



# HOW TO START A LITTLE DRIBBLER LEAGUE IN YOUR COMMUNITY



The following material is intended to acquaint you with Little Dribblers' Basketball, Inc. and to assist you in the organization and operation of a league in your community.

Little Dribblers' provides a pattern for the operation of your program that has been developed, tested and proven through the experience of thousands of volunteers such as yourself since 1969.

Little Dribblers' Basketball, Inc. is the administrative organization for local youth basketball leagues primarily in the State of Texas. Regional and National Tournaments are available in the following age divisions.

Ages 10 and under Junior Boys and Girls

Ages 12 and under Major Boys and Girls

Ages 14 and under Senior Boys and Girls

Little Dribblers' Basketball leagues are designed for community action to help boys and girls develop into better adults through participation in organized, supervised recreation.

Sportsmanship, team work, self-reliance and self-discipline are among the attributes needed to ensure that kids become productive citizens. These attributes can be learned through participation in organized basketball programs.

In essence, Little Dribblers believes that if you teach youth to play by the rules, they will learn to live by the rules.

## **PROGRAM**

Little Dribblers is not a program designed for a few highly skilled athletes. It is designed to serve as many youths in the community as possible, who are sincerely interested in the game of basketball. Little Dribblers' Basketball believes that the best way to improve the overall basketball skills in the community is to improve the fundamental skills in all kids who have an interest in the game rather than only making the game available to those few who can afford to play in tournament after tournament.

The goal for the local leagues should be player development. Coaches should spend a considerable amount of practice time working on teaching the fundamentals of basketball. Developing fundamental skills in every player no matter their ability must be a priority.

Competitive play is an important aspect of the game but it is not the only aspect. Players must first learn the fundamental skills.

All team members are playing members. Each player on a team must play at least one, full, uninterrupted quarter each game. Basketball is a team sport. All players should be allowed to contribute to the team no matter their ability level.

## **ORGANIZATION**

Little Dribblers is designed as a community project. Our divisions are determined and divided by the size of the local school district. The goal is for like sized leagues to compete against each other creating a level playing field for all leagues.

The first step in starting a Little Dribbler league in your community is to notify the Little Dribblers' headquarters of your interest to start a league. This will allow us to put your name and contact information in our database so that you receive all information that you will need for the upcoming season. The best way to accomplish this step is to send an email with all of your contact information. Email [cara@littledribblers.org](mailto:cara@littledribblers.org). Please include your name, address and primary contact phone number, name of your community, name of your local school district.

### **FORM A COMMITTEE**

Your next step should be to organize a committee of other parents and community leaders that share your interest in starting a youth basketball league in your community. We recommend that you visit with the basketball coaches from the school in your area. Coaches can usually provide you with names of people in the area that are supportive of their basketball program that would see the benefit of a youth basketball program in your area.

### **PLAN YOUR MEETING**

With the help of your committee, schedule an organizational meeting. Make a list of community leaders that would be of assistance in organizing your league. Some people to consider are: school coaches, Chamber of Commerce, City Recreational personnel, bankers, local civic groups such as Lions Club, Rotary Club, church youth ministers. Be sure to include your local school superintendent since you will most likely need to use their gyms for practices and games. School support is vital if you will be using the school gyms.

### **PUBLICIZE YOUR MEETING**

Once you set the date for your Organizational Meeting, get the word out. Make sure to personally invite those community leaders that the committee decided on. Use social media, newspapers, radio, etc. to let everyone know that you are having a meeting to organize a youth basketball league in your community.

### **INTRODUCTORY MEETING**

At this meeting people are going to want to know exactly what you are going to do and why. Be sure that the person chosen to conduct the meeting has a basic understanding of Little Dribblers' Basketball and can explain the benefits for having a league in your community. It can be helpful to have a spokesman from an area Little Dribblers' league to speak about their experience in their own community. We will be happy to provide you with the names of other league presidents in your area.

At this meeting, be sure to have people who are interested in helping to sign up giving you their name and contact information. Collect email addresses so that you can contact a lot of people at one time. You will need a lot of volunteers to coach, keep score, run concessions stands, take admissions, etc.

Go ahead and schedule your next meeting while you have a room full of excited people ready to get your new league up and running.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

Using your list and contact information, get the work out of this meeting. Open the meeting to anyone interested because people have now been talking about this new league and you should have more people wanting to find out what is going on.

The first order of business should be to decide on a Board of Directors for your new league. You should have at least the following positions: President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. Accept nominations and allow the group to vote to fill these positions.

Once the Board of Directors is decided, the new officers should select volunteers to Chair Committees. Below is a suggested list of committees.

Coaches	Publicity	Finance	Facilities	Sponsors
Referees	Concessions	Constitution	Equipment	

## **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

Your Constitution Committee should come up with the Constitution and By-Laws for your league. You can find examples of By Laws Online. The purpose of By Laws is to set out in writing how your league is to be implemented. This should include how officers are elected, how committees will be selected, what ages you will have in your league, boundaries of your league (local school district boundary area), how teams will be selected, how you will register your players, selection process for coaches.

## **SELECTION OF COACHES**

Coaching is by far one of the most important positions in your league. The coaches are the ones who will have direct contact with the kids in your league. Coaches can make or break your league. It is important that the Board of Directors meet with prospective coaches to outline their expectations. Coaches should know that Little Dribblers Basketball leagues are designed to provide a safe learning environment that allows a child to develop their basketball skills by learning the fundamentals of basketball. Coaches should have the temperament to deal with children with differing skill levels and abilities.

It can benefit your coaches to provide a Clinic prior to the beginning of practices to demonstrate the fundamentals of the game that all coaches to stress to their players. Enlist your local school coaches to help at this clinic.

## **CONDUCT**

Little Dribblers' Basketball, Inc. was developed as a community based league that is open to all kids in the community that has a desire for basketball. The actions of adults can severely limit a player's desire to play basketball. It is important that your newly formed league provide as safe and secure environment for these young boys and girls to learn the game. Athletic events can sometimes bring out the worst in people. Your league should provide a Code of Conduct for parents, players, coaches and referees that is strictly enforced. (See Codes of Conduct in the Manual.) People who violate the Code of Conduct should not be allowed to be involved in your league.

## **CONCLUSION**

The ultimate goal of Little Dribblers' Basketball, Inc. is not to develop outstanding basketball players; it is to develop outstanding young men and women who can play great basketball. This is done by teaching your players cooperation, team work, communication and citizenship along with dribbling, shooting and defense.