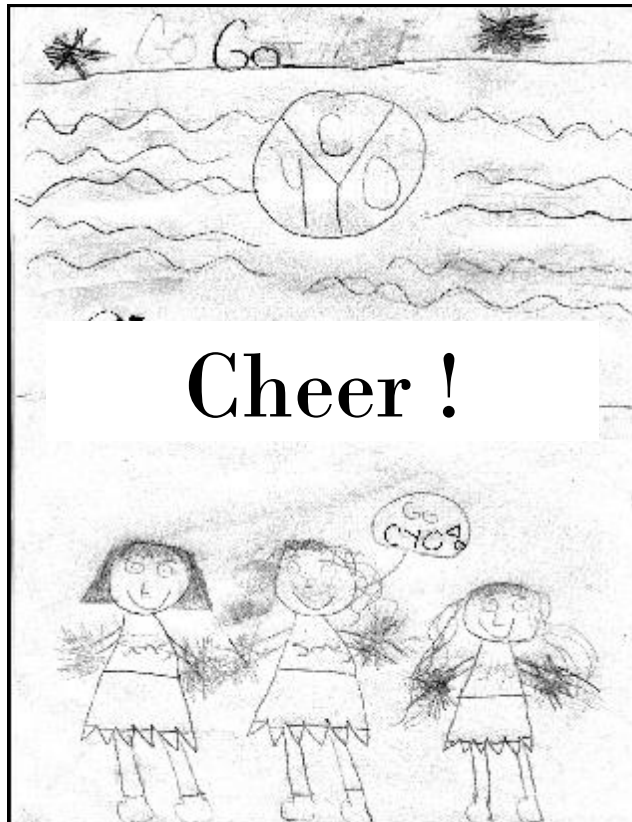


**Youth & Young Adult Ministry  
And CYO Office**

**2009-2010 CHEER SQUAD  
COACHES HANDBOOK**



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***CYO Athletics***  
***Endeavoring to help young people be  
more Christ-like in the way they live.***



*Catholic Charities | Parish & Community Ministries*

*Catholic Charities Health and Human Services*



# Mission Statement

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*The Catholic Youth Organization endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live. The CYO promotes participation and sportsmanship to foster the total development of participants and influence the formation of Christian values. The CYO serves the youth of the Diocese of Cleveland with the leadership necessary for the coordination and administration of athletic activities between members, which will provide equitable opportunities for participation, reduce the risks of participation and enhance the experiences of the young athlete.*





**Youth & Young Adult Ministry and CYO Office**

Dear Coach,

As a coach, you need to be aware of the impact you will have on your players -- not just in their athletic endeavors, but in life, long after their organized sports playing days are over.

Being a Coach is a tremendous challenge and responsibility, but it's also very rewarding. As players grow and develop from the inexperienced athlete that you may first see at practice to the young person that they will become as a leader of the team, school, or community, you know that your positive support and guidance had an impact in their life. When you see a player sacrificing personal accomplishments for the good of the team and giving the best effort they can with a smile on their face, you will know that your direction had a positive effect not just in the game but also at home, at church and in school.

In CYO Athletics the role of the coach is that of youth minister, leader, teacher and parent. You need to reflect on each of these roles as you prepare for the upcoming season. Remember to take the time to develop your relationship with God and to always be an example of Christ-like behavior to your players, opponents, officials, parents and fans. As you do this the growth that will take place in you and the athletes through this shared experience will make both of you better people.

The information in this Coach's Handbook is designed to help you with all aspects of coaching from understanding the CYO Philosophy and Mission, planning for the season, and working with parents to understanding the rules of the game. Use the Coach's Handbook as the starting point for your plan to create a positive and rewarding experience for your players. If you do, they will never forget you.

Remember, Keep the Spirit Alive!

The CYO Athletic Staff

***CYO Athletics – Endeavoring to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live.***

[www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org)

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# THE CYO STORY

In the Depression Years of the 1930's a ray of light burst forth illuminating a need for the development of leisure time activities for our youth. The sounds of cheering crowds, the singing of camp songs, the music from a parish hall announcing a hi-club dance and the celebration of the Eucharist among a youth group began to touch the lives of young people through the start of the Catholic Youth Organization.

Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth stressed that recreational and social activities were an important part of the overall education of young people. He called for us to rise and share our values and faith experiences with wisdom and love to the young people. After two years of study, In December, 1937 Archbishop Joseph Schrembs appointed Reverend James O'Brien as Diocesan Director of the Catholic Youth Organization. The CYO was designed as a youth serving agency to organize and coordinate all youth activities. Archbishop Schrembs stated that spiritual development is the primary objective of CYO. We are to lead youth to a better understanding and appreciation of our faith, to practice virtue and to encourage the youth to receive the Sacraments.

In the early 1940's the four-fold program of CYO, Social – Spiritual – Cultural – Physical, began to fully develop through the development of the Knights of the Alter, Cayomaw Club, Hi-Club, and CYO Camp and Athletic programs. In the 1950's, under the direction of Msg. Thomas C. Corrigan the CYO grew to include young adult programs for those that lost contact with the Church during World War II and the Korean War. During this time there were over 5,000 boys and girls involved in CYO athletics and over 1,500 CYO summer campers. Committees of lay volunteers also began to organize programs in Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, a National Catholic Youth Week, a One Act Play Festival and the Knights of the Alter Holy Hour.

In the 1960's and 1970's Reverend James P. O'Donnell fostered the development of the "Youth Happening", the AMEN Program, the Walk for Hunger in Greater Cleveland, SEARCH Program, and the Coaches Certification Program. In 1976, with Dan Ferrazza as Diocesan Director, A Vision of Youth Ministry was published. In this document the United States Catholic Conference stated that "No one aspect of youth ministry is independent of others; they are all interdependent elements of a unified total vision...the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person. We are still guided by this vision today.

In the 1980's and 1990's Bishop Anthony Pilla invited us to join with him in accepting not only the challenge but also the HOPE who is Jesus. He has been a guiding hand along the journey of developing Church in the Youth and Young Adults of Cleveland. During this time there has been a re-commitment to the early dreams of CYO, to enable young people to know Jesus. In May 1997 the CYO Philosophy and rules were organized into the present Charter & By-laws that are reaffirmed by member parishes each time they resubmit their Membership Agreement. Our philosophy captures the heart of our athletic programs – Christ – Participation – Team – Teaching!

The tradition of CYO continues today. In 2002, over 15,000 young people participated in our Youth and Young Adult Ministry programs, over 29,000 participated in our Cleveland CYO Athletic programs, over 7,400 campers attended our CYO Camp Programs. Our constant challenge remains the building of community and shared philosophy among the many volunteers that give the CYO the energy to grow. Today, volunteers in CYO programs give their time and energy with the same enthusiasm as those in the 1930's. Working together we will continue to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live and promote participation and sportsmanship among all those involved in CYO.

# THE CYO PHILOSOPHY

*CYO Athletics endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live. Our programs focus on the total development of participants in order to influence the formation of Christian values. For this reason, CYO sports are an important part of the Catholic Church's comprehensive ministry to, with, by, and for youth.*

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CYO Athletics foster the development of physical skills, emotional growth, affirmation of gifts and spiritual strength. The young person, not the athletic activity, is our primary focus. Therefore we believe that:

- All CYO Athletic programs should be well organized and maintain standards of high quality.
- All who have the opportunity to be on a team should also have the right to participate in the game.
- Participants should have the opportunity to be involved in athletics at an appropriate age/grade level.

CYO Athletics believes that the Coach's role is critical. The coach's primary role is that of youth ministry leader, therefore striving to act at all times as a model of Christ-like values & behaviors.

CYO Athletics believes that success is not measured by the final score. Success is measured by the effort of individuals striving to achieve team goals while respecting themselves, their teammates, and their opponents and at the same time having fun.

CYO Athletic should be viewed as part of the faith building efforts of the participating members. The interrelationship of CYO Athletics with family life, parish life, and school life is essential.

CYO Athletics is committed to the acceptance of and love for people of all nationalities and races. Through our CYO Athletic programs, we work to build a community and a bond of unity that leads to caring for one another in the ways Jesus taught.

