $1.00 Gate Fee for ages 5-7, & free entry for Coaches, Players, & spectators ages 4 & under.

- Brackets & Maps to the gyms will be posted to QuickScores.

- All players must wear matching jerseys with a YMCA logo. Players will not be allowed to play without a jersey. Teams on the top of each bracket game will wear light. Teams on the bottom of each bracket game will wear contrasting or dark colored uniform.

- Any roster checks/protest must be made before the game starts. Please notify the gym supervisor at the scoring table in the event of a challenge.

- There are no protests regarding official's calls.

- No jewelry, ear rings, rubber bands, casts, or bracelets will be permitted during play.

- Any player/coach/spectator that is ejected from a game will be removed from the current game & next game. The ejected player/coach/spectator will have to meet with the Sport Director or Tournament Head prior to being allowed back.

- Tournament Rules are available at the end of this packet.

- Refunds will not be available for any teams.

- Age Groups may be combined based on registration numbers.




# Coaches' Packet

2026 WINTER SPORTS

# YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City
# Coaches Creed

I pledge myself to uphold the high standards of the YMCA in all my associations with team members, coaches, spectators, staff, volunteers, and opposing teams.

I will exemplify all the principles of good sportsmanship and instill them in the youth under my care. I will not permit any unsportsmanlike conduct from players or spectators representing the team I am coaching.

I will, by personal example, display the qualities of leadership that will inspire youths to strive toward the goal of good leadership and sportsmanship.

In accordance with the YMCA principles, I shall make fair play and good sportsmanship the primary objective of all competition. I will follow the YMCA rules on playing time and provide equal opportunities to all.

My primary aim as a YMCA coach shall be the development of youth, spiritually, mentally, and physically.

I will abide by and uphold the rules and regulations governing athletic contests, as established by the YMCA. I will follow the YMCA practice plan and implement the fitness concepts & character concepts.

I will, before any athletic contest is started, line up all my team players and coaches together with the officials and recite the YMCA Pledge or a prayer.

I will, after any athletic contest is completed, line up my team facing our opposition and lead them in shaking hands or some form of non contact recognition, with the opposing team.

I have read the Coaches Creed and fully agree with the conditions of the creed. I fully understand the team I am coaching is not my team, but as a YMCA team, and I understand that I will be relieved of my duties as a coach if found guilty of any major violation.

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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# COACHING AT THE YMCA

- Fill out Coach Application and Consent for Criminal Background Check Form
  - Submit to the YMCA Sports Department by registration deadline of sport you are planning to coach. All documents can be found on www.quickscores.com/ymcaokc
- Complete assigned online coach's trainings in Volunteer Matters with the Application.
- Review YMCA Online Coaches available on QuickScores.
- Submit coach's training course completion certificates to your local YMCA Sports Department
- Attend Coaches Meeting
- Receive Roster (after clear CBC and Concussion Training)
- Schedule team practices
- Go to www.quickscores.com/ymcaokc to register as a coach
- Download the YMCA OKC Sports App
- Contact your team
  - Introduce yourself
  - Inform team of practice/game schedule and required uniform
  - Take volunteers for assistant coaches, snack list, etc.
    - Trainings, Coach Application and Consent for Criminal Background Check Form required for Assistant Coaches
- Attend team pictures as scheduled by Official YMCA Photographer and the YMCA Sports Department
- Check Weather Hotline in the event of inclement weather for status on games
- Attend weekly practice(s) and game(s)
- Pick up end of season participation medals from the Sports Department Office
- Distribute medals to players at last game or schedule end of season celebration
- Questions? Contact your local YMCA Sports Department

Yes, Coach! | U.S. SOCCER FOUNDATION

## What is Yes, Coach!™

**Yes, Coach!** is a national movement dedicated to equipping coaches with the tools to mentor young people both on and off the field.

Launched by the **U.S. Soccer Foundation and Stand Together Foundation**, the campaign aims to train 100,000 coach-mentors by 2030, impacting over 3 million youth nationwide.

Through free, self-paced online training, coaches learn practical skills, youth development techniques, and strategies for creating safe, supportive environments.

Whether you're a sports coach, community leader, or simply someone passionate about helping kids thrive, **Yes, Coach!** empowers you to become the role model every child deserves.

**Transforming lives, building confidence, and impacting communities.**

# ABCs of Working with Kids

**A is for Active** You have to be active. If you sit out of every activity, the kids won't think you care about them.
**B is for Belonging**. Children want to belong, you have the ability to help them feel as they do belong.
**C is for Cheerful** Be cheerful. Even if you're in a bad mood, be sure to keep a smile on your face. A bad day for you is a bad day for the kids.
**D is for Desire** You have to have the desire to give kids a fun program.
**E is for Everyone** Interact with everyone and get everyone involved! If you notice one of the kids in your group is shy, be sure to get him/her involved with the other kids even more.
**F is for Funny** Kids don't want a an adult who's serious all of the time. Make jokes, have a good time.
**G is for Guide** It's your job to guide your children in the right direction of their life.
**H is for Happy** This is a given. You have to be happy. Don't be angry all of the time.
**I is for Independence** Teach children to become more independent than they are.
**J is for Join in** Don't sit on the side lines. Participate and have fun with the kids. Even if it means running around a playground or going down a slide. Do it.
**K is for Kids** This could have two meanings. The first means that you have to be good with kids to be a successful. The second is to let the kid inside of yourself come out. You may not be the most active or creative person outside of this program, but here that doesn't matter. Even if you aren't the best at drawing, draw anyway.
**L is for Laugh** You should always laugh. If one of the kids tells you a story or joke that they find funny but you don't, laugh anyway. Of course, remember to laugh at appropriate times. If a kid trips on a rock and falls, that's not the time to laugh (even though you may want to). If a kid draws a bad picture, don't laugh at it.
**M is for Make Friends** Make friends with the kids. Obviously this will probably happen, but make sure it does. Never ignore one child. Also, have kids make friends with each other.
**N is for No Yelling** You should never yell. You might scare them or make a bad situation worse. Or if you yell enough, they might actually get used to it and yelling won't be a threat to them.
**O is for Options** Give options. They'll have to learn sometime to choose and make decisions. Why not help them out. Sometimes they might not like the options, but they'll have to choose.
**P is for Patience** Have patience. This is pretty self-explanatory.
**Q is for Questions** Instead of punishing two kids for fighting right away, ask questions. Ask why they were fighting, what started it, who started it, was there a better way to solve the problem.
**R is for Relationships** Build relationships with the children.
**S is for Sanity** Be sure to keep your sanity, no matter how stressful times can get. Talk to other adults for suggestions.
**T is for Teach** Teach the ways of life. Teach them to try and become the best person they can be.
**U is for Understanding** We are all understanding people. If a child is upset, sit down and talk with them and listen to what they have to say.
**V is for Vigilance** We are in charge of making sure things are safe in our program.
**W is for Wisdom** Share your wisdom with the kids and watch them grow as the weeks go on.
**X is for eXcellence** You have a limited amount of time to give to the kdis. Give it your all 100% of the time and be excellent.
**Y is for Yes I Can** This is not only a place for kids to learn new things and explore outside of their comfort zone; we can do this too!
**Z is for Zzz** Let's face it: get all the sleep you need to be well-rested for Wednesday afternoons!

