

Develop a Strong Code of Conduct



For Players, Coaches, Parents and Officials

A solid youth basketball tournament code of conduct should clearly spell out expectations, boundaries, and consequences for **players, coaches, parents/spectators, and officials**. Key elements:

1. Core Principles

- Emphasis on fun, development, and safety over winning at all costs.
- Commitment to **sporting respect**: everyone will respect players, coaches, officials, and fans even when they disagree.
- Zero tolerance for violence, threats, harassment, bullying, or discrimination.
- Expectations for a drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free environment at all youth events.

2. Player Expectations

- Play by the rules, try your best, and focus on effort and improvement, not just the score.
- Show respect to teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials at all times (no taunting, trash talk, or arguing calls).
- Use appropriate language; no profanity or abusive comments in person or online.
- Accept officials' decisions without argument and shake hands with opponents after games.

3. Coach Expectations

- Put players' physical and emotional well-being ahead of winning.
- Model composure and good sportsmanship; never berate officials, opponents, or players.
- Communicate with officials calmly and through proper channels; do not argue calls during play.
- Follow league safety protocols, play-time and participation rules, and age-appropriate coaching practices.
- Address concerns privately, not in front of players or spectators, and report serious issues to tournament administrators.

4. Parent and Spectator Expectations

- Support all players with positive encouragement; avoid coaching from the stands or criticizing anyone.
- Respect coaches' and officials' roles; do not confront or argue with officials at games.
- No profanity, taunting, or hostile behavior toward players, coaches, officials, or other spectators, in person or online.
- Keep criticism and concerns to appropriate times and channels (post-game conversations, email, or formal complaint process).
- Accept that violations can result in warning, removal from a game, suspension, or season-long ban.

5. Official and Staff Expectations

- Enforce rules impartially, firmly, and with self-control.
- Communicate respectfully with coaches, players, and staff; avoid provocative language or gestures.
- Arrive prepared and on time; uphold the dignity of the role and the tournament.

6. Enforcement and Consequences

- Clear progressive discipline structure: verbal warning, written warning, game ejection, suspension, and potential ban from events.
- Immediate removal for severe behaviors (violence, threats, hate speech, harassment).
- Requirement that all participants (players, parents, coaches) sign the code of conduct as a condition of participation, ideally via an electronic waiver linked to registration.

Including these components gives your tournament a clear, enforceable framework that supports safety, sportsmanship, and a positive experience for kids.