# THE CYO EMBLEM



*The CYO Emblem was designed and approved for the Catholic Youth Organization of the Diocese of Cleveland. To wear this emblem is to bear witness to the fundamental doctrines of one's Catholic faith in the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and in our salvation by Christ. For this reason the CYO Emblem is to be a visible part of all CYO Team uniforms.*

- *The background of the Emblem is blue and the cross, circle and letters are white.*
- *The whole circle symbolizes God*
- *The three-fold division within the circle symbolizes the Holy Trinity of God - the Father, Jesus Christ - the Son and the Holy Spirit. This division represents the Unity we share in the Holy Trinity.*
- *The Greek Cross, which forms the divisions of the circle, is the sign of our salvation by Jesus Christ our Savior.*

*The Catholic Youth Organization endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live.*

# THE ORGANIZATION OF CYO ATHLETICS

CYO Athletics relies upon the leaders at parishes to fulfill vital roles in the Youth Athletic Program. Parish leaders must organize sign-ups and entry materials as well as eligibility rosters, preparticipation forms, supervision of coaches as well as the financial issues associated with operating an athletic program. Established leadership roles within the CYO at the member and diocesan levels can help create stability and consistency throughout the athletic program. All members of the Cleveland CYO agree to follow the CYO Charter & By-laws which may be found at [www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org).

## **MEMBER LEADERSHIP**

All members (parishes or schools) participating in the Cleveland CYO athletic program must have a Pastoral Designee. The Pastoral Designee is appointed by the Pastor/Principal of the parish and is the parish's official recipient of all diocesan CYO athletic information and is responsible for promulgating this information within their parish. The Pastoral Designee also serves as the official contact for the parish with the diocesan CYO Office for issues related to finance, inquiry, eligibility, discipline, and program administration.

The Member Administrator (Pastor/Principal) is responsible for the direction and supervision of the CYO Athletic program at the Member Level. The Pastoral Designee is the official member liaison with the CYO Athletic Administration. The Pastoral Designee is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the member's CYO Athletic program. The Pastoral Designee is ultimately accountable to the Member Administrator.

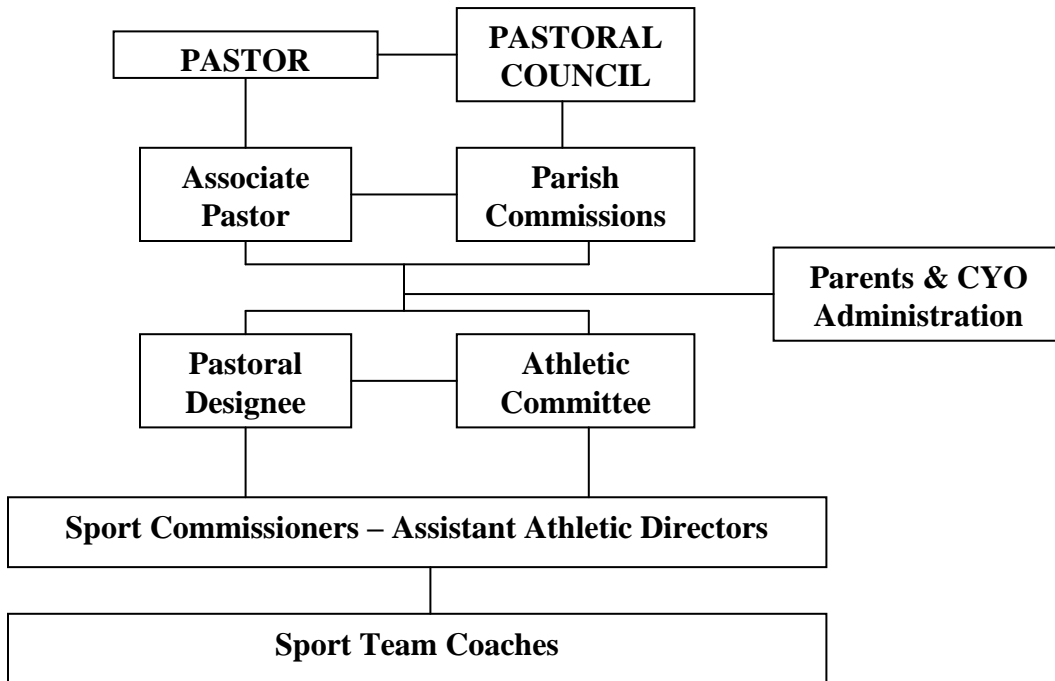
## **CYO OFFICE LEADERSHIP**

The CYO Office is led by the CYO Athletic Administrator, CYO Area Athletic Directors, CYO Sport Commissioners and the Cleveland CYO Athletic Advisory Committee. The CYO Office staff is here to help pastoral designees and coaches plan and prepare for the upcoming sport seasons. The CYO Sport Commissioners are the first points of contact for coaches of a sport. Coaches should familiarize themselves with the names and telephone numbers of their sport commissioners. Coaches should call their CYO Athletic Director for answers to questions related to eligibility, protest or grievance, to review a decision made by a sport commissioner or to comment on the success and virtue of the CYO program.

The Cleveland CYO Athletic Advisory Committee meets on a quarterly basis to review, evaluate, plan and integrate the path of CYO Athletics in Cleveland with the overall mission of the Church. The committee is composed of 14 individuals from parishes participating in the CYO Athletic Program, who also may serve on sub-committees or ad-hoc committees that advise and give direction to the CYO Staff.

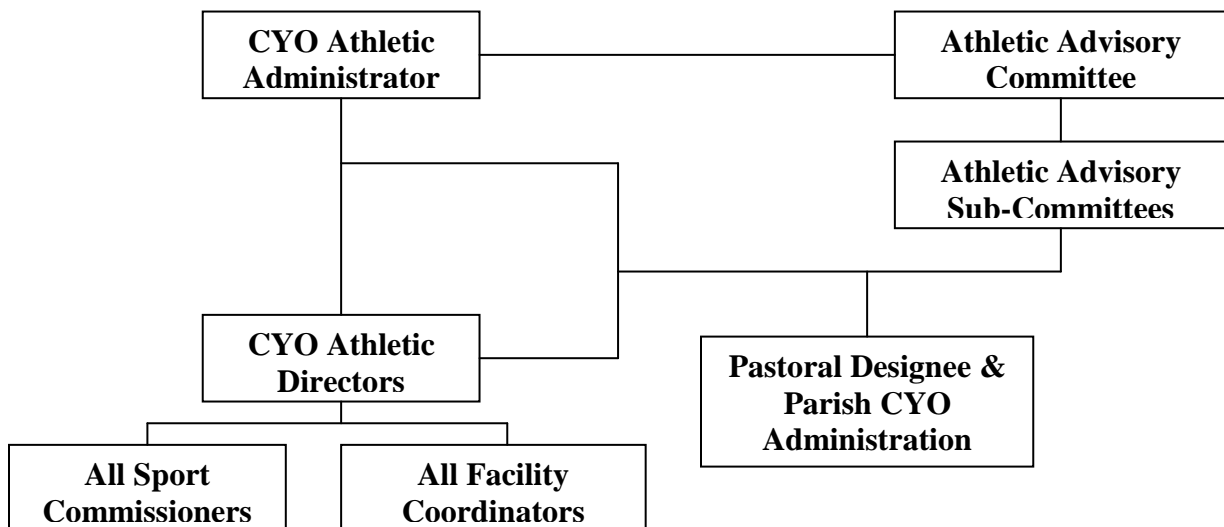
## Member Organization of CYO Athletics

The CYO Charter and By-laws are the governing documents under-which the following operates.



## Diocesan Organization of CYO Athletics

The CYO Charter and By-laws are the governing documents under-which the following operates.



# YOU ARE NOW A CYO COACH

Congratulations on joining one of the most rewarding professions known to any man or woman. As a coach of a youth sport team you have the opportunity to shape the outlook young people have towards athletics and the development of their faith. By taking a few moments to plan and prepare for the upcoming season you can minimize issues that you may come across later on in the season. The goal of this section is to inform you of the requirements to coach in CYO Athletics and steps to take to plan for a successful season.

Your main goal as a CYO coach is not to win matches or games, but to organize the children for fun and learning. Coaching youth teams has nothing to do with winning, it's objective is developing players and helping them to play well. The young player wants to enjoy themselves and winning matches or games is not their main goal, so whatever you do don't let your self-esteem and self-confidence be governed by whether the team wins or loses.

CYO Coaches often list many specific goals they hope to achieve when coaching their athletes; usually their goals fall under these objectives:

- To help young people have fun.
- To help young people develop skills
- To help young people demonstrate Christ-like behaviors

As a coach you want an athlete to develop physically, by learning the sport skills, improving physical conditioning, developing good health habits, and avoiding injuries; psychologically, by learning to control their emotions and developing feelings of self worth; and socially by learning cooperation in a competitive context and appropriate standards of behavior.

## **REQUIREMENTS TO BE A CYO COACH**

Each parish must assure that a person who has been engaged to coach complete the following before they begin coaching;

- Read and acknowledge the Diocese of Cleveland, "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse"
- Read and acknowledge the Diocese of Cleveland, "Standards of Conduct for Ministry".
- complete a parish application,
- attend an approved abuse prevention program,
- attend a CYO Coaches Development Program session,
- complete the required fingerprinting process.
- Wear CYO credentials while coaching at all CYO events.
- Failure to do so will result in the coach's ineligibility until the requirements have been completed.