# Top Ten Tips for Working with Kids

1. **Get to know each one individually.**
   Take time to get to know some of the interests, talents, and qualities of each child. Until your children feel they are building a relationship with you, that is the point where they start to feel secure and connected.

2. **Get into routines right away.**
   For most children, routines provide security because they are predictable, and they help to know what is expected of them. For example, try using the "five-minute warning" routinely before the end of every activity period. Announce to kids, "Okay, we have five minutes before we have to clean up!" Transitions are hard for children because they involve a small loss of what they have just invested their pride and energy into doing. Using the five-minute warning consistently in other words, doing it routinely, helps children master those transitions.

3. **Keep your directions simple!**
   Giving too many things to do at once is confusing and often results in not too much getting done! Especially for younger children who have shorter attention spans and for children who are easily distracted, try the following routine:
   **Step 1:** Tell a child one thing to do. ("Get your homework out of your bag")
   **Step 2 :** Ask them to repeat back to you what you have just asked them to do. ("So what are you going to do right now?")
   **Step 3:** Instruct the child to come back and tell you when they've finished.
   **Step 4**: Praise them for getting it done!
   **Step 5**: Repeat the process with a new task for the child.

4. **Get on their train before you try to get them on yours.**
   There's an expression called "getting on a train." When a child is doing something other than what she should be— rather than get into a struggle with her, experts suggest that you take a minute or two and join in whatever she is doing. In other words, take a moment to look at the pay attention to what they are doing before coaxing them away from it and onto the task at hand. Entering that child's world on her terms is a great way to develop influence with that child — which is a more powerful and lasting way of motivating children than using threats or force.

5. **The human brain can't hold a negative.**
   When you tell a child at the swimming pool, "Don't run!" what his brain hears is "Run!" When you tell a child, "Don't talk while I'm talking!" his brain hears, "Talk while I'm talking!" It is impossible to tell someone not to do something without suggesting they do the very thing you don't want them to do. What is more effective is telling them what we want them to do. For example, at the pool, say, "Walk!" In a meeting say, "Listen while I'm speaking. You can have a turn when I am finished". Turning negatives into positives is more than just a subtle rephrasing of words. Children today are visual learners, meaning they get a picture in their brains of what behavior we are suggesting when we talk. Giving them a clear picture of what we want, rather than what we don't want helps steer their behavior in a more constructive direction. "Keep your hands to yourself," or, "Use your words when you are upset," are examples of telling children what we want from them that help them behave more appropriately.

6. **Sarcasm has no place here!**
   I once heard an adult shouting at children who were late to line-up: "Come on, ladies! My old grandmother moves faster than you guys!" Sarcasm may be said with a hint of affection or humor, but this subtlety is lost on children younger than fourteen — the age at which the human brain "gets" sarcasm. Not that children won't mimic the sarcasm they witness... they will. But, what younger children "repeat" is simply hostility — any hint of affection or good-natured humor that one might embed in a sarcastic remark to a friend is lost on younger children.

7. **Drop the rope!**

If you have ever heard a child say to an adult, "You're not the boss of me! I don't have to listen to you!" then you have witnessed an example of how American children have been encouraged to "speak up" and assert themselves. Unfortunately, many children today confuse rudeness with assertiveness. When a child says something provocative, like, "This is a free country! I can do what I want!" or, "My parents don't make me do that, you clean up!" rather than get into an argument — which I call picking up the emotional rope — use the following four-step response:

**Step 1**: Stay calm and let go of the provocation (in other words, drop the emotional rope!).

**Step 2:** Make children "right" about what they are "right" about. For example, "You're right. I'm not your parent!" Or, "You're right — it is a free country! Isn't that great!"

**Step 3:** Pause and then simply say ". . . and . . . everybody knows that her, part of being responsible is cleaning up. And you can do this — it's no big deal!"

**Step 4 :** Then stop talking and move on! One of the biggest mistakes adults make with children is we talk too much! Less is more!

When it is clear that you are not going to pick up the bait and get into an argument, you throw that child off balance. Second, using the word "and" as opposed to the word "but" helps kids stay with you. Third, state simply and calmly what everybody knows which helps you maintain the upper hand emotionally and signals to the child your confidence. When you detach and move on you are essentially taking the high road. Children would much rather argue with you than do what they are supposed to do. Detaching takes that option away. Picking up the "emotional rope" is the single greatest mistake adults make with children.

8. **Try using the "triple play" with children who are having a hard time fitting in.**

One of the challenges facing adults I hear about most frequently is the child who is a little socially awkward or shy. This is where a technique I call the "triple play" comes in. Try pairing that child with one other child (preferably one he helps choose) and do a fun activity together. When children play together they get to know one another more easily and introduce them to others too.

9. **Teach children how to share and have gratitude.**

You may actually have to teach how to share or have a sense of gratitude. Teaching them how to share and have gratitude will help them work together. Try gathering the kids for a few minutes at the end of the day and have them raise their hands when they have an example to share with the group of something that happened that day that they are grateful for or something that someone has shared with them that day, like friendship or a toy or their time and help during clean-up. Encouraging gratitude helps create an environment where friendship and respect flourish.

10. **Listen, Laugh and Enjoy!**



# Additional Communication Tips

***Communicating with children:***

- Always give directions using positive statements (ex. "inside voices please").
- Listen to children and respect individual differences. When you take time to listen, you show a child that he/she is important.
- Have eye contact- kids know you are listening when you are making eye contact. Lean for a teen, squat for a tot.
- Avoid talking down to children.
- Be clear in your expectations.
- Discuss with the children the activities for the day.
- Use motivating words.
- Praise and Reinforce good behavior.
- Flexibility and adaptability are essential.
- Have empathy, realize that some children may be dealing with less than ideal situations unbeknown to you.
- Always intervene when you hear children putting each other down.
- Use a sense of humor, an easy-going attitude, patience and creativity
- Always end the day on a positive note. Ask questions like "What was your favorite part of the day?". You will be amazed what matters to the children.

## HOW TO HAVE FUN

- This program about relationships and connections between kids and volunteers. Don't be lazy! Interact with children. Don't just tell them how to do things--do it too! Play UNO, , play in the soccer game. It makes the day so much more fun for you too!

- You are a role model, so act like it. The children will do what you do. Think of how you want the kids to behave and act that way. Be professional in front of the children.

- Be friends but do not let them get away with things. Treat kids who get on your nerves like you do your favorite. Basically, don't play favorites!




- Break up cliques early. It is unavoidable that there will be cliques. Make sure that you make them mingle as much as possible.

- Be proactive rather than reactive. Anticipate what is going to happen and then plan accordingly.

