

**GUIDE FOR
YOUTH ATHLETICS**

**LAFAYETTE RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
LAFAYETTE RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	P 3
II. Definitions	P 3
III. Purpose of the Program	P 4
IV. Methods	P 5
V. The Neighborhood Concept	P 5
A. History	P 6
B. Neighborhood Areas	P 6
C. Organization	P 6
1. Minimum Standards	P 6
2. Penalties	P 7
D. Operations	P 7
1. Minimum Standards	P 8
2. Penalties	P 8
E. Chartering	P 8
F. Role of Volunteers	P 9
G. Rules Committees	P 10
H. Girls Athletics	P 10
I. Therapeutic Athletic Program	P 11
J. Competitive Athletics	P 11
K. Residency	P 12
1. Policy	P 12
2. Penalties	P 13
L. Minimum Playing Time	P 14
M. No Cut Policy	P 15
N. "For The Kids"	P 15
O. Multiple Sports	P 15
P. Discipline and Appeals	P 16
1. Procedures	P 16
2. Jurisdiction	P 18
3. Specificity	P 18
4. Appeals	P 18
VI. LAFAYETTE YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION	P 19
A. History	P 19
B. Organization and Methods	P 19
C. Structure	P 19
D. Soccer Appeals	P 20
VIII. UNAFFILIATED PROGRAMS	P 21

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

VII. THE COMMISSION	P 21
IX. THE STAFF	P 23
X. THE COACH	P 23
A. Qualifications	P 23
B. Practice	P 24
C. Officials	P 25
XI. THE TEAM	P 25
A. Philosophy	P 25
B. Team Selection	P 25
XII. THE PARENTS	P 27
XIII. THE PLAYERS	P 29
SIGNATURE PAGE	

I INTRODUCTION

Lafayette Consolidated Government, Recreation and Parks Department and the Lafayette City/Parish Recreation and Parks Commission provide the facilities and direction for the youth athletic activities in Lafayette Parish. They are charged with the responsibility of overseeing the various athletic programs so that the needs of the programs are provided for and so that they are run efficiently, comprehensively and without discrimination. This Guide is meant to be a format for all such programs that now exist or may come into being in the future.

The Guide has been developed through the cooperation of the Commission, the Staff and leaders in the Youth Athletic Program in Lafayette Parish. It is meant to be both a guide and a manual of operations for the Program. The purpose of the Guide is to provide a quick reference source and so that all parties involved in delivering the youth programs will have a consistent, effective, comprehensive manual for guidance in many local areas and problems. It is hoped that as the many volunteers move through the Program, they may use the Guide without resorting to "reinventing the wheel".

Subsequent changes in the Guide may be made at any time with a 2/3-majority vote of a quorum of the Recreation and Parks Commission. Changes proposed by a Neighborhood or Rules Committee should be referred to the Staff for handling and consideration. Changes, once approved, will be enacted (6) calendar months from the date of passage. If more immediate change is needed, unanimous approval of a quorum of the Commission is required to shorten the time interval for enactment. (Revised 2/91).

II DEFINITIONS

The youth athletic aspect of the Recreation and Parks Departments and Commission is defined as those activities that are athletic in nature. There are many types of activities that are recreational but not necessarily athletic. For purposes of this document, all team-related and individual activities where physical body function is developed on an ORGANIZED basis are included. Presently in Lafayette, there are comprehensive programs in baseball, slowpitch softball, fastpitch softball, soccer, basketball, track and field, tackle football, volleyball and flag football as team sports.

III PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The Lafayette Recreation and Parks Departments and Commission seek to involve youth in recreational and athletic activities. The primary purpose of these activities is to enhance the development and growth of the youth participants. Youth programs are meant to be recreationally motivated in and of themselves and are not designed as a training ground for school or professional athletic activities at a later date. The priorities, goals and directions placed on the program for team athletic participation are as follows:

1. SAFETY - Any athletic endeavor first and foremost should be safe.
2. ENJOYMENT - Athletic activity is meant to be enjoyed by the participants. Athletics should be FUN. If a youngster is not enjoying a particular activity, he should not be forced to participate.
3. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY - An inherent part of athletics is physical activity and development. Conditioning and muscular body development is of primary importance.
4. TEACHING
 - A. Sportsmanship - The program attempts to teach qualities of sportsmanship to the participants. The attitude and acceptance of winning and losing fairly are important requisites for adult life.
 - B. Athletic Skills - The aim of the Program is to teach fundamental athletic skills to all participants. While various youth have various degrees of agility and athletic ability, the Program aims to help each youth reach his own potential.
 - C. Team Play - In activities that are team oriented, the Program attempts to teach the value of team play over individual achievement. A youngster should be taught to help, to be dependable and to be able to depend upon others. Team play is an important part of the social skills needed in today's complex society.
 - D. Self Esteem - The importance and value of the individual is stressed at every level of participation. Even players with marginal athletic abilities can and should be allowed to contribute to the overall effort.
5. PROPER PERSPECTIVE - Athletic endeavors are part of overall youth development. The participation in the Program is part of an overall environment of family, church, school and society. It is not an end in itself.
6. COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS
 - A. Athletic Excellence - The Program is designed primarily as a RECREATIONAL program for the AVERAGE youngster to participate in and enjoy. In addition, attempts are made, through post-season play, All-Star teams and ability grouping to enable the highest quality athletes to improve and perfect their skills in a competitive environment. While these activities are an important and integral portion of the Program, they should never be allowed to overshadow the fundamental recreational aims of the program.
 - B. Competition - The Program is designed to place the proper emphasis on competition. Competition is an inherent part of athletics as well as life. While it is not without controversy, competition can be a great motivator in achieving athletic excellence and youth development if properly managed. The younger the age level of play, the less competition will be stressed. As the age and skill levels increase, more active competition is allowed.

7. FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY - The Athletic Program is to be offered to all youths who are residents of Lafayette Parish without regard to race, sex or religion.
8. "FOR THE KIDS" - The Program is designed as a program for children. In all aspects of the Program, no matter what methods are used, the whole emphasis comes up as doing "For The Kids". All changes and questions that arise will be judged on the best course of action from that basis. All rules and procedures adopted in this document, or subsequently, are meant to serve the youth who participate in the Program, not the reverse. While administrative questions are important, they shall not abridge the individual youth's right to participate.
9. BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES - The youth athletes Bill of Rights summarizes the aims of the Program. The following is reprinted from Guidelines for Children's Sports, R. Martens and V. Seefeldt, Washington, D.C. American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Dance, 1979.
 1. Right to participate in sports.
 2. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability.
 3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
 4. Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
 5. Right of children to share in the leadership and decision making of their sport participation.
 6. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
 7. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports.
 8. Right to an equal opportunity for participation in sports.
 9. Right to be treated with dignity.
 10. Right to have fun in sports.

IV METHODS

To accomplish the above priorities and goals in team sports, the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Commission make extensive use of volunteers. The Recreation and Parks Department provides the structure and resources and the neighborhood organizations handle the day-to-day operations.

V THE NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPT

The neighborhood concept is one of the basic precepts in providing the recreation product to the youth of the parish. Basically stated, it charges volunteer organizations in the various geographic locations of the Parish (Neighborhoods) with the authority and responsibility of organizing and coordinating various sports programs. The youth of that area are formed into teams, practice within that Neighborhood and, in most cases, compete against other teams from that Neighborhood during the regular league season. In basketball, baseball, football, volleyball and softball, the areas are defined by the attached map. Soccer is handled in a different format. (See Soccer).

A. HISTORY

The Neighborhood Concept was pioneered in the mid-70's to fill the need for a Youth Athletic Program. During the 60's and early 70's, the program had served the Parish relatively well, but with the quickening growth rates in population, the program needed modifications. These changes led us to the present Neighborhood Concept that divides the Parish of Lafayette into neighborhoods.

B. NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS

1. Broussard/Youngsville Youth Association (BYYA)
2. Brown Park Athletics (BPA)
3. Carencro Area Youth Sports Inc. (CAYSI)
4. Cajun Sports Association (CSA)
5. Scott Area Team Sports (SATS)
6. Southwest Lafayette Youth Sports, Inc. (SLYSI)
7. South West Athletics (SWA)

The areas are defined geographically on the parish map. Boundaries are subject to change and interpretation, but any permanent change of boundary cannot be made within 6 months of the beginning of a sport season. The Staff and the Youth Athletic Committee of the Recreation and Parks Commission manages the boundaries with the concurrence of the entire Commission.

C. ORGANIZATION

The Neighborhood organization is to be selected and operated from the individual neighborhood district that it serves. It is the fundamental unit of service in the various sports. The neighborhood is allowed a great deal of latitude in rules and organization it imposes upon itself. Matters such as number and qualifications for board members, length of term of board members, coach selection procedures, officer selection and terms, funding, disbursement of funds, selection of sport coordinators, etc. are explicitly a matter of internal concern for the individual Neighborhood. Other than the requirement that voting for the Board of Directors be accomplished at an open, advertised, general membership meeting, the Recreation and Parks Department and the Recreation and Parks Commission have minimal authority on organizational structure, as long as the Neighborhood's by-laws and the fundamental precepts of this Guide are being upheld.

1. Minimum Standards

Because the Neighborhood is the most important unit in providing youth athletics, it is desirable to have strong organizations with continuity from year to year. Accountability by neighborhood to the Recreation Department is absolutely necessary to *ensure* proper handling of funds.

There are minimum standards of organization for a Neighborhood to obtain and retain a Charter with the Recreation Department. As a minimum, a Neighborhood shall provide to the Athletic Programs Manager:

A. A copy of the Articles of Incorporation of the Neighborhood. Liability issues involving Youth Athletics mandate that the Neighborhood be incorporated.

B. A copy of the Organization and By-Laws for the Neighborhood. Included in this organization plan will be:

1. Qualifications for voting membership.
2. Method of election of the Board of Directors. (Has to be at an open, General Meeting).
3. Length of term and succession rights of the officers.
4. Method of selection to be used for All-Star coaches and players.
5. Disciplinary procedures, including possible offenses, the right to open hearing, appeal rights and due process.
6. Method of drafting teams to be used in the various sports.

