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Playing Time Policy

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Please remember that children mature and develop at different rates. Some children are already built for football and understand the game, while for others it may take a little more time. The process of learning the game of football happens at practice, not on game day!

I - Before Registering Your Player

Please understand that playing time is not guaranteed. Football is an extremely physical and competitive sport. Players must be ready physically AND mentally to play. Coaches will not risk the safety of a player to appease the player's parents. Things like timidness and not understanding the game can lead to serious injury.

II - Player Safety

First and foremost, player safety is the number one factor in every decision that is made by our coaches. This includes playing time. Football is a true team sport. At all levels, one missed assignment by one player can determine the result of a play or even the outcome of an entire game. A missed assignment by a player due to not yet understanding the positions, techniques, and speed of the game has the potential to result in the injury of the players that do understand.

III - Practice Time

Coaches understand that there will be instances when a player needs to miss a practice due to things like illness, vacation, or other reasonable justifications. However, please be mindful that the more practice time missed may result in your player falling behind. It's not uncommon for coaches to adjust plays and add new techniques throughout the season. It is very difficult to tailor a practice around a player who does not show up. It is also difficult for the coach to be able to play that player on game day if they are not up to speed with the rest of the team.

Players who are consistently late to practices or who are regularly absent, regardless of their skill level, will risk losing playing time in both regular and B games. NO EXCEPTIONS. Again, football is a team sport. Your child needs to be at practice working with their team. It's not fair to the players who show up on time, day in and day out.

IV - Fifth Quarters and B Games

Coaches do their best to rotate non-starters into regular games to the best of their ability considering the progress of each game. The score differential for this pivot point is determined by the coaches and may be subjective or different for each game.

For example, if a team is up by 16 or more points, the lead can be lost in a matter of a few minutes. In other cases, coaches may feel confident enough to insert non-starters in a game that has a close score, but can still secure a win. Keep in mind that Austintown Youth Football and Cheer has no control over the opposing team's lineup. Just because we play non-starters doesn't mean the opposing team will sub in their non-starters. Austintown Youth Football and Cheer coaches will ALWAYS consider player safety when making these coaching decisions.

Austintown Youth Football and Cheer strives to compete in as many B games and 5th quarters as possible. We will do everything in our power to set up B games and 5th quarters for players who either don't play on Sundays or play very little. B games are just as important as regular Sunday games. All players who are not playing in a B game are REQUIRED to attend the game, in their jerseys, and stand on the sidelines to cheer on their teammates. NO EXCEPTIONS.

V - What Can I Do if My Player is Struggling?

Be coachable - Please talk to your player about being coachable. Coaches love players who pay attention, listen, are respectful, and follow instructions. If a coach suggests your player try a new position, for example, encourage your player to abide by the coach's request.

Show up - Have your player attend and be on time to all practices so that they do not get behind. If your player needs to miss a practice, please let your coaches know in advance.

Ask for help - Coaches are more than willing to help out. If you feel like your player is struggling, please reach out to one of their coaches. If you are uncomfortable reaching out to a coach, please contact your team mom or a Board member.

Get noticed - Remind your player to want to be at the front of the line for every drill. Jog on and off the field. Give 110% for the entire practice. No talking back to the coaches or telling coaches "no". Encourage your player to ask questions when they do not understand something.

Encourage your player - Encourage your player to want to work to get better. Please do not make excuses for them. Any negativity you reflect on your player, the coaches, or the team carries over to the field and creates a toxic environment for everyone involved.

Work at home - Encourage your player to put in work at home by playing catch, practicing footwork, building endurance via cardio, etc.—every bit helps! Be involved with your player by helping them run through plays and formations. If your player is struggling to understand the game, there are plenty of great tutorials on YouTube.