- Grin and bear it. You may be tired, hungry or have 100 other things that you need to get done at work. People who work with kids need to be some of the best actors in the world at times.

- Try to spend a few minutes of face time with each new child. They will like you more if they feel that they are the center of attention, and it will allow you to understand them better. We can tag team as a group.

- **Prepare**. Prepare for each day and whatever it may throw at you. If you prepare yourself, you can prepare the kids. They will have less anxiety about the day and have something to look forward to.

- Ask questions, start conversations and play games that help the kids get to know each other.

# HOW TO PICK TEAMS

*Have you or someone you know ever been the last person selected to be on a team? If this has happened, then you are aware of the damage it causes to one's self esteem. Making teams by using team captains who select players, one by one, from the group has severe consequences.*

Consequences:
1. Child loses self confidence
2. Child may become a behavioral problem
3. Child does not want to participate
4. Child does not want to return to the program

**Creative Ways to Make Teams**

- Have children line up and count off using numbers, objects, animals (tigers and bears), etc.
- Have everyone take off one shoe and put it in a pile. Volunteer randomly throws shoes to his/her left and right. Children go to the left or right to pick up their shoe. Two teams are made of the right/left throw.
- Make teams according to birth month, birth dates, or birth season.
- Draw names from a hat (use name cards).
- Have children pair off and each pair find another pair to form four and each foursome find another foursome…go until you have the correct teams designed.
- Play a game or icebreaker that results in formed groups.
- Have children group according to material items, NOT physical characteristics (all who are wearing a watch vs. those who aren't; those with white shirts, those with other colors)
- Volunteers randomly select teams (not too exciting, use as a last resort).
- Mingle, Mingle, Mingle—group mingles around, leader calls out random numbers, the group has to get in groups of that many, play multiple rounds.
- Toe to Toe – Have the kids stand toe to toe with someone their height. One of the kids is skittles one is starburst. Send one to one side, one to the other. Keep dividing until you get desired group size.
- Come up with a few ways of your own!



# GAMES

**Play with the kids .** Kids will be most likely to play a game if you are actively participating. Enjoy yourself and be part of the group, but be cautious not to play at skill levels above the kids that make the game unfair or dangerous.

**Facilitate equal playing action for all participants.** Be very mindful of how many times a kid has (ie) received the soccer ball. Quite often, less active kids are left on the sidelines while more athletic or outgoing children dominate the game. If you are playing any activity, find a way to keep activities moving and changing to give everyone equal quality playing time. This same principle applies to sports-minded children who may be uncomfortable playing dramatic games.

**Keeping score is not always important!** You'll quickly find that by simply not keeping score, many games become more fun. Whenever possible, try to limit the focus on "winning" or "losing" and concentrate more on having fun, and staying active. This is not to say that you should never keep score - it's simply not always important.

**Re-invent any activity by changing the rules .**Any game can be adapted to make it more interesting. Here are several adaptations of kickball as an example: Run the bases backwards, run them in reverse order, give all infielders water balloons to use to throw players out instead of the ball, hit the ball with a bat, use a beach ball or have entire sides kick before rotating instead of having traditional outs.

**Learn games at all physical activity levels.** Every group is different, and every day is different as well. Good volunteers have a bag a tricks for the various personalities or weather conditions that they come across.

**Always, Always, Always encourage teamwork, fair play, and sportsmanship!** Set the tone right away - games are meant to be fun and should reflect the values of the Y. Set ground rules for physical or less active games alike, such as, "Only positive comments," or "No name-calling."

**Always stop the game while you're still having fun.** Children will always want to return to a game that was stopped that they were enjoying. If you play a game until everyone is dropping out or arguing, that's how they will remember it.

**Let children lead games.** Give children an opportunity to be the group leader, explain the rules, choose captains, set boundaries, and arbitrate arguments. It helps build leadership skills, independence, and self-esteem.



# CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES and POLICIES

A foundational commitment of the Y is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Thus, child abuse in any form is a primary concern to the Y. Child abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of a child resulting in injury or harm.

- Any staff or volunteer who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child participating in one of our programs has been abused or neglected, or having reason to suspect that a child has been threatened with injury and that abuse will occur, must report to the proper authorities.
- Volunteers are trained to recognize, prevent, and report child abuse.
- Under no circumstances should a staff/volunteer member interrogate the child or cause them to feel responsible for the abuse/neglect. The staff/volunteer person's responsibility is to report and cooperate with the agency's investigation.
- Confidentiality is of utmost importance.
- Parents/guardians or children involved in the case should not be contacted by a YMCA staff/volunteer person.

Oklahoma Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-522-3511

**In order to avoid allegations regarding child abuse, the following policies must be adhered to:**

- Staff/ Volunteers will not use verbal or emotional abuse when disciplining.
- Staff/ Volunteers will not discipline by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care such as food or shelter.
- Staff/ Volunteers should at no time be alone with a single child unobserved by other Staff/ Volunteers.
- Staff/ Volunteers to child contact should be on the hand, shoulder, or upper back. Staff and volunteers will respect children's rights not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and will understand that touch should be done only in view of others.
- Staff/ Volunteers shall be alert to the physical and emotional state of children each time they report for a program.
- Staff/ Volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life in the presence of children and/or parents is prohibited.
- Contact should never be against a child's will (unless in the case of clear and present danger of the child).
- Contact should never be against a child's discomfort, whether expressed verbally or non-verbally.
- Contact should never be used when it would have the effect of over-stimulating the child.
- Contact should never take place in a place on a child's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only with supervision from another adult.

| *Appropriate Physical Interactions* | *Inappropriate Physical Interactions* |
|---|---|
| • Side hugs<br>• Shoulder-to-shoulder or "temple" hugs<br>• Pats on the shoulder or back<br>• Handshakes<br>• High-fives and hand slapping<br>• Verbal praise<br>• Pats on the head when culturally appropriate<br>• Touching hands, shoulders, and arms<br>• Arms around shoulders<br>• Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) | • Full-frontal hugs<br>• Kisses<br>• Showing affection in isolated area<br>• Lap sitting<br>• Wrestling<br>• Piggyback rides<br>• Tickling<br>• Allowing a youth to cling to an employee's or volunteer's leg<br>• Any type of massage given by or to a youth<br>• Any form of affection that is unwanted<br>• Compliments relating to physique or body development<br>• Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas |
| *Appropriate Verbal Interactions* | *Inappropriate Verbal Interactions* |
| • Positive reinforcement<br>• Appropriate jokes<br>• Encouragement<br>• Praise | • Name-calling<br>• Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of staff and volunteers<br>• Secrets<br>• Cursing<br>• Off-color or sexual jokes<br>• Shaming or Belittling<br>• Derogatory remarks<br>• Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth<br>• Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family |



