



Youth Sports FAQ's

What is the Juneau Parks & Recreation Philosophy regarding youth sports programming?

The Juneau Parks & Recreation Department youth sports program is oriented towards providing a healthy recreational and social learning experience for children. Fun and sportsmanship are emphasized rather than competitive attitudes. The youth sports program strives to provide an enjoyable learning experience for youth through sports, with the utmost importance placed on the wellbeing of the participant. The program is designed with rules and guidelines that allows each participant fair treatment throughout the season; to stimulate a higher level of self-esteem for participants; to teach fundamentals and skills; and to teach the team sport concept.

Youth leagues are open to all abilities and no child will be turned away from our programs.

What is the registration process?

The registration fee for all youth sports programs, with the exception of Pee Wee Basketball and Start Smart, is \$55 +tax. Registration will take place over a 10 day period. After the 10 days, a \$10 late fee will be added. Once all the spots for the league are full, children will be placed on the waitlist. No payment is expected at that time. Every effort will be made to move a child over the waitlist.

Registration takes place online, in person, over fax or email. Payment is expected at the time of the transaction.

A refund or credit will be given if notification is received 3 working days prior to the first league game. For medical cancellation, a physician's statement is required and a partial refund will be given, prorated to the date of notification. If a refund is requested, a \$5 service charge per participant is assessed. If a credit is requested, there is no charge. Credit must be used 1 year from date of issue.

To play "up" a league, a child must turn the age of the division by the last day of play. For volleyball, a player's division is determined by their grade level and there is no playing "up". Children who are four must turn 5 by a pre-determined date in the season.

What if the division I want to register my child in is full?

Registration takes place until a division is full. When a league is full, a child is placed on the waitlist. No payment is expected at the time of that transaction; once a child can be registered, payment will be charged. Each child on the waitlist is numbered as they come in.

The process is after the first week of games and practices, the recreation coordinator reaches out to coaches to ask if anyone can take another player. If a registered player drops out, waitlisted players will be moved to the team.

How do I apply for a scholarship?

Juneau Parks & Recreation Youth Scholarship program is designed to provide financial assistance to youth who may not otherwise be able to participate in youth activities. The scholarships are for children ages 3-18 and/or through high school, unless the program is intended for disabled youth, in which case the program may server youth no older than 20 years of age.

Special requests?

Specific requests for team assignments made by parents will be considered on an individual basis. Decisions related to these requests will be made only by staff and will be based on the merits of what is best for the child and the program. P&R attempts to honor requests for transportation purposes but retains the right to deny any request in order to maintain control over team balance. Both parties must make the request at the time of registration. Siblings will not be automatically be placed together; please indicate on the form if you want them playing together.

Night requests are almost impossible to accommodate. There are a limited number of practice slots and practice nights are dependent on coach availability. If a child ends up on a night they cannot practice, please notify the Recreation Coordinator. They will send out an email to teams on a different night and see if another child can swap practice times.

Please notify the Recreation Coordinator of any requests your family may have. Requests are not guaranteed.

Why aren't coach requests accepted?

The Juneau Parks & Recreation Department believes children should be exposed to a variety of coaching styles and coaches. This promotes flexibility and learning different skills and drills.

How many kids are on each team?

We try to keep our teams at a size that is manageable for the coach and allow substitutes for games. For outdoor soccer, team sizes range from 8 kids in our youngest division to 16 kids in our oldest division. Indoor soccer teams range from 8-10 kids in all divisions. Basketball teams max out at 10 kids. Youth volleyball teams max out at 8 kids.

How are teams put together?

The following procedure for selection of youth sports is a result of recommendations made by participants, the recreation subcommittee, and staff. This procedure will be used in forming teams in each youth sports league.

1. Youth player registration will be open for a ten working day period or until spaces available are filled, prior to assigning teams.
2. Registration must be made by a parent or legal guardian (signature required on waiver) at the Juneau Parks and Recreation office, the Zach Gordon Youth Center, or sent through the mail, by FAX or online.
3. Coaches rating from prior seasons may be utilized as an indicator of skill level.
4. On a predetermined date, the Recreation Coordinator will place registered players on teams, after determining a minimum and maximum number of team rosters. Teams will be formed with the minimum number of players when possible. This will be determined by number of registrants. Team assignments will be made according to the following criteria:
 - a. Where players attend school (downtown/Douglas or valley).
 - b. Age group (5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, though older age groups may be combined).
 - c. Skill ability as rated by parent and/or coach/recreation staff (to achieve a balance on teams)
 - d. The player's gender. Children will not be discriminated against based on their gender identity. P&R youth sports believes a child should be able to play in the same gender division as they identify with.
 - e. Special requests will be allowed for immediate family members to be placed on the same team (i.e., brothers or sisters placed together or parent assigned to coach their child's team). One coach per team will be allowed to request that their own child play on their team. Assistant coach or co-coach requests will be considered on an individual basis.
5. Specific requests for team assignments made by parents will be considered on an individual basis. Decisions related to these requests will be made only by staff and will be based on the merits of what is best for the child and the program. Parks and Recreation will attempt to honor requests for transportation purposes but must retain the right to deny any request in order to maintain control over team balance. Coach requests will not be considered.
6. Registration will be open after teams are chosen but only on a space-available basis. Late registration will be placed according to skill levels needed to balance the division and the number of open positions on rosters.