C. A copy of the proposed meeting place and times for general meetings. This shall be furnished annually, after the election of officers but before the Baseball season commences. A general membership meeting shall be required at least once annually (to elect Board of Directors) and Board of Directors meetings are required at least quarterly (monthly meetings are recommended). Minutes of such meetings shall be maintained and shall be available to the General Membership upon request.

D. The Treasurer or *their* designee shall deliver to the Athletic Programs Manager, on a monthly basis, a copy of the current financial statement of the Neighborhood. The Recreation and Parks Staff will make the financial statement available for viewing to the general public on request.

2. Penalties

Failure to submit required documentation will result in punitive measures. Financial reports for each month are due before the 15th of the following month. No reimbursement of official fees will be made to any Neighborhood if neighborhood fails to submit financial statement or meeting schedule. Any Neighborhood that withholds such documentation over more than three months shall be liable and in violation of the chartering requirements and subject to the appropriate disciplinary action.

D. OPERATIONS

The Neighborhood is charged with running it's athletic program according to **THEIR BY LAWS** and this Youth Athletic Guide. The Neighborhood shall oversee the call-out of players, an equitable tryout and draft, securing equipment and uniforms, and coordination of officials. If the Neighborhood elects to participate in All-Star competition, where it is offered, the Neighborhood will select the All-Star players and coaches. Such areas as drafting and All-Star selection shall be consistent from year to year and according to Neighborhood by-laws. During the season, all intra-league conflict shall be adjudicated at the local (Neighborhood) level first. Such conflicts are appealable through the levels of the organization (see appeals).

The Recreation Staff shall provide assistance to the local Neighborhood with training to properly run the local athletic program. One offering is formal training and certification as a youth athletic coach through the American Sports Education Program (ASEP). This is required for a coach to be involved in postseason selection and coaching.

Any time that a Neighborhood does not have sufficient interest or numbers in one sport to field a complete league in that sport (4 teams), that Neighborhood shall be joined with other Neighborhoods to form a league. Coordination among Neighborhoods shall be provided by the Staff.

1. Minimum Standards

Because the youth in the Program look to the Neighborhood first as the primary supplier of youth athletics, these organizations have a responsibility to provide a multitude of services to them. It would be ideal if each Neighborhood could offer at least a league (4 teams) within each age group of all sports offered in the program. The relatively small size of some neighborhoods, geographical logistics, etc. make this impractical. Sometimes, the numbers and interest just aren't there. Although a larger size enables a Neighborhood to offer more services, no minimum size is mandated.

It is required, however, that the Neighborhood be the clearinghouse for all registrations in the sports that are part of the Neighborhood system; namely, baseball, softball, football and basketball. They are to also provide registration for all girls' programs. If a child wants to play basketball, football, or baseball, he contacts the same organization. If there are not sufficient numbers for strictly intra-league play, the Recreation Staff Coordinator will group the registrants with others for team and league formation. Neighborhoods are strongly requested to assist each other in this function. Every youngster in Lafayette Parish has a place to play.

2. Penalties

Neighborhoods failing to provide registration for boys and girls programs that the Recreation Department sponsors are subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

E. CHARTERING

When the minimum organization and operations standards for a Neighborhood are met, the Recreation and Parks Commission and Department may issue a Charter to the Neighborhood certifying its status as the provider of Youth athletics for a specified geographic area. This Charter is meant to signify *substantial* contribution, organization, and effort being generated to provide for the Youth Athletic needs of our children.

With the chartering of an organization through the Recreation Department, the following benefits accrue to the Neighborhood. The Charter:

1. Provide acknowledgment of an area as the primary provider of Youth Athletics for the area.
2. Formalizes the relationship of the Neighborhood throughout the Recreation Department.
3. PROVIDES FREE, PRIORITY USE OF THE RECREATION AND PARKS ATHLETIC FACILITIES.
4. Provides a voice for prioritizing additional capital expenditures for these facilities located within the Neighborhood.
5. Provides a clear line of authority in recreation within Lafayette Parish.
6. Provides inter-area and inter-Neighborhood coordination.

7. Provides additional help for the Neighborhood in achieving it's own aims and objectives with respect to Youth athletics.
8. Provides a uniform, comprehensive and coordinated youth athletic program.
9. Provides for an increased voice by the Neighborhood in running each phase of the Athletic Program.
10. Provides a uniform set of rules for athletic competition Program-wide.
11. Provides for eligibility of reimbursement of athletic fees when meeting operational standards of the Program.

Parents, athletes and coaches have appeal rights with respect to the cooperation of the individual Neighborhood (see Appeals). This process will be invoked only instances where there is a question of adherence to the Neighborhood policy and the policy of the Youth Athletic Program and Guide. No rulings will be issued on strictly internal matters..

F. ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEERS

An Athletic Program such as this is almost entirely dependent on volunteers; a paid program would be cost prohibitive. The strength of that program lies with the volunteers selected to serve in the neighborhood. There is a tremendous wealth of talent available in the community. There is managerial, technical, athletic, and financial talent available on a volunteer basis. It is the volunteers who are responsible for the outstanding quality of the Program.

