

Youth Sports Coach Handbook

Thomaston Upson
Recreation Department
P. O. Box 672
Thomaston, GA 30286
706-647-9691_

Youth Sports Volunteer

JOB DESCRIPTION

- TITLE** Volunteer Coach for the Thomaston Upson County Recreation Department
- DESCRIPTION** Coach of male and or female athletes 18 years and under
You will be considered a role model for young athletes assigned to your team; therefore sportsmanship, fair play, and full participation are all mandatory.
- RESPONSIBILITIES**
- *Plan and supervise games, practices and events
 - *Supervise assistant coaches and team parents
 - *Teach the young athlete the fundamentals of the sport
 - *Encourage the involvement of the parents in the sport
 - *Schedule and conduct parent and other necessary team meetings
 - *Provide a safe and fun environment for the children
 - *Learn and follow ALL league rules, policies and procedures
 - *Give each player required playing time
 - *Put the well being of players ahead of your desire to win
 - *Attend all league meetings, classes, tryouts, and functions
- QUALIFICATIONS**
- *Successfully complete the application procedure and pass a background check
 - *Attend any scheduled coaches meetings
 - *Successfully complete the SIMPLY THE BEST certification program
 - *Be enthusiastic
 - *Not want to win at all costs
 - *Must be patient, especially with children
 - *Be organized. Organization is critical to your success!
 - *Be dependable

I agree that I have read and understand the above job description of a youth sports coaching position, and I accept the terms of the job description.

Applicant signature

Name (printed clearly)

Date

Please note: Failure to sign this page will render coach's application incomplete.

THOMASTON UPSON RECREATION DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTEER YOUTH COACH APPLICATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE _____

WORK OR CELL _____

PROGRAM/SPORT
WISHING
TO VOLUNTEER _____

Please list any special training, skills, experience you have that would make you a good candidate for a Thomaston Upson Recreation Department Youth Coach.

Please list any special certifications you possess (ie: CPR, medical, etc)

Previous volunteer/work experiences

Have you ever been refused participation in any program? Yes or No If, yes please explain.

Please list two references, at least one which has knowledge of your participation in a volunteer capacity.

Name	Relationship	Phone Number
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COACHES

Responsibilities & Expectations

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He/she should be sensitive to the children's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He/she should be dedicated to serving children and understand that youth sports provides physical and emotional growth for participants. Remember, youth sports are for the children.
2. A coach needs to realize that he/she is a teacher and not a drill sergeant. He/she should help children to learn and work to improve skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the child transforms into the best interests of the game.
3. The safety and welfare of the children should never be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push children beyond limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the youth sports experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is meant to be fun.
5. A coach should care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth sports program is a means to an end, not an end to itself.
6. A coach should encourage his players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. A coach needs to remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. He/she should never circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his/her opponents' team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He/she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he/she gets from the players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.

Coaches' Code of Conduct & Code of Ethics

1. *I will honor the fact that youth sports exist for youth, not adults.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Maintaining a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
- b. Exercising your authority/influence to control behavior of fans and spectators.
- c. Exhibiting gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
- d. Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to participation of adults and youth. Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the follow the spirit of those rules.
- e. Fulfilling the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a “children first” philosophy.
- f. Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
- g. Placing emphasis on fun, participation and team.

2. *I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child and other children involved.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well being.
- b. Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team.
- c. Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
- d. Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and when interacting with youth.

3. *I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Establishing practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players skills and individual abilities.
- b. Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
- c. Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

4. *I will exercise good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players & officials at every game, practice or other sports event.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Adopting the position, teaching and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others as we would like to be treated.
- b. Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
- c. Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
- d. Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect fair sportsmanship and fair play.

5. *I will make sure all children play in a safe, healthy environment.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- b. Protecting players from sexual molestations, assault, physical abuse and emotional abuse.
- c. Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- d. Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- e. Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.

6. *I will insist that my team exercise good sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, fans, and other players.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Becoming knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
- b. Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players, so that with this understanding good sportsmanship can be maintained.
- c. Teaching techniques that reduce risk of injury to both the coach's own players and their opponents.
- d. Discouraging illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

7. *I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. I will refrain from their use at all Thomaston-Upson Recreation Department youth sports events.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- b. Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players
- c. Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug or tobacco products to any of your players
- d. Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

8. *I will place the safety and physical development of my players ahead of my personal desire to win.*

Expected Behavior:

- a. Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with league officials, players, game officials, parents and spectators. ***At no time is profanity acceptable.***
- b. Including all players in team activities with out regard to race, religion, sex, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability or any other legally protected classification.
- c. Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- d. Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the playing by the spirit of those rules.
- e. Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
- f. Allowing reasonable absences from practices.