It feels like my child's team is not as advanced as other teams in the league. What gives?

When putting teams together, the recreation staff looks at the child's rating, comments from previous coaches, and whether or not the child is a part of a club team. Unfortunately, sometimes that information is missing from registrations submitted by parents or coaches have failed to fill out the end of season evaluation. This can lead to teams being uneven. Parents can help prevent this by filling out the rating appropriately and encouraging their coach to fill out the end of season evaluation. If your child is part of a club program, please take that into account when rating your child.

Once teams are made, changes will not be made.

Why aren't parents notified about teams and schedules sooner?

Schedules and rosters are made available to families the same week as the first practice. For a lot of families, this can cause a bit of anxiety because they are trying to plan out activities for everyone involved.

There are several factors that play into why schedules are not made available earlier.

- 1) Finding coaches for each team: Each league has between 20-40 teams, which means finding 20-40 people willing to volunteer to coach and pass a background check. Several times, coaches have not been secured until the week the season starts. Having a long lead time allows the Recreation Coordinator to secure and screen volunteers who will work with your children.
- 2) Scheduling practices and games: For each league, there are limited time slots available for practices. The Recreation Coordinator has to balance the needs of the volunteer coach with what is available for gym and field time. This means a lot of time is spent working with the coaches to make sure that they are on a night that works for their family within the constraints of gym availability.
- 3) Registration: The Recreation Coordinator leaves registration open long enough to allow families to register and to ensure that age divisions will have an even number of teams.
- 4) Putting teams together: teams in each age division should be balanced by skill level, age and gender. Other considerations taken into account include siblings, and carpooling. The Recreation Coordinator must try to balance each team with the needs of the division and the needs of the parent/guardian. This requires a lot of shuffling, talking with previous coaches and double checking rosters.

What is the cancelation policy due to weather/unforeseen events?

Games and practices are occasionally cancelled due to severe weather or an unforeseen event. In the event of a cancelation, P&R will notify coaches as soon as possible. Coaches will notify their teams. P&R will also send an email blast out to families with information regarding the cancelation.

Occasionally, an unforeseen event will lead a practice or game to be cancelled. For instance, the school may fail to notify community schools that they will have an event in their building or a school monitor may not show up. P&R will notify families as soon as they are made aware of the situation. Cancelled practices are not rescheduled. Cancelled games are rescheduled if both coaches agree, staff is available and time is available at a field or gym.

What are the facility procedures?

If a school is locked, please do not attempt to enter. This is trespassing! Please do not contact a teacher you know or the principal of the school. They are not responsible for P&R activities.

Please remember we are guests in the gym. In order for us to have continued use of these facilities we must treat them accordingly. Please urge team members and parents to cooperate with the following:

- 1) All facilities are drug free zones and smoking is not allowed on school property (entryways & parking lots)
- 2) Please do not park in fire lanes. Illegally parked cars are subject to impoundment.
- 3) An adult must supervise all young children brought to the gym at all times.
- 4) After the last game or practice of the evening, please leave the gym promptly.
- 5) No glass containers

- 6) Game shoes should be carried into the gym.
- 7) Black-soled shoes will not be allowed in the gym. If a shoe marks the floor, the shoe will not be allowed on the floor.

What is the code of conduct and how is it enforced?

There is a standard of conduct expected from every person associated with the Juneau Parks & Recreation youth sports program. Game and league rules control participant conduct on the field during play. Participants must also be responsible for their conduct during practices and when not actively participating in a game. Appropriate conduct also relates to coaches, parents, referees, and Parks & Recreation staff.

Inappropriate conduct can be any of the following. But is not limited to: hitting, pushing verbal abuse, intimidation, alcohol or drug use prior to or during games/practices and poor sports conduct, including arousing spectators against a referee, player, and team or Parks & Recreation staff.

Each spectator, participant, coach and assistant coach agrees to abide by our Code of Conduct.