Most of the volunteers come from the ranks of the parents. Although there are some very notable and valuable exceptions, most of the coaches and administrators donate their time as coaches helping out on their kid's teams. The normal path is for a parent to be recruited to coach or assist on his child's team. After coaching a few years, the parent may see the need for improvement in some phase of the Neighborhood program and get involved in it's administration. Neighborhood administrators generally come from the coaching ranks first.

Besides being a job that is not easy to accomplish, administering a Neighborhood is also thankless. Like the Commission members, the administration of the local Neighborhood is made up of volunteers. It is of utmost importance that the activity of the volunteers be structured to *ensure* the most benefit to the children in the Neighborhood. With seven (7) different Neighborhoods and various sports, just about every conceivable type of organization has been tried in the past. Because membership on Boards of Directors change almost yearly in most Neighborhoods, it is important to provide a frame of reference to direct new volunteers. They need to know where the Program is headed and what methods work in getting there. While the structure mandated by this Guide is certainly not the only one that will work, by trial and error, many of the pitfalls and inadequacies have been determined and countered. By using this Guide as a reference, volunteers who enter the program can focus on the problems that face their Neighborhood without resorting to a constant change of structure or goals.

The object of the minimum standard, the rules, etc. are to create a structure for success. The shift, positive and negative, has been primarily due to the relative strength of the individual board members of the Neighborhood. In many instances the Neighborhood organization was structured to fit the personalities and needs of the Board members. With varying objectives, abilities, and effort,

the structure varied also. The structure mandated by this Guide provides a structure for success. It is proven. It works. It provides for excellence, it provides for accountability. It is something to grow on. Many additional programs, additional services, and enhancements to the basic program can and should be provided for the children. While this Guide establishes minimum standards, it also provides for a great deal of latitude as to how the overall aims of the Program will be accomplished.

With the establishment of the standards, the Commission is attempting to put all Neighborhoods on equal footing, to even out the chance for success. The measure of that success is how many kids participate, how many kids grow, how many kids are kept out of trouble. It is not measured by which Neighborhood wins athletic contests. The Commission and this Guide are not attempting to impose blinders or restraints, or in any way inhibit the dedication and spirit of the volunteers within the Neighborhood. It is the aim and desire of the Commission and the Staff that the children be provided excellence; that they be provided consistency.

Because youth are involved, the misguided in our midst could inflict serious damage to individuals, to Neighborhoods and to the Program. Unfortunately, it is the small minority that must be guarded against and it is those persons that the rules are designed. The "For the Kids" motto should truly be used by everyone for the proper purpose and not as an excuse to circumvent rules.

The Program and this Guide want to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of all volunteers. We honor those who came before us, blazed the trails and established the Program. We honor those who are serving the Program now. We anticipate that those who follow will have the same dedication and insight to provide for future generations in Lafayette Parish.

G. RULES COMMITTEES

Each team sport that is offered Parish-wide through the neighborhoods has a central rules committee. This committee consists of members of the Youth Athletic Committee of the Commission, volunteers and a Recreation Coordinator. Membership changes from year to year based on who volunteers. This committee reviews and recommends rules, policies and dates applicable for the season. After the season is over, it makes recommendations for changes for the following year. The recommendations of the Rules Committee, upon adoption by the Recreation Commission, will be the rules that govern all inter-Neighborhood play. Neighborhoods may alter these rules to suit their own needs, but all inter-Neighborhood play will be governed by the rules established. No rules having to do with minimum playing time may be diminished by the Neighborhood.

It is intended that all Neighborhoods be represented in determining all playing rules. It is only with this representation that problems can be worked out ahead of time. Post-Season meeting will be held with the rules committee.

H. GIRLS' ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

The Lafayette Recreation Program is meant to be a truly comprehensive program for both males and females. There is to be absolutely no discrimination by a Neighborhood on the basis of race, creed, *gender, ability or religion*.

Programs are meant for both sexes. Parallel programs specifically for girls and co-ed teams are to be provided as a matter of course in other sports activities. Ideally, there will be an alternate program for girls in each sport (with softball begin the alternative to the boys baseball program). Since athletic participation by girls is much less than boys, Neighborhoods may have to combine to form a program.

Girls **will** be allowed to play on boys' teams providing they have sufficient skill and talent to contribute to those teams. That determination shall be made at the Neighborhood level with approval from to the Staff. Girls will be encouraged to participate on all-girls' teams as a first alternative but will not be prohibited from participation on boys teams on the basis of *gender* alone.

I. THERAPEUTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM

There are segments of the youth population that, for some reason or another, cannot compete with the children in the same *age/gender* bracket as their peers. Such segments include Down's Syndrome cases, severe muscular coordination problems, mental retardation, amputees and physically handicapped youth. Another portion of the recreation effort (outside Youth Athletics) provides for the mentally and physically handicapped in the Parish. The Recreation and Parks Therapeutic Department has a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist on staff to deal with the recreational needs of the disadvantaged population. In addition, the Therapeutic Recreation Specialist works with the schools in recreational activities such as the Special Olympics.

If a parent of a disadvantaged child wishes to "mainstream" that child into the regular Youth Athletic Program, certain exceptions may be made on an individual basis. Final ruling in all matters involving such cases will be made jointly by the Recreation staff.

J. COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS

As has been stated before, the primary focus of the Recreation Program is the AVERAGE player and RECREATIONAL athletics. All the rules and all the guidelines are meant to get the average athlete to participate, have a good time and derive all the benefits of an organized athletic program. The average player is protected by the NO CUT rules and the Minimum Playing Time rules. (See appropriate sections elsewhere in Guide). The whole emphasis is on participation. When the recreational season is over, however, the outstanding athletes are provided the opportunity to further their abilities. They are provided an opportunity to compete with others who are as competent and participate at a higher level of competition. Although participation in this phase of the Program is on a voluntary basis with the Neighborhood and with the parents, the following is what the competitive aspect of our Program is designed to do.

It is the intent of the Program to run a dual system of offerings: one recreational (league) in nature and one competitive (post-season, All-Star, etc.) in nature. Generally, these do not run concurrently. The competitive program is an adjunct to the recreational program. While more intense, more time consuming and more costly, it should be viewed as a supplement to recreational athletics, never as a replacement or alternative. Parents and Neighborhoods should be made aware of the time, travel and financial commitment involved in such endeavors before allowing their kids to participate. As a general rule, the competitive programs will be offered in sports beyond 7 and 8 year olds.

As a matter of policy, only Neighborhood Board-sanctioned teams will be allowed to participate in All-Star programs and such teams shall participate first in the programs sanctioned activities of the department.

This Guide **DOES** require the method in selecting all-stars be included in the by-laws of the Neighborhood and that this method be adhered to. Failure to adhere to it's own by-laws with respect to All-Star selection may result in disqualification of the All-Stars teams:

Some points to consider in selecting All-Stars are:

1. All coaches in the league should have some say in the selection process, at least the preliminary stages of that process. Whether the coaches nominate kids, then select by tryout, or vote, the individual coaches should have input. *To be eligible to vote for and/or Coach, a coach must be in good standing with the neighborhood and with the Recreation Department (ASEP Certified).*
2. The selection process should not favor the children of coaches or be a popularity contest of children or a "you vote for my kid and I will vote for yours" situation.
3. The selection of All-Star teams and coaches should be a formal process, written down for consistency from year to year.
4. The total perceived contribution of an athlete should be the criteria considered in voting; a lesser talented and committed team player may be picked over a more talented player with poor attitude or work habits.
5. After the selection process has been completed, parents should be *apprised* of the different goals, emphasis, methods and rules that competitive sports entail. Specifically, playing time *may not be* assured and there exists the possibility that an individual player may not play in any game during the entire All-Star season.
6. The aim of the All-Star Selection Process should be that the very best kids available be coached by the very best coaches available. It is as much a disservice to select a child with limited abilities to an All-Star team as it is to pass over a child with outstanding abilities.

K. RESIDENCY

1. Policy

The Youth Athletic Program is designed and maintained for the youth of Lafayette Parish. AS the outstanding program in the area, there is a desire from children from neighboring parishes to participate in this Program rather than the program in their home parish. Since the facilities, maintenance and salaries associated with the management of the Program are provided by tax monies levied against the taxpayers and residents of Lafayette Parish, the Program will not knowingly accept any out-of-Parish residents.

PARTICIPANTS WILL PLAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THEIR ACTUAL RESIDENCE. Any youngster residing in an area that does not offer a sport/program can still register with his neighborhood and participate in the sport in another Neighborhood. His registration will be turned over to the Staff and he will be assigned to the appropriate (usually nearest) Neighborhood participating.

Because of the diversity and relative strengths and weaknesses of various Neighborhoods, each organization takes on a personality of its own. In some cases, parents are reluctant to enroll their children at their particular Neighborhood they have been geographically assigned to and want, instead, to register at another Neighborhood. It is repeated: **PARTICIPANTS WILL PLAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THEIR ACTUAL RESIDENCE.** Because of All-Star play, inter-Neighborhood play, and because in many instances disadvantaged Neighborhoods may be "bled" of outstanding managerial, coaching and athletic talent, it is absolutely imperative that the Neighborhood boundaries be enforced. Youth *Neighborhood* leaders support strong action against violators of boundary prescriptions.

At registration, each Neighborhood will be required to verify that the address given on the registration form is within the defined boundaries of that Neighborhood. The address on file with the Lafayette Parish School Board is of interest, but determination of appropriate Neighborhood will be based on where the youngster actually **LIVES**. Post Office Box addresses are of interest in receiving mail, but parents/guardians are required to sign a statement acknowledging that their child actually **LIVES** at the address on the registration form, and that if a preponderance of evidence is found to show willful intent to violate residency rule, that child **WILL BE BARRED FROM PARTICIPATING IN ANY SPORT IN THE PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THAT SPORT SEASON.**

Standardized registration forms for this purpose, for use Parish-wide, will be required for every registration in all sports. The statement that requires acknowledgment shall be worded as follows:

"As parent or legal guardian of the Youth Athlete listed on this registration, I hereby certify and affirm that this child does legally and actually reside at the address listed. I understand that if my child is found to be actually living at an address other than the one listed, he or she is subject to being suspended from the Lafayette Recreation Program for at least one year and that I, as parent or guardian will also be subject to suspension for a period of 2 years."