# Rules

## 2026 WINTER SPORTS

# FREQUENTLY ASKED BASKEBALL QUESTIONS

## DEVELOPMENTAL LEAGUE

| Division | Players | Ball Size | Goal Height | Defense | Standings Kept | Game Length |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4 Year Old** | 5 v 5 | 27.5 (junior) | 6.5 Feet | Man Only (Wristbands) | No | (4) Six Minute Quarters |
| **6 & Under** | 5 v 5 | 27.5 (junior) | 8 Feet | Man Only (Wristbands) | No | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **8 & Under** | 5 v 5 | 27.5 (junior) | 9 Feet | Man Only (Wristbands) | No | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **10 & Under** | 5 v 5 | Boys & Girls Women's Size (28.5) | 10 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **12 & Under** | 5 v 5 | Boys - Official Girls - Women's | 10 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **16 & Under** | 5 v 5 | Boys - Official Girls - Women's | 10 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |

# FREQUENTLY ASKED BASKEBALL QUESTIONS

## SPIRIT LEAGUE

| Division | Players | Ball Size | Goal Height | Defense | Standings Kept | Game Length |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **8 & Under** | 5 v 5 | 27.5 (junior) | 9 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **10 & Under** | 5 v 5 | 28.5 (women's) | 10 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |
| **12 & Under** | 5 v 5 | Boys - Official Girls - Women's | 10 Feet | Man or Zone (No Wristbands) | Yes | (4) Eight Minute Quarters |

THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**4 Year Old / 6 & Under**

**Developmental League Basketball Rules**

## I. Playing Time

A. 4 Year Olds will play Five on Five.
B. 6 & Under will play Five on Five.
C. All players must play at least half of the game.

## II. Official Game Time

A. 4 Year Olds will play Four (6) minute quarters.
B. 6 & Under will play Four (8) minute quarters.
C. The clock will run continuously and will only be stopped for time outs, injuries and the last thirty (:30) seconds of each quarter on all dead ball situations.
D. There will be one minute between quarters and three minutes for half time.

## III. Press

A. No press of any type is allowed.
B. Defensive Players must retreat to inside of the Offensive Team's 3-point arc and allow the ball & the player with the ball to cross mid-court unimpeded.

## IV. Time Outs

A. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half; time-outs will not carry over from half to half.
B. Time-outs will last approximately one (1) minute.
C. The coach or the players on the court may call time-outs.
D. The team in possession of the ball can only call a time-out.

E. If a dead ball situation occurs, either team may call a time-out.

## V. Scoring

A. No score will be kept on either the scoreboard or at the official's table.

## VI. Defense

A. Man-to-man is the only defense permitted in this league. Players will wear colored wristbands. They will guard the player on the opposing team with the matching color. Any player may stop a fast break or pick up a loose ball in the frontcourt. Wristbands can only be changed during timeouts and end of quarters.

B. There will be no steals off the dribble.
C. No double-teaming will be allowed.
D. The penalty for infraction of these rules will be to return the ball to the offensive team.
E. Shot attempts may be blocked.

## VII. Basket Height / Free Throws

A. 4 Yr. Old Basket height will be six and a half (6.5) feet.
B. 6 and Under Basket height will be eight (8) feet.
C. Free throws will be shot from the twelve (12) foot line.

## VIII. Ball Size

A. Junior size ball (27.5)

## IX. Miscellaneous

A. Jump ball will begin the game with alternating possession thereafter.
B. No lane violations will be called in this league.
C. A forfeit is called ten (10) minutes after scheduled game time if one team does not have enough players to start the game. A team may start and end the game with as few as three (3) players.

E. Games will not be rescheduled due to a team conflict with the published schedule. The only games that will be rescheduled will be result of inclement weather or a problem with the facility.

F. One coach may be permitted on the floor during a game and will need to position themselves to avoid any game interference. Coaches may not stand under the basket on the court. All other coaches must remain in the bench area.

G. If a coach or a fan is ejected from the game, they will automatically be ineligible for the next game. Further penalty may be assessed if necessary.

H. There are no protests regarding official's calls.

I. Home team must provide an adult volunteer to operate the game clock (Home Team). The game will not begin without the volunteer. Failure to provide a volunteer could lead to forfeit of the game.

J. The following rules will be the official playing rules. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book. The Sports Director or Sports Coordinator(s) will have the final ruling in all matters.

K. For player safety, jewelry is not allowed during games. This includes earrings, necklaces, etc. Using tape, bandaids or other items to cover is not permitted.

*Note: This is an instructional league. The rules have been modified to help all players develop proper fundamentals and to provide a positive introduction to the sport of basketball.*

## X. YMCA Mission Statement

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**8 & Under Developmental League**

**Basketball Rules**

## I. Playing Time

A. 8 & under will play Five on Five.
B. All players must play at least half of the game.

## II. Official Game Time

A. Four (8) minute quarters.
B. The clock will run continuously and will only be stopped for time outs, injuries and the last thirty (:30) seconds of each quarter on all dead ball situations.
C. There will be one minute between quarters and three minutes for half time.

## III. Press

A. No press of any type is allowed.
B. Defensive Players must retreat to inside of the Offensive Team's 3-point arc and allow the ball & the player with the ball to cross mid-court unimpeded. Once the ball has crossed the mid court line, defensive players may come outside of the 3-point arc.

## IV. Time Outs

A. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half; time-outs will not carry over from half to half.
B. Time-outs will last approximately one (1) minute.
C. The coach or the players on the court may call time-outs.

D. The team in possession of the ball can only call a time-out.
E. If a dead ball situation occurs, either team may call a time-out.

## V. Scoring

A. Score will be kept on the scoreboard and at the official's table. Standings will not be kept for 8 & Under.

## VI. Defense

A. Man-to-man is the only defense permitted in this league. Players will wear colored wristbands. Wristbands can only be changed during timeouts and end of quarters.
B. They will guard the player on the opposing team with the matching color and may only steal the ball from that player in the frontcourt. Any player may stop a fast break or pick up a loose ball in the frontcourt.
C. The penalty for infraction of this rule is to return the ball to the offensive team.
D. Shot attempts may be blocked.
E. No double-teaming will be allowed.
F. In the 8U Division, when a screen occurs, the defensive players involved in the screen may switch off their matching wristband/offensive player. All players must return to guarding their matching wristband on the next dead ball.

## VII. Basket Height / Free Throw Line

A. Basket height will be nine (9) feet.
B. Free throws will be shot from the twelve (12) foot line.

## VIII. Ball Size

A. Junior size ball (27.5)

## IX. Miscellaneous

A. Jump ball will begin the game with alternating possession thereafter.
B. No lane violations will be called in this league.
C. Bonus foul shooting (2 Shots) begins on the fifth (5th) team foul of each quarter.

D. Team Fouls reset each quarter.

E. A player receiving his/her fifth personal foul will be disqualified from the remainder of the game.

F. A forfeit is called ten (10) minutes after scheduled game time if one team does not have enough players to start the game. A team may start and end the game with as few as three (3) players.

G. Games will not be rescheduled due to a team conflict with the published schedule. The only games that will be rescheduled will be result of inclement weather or a problem with the facility.

H. One coach may be permitted on the floor during a game and will need to position themselves to avoid any game interference. Coaches may not stand under the basket on the court. All other coaches must remain in the bench area.

I. If a coach or a fan is ejected from the game, they are subject to be ineligible for the next game. Further penalty may be assessed if necessary.

J. There are no protests regarding official's calls.

K. Each team must provide an adult volunteer to operate the game clock (Home Team) and the score sheet (Away Team). The game will not begin until these volunteers are at the table. Failure to provide a volunteer could lead to forfeit of the game.

L. The following rules will be the official playing rules. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book. The Sports Director or Sports Coordinator(s) will have the final ruling in all matters.

M. For player safety, jewelry is not allowed during games. This includes earrings, necklaces, etc. Using tape, bandaids or other items to cover is not permitted.

Note: This is an instructional league. The rules have been modified to help all players develop proper fundamentals and to provide a positive introduction to the sport of basketball.

## X. YMCA Mission Statement

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

# THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**10 & Under / 12 & Under**

**Developmental League Basketball Rules**

## I. Playing Time

A. Both ages will play Five on Five.
B. All players must play at least half of the game.

## II. Official Game Time

A. Four (8) minute quarters.
B. The clock will run continuously and will only be stopped for time outs, injuries and the last thirty (:30) seconds of each quarter on all dead ball situations.
C. There will be one minute between quarters and three minutes for half time.

## III. Press

A. Full court press is allowed.
B. When a team is ahead by 10 points, they must retreat and allow the offense to cross the mid-court line unimpeded.

## IV. Time Outs

A. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half; time-outs will not carry over from half to half.
B. Time-outs will last approximately one (1) minute.
C. The coach or the players on the court may call time-outs.
D. The team in possession of the ball can only call a time-out.
E. If a dead ball situation occurs, either team may call a time-out.

## V. Scoring

A. Score will be kept on the scoreboard & at the official's table.
B. When a team is ahead by 20 points or more, the team that is ahead will not have points added to the score on the scoreboard.

## VI. Defense

A. Both man-to-man and zone defenses are permitted in this league.
B. The ball may be stolen at anytime in this league.
C. When a team is ahead by 10 points, defense must pick-up at half-court.

## VII. Basket Height / Free Throw Line

A. Basket height will be ten (10) feet.
B. 10 & Under Free throws will be shot from the twelve (12) foot line.
C. 12 & Under Free throws will be shot from the regular free throw line (15 feet).

## VIII. Ball Size

A. 10 & Under Boys/Girls - 28.5" ball (official women's size ball)
B. 12 & Under Boys - Official regulation size ball.
C. 12 & Under Girls - 28.5" ball (official women's size)

## IX. Miscellaneous

A. Jump ball will begin the game with alternating possession thereafter.
B. 10 & Under – Five (5) seconds will be allowed in the lane.
C. 12 & Under - Three (3) seconds will be allowed in the lane.
D. Bonus foul shooting (2 Shots) begins on the fifth (5th) team foul of each quarter. Team Fouls reset each quarter.
E. A player receiving his/her fifth personal foul will be disqualified from the remainder of the game.

F. A forfeit is called ten (10) minutes after scheduled game time if one team does not have enough players to start the game.
G. A team may start and end the game with a few as four (4) players.
H. Games will not be rescheduled due to a team conflict with the published schedule. The only games that will be rescheduled will be result of inclement weather or a problem with the facility.
I. All coaches must remain in the bench area.
J. If a coach or a fan is ejected from the game, they will be subject to being ineligible for the next game. Further penalty may be assessed if necessary.
K. There are no protests regarding official's calls.
L. If you believe your record is wrong, you have 2 weeks from the originally scheduled date to notify the Sports Department.
M. Each team must provide an adult volunteer to operate the game clock (Home Team) and the score sheet (Away Team). The game will not begin until these volunteers are at the table. Failure to provide a volunteer could lead to forfeit of the game.
N. The following rules will be the official playing rules. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book. The Sports Director or Sports Coordinator(s) will have the final ruling in all matters.
O. For player safety, jewelry is not allowed during games. This includes earrings, necklaces, etc. Using tape, bandaids or other items to cover is not permitted.

## X. YMCA Mission Statement

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**14 & Under / 16 & Under**

**Developmental League Basketball Rules**

## I. Playing Time

A. League will play Five on Five.
B. All players must play at least half of the game.

## II. Official Game Time

A. (4) Eight Minute Quarters
B. 3 Minutes (3:00) for Half Time
C. The clock will run continuously and will only be stopped for time outs, injuries and the last thiry seconds (:30) of each quarter on all dead ball situations.

## III. Press

A. Full court press is allowed.
B. When a team is ahead by 10 points, they must retreat and allow the offense to cross the mid-court line unimpeded.

## IV. Time Outs

A. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half; time-outs will not carry over from half to half.
B. Time-outs will last approximately one (1) minute.
C. The coach or the players on the court may call time-outs.
D. The team in possession of the ball can only call a time-out.
E. If a dead ball situation occurs, either team may call a time-out.

## V. Scoring

A. Score will be kept on the scoreboard & at the official's table.
B. When a team is ahead by 20 points or more, the team that is ahead will not have points added to the score on the scoreboard.

## VI. Defense

A. Both man-to-man and zone defenses are permitted in this league.
B. The ball may be stolen at anytime in this league.
C. When a team is ahead by 10 points, defense must pick-up at half-court.

## VII. Basket Height / Free Throw Line

A. Basket height will be ten (10) feet.
B. 16 & Under Free throws will be shot from the regular free throw line (15 feet).

## VIII. Ball Size

A. 16 & Under Boys - Official regulation size ball.
B. 16 & Under Girls - 28.5" ball (official women's size)

## IX. Miscellaneous

A. Each team must provide an adult volunteer to operate the game clock (Home Team) and the score sheet (Away Team). The game will not begin until these volunteers are at the table. Failure to provide a volunteer could lead to forfeit of the game.
A. Jump ball will begin the game with alternating possession thereafter.
B. 16 & Under - Three (3) seconds will be allowed in the lane.
C. Bonus foul shooting (2 Shots) begins on the fifth (5th) team foul of each quarter.
D. Team Fouls reset each quarter.

E. A player receiving his/her fifth personal foul will be disqualified from the remainder of the game.
F. A forfeit is called ten (10) minutes after scheduled game time if one team does not have enough players to start the game.
G. A team may start and end the game with a few as four (4) players.
H. Games will not be rescheduled due to a team conflict with the published schedule. The only games that will be rescheduled will be result of inclement weather or a problem with the facility.
I. All coaches must remain in the bench area and be a minimum 18 years of age or older.
J. If a coach, player, or a fan is ejected from the game, they will be subject to being ineligible for the next game. Further penalty may be assessed if necessary.
K. There are no protests regarding official's calls.
L. If you believe your record is wrong, you have 2 weeks from the originally scheduled date to notify the Sports Department.
M. The following rules will be the official playing rules. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book. The Sports Director or Sports Coordinator(s) will have the final ruling in all matters.
N. For player safety, jewelry is not allowed during games. This includes earrings, necklaces, etc. Using tape, bandaids or other items to cover is not permitted.

## X. YMCA Mission Statement

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

# THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

## Spirit League

The following rules will be the official playing rules for all divisions of the YMCA Spirit League. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book.

## Court & Equipment

1. **Ball Size:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 & Under | | 27.5 (Junior Ball) |
| 10 & Under | | 28.5 (Women's Ball) |
| 12 & Under | Boys: | 30.5 (Men's) |
| | Girls: | 28.5 (Women's) |

2. **Goal Height**

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 & Under | 9.0 Feet |
| 10 & Under | 10.0 Feet |
| 12 & Under | 10.0 Feet |

3. **Free-Throw & Lane Count**

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 & Under | Standard Line and 5 second lane count |
| 10 & Under | Standard Line and 5 second lane count |
| 12 & Under | Standard Line and 3 second lane count |

### Players, Substitutes and Equipment

1. **Substitutions** Free Substitution. Equal playing time in periods 1-3. Coaches discretion in the fourth period and overtime.

2. **Uniforms**

Home Team will provide/wear YMCA grey uniforms
Away Team will provide/wear YMCA blue uniforms

### Definitions

1. Refer to the NFHS rulebook.

### Scoring and Timing Regulations

1. **Length of Game**
   A. (4) Eight Minute Quarters
   B. 3 Minutes (3:00) for Half Time
   C. The clock will run continuously and will only be stopped for time outs, injuries and the last thiry seconds (:30) of each quarter on all dead ball situations.

# the YMCA THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

2. **Time-Outs:**
Each team will receive 2 timeouts per half. These are full time-outs lasting 1-minute in length. Time-outs will not carry over.

3. **Overtime:**
Overtime will consist of 1 period, 3 minutes in length, with each team receiving 1 time-out. If the score is still tied after the 1st overtime, games will be recorded as a tie.

During the tournament, if tied at the end of the 1st overtime, a 2nd overtime will start after a 1-minute break. This process will repeat until a winner is determined.

4. **Time-out, Stopping Play**

Time-Out occurs and the clock, if running, shall be stopped for the entire game for:

- Time-Outs & Injuries Only

Time-Out occurs and the clock, if running, shall be stopped within the last minute of each half when the official signals:

- A foul
- A held ball
- A violation
- Injury
- Delay in getting a ball live
- Any Emergency
- Free Throws

**Out of Bounds and the Throw In**

1. **Player Location**

The location of a player or non-player is determined by where the player is touching the floor as far as being:

- Inbounds or out of bounds
- In the frontcourt or backcourt
- Outside (behind/beyond) or inside the three-point field goal line.

**Throw-In – Designated Spot**

The designated throw-in spot is 3 feet wide with no depth limitation and is established by the official prior to putting the ball at the thrower's disposal.

- The thrower must keep one foot on or over the spot until the ball is released. Pivot-foot restrictions and the traveling rule are not in effect for a throw-in.

# THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**Lane Violations**

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 & Under | 5 Seconds |
| 10 & Under | 5 Seconds |
| 12 & Under | 3 Seconds |

1. **Bonus Free Throw**

   - Bonus foul shooting (2 Shots) begins on the fifth (5th) team foul of each quarter. Team Fouls reset each quarter.

**Types of Defense Allowed**

| | |
|---|---|
| **8 & Under** | Wristbands are not used in the Spirit League for Defense. Any type of half court defense is allowed. Full court press is allowed for the entire game unless up by10 points. If up by 10 or more, the defensive team must drop back to half court to allow the player with the ball to cross mid-court unimpeded. See fouls and penalties for violations. |
| **10 & Under** | Any type of half court defense allowed. Full court press allowed for the entire game unless up by 10 points. If up by 10 or more, the defensive team must drop back to half court to allow the player with the ball to cross mid-court unimpeded. See fouls and penalties for violations. |
| **12 & Under** | Any type of half court defense allowed. Full court press allowed for the entire game unless up by 20 points. If up by 20 or more, the defensive team must drop back to half court to allow the player with the ball to cross mid-court unimpeded. See fouls and penalties for violations. |

# THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

**Closely Guarded** – Guarding shall be the act of legally placing the body in the path of an offensive opponent. There is no minimum distance required, but the maximum distance between the guard and opponent shall be 6 feet when closely guarded. This applies when the opponent dribbles the ball or is holding it. The count is separate for both.

**8 & Under / 10 & Under / 12 & Under** 5 Seconds

**Back Court**

**8 & Under / 10 & Under / 12 & Under** 10 Seconds

**Fouls and Penalties**

Fouls are recorded. 5th foul disqualifies player

1. **Technical Fouls**
   - **Player** Upon receiving a technical foul, the player's action will be discussed by the officials and subject to ejection based on severity. Example: Fighting, Foul Language, etc. Any player receiving a second technical foul in a game, will be automatically ejected.
   - **Coach** 1st Technical results in the Coach being required to stay seated on the bench for the remainder of the current game. A 2nd Technical results in ejection from the current game and suspension from the next game. Coach must also meet with their branch specific YMCA Leadership Staff and/or Committee prior to returning to coaching.

**Coach's Rule**

1. One (1) Head Coach and one (1) assistant coach will be allowed on the bench during games.
2. Coaches must remain on or in front of their respective benches.
3. The Head Coach is the only coach allowed to address the officials before, during, or after the game. The assistant coach may confer with players and table personnel but only during dead ball situations.
4. If a player is injured, an official or YMCA staff person will call the coach on the floor. This is for the safety of all the players that could be injured by anyone running on the court unexpectedly.
5. Under no circumstances shall any coach confer with another player or coach from the opposing team in a negative manner. If YMCA staff witnesses such action, that coach will be asked to leave the game and will be under review with the YMCA Sports Committee.
6. Coaches are role models for our athletes, therefore you will be held to the highest YMCA standards of good character and positive behaviors.

# THUNDER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

7. Each team must provide an adult volunteer to operate the game clock (Home Team) and the score sheet (Away Team). The game will not begin until these volunteers are at the table. Failure to provide a volunteer could lead to forfeit of the game.
8. There are no protests regarding official's calls.
9. If a coach, player, or a fan is ejected from the game, they will automatically be ineligible for the next game. Further penalty may be assessed if necessary.
10. If you believe your record is wrong, you have 2 weeks from the originally scheduled date to notify the Sports Department.

11. For player safety, jewelry is not allowed during games. This includes earrings, necklaces, etc. Using tape, bandaids or other items to cover is not permitted.

12. The following rules will be the official playing rules. Should a dispute occur, we will refer to the following set up rules first and then to the NFHS Rule Book. The Sports Director or Sports Coordinator(s) will have the final ruling in all matters.

# Concussion Info

2026 WINTER SPORTS

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City

## Youth Sports Concussion Policy

### Purpose Statement

The YMCA recognizes that concussions, a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI), are serious injuries with negative outcomes that can affect an individual physically, emotionally, behaviorally, and/or cognitively, with the potential for long-term impacts on brain development. While concussions have many causes, these brain injuries are commonly sustained by youth participating in athletics or other recreational activities. The purpose of this policy is to maximize safety with respect to sports, and recreation-related concussions, by educating staff, team and game officials, athletes, and parents/guardians about concussions; providing guidance on how to prevent and manage concussions; and supporting youth returning to activities after a concussion in accordance with Oklahoma state law (70 O.S. § 24-155). This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The YMCA will be responsible for reviewing requirements of state law against this concussion policy and for seeking any technical assistance needed for policy review and revision. The YMCA will be responsible for implementation of the policy.

### Education

On an annual basis, the YMCA will provide athletes and their parents/guardians concussion information on the nature and risk of the injury, including the risk of continuing to play after a concussion. This information will be made available on the YMCA sports website. Athletes and parents/guardians must complete, annually, an acknowledgment form affirming receipt and understanding of the provided concussion information. These acknowledgment forms must be submitted digitally to the YMCA prior to participation in practice or competition. The YMCA will be responsible for verifying receipt of a completed acknowledgment prior to athletics participation. Staff, including volunteers, who knowingly allow an athlete to participate in practice or competition prior to receipt of the completed acknowledgment form will be subject to league discipline.

Adopted 1.1.2021

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# YMCA Youth Sports Concussion Plan

## Players

- Educate regarding signs and symptoms of concussion, as well as misguided information.
- Provide educational materials via YMCA sports website
- Require mouth pieces for Flag Football and Tackle Football.
- Recommend mouth pieces for all sports.
- A player receiving any type of head impact regardless of source, will be removed from the game and will be unable to return.

## Parents/Guardians

- Educate regarding signs and symptoms of concussion, as well as misguided information.
- Offer CDC Heads Up Concussion Training
- Provide educational materials via YMCA sports website
- Encourage support of coaches or officials decisions to remove players from practices/games if a concussion is suspected.
- Provide medical clearance documentation to YMCA & coach prior to allowing player to return.
- Follow the 3 R's, recognize, respond, return to play, in the event of a suspected concussion.

## Coaches/Assistant Coaches

- Educate regarding signs and symptoms of concussion, as well as misguided information.
- Require NFHS or CDC Heads Up Concussion Training
- Provide educational materials via YMCA sports website
- Provide parents with concussion symptoms document in the event of a suspected concussion.
- Provide or confirm medical clearance documentation to YMCA Program Director prior to allowing player to return.
- Follow the 3 R's, recognize, respond, return to play, in the event of a suspected concussion.

## Officials

- Educate regarding signs and symptoms of concussion, as well as misguided information.
- Require NFHS or CDC Heads Up Concussion Training
- Provide educational materials via YMCA sports website
- Any team or game official who becomes aware or suspects that a child has sustained a concussion should immediately remove the child from the practice or game. Child should be removed from play when:
    - A child has taken, or is suspected to have taken, a blow or impact to the head or body with potential to cause a concussion.
    - A team or game official becomes aware or suspects that a child is exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with sustaining a concussion.
- The game official will be responsible for documenting the circumstances of the injury, notifying the athlete's parents/guardians, coach and YMCA Leadership and, when appropriate, enacting the emergency action plan.

Adopted 1.1.2021

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FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Penalties

Per Oklahoma Concussion Policies, Youth Sports Organizations must include in concussion policies predetermined penalties for team and game officials who do not remove an athlete from play upon a suspected concussion. Oklahoma's concussion law sets minimum penalty standards and also prohibits assessing monetary fines as penalties. Organizational leadership may establish more severe penalties than these minimums, but all penalties should be established in policy before enforcement. The following are the minimum penalties required by state law:

First violation: Required completion of additional concussion recognition and management education as predetermined by the governing board. Additional training must be documented, with record of completion readily available upon request.

Second violation: Suspension from the sport or activity until an appearance in front of the governing board. The appearance before the governing board may involve a determination as to whether the individual will continue in their role with the organization.

The YMCA Sports Committee will serve in the role of the governing board for YMCA Youth Sports League.

## The 3 R's

**Recognize**
- Learn what a concussion is and how it affects an individual.
- Learn the symptoms and warning signs of a concussion.
- Follow the Respond steps in the event of a suspected injury.

**Respond**
- Remove child from game/practice.
    - Children who have been removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion will not be allowed to return to play the same day.
- Notify parents and league officials.
- Seek medical attention.
- Record detailed information regarding incident or past history.
- Keep child out of play until medically cleared.

**Return to Play**
- Child should have returned to all activities of daily living and be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before starting the Return to Play protocol.
- Obtain medical clearance from child's physician.
- Secure new program waiver signed by parent/guardian.
- Encourage parent/guardian to follow and document child's progress using the "Getting Back in the Game Program".
    - Perform light aerobic exercise (No weightlifting, jumping, hard running).
    - Gradually add activities that increase an athlete's heart rate and incorporate limited body or head movement.
    - Gradually increase activity to include a heavy non-contact physical activity.
    - Reintegrate child into practices.
    - Place child back into play, while monitoring for returning symptoms.

# Concussion Facts
## Coaches



## What is a concussion?

When an athlete gets their “bell rung” or gets “lit up” they have suffered a concussion. A concussion is a type of *traumatic brain injury (TBI)* caused by a bump, blow, hit, or jolt to the head or body that moves the head and brain rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce or twist inside the skull, sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain. The effects of a concussion can be serious and should be treated as such. The brain continues to grow and develop into the mid-twenties; disruptions to that development from a TBI in childhood or adolescence can have long-term consequences on the brain’s functioning.



## When an athlete takes a hit

If you suspect an athlete has sustained a concussion, **immediately** remove them from play. Do **not** allow the athlete to return to play on the same day as the injury (unless the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider who provides *written* clearance allowing same-day return to play). Record the time and circumstances of the injury, along with any concussion signs/symptoms you observe or the athlete reports to you, and provide this information to the medical team.



## WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT

The brain needs time to heal after a concussion. An athlete who continues to play or who returns to play too soon – before the brain has finished healing – has a greater chance of getting another concussion. **A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing can be very serious and can affect an athlete for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.**



**MYTH:** A concussion always causes you to lose consciousness (pass out).

**FACT:** Most concussions don’t cause you to pass out. In fact, concussion **symptoms may not appear for hours or days after the hit.**

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

There are many signs and symptoms of a concussion. **Concussion symptoms may appear minutes, hours, or days after the initial injury.** Symptoms may be physical, emotional, behavioral, or cognitive (affect thinking). You may observe these signs in an athlete or the athlete may report symptoms to you.

## Physical

- Headache or pressure in the head
- Dizziness, balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to noise, ringing in ears
- Sensitivity to light, blurry or double vision
- Feels tired
- Tingling
- Does not "feel right"
- Seems dazed, stunned

## Emotional/Behavioral

- Becomes irritable
- Becomes sad or depressed
- More emotional than usual
- Anxious or nervous
- Personality or behavioral changes, such as becoming impulsive

## Cognitive

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble remembering, can't recall events before or after the hit
- Feels sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Feels "slowed down"
- Repeats questions or answers questions more slowly
- Confusion
- Forgets routine things

# DANGER SIGNS

If one or more of these signs emerges after a hit to the head or body, **IMMEDIATELY** call 911 or tell the parent/guardian to take the athlete to the nearest emergency room.

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsy or cannot wake up
- Headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness
- Decreased coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Repeated vomiting or ongoing nausea
- Shaking or twitching (convulsions or seizures)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation

**Learn more: concussion.health.ok.gov | 405.426.8440**

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OKLAHOMA State Department of Health

OKLAHOMA Education

# Concussion Facts
## Parents & Guardians



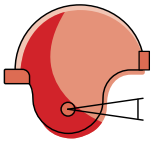
## What is a concussion?

When an athlete gets their “bell rung” or gets “lit up” they have suffered a concussion. Concussions are a type of *traumatic brain injury (TBI)*. When a child or adolescent sustains a concussion, their brain may bounce or twist inside the skull, sometimes stretching or damaging brain cells and causing chemical changes within the brain. This movement interrupts the brain’s functioning and can impact your child physically, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally.



## How do concussions happen?

Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, hit, or jolt to the head or body that moves the head and brain rapidly back and forth. Common causes are falls and being hit against or by another person or object. Your child’s head does not have to be struck to cause a concussion — a body-to-body hit has the potential to cause a concussion.



## Can concussion risk be reduced?

**YES!** There are ways to reduce your child’s risk of a concussion. Talk to your child about practicing good sportsmanship and following coaches’ instructions for safe game play. Make sure bicycle, athletic, and ATV helmets fit properly and are worn consistently. While a helmet doesn’t prevent a concussion, it does protect your child’s head from more severe head injuries. Make sure your child’s school and sports organizations have established concussion policies and protocols; they should have procedures in place for coach training and returning to learn and play after a concussion.



## Can my child keep playing after a concussion?

The brain needs time to heal after a concussion. An athlete who *continues to play* or who *returns to play too soon* — before the brain has finished healing — has a greater chance of getting another concussion. **A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing can be very serious and can affect a child for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.** If you suspect your child has sustained a concussion during a practice or a game, make sure they are **immediately** removed from play. Do **not** allow your child to return to play on the same day as the injury.

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

There are many signs and symptoms of a concussion. **Concussion symptoms may appear minutes, hours, or days after the initial injury.** Symptoms may be physical, emotional, behavioral, or cognitive (affect thinking). You may observe these signs in your child or your child may report symptoms to you.

## Physical

- Headache or pressure in the head
- Dizziness, balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to noise, ringing in ears
- Sensitivity to light, blurry or double vision
- Feels tired
- Tingling
- Does not "feel right"
- Seems dazed, stunned

## Emotional/Behavioral

- Becomes irritable
- Becomes sad or depressed
- More emotional than usual
- Anxious or nervous
- Personality or behavioral changes, such as becoming impulsive

## Cognitive

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble remembering, can't recall events before or after the hit
- Feels sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Feels "slowed down"
- Repeats questions or answers questions more slowly
- Confusion
- Forgets routine things

# DANGER SIGNS

If one or more of these signs emerges after a hit to the head or body, **IMMEDIATELY** call 911 or take your child to the nearest emergency room.

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsy or cannot wake up
- Headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness
- Decreased coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Repeated vomiting or ongoing nausea
- Shaking or twitching (convulsions or seizures)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation

**Learn more: concussion.health.ok.gov | 405.426.8440**

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OKLAHOMA State Department of Health

OKLAHOMA Education

# Concussion Facts
## Youth Athletes



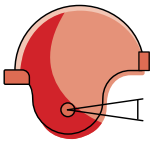
## What is a concussion?

When an athlete gets their "bell rung" or gets "lit up" they have suffered a concussion. Concussions are a type of *traumatic brain injury (TBI)*. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, hit, or jolt to the head or body that moves the head and brain rapidly back and forth. Falling or being hit against or by another person or object are common causes of concussions. Your head doesn't have to be struck to cause a concussion; for example, a body-to-body hit has the potential to cause a concussion.



## What does a concussion do to my brain?

When you experience a concussion, your brain may bounce or twist inside your skull, sometimes stretching or damaging brain cells and causing chemical changes within the brain. A concussion interrupts your brain's functioning. When your brain is injured by a concussion, the injury can affect you physically, emotionally, behaviorally, and/or cognitively (how you think).



## Can concussion risk be reduced?

**YES!** There are ways to reduce your risk of a concussion. Practice good sportsmanship and follow your coach's instructions for safe game play. If you play contact sports, learn the fundamentals and appropriate techniques. Make sure bicycle, athletic, and ATV helmets fit properly and are worn consistently. While a helmet doesn't prevent a concussion, it does protect your head from more severe injuries.



## Can I keep playing after a concussion?

Your brain needs time to heal after a concussion. If you *continue to play* or *return to play too soon*—before your brain has finished healing—you have a greater chance of getting another concussion. **A repeat concussion that occurs while your brain is still healing can be very serious and can affect you for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.** If you think you may have sustained a concussion during a practice or game, **immediately** talk to your coach, game official, athletic trainer, or parent/guardian and **remove yourself from play.** Do **not** return to play on the same day as the injury. You need to see a health care provider to be evaluated for a concussion and given written clearance to return to play.

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

There are many signs and symptoms of a concussion. **Concussion symptoms may appear minutes, hours, or days after the initial injury.** Symptoms may be physical, emotional, behavioral, or cognitive (affect thinking). You may notice these symptoms yourself or someone else may observe them. If you experience any of these symptoms after a blow to the head or body, tell someone immediately.

## Physical

- Headache or pressure in the head
- Dizziness, balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to noise, ringing in ears
- Sensitivity to light, blurry or double vision
- Feel tired
- Tingling
- Do not “feel right”
- Feel dazed, stunned

## Emotional/Behavioral

- Become irritable
- Become sad or depressed
- More emotional than usual
- Anxious or nervous
- Personality or behavioral changes such as becoming impulsive

## Cognitive

- Trouble thinking clearly
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble remembering, can’t recall events before or after the hit
- Feel sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Feel “slowed down”
- Repeat questions or answer questions more slowly
- Confusion
- Forget routine things

# DANGER SIGNS

If one or more of these symptoms emerges after a hit to the head or body, **IMMEDIATELY** call 911 or get someone to drive you to the nearest emergency room.

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsy or cannot wake up
- Headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness
- Decreased coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Repeated vomiting or ongoing nausea
- Shaking or twitching (convulsions or seizures)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation

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OKLAHOMA Education