- For grade school teams, any man or woman 18 years of age or older may serve as a head coach, or at least 16 years of age may serve as an assistant coach if they are approved by the Pastor, Pastoral Designee and member athletic committee.
- For high school teams, any man or woman 25 years of age or older may serve as a head coach, or at least 18 years of age may serve as an assistant coach if they are approved by the Pastor, Pastoral Designee and member athletic committee.
- When a girl's team is coached by men, it is required that a women 18 years of age or must be associated with the team as an athletic aide and in attendance at all practices. When a female coaches a boy's team a male athletic aide must be associated with the team is also required.

### **COACHES TRAINING SESSIONS**

- All coaches must attend a CYO approved coaches orientation program before they begin coaching.
- All coaches are to attend coaches meetings and other session required to maintain CYO certification.

### **PARENTS AT GAMES**

As the coach of the team during a game you are responsible for the actions of yourself, assistant coaches, players, parents and fans. It may not be fair to put that much responsibility on you, but as a coach your actions usually set the tone for the other individuals listed. Unfortunately problems with poor sportsmanship from parents exist. In the CYO we hope that our philosophy and atmosphere at the games would minimize unsportsmanlike behavior.

As a coach you thought you were there solely for the kids, but you may have to step in if a parent is becoming too involved by verbally abusing officials, taunting players, and coaching players from the stand or stepping onto the court. Your actions may need to be a calm reminder of the purpose of youth sports to suggesting that the parent leave the facility or helping the official gain control of the crowd. Always take the time to remind your parents and assistant coaches that the little eyes of the players are always watching them and learning from their behavior.

# **RULES OF THE GAME**

## **CYO SPORT OFFERINGS**

The Cleveland CYO offers competition in the following sports during the noted season:

### **FALL**

Football  
Girls Soccer  
Boys Cross Country  
Girls Cross Country  
Girls Volleyball  
Cheer  
Boys Soccer

### **WINTER**

Wrestling  
Boys Grade School Basketball  
Girls Grade School Basketball  
Boys High School Basketball  
Girls High School Basketball  
Cheer

### **SPRING**

Baseball  
Fast-pitch Softball  
Boys Track & Field  
Girls Track & Field  
Boys Volleyball  
Girls High School Volleyball

## **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

Participation on CYO Teams is open to those that meet the criteria outlined in By-law 4 of the CYO Charter & By-laws. To be eligible to compete in CYO the athlete must meet either the Parish, School, Parish School of Religion or adjoining member requirement outlined on By-law 4. Some athletes may not be able to participate in practices, scrimmages or games without the approval of the CYO Office, consult the by-law for details. By-laws are available at [www.clevelandcyo.org](http://www.clevelandcyo.org)

## **AGE LIMITATIONS & DIVISIONS**

The CYO will, whenever possible, offer leagues by age/grades divisions. However all divisions of play may not be offered in all sports or service area. A team must enter in the division of the oldest member of that team. In each case, the athlete must meet the age requirement on October 1 of the current school year. Third grade students are not eligible for CYO participation. Many parishes offer intramurals for such children. Divisions are of competition are as follows:

<b>CYO HIGH SCHOOL</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grades	
Varsity	12 <sup>th</sup> and down	ages 18 and under
Junior Varsity	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 16 and under
<b>CYO GRADE SCHOOL</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grades	
Varsity	8 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 10-14
Junior Varsity	7 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 9-13
Cadet	6 <sup>th</sup> grade & down	ages 9-12
Developmental	5 <sup>th</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 8-11
Elemental	4 <sup>th</sup> grade only	ages 8-11

**NOTE:** All divisions may not be offered in all sports or areas. *More restrictive limitations on age may be in place for certain sports. Consult the sports rules for details.*

## **ATHLETE PREPARTICIPATION FORM**

Each Athlete must have a complete and valid Preparticipation Form on file with the CYO member before the athlete may participate in any practice, competition or scrimmage.

## **ATHLETE PARTICIPATION**

It is the philosophy of the CYO to have all players participate in games and competitions. All children eligible and healthy are expected to play. For reasons of discipline, grades, etc., a child may lose eligibility as determined and established by the coach, school, principal, parish pastor, administrator or Pastoral Designee. In situations of ineligibility the coach is to inform the scorer and opposing coach of the ineligibility as well as insure it is marked on the game scoresheet or roster. The rules of each specific sport define the implementation and requirements for the participation rule.

All athletes that meet registration and medical criteria are to participate in CYO athletes. Teams are not permitted to cut players from a team. It is an underlying principle of CYO to allow all to play and participate, and for us to foster the development of physical and social skills, as well as spiritual strength in each CYO Athlete on our team. Therefore tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.

## **COACH AND ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is expected that all players, coaches, parents, officials, commissioners, site personnel or other persons involved with a CYO team, will conduct themselves as an example of Christian behavior. They do this through Christian leadership, good sportsmanship and providing an atmosphere for healthy athletic programs. Christian behavior is essential and expected as a witness to the philosophy and values of CYO athletics. The violations listed below will not be tolerated in CYO programs:

- Failure of the Pastoral Designee to assume direct responsibility for the individual program.
- Refusal to abide by the rules and decisions of the CYO.
- Violation of the Influence Rules (recruiting).
- Knowingly using an ineligible player.
- Taking a team off the field, floor, or out of a tournament because of dissatisfaction with the officials or other unsatisfactory reasons.
- Failure to control the spectators and/or players bench.
- Failure to adequately protect officials and/or the visiting team.
- Violation of the practice and playing season dates.
- Use of profane, vulgar or abusive language.
- Inappropriate conduct or disrespect toward officials, site personnel and others involved in CYO Athletics.
- Vandalism or the destruction of property.

- Verbal or physical abuse of players, coaches, opponents, officials or anyone affiliated with the CYO program.
- Use of alcohol or illicit drugs or tobacco before, during, or after any CYO activity.
- Representing ideals that are contrary to the philosophy of the CYO program.
- Escalating behaviors that incite others to act in ways that are in direct conflict with the values of the CYO program.

### COACH AND PLAYER SUSPENSION POLICY

A coach or player ejected from a game for any reason must leave the premises and shall be suspended for the next scheduled game (two games in the high school division). An ejected player must be supervised by an adult. The person ejected may not associate with the team during the duration of the suspension, this includes practices and scrimmages.

- If a head coach is ejected from a game and does not leave quietly or there is no registered assistant coach, the team must forfeit that game.
- The penalty for any coach or player who is suspended for a second time during a season will be removal from the program for the remainder of the season.
- Any flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct is just cause for suspension. Good sportsmanship is expected at all times by all parents, coaches and players. Inappropriate behavior at any time during the CYO function is just cause for penalty.

### INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

Sportsmanship is a primary focus of CYO sports and players and coaches are expected to respect their opponents. It is inappropriate for players and coaches to use insulting or demeaning language (“Trash Talk”) or unacceptable language to one another before, during or after games. This rule will be strictly enforced by CYO game officials.

### RECRUITING

- In the Cleveland CYO, the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with a CYO Member to secure or retain a prospective athlete from another member is not permitted and shall cause the student to be ineligible upon transfer and shall jeopardize the standing of the member in future CYO athletic programs.
- High Schools that are members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association must follow their Bylaw 4, Section 9 which outlines the following limitations on recruitment by an OHSAA member high school:
  - A student is considered a prospective athlete upon enrolling in the seventh grade.
  - Prior to enrollment a prospective athlete may visit a member school within the district of residence of parents, provided the arrangements for the visit are cleared through the principal of the school to be visited.
  - High Schools cannot provide financial aid or scholarships to a student on the basis of athletic ability.
  - A prospective athlete shall not be offered or accept any inducement, such as free tuition, employment, books, complimentary tickets, sweatshirts, uniforms and

supplies, other than that which is provided to all students. High Schools can invite an 8<sup>th</sup> grade class to attend a game for free. However the invitation must be made to the whole group and not particular students.

- High School Coaches are not to initiate contact with prospective students outside of the high school's building until the student has applied to the school and acceptance letters have been distributed. No (OHSAA) member representative shall initiate any communication with a prospective athlete, parents or an athlete, guardian or family member, in person or through a third party prior to enrollment.
- The Cleveland Area Catholic High Schools have an agreed upon "No Contact" period that runs during the application review process from early-January to mid-February. During this time representatives from high schools are not to have contact with prospective students.
- High School coaches can talk to a parish group as long as they talk about the general educational values of athletics and not the attributes of a particular school.
- High Schools cannot provide financial aid or scholarships to a student on the basis of athletic ability.
- If a parent or athlete wishes to talk to coach, they need to make a request through the admissions office of the school and a meeting will be held on school grounds.