Neighborhoods will be required to have registrants complete these standardized forms. The standard forms are being devised to contain as much specific information as individual Neighborhoods might want to include. Registrations will be valid only on these forms. If additional information or multiple forms are needed for internal purposes within the Neighborhood, these shall be supplemental and supplied by the individual Neighborhood.

It is the Neighborhood responsibility to determine that the address lies within its boundaries. It is the parent's responsibility to provide accurate and truthful information that the child actually lives there. Residency requirements shall be fully enforced. Neighborhood Boards of Directors are required to assist the policing of the boundary situation. If a child is found participating in the incorrect neighborhood *they may* be assigned to the proper neighborhood at once, even if the season has started. The participant(s) *can* be moved to the proper neighborhood at anytime during the season *if space is available with approval from the Athletic Programs Manager. Any participant playing outside of their neighborhood will not be eligible for post-season play.*

The Recreation Department will establish a central registry of all participants in the Program. Each participant will use his/her social security number, and his records will be maintained as he grows older and moves around within the Parish. It is hoped that this central registry will enable the Neighborhoods to better police the residency of its registrants and to enable a better police the residency of its registrants and to enable a larger percentage of the population to be reached by the Program.

Neighborhoods must continue to register children until all teams are balanced with equal numbers of players on each team. Neighborhoods will not be allowed to form baseball or softball teams with less than 12 players and basketball teams with less than 7 players without permission from the Athletic Programs Manager.

2. PENALTIES (Revised 1/22/96)

Penalties for violations are as follows:

A. Neighborhoods knowingly accepting players outside their boundaries may be assessed a \$300.00 fine per illegal participant. The Neighborhood must pay from their account. It will not be levied against reimbursement. Any Neighborhood failing to pay a fine by the end of the season will not be allowed to participate in post-season play. Any Neighborhood allowing systemic (more than 3) instances of boundary violations may be subject to having its Charter revoked.

B. Neighborhoods accepting players outside their boundaries may be barred from post-season/All-Star play at any age level where an illegal player participated, even if the player was not selected to the All-Star team. Care will be exercised in enforcing this rule so as not to unjustly punish an unwitting Neighborhood. Cases will be handled on an individual basis, but acceptance of coaches' and board members' children who are later found to be living out of the Neighborhood will be severely dealt with.

C. Participants (athletes) intentionally violating the residency requirement will be suspended *from* the Program for (1) calendar year starting from the date of the conclusion of the season.

D. Parents of illegal participants will be barred from coaching, sponsoring, officiating, or serving on any Neighborhood Board of Directors or in any other official capacity in our Program for (2) years.

For purposes of enforcing the rules, the following time sequence is in effect. Any Parent who willfully provides false address information will be treated as a violator from the date of registration. Penalties levied against Neighborhoods will not be initiated until competition starts. The Neighborhood has between registration and the start of the season to find and report discrepancies and errors and to help investigate claims of false information.

The Boundaries and Procedures Committee of the Recreation Commission will review any written complaints of boundary and residency requirements that come from residences within Lafayette Parish. Upon investigation, action will be forwarded to the whole Commission. *The Recreation Department Staff will handle all out of Parish request.*

Any mitigation of the hard fast residency rule must be sought before the season formally begins and must pass approval of the *Boundaries & Procedures* Committee, the whole Commission and the Athletic Programs Manager.

L. MINIMUM PLAYING TIME

In all leagues, there is an associated minimum playing time rule. Simply stated, if a child goes to practice and follows the rules, he gets to play a minimum amount of time. This minimum time varies from sport to sport as determined by the Staff Rules Committee and the Commission. The only acceptable reasons for a coach not to play a child a minimum time would be discipline (in which case he has to notify the opposing coach before the start of the contest), or injury or ejection (e.g. fouls in basketball) before the prescribed period has elapsed. The penalty for not playing all players is the forfeiture of the contest. The objective is recreation and participation. **MINIMUM PLAYING TIMES ARE SPECIFICALLY MEANT TO BE IN EFFECT FOR ALL SPORTS, INCLUDING FOOTBALL.**

Any coach who flagrantly violates this rule may be subject to discipline, including suspension. Neighborhoods should assist in policing the minimum playing time by limiting roster sizes, educating parents, etc. Neighborhoods that flagrantly condone minimum playing time violations from coaches may be subject to disciplinary action. **CHILDREN MUST PARTICIPATE.**

M. NO CUT POLICY

Because of the fundamental recreational nature of the Program, there is a general "No Cut" policy for all of the Neighborhoods in all of the sports. For example, if Neighborhood "B" has 20 boys who register for Pony level league baseball, it is not within that Neighborhood's authority to pick the best 13 players and then cut the rest. Results of competitive tryouts should never be used to determine eligibility to participate in recreational teams. Tryouts may be used to spread the talent out evenly, but not to determine if a child can play. Unless a child suffers from some type of disability, it is the right of that child to participate in recreational athletics, without regard to physical skills. If the numbers are insufficient for the formation of a team, or if the proposed roster would be too large, Neighborhoods will be allowed to pool players for overall joint effort and teams. Recreation Coordinator will assist with this procedure.