- I will not yell at officials, coaches, other adults or my child while they are playing
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I will not ridicule anyone involved in a youth sporting event
- I will not curse or use abusive language
- I will not coach from the sidelines
- I will not use any form of electronic media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to harass, verbally assault or bully any member of the Parks & Recreation Program
- I will not disrupt coaches during meetings, games or practices
- I will be a positive spectator and engage in positive cheering from the parent sideline. Insulting comments, arguing and challenging the coaches or officials will not be tolerated
- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship by being supportive of all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or youth sport event
- I will remember that is a program and game for KIDS, not adults.

At the time of a transgression, the referee will act. For the first offense, the referee will ask the spectator or child to stop their behavior and inform the coach that they have spoken to someone about their actions and ask the coach to be aware of the person's behavior. The second time, the referee will issue a yellow card and will call the Recreation Coordinator to let them know what is happening. The third time the person will be asked to leave. The referee will submit a report and the Recreation Coordinator will take it from there.

The Recreation Coordinator will speak with people attending the game or practice to ask what happened. The Recreation Coordinator will also speak with the person involved to hear their side of the incident. Once all the information has been gathered, the Recreation Coordinator will set up a meeting with the person. Consequences for breaking the code of conduct include: a letter of reprimand; suspension for 1 game or practice; a season suspension; suspension for 1 year of all Parks & Recreation activities; a lifetime ban. Serious offenses require the person to meet with the Recreation Coordinator and the Zach Gordon Youth Center manager. All suspensions of more than 1 game or practice will be discussed with the Zach Gordon Youth Center manager before implementation.

What do I do if I have a concern or complaint about a coach?

If you have an issue with a coach, we ask that you address it with them first. Usually, a coach is unaware that something is wrong. They are dealing with a team of 10-16 kids and they cannot be aware all the time of each individual child's emotions. And, occasionally, kids do not let a coach know that they are feeling upset so it can be missed. Contacting the coach first and explaining the situation, be it their child feels like they are not getting the same amount of play time, or you feel like there is

favoritism on the team, can rectify the situation. If you do not see improvement after the conversation, you should reach out to the Recreation Coordinator, who will take over and follow up with the coach.

If you have a serious concern, safety or otherwise, we ask that you contact the Recreation Coordinator. Please submit your concern via email or written word. This will help create a record of documentation of the event in question. Complaints are kept anonymous.

The RC will investigate the concern and take appropriate action. The Recreation Coordinator will contact team family members and spectators to ask if they have any knowledge of what happened or saw the issue firsthand. The investigation will be anonymous, and the coach will not have knowledge of who made the complaint.

Immediate safety concerns should be addressed at the time of the event. Speak with the coach about your safety concern who will immediately address it.

What do I do if I have a concern or complaint about a referee?

If you have a concern or complaint about a referee, please do not address the referee. If it is an immediate safety issue, please speak with your coach, who will address it. The coach will also notify the RC of any issues.

At no point should a parent speak with a youth referee. Parents are also forbidden from harassing or verbally abusing youth referees. Any such behavior will result in an automatic ejection from the game.

What are parents' and spectators' responsibilities?

Parents/guardians should notify the appropriate coach and staff any medical concerns or conditions that might affect the child during play.

Parents/guardians should introduce themselves to the coach(es) and participate in the beginning season team meeting. This is your chance to ask questions about the coach's philosophy, practice and game expectations and team expectations. Establishing a positive relationship from the start will help keep the season going in the right direction for both the coach and the parent.

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying coaches if their child will not make it to a practice or game. Please pick up your child within 5 minutes of the end of practice. Coaches cannot leave a child unattended, so your prompt action ensures that a coach can leave a game or practice. Habitual failure by a parent to not pick up their child in a timely manner will result in speaking with the Recreation Coordinator.

We are guests in community schools around town. If chairs or bleachers have been put out for games and practices, please help put them away. Clean up the space around you when you leave.

Check in with your child's coach to see how you can help with the team. The coach is a volunteer and may need other adults to help with keeping track of time and subs, creating a snack schedule, setting up a phone/text tree.

Parents, spectators, and guardians should abide by the code of conduct during games and practices. Sports can be an emotionally charged environment, and sometimes our emotions get the better of us. Yelling at referees, coaching from the bench or saying negative things about the children playing is prohibited.

Please remember:

- 1) These are kids
- 2) This is a game
- 3) Coaches are volunteers
- 4) The Referees and umpires are human
- 5) Spectators should cheer for everyone
- 6) No college scholarships will be handed out

Adults should model positive behaviors: cheer for good plays, regardless of who made it; treat the coach as an ally and help out where you can; and be respectful to other adults, children, officials and the coaches.