#### DIOCESAN RULE ON ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARM USE

Coaches, players, managers, statisticians, scorekeeper, cheerleaders, spectators, site personnel, commissioners and contest officials in the CYO athletic program are prohibited from using any form of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products or carry a firearm or deadly weapon at CYO athletic competitions or practice sessions. CYO contest sites are drug, alcohol, tobacco and firearm free zones.

Alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products or firearms and deadly weapons are not permitted anywhere on the premises of a CYO athletic event. Penalty for violation by the parish representatives, officials, coaches, spectators or participants is disqualification from that contest as well as possible legal action. The CYO Member is responsible to enforce this policy.

#### PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF RULES

The penalties that are imposed by the CYO Athletic Administration or their Pastoral Designee for violation of rules include, but are not limited to:

- Warning.
- Probation.
- Forfeiture of playoff or tournament rights.
- Forfeiture of game or games.
- Temporary or permanent suspension or removal of a player, coach, parent or spectator.

- Suspension of current/future event sanctions.
- Suspension of the team.
- Suspension of athletic contests when the relationship between two or more teams has become as quarrelsome and unsportsmanlike as to jeopardize the parish and public welfare.
- Suspension of the member.

## **PROTESTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The CYO Office will review a protest or grievance that is received with three (3) business days after an incident. The initiator of the complaint must submit a grievance or protest in writing that is signed by the Pastoral Designee and Member Administrator.

A Formal Grievance is any concern or disagreement with the administration of the Catholic Youth Organization athletic program. A formal grievance does not require a protest fee to accompany that complaint.

A Formal Protest is a written objection directly associated with the rules and/or athletic contest. A formal protest, in order to be considered by the Area CYO Athletic Director or grievance committee must be accompanied with a protest fee of \$25.00. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned.

Protests or grievances involving disputed calls by game officials are not considered for appeal.

An appeal of the decision of the Area CYO Athletic Director may be filed with the CYO Athletic Administrator within five (5) business days following the release of the written decision of the CYO Athletic Director. A written decision from the CYO Athletic Administration shall be issued three (3) days after the review.

## **GOVERNING BODIES**

- The CYO Sport Specific rules are supplemented by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules. Copies of the NFHS rulebooks may be obtained through the Ohio High School Athletic Association or by visiting [www.NFHS.org](http://www.NFHS.org).
- The CYO Sport Specific rules are supplemented by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) rules. Copies of the OHSAA rules may be obtained through the Ohio High School Athletic Association, [www.OHSAA.org](http://www.OHSAA.org).

# **CYO Coach's Code of Ethics**

*CYO Coaches are contributors toward the development of the young athlete. As such, they need to exercise a high level of self-discipline and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for standards of conduct by CYO Coaches.*

The CYO Coach shall teach and encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support and respect for all athletes, officials, site workers, fellow coaches, and CYO administrators at all times.

The CYO Coach shall be a positive force in the formation of the youth as a total person. Through the coach's counseling and encouragement, all athletes should learn their value and responsibility to the Team, Church and Community.

The CYO Coach shall master and follow the rules of the sport, CYO modification, divisional rules as well as the general policies of the CYO Charter & By-laws.

The CYO Coach shall help their players master the skills of the sport. They shall use practices, competitions and games as opportunities to develop the fundamental skills in each athlete.

The CYO Coach shall be punctual and responsible in the fulfillment of their obligations by arriving at the competition and practice sites early, by making introductions to officials, scorers/timers/supervisors and other coaches.

The CYO Coach shall remain mindful that their conduct during each event has a tremendous impact on the conduct parents and fans exhibit. The coach should always demonstrate good sportsmanship, patience, manners and an attitude indicative of the spirit of CYO.

The CYO Coach shall remain mindful that their conduct has a tremendous impact on the love of the sport a child may have, the view parents and fans have of youth sports, the reputation of the youth coaching profession and the quality of the CYO Athletic Program.

***Sportsmanship is the Name of the Game!***

Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

# CYO CHEER SQUAD RULES

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit/Cheer Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained within. CYO game contest rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may issue authorized changes.

## OFFICIAL TEAM

- Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more Members listed on the team roster who meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Pastoral Designee, Pastor and CYO Office. Eligibility Rules, as defined in Bylaw 4 of the Charter & Bylaws, shall be followed to determine all questions regarding eligibility.
- There is not a minimum number of players on a team.
- A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled contest for any reason without the consent of the referee or CYO representative may be subject to a suspension for one calendar year. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.

## SQUAD FORMATION AND REGISTRATION

- Cheer will be offered in the Varsity (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade) and Cadet (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade) Divisions only.
- Squads may consist of boys and girls.
- Cheer is sponsored during the fall and winter seasons.
- All teams must register with the CYO Office by the team entry deadline. Teams must register/re-register for each season of competition.
- In keeping with the CYO Philosophy standards have been set for the formation of teams and development of athletes.
  - All athletes that meet registration and medical criteria are to participate in CYO athletes.
  - CYO prohibits "cutting" players from a team. It is an underlying principle of CYO to allow all to play and participate, and for us to foster the development of physical and social skills, as well as spiritual strength in each CYO Athlete on our team. Therefore tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.
  - In the Elemental, Developmental and Cadet Divisions of play, if members sponsors more than one squad per division these squads must be split evenly. A & B (stronger/weaker, stacked/weaker teams) are not permitted. Violations of the policy bears significant penalties.

## UNIFORMS

- Participants are required to wear *Member* issued uniforms. The uniform shall include at least a t-shirt with the team name or identifying emblem and a skirt or shorts
- All athletes must have the CYO Emblem on their uniform either sewn or stenciled.

- Chains, earrings, other jewelry, glitter, face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during competition.
- An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO Administration may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag nor patch interferes with the visibility of the team's name.

### **PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Coaches must be CYO Certified.
- Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before the contest.
- At each contest and practice, coaches are to have in their possession; an official team roster, a copy of each player's Preparticipation Form and Emergency Medical Authorization Form, and a first aid kit.
- A pre-game conference should be held between the officials, coaches and team captains.
- CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.

### **PARTICIPATION**

- Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of his or her ability.
- A player on a CYO team may not participate on any other cheer team during the CYO season. For purposes of defining eligibility, a player may not be on another team from the published CYO roster due date and the completion of the team's final game.
- Participants may only play and be rostered on one CYO team in the same sport in the same school year.
- Mandatory participation applies to all games/competitions
- Violation of these rules will result in a warning or disciplinary action toward the coach.

### **GAME & TIME LIMITATION**

- No competitions can start after 8:00 PM, and must stop at 9:00 PM.
- Practice session must be completed by 9:00 PM.

### **GENERAL RULES**

- All cheers must be reviewed by the coach for good taste and propriety. If any doubt exists, the pastoral designee or school/parish administrator should review the cheer.
- All cheers are to be original & developed by the team & coaches. Cheers or routines are not to be derived from other schools or squads. If cheers or routines performed in competition are proven to be derived from other squads/schools, the team and coach shall be subject to penalties outlined in By-law 12 of the CYO Charter & By-laws.
- A spotter should be used in practice and performance until a tumbling stunt or jump is perfected and approved by the coach.

- With parental approval, a participant may use a minimum amount of makeup.
- Gum chewing is prohibited.
- Cheerleaders should be cheerful, friendly, provide team spirit, and not belittle an opponent or other squad.

## PROHIBITED ELEMENTS

- Pyramids – defined as two people supporting one person or three people supporting two people, or any other position when one person has both feet off the floor and is in contact with another person who is in a supporting position.
- Mounts – defined as a duo-mount, shoulder sit, thigh stand or sitting on the shoulders of another person.
- Use of mini-trampolines
- Knee-drops, slams or fireman catches.
- Aerial tricks in tumbling routines – *aerial tricks are defined as any tumbling stunt that requires an individual to have both feet and/or hands off the floor.*

## GAME PERFORMANCES

- Cheer squads are required to enter the site as one unit under the supervision of the coach.
- Cheerleaders may not, at any time, obstruct the view of spectators or interfere with the athletic competition in process.
- During games, squads are permitted to perform from the sidelines within reasonable distance of the out-of-bounds line.
- Football
  - The performance location shall be behind the bench area of their team.
  - If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the field.
  - At half time each squad may perform two (2) cheers *or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.*
  - On-field cheers are not allowed during timeouts.
- Basketball
  - The performance location shall be to the left/right of their team's basket or bench. A cheer squad is not to be positioned under the basket or by the bench of the opposing team.
  - If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the floor.
  - At half time each squad may perform two (2) cheers *or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.*
  - Short cheers may be allowed on the floor during timeouts. Squads should alternate time-out performances.
  - Squads must leave the floor at the referee's whistle.
  - Sites may limit/restrict performances/size due to space and safety concerns

(Revised April 2009)