All youngsters who register on time (two week registration period) must be accepted. After the registration deadline, the neighborhood must take registration until all teams are equal in each age division. After all teams in each age group are balanced (equal) a waiting list will be taken.

N. "FOR THE KIDS"

In keeping with the "For the Kids" guideline, no set of rules or administrative procedures is more important or sacred than the right of the individual child to participate in a quality program. All of the procedures that are adopted are meant to serve the children participating in the Program, not the reverse. A child in Lafayette Parish, unless he or his parent have abridged the right, **ALWAYS HAS A PLACE TO PLAY.**

All rules made by the Commission, the Staff, this Guide and the Neighborhoods are meant to facilitate the organization and the provision of athletic offerings for the youth of Lafayette Parish. In some instances, the need of the overall may inconvenience certain individuals, but no rules, other than disciplinary infractions will overshadow the individual's right to participate.

Providing false information on the registration forms abrogates all rights by a parent and *their* child according to the provision of the Residency segment of this Guide.

O. MULTIPLE SPORTS

In many instances throughout the calendar year, the youth of our Parish are participating in more than one Youth Athletic Program activity at one time. This is particularly true in the case of athletes who participate in the various All-Star seasons. In many instances this has resulted in friction among the coaches of the various sports.

It is the aim of the Youth Athletic Program to offer a variety of programs for individuals. While specialization in high school is almost always necessary, it is not felt that there is a right to force kids 9-10 years old to choose between various sports. Although parents, coaches and kids may have their personal preference, **NO SPORT IS DEEMED INTRINSICALLY BETTER THAN ANOTHER.** Football is not more desirable than soccer and baseball is not better than softball. The sports are different and the choices should be made by the participants and their parents. The selection process will occur naturally as a child's interests and abilities develop with maturity.

The staff will coordinate the scheduling of various sport seasons to minimize conflicts and problems.

P. DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS

The Neighborhoods shall have the right to discipline the players, parents, coaches and administrators, according to the bylaws of that organization. (The Lafayette Youth Soccer Association - LYSA - also has this right, but that is covered under the Soccer Appeals section). This Guide, the Staff and the Commission will have the authority to review the disciplinary action taken against any individual or individuals as set forth herein.

Additionally, violations of the precepts and basic aims of the youth athletic program as set forth in this athletic guide are items that may be disciplined directly by the staff, the Youth *Programs* Committee or the Commission as a whole. The procedure for violations that are disciplined initially by the Staff, the Youth *Programs* Committee or the Commission as a whole as set forth herein.

In certain circumstances, the Neighborhood organizations themselves may be subject to discipline. The procedure for such disciplinary procedure shall be as set forth herein.

1. PROCEDURES

A. Neighborhood Initiated Discipline - the neighborhood disciplinary procedure must be formalized and in writing and conform to the procedures outlined herein.

1. Accusation or complaint - this stage is where a person (coach, player, parent, administrator) is actually charged with commission of a specific behavior. The accusation or complaint shall be made in writing to the alleged perpetrator.
2. Investigation - the duly authorized representatives of the Neighborhood shall investigate the charges preliminarily.
3. The alleged perpetrator may be suspended pending an open hearing only with probable cause pursuant to the preliminary investigation.
4. Hearing - within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the preliminary investigation or suspension, whichever first occurs, the alleged perpetrator shall have the right to an open hearing confronting his accusers. He shall be provided five (5) days written notice in advance of said hearing. If the alleged perpetrator does not desire a hearing, suspension shall stand for an appropriate time. A decision shall be rendered by the majority of the quorum of the board of directors of the organization involved. The decision shall be submitted in writing to the alleged perpetrator and to the staff of the Recreation and Parks Department.
5. Appeals - within ten (10) days after receiving notice of said decision, the alleged perpetrator shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Neighborhood to the staff of the Recreation and Parks Department. This appeal must be in writing and set *forth* the basis of the appeal. Thereafter, the staff shall request that the Youth *Programs* Committee convene a hearing on

the matter. This hearing shall be open unless the alleged perpetrator shall request otherwise. The *Youth Programs* Committee shall make a preliminary recommendation to the Recreation Commission. The *Youth Programs* Committee may request that the entire Commission hear the matter at issue. The Commission is the final arbiter of any dispute, and after receiving the preliminary recommendation of the *Youth Programs* Committee or the hearing of the matter, shall render a decision within ten (10) days in writing to all concerned parties.

B. Discipline Initiated by the Staff, the *Youth Programs* Committee or Individual Commissioners.

In appropriate circumstances, the Staff, the *Youth Programs* Committee or Commissioners shall have the right to initiate discipline action for violations of the precepts and basic aims of the Youth Athletic program. The procedure for this discipline shall be as follows:

1. Accusation or Complaint - the alleged perpetrator shall be notified in writing by the disciplining entity setting forth the alleged behavior that is subject to discipline.

2. The staff shall be charged with the investigation unless the staff initiates the discipline. In the latter case, the designated representatives of the *Youth Programs* Committee shall be charged with the investigation. If the discipline is initiated by the Commission and/or the *Youth Programs* Committee, then the staff shall be charged with the investigation of the alleged conduct.