9. *I will support other coaches and league officials..*

Expected Behavior:

- a. I will back and support league officials and coaches when working with my players and parents. I will enforce league rules.
- b. If I have concerns or questions, I will direct them to league official or coach at an appropriate time, not during a practice or game. I will not criticize another coach, an official, or a league official in front of my players or parents.
- c. I will cooperate and offer assistance when ever I can.

10. I will remember that children play, referees call, fans cheer and coaches TEACH. Anytime someone steps out of their area of responsibility, a strain is created on every other areas involved.

SIMPLY THE BEST

Youth Coaches Characteristics

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT COACH?

Listed below are the essential qualities of this individual.

1. **Must see self as teacher.** Not just a coach. Your main responsibility is to educate by teaching skills of the game and "Life Skills."
2. **Must be motivated to help.** Your ego can be major limitation. Showcase the kids, not yourself. Success is measured by growth, not wins.
3. **Must make games and practices fun.** Praise players and be careful to avoid yelling.
4. **Transform negative into positive.** With so much failure associated with Youth Sports, staying positive is vital.
5. **Must be a student of the game.** Learn as much as you can. Be receptive to new information.
6. **Must be organized.** Establish practice, game and emergency plans.
7. **Must emphasize efforts not results.**
8. **Must establish rules and enforce them.** Where there is no discipline, there is no learning. Be fair and equal.
9. **Be a positive example.** You are a role model. How you are remembered is up to YOU.

GRIEVANCE AGAINST A COACH **PROCEDURE**

When the Thomaston Upson Recreation Department receives a grievance/complaint about a member coach, the Department will:

1. Review the Youth Sports Complaint form and gather information from parties involved, to determine if a violation of letter or intent of the Coaches' Code of Ethics has occurred. This may include game officials and other coaches, parents and children as deemed necessary by Recreation Department staff.
2. Speak directly with member coach to address the complaint.
3. The Recreation Staff/League Administrator has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Code of Ethics that comprise the Code of Conduct.
4. The Recreation Staff/League Administrator, after approval from the Recreation Director, has the ability to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in Thomaston Upson Recreation guidelines.
5. If a coach appeals the decision made by the Recreation Department, a local review committee will be organized. It shall consist of Recreation Director, member of Thomaston Upson Recreation Commission and one coach from the league. It will be the Department's responsibility to name one coach per league at the beginning of season, who will sit on review committee, if needed.
6. The accused coach has two business days from the delivery of the decision, to make appeal. He/she will be notified that there is a formal appeal process. If an appeal does occur, it must be done in writing to League Administrator.
7. **The Thomaston Upson County Recreation Department will follow up each YOUTH SPORTS COMPLAINT FORM with a phone call and written notification to person registering complaint. It may be to explain no violation had occurred and no action being taken or it will be to update as to progress of complaint procedure.**

ENFORCEMENT

CODE OF CONDUCT AND COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

The Thomaston Upson County Recreation Department, along with the SIMPLY THE BEST, are dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of code of conduct among its coaches.

This Code of Conduct defines the expectations for adults serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used by the Thomaston Upson Recreation Department, when necessary, to check behavior and to respond with resolve to protect children from psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

The Thomaston Upson Recreation Department and Simply the Best firmly believe that for the sports experience to be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when with and around children. Every Simply the Best member is required to sign and adhere to a Coach's Code of Ethics Pledge. The **Code of Conduct** has been developed to help explain how each of the "canons" of the Simply the Best Code of Ethics should be demonstrated in the actions and behaviors of a Simply the Best certified coach.

It is the duty of the Thomaston Upson Recreation Department to respond to complaints lodged against any coach that has allegedly violated the Code of Ethics. This is accomplished by initiating the YOUTH SPORTS COMPLAINT procedure. The purpose of this procedure is to make the Department aware of complaint and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the member coach's behavior. In order to provide the Recreation Department the flexibility to take appropriate action when a coach is found to have violated the Coaches' Code of Ethics, a range of possible actions has been developed to accompany the Code of Conduct.

Possible Actions Include:

1. Warning to and/or apology from coach
2. Probation
3. One game suspension
4. Multiple game suspension
5. Season suspension
6. Permanent revocation of certification

When reviewing a complaint and deciding what action is most appropriate in a given situation, the Recreation Department must take into consideration various extenuating circumstances.

Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:

- a. First offense
- b. Remorse
- c. Apparent desire to reform
- d. Other good coaching attributes
- e. Dedication to youth sports

Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:

- a. Child endangerment
- b. Violation of law
- c. Prior complaints/review action
- d. Lack of remorse
- e. Number of ethics canons violated
- f. Number of expected behaviors violated
- g. Breach of duties as role model