3. Suspension pending hearing - if the investigative authority *finds* probable cause, the alleged perpetrator may be temporarily suspended pending a hearing.

4. Hearing - within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the preliminary investigation or suspension, whichever first occurs, the alleged perpetrator shall have the right to a hearing confronting his accusers. He shall be provided five (5) days written notice in advance of said hearing.

If the alleged perpetrator does not desire a hearing, suspension shall stand for an appropriate time. A decision shall be rendered by the majority of the quorum of the board of directors of the organization involved. The decision shall be submitted in writing to the alleged perpetrator and to the staff of the Recreation and Parks Department.

5. Appeals - all appeals shall be filed with the Commission as a whole body within ten (10) days after receiving notice of the decision in writing. The alleged perpetrator shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Staff or *Youth Programs* Committee. This appeal must be in writing and set forth the basis of the appeal. Thereafter, the Commission shall convene a hearing on the matter. The hearing shall be open unless the alleged perpetrator *requests* otherwise. The Commission shall render a decision in writing to all concerned parties within ten (10) days after the conclusion of the hearing. Most of the suspensions *involve* players or coaches. Because coaches are meant to be leaders, teachers and role models, it is especially important that the behavior be exemplary.

Example of coaches' misconduct include.

- (1) Physical or verbal abuse of players. Physical or profound verbal abuse of parents, game officials or other coaches.
- (2) Molestation.
- (3) Encouraging or condoning violent behavior by players outside of the scope of the game being played.
- (4) Encouraging or condoning unsportsmanlike behavior in players.
- (5) Cursing at kids, officials or parents on the field of play or at practice.
- (6) Intoxication or loss of personal self control to the detriment of the *players at a field, or during play or practice.*
- (7) Profound failure to uphold the goals, principles and objectives of the Youth Athletic Programs, as stated in Section III of this Guide.

C. *If a neighborhood board rules to suspend a participant, volunteer or spectator from the park, said neighborhood must get approval from the Athletic Programs Manager.*

2. JURISDICTION

Jurisdiction for all intra-neighborhood disputes begins with the Neighborhood Association. This jurisdiction includes, but is not limited to, the discipline of coaches, players, parents and fans. A neighborhood=s jurisdiction does not carry over to matters which have no direct bearing on the LRPD sanctioned program. The staff and/or Youth Programs Committee and/or the Commission as a whole shall have jurisdiction for discipline in all disputes between Neighborhoods and between sports.

3. SPECIFICITY

The only matters that will be considered in passing judgement in a disciplinary matter will be the conduct of the person as it pertains to the Athletic Program. The person's private life is only relevant to the extent it bears on the disciplinary procedure at issue. Generally speaking, one's private life shall have no bearing on any disciplinary procedure and shall not be considered by the investigating authority.

4. APPEALS

A person who has been disciplined by a neighborhood initiated by a Neighborhood has the right to appeal as set forth under Procedures. Any individual who has had discipline initiated by the staff shall have the right to appeal as set forth under Procedures.

Those disputes that exist between Neighborhoods or between sports, the Staff will provide the first level of discipline and the Youth Athletic Committee would be the first avenue of appeal.

Appeals will not be heard on any matter that is strictly an internal matter within a Neighborhood. For example, the selection of All-Stars and All-Star coaches, the selection of the Board of Directors, sources of revenue or expenditures for any individual Neighborhood, drafting of teams, etc. are appealable only to the extent that the Neighborhood is alleged not to have followed *it=s* own written by-laws as approved by the staff of the Recreation and Parks Department.

VI. LAFAYETTE YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

A. HISTORY

The soccer movement began in Lafayette Parish during the fall of 1978 independent from the recreation department. The Parks and Recreation Department officially sanctioned and began overseeing the operations and maintenance of the soccer programs in 1983.

B. ORGANIZATION AND METHODS

The Lafayette Youth Soccer Association (LYSA) is the volunteer organization that is charged with the authority and responsibility of organizing, coordinating and maintaining the soccer activities. The program is affiliated with the Louisiana Soccer Association and the United States Youth Soccer Association. Although Soccer is represented and played by kids Parish-wide, it is a parallel organization, outside the regular Neighborhood organization. The LYSA, like other Neighborhood organizations, is incorporated, and has a Board of Directors elected from a general membership.

The Parish is divided into "Areas". There are six Areas in Lafayette Parish and these Areas closely corresponds to a grouping of the Neighborhoods in the Neighborhood system of operation. There is centralized registration of al players. Teams are chosen from the practice within the Area. The LYSA acts as both the Neighborhood and the Rules Committee for soccer.

- 1- Broussard
- 2- Pius
- 3- Riverside
- 4- Prairie
- 5- Scott
- 6- Northside

C. STRUCTURE

It is the intent of this Guide to formalize, codify and enumerate the areas of responsibility and authority with all groups involved in the Lafayette Youth Athletic Program. With the presentation of the exact policy, methods and procedures *used in ALL* Youth Athletic groups, it is hoped that spirit of cooperation among these groups will be fostered and enhanced.

The Recreation and Parks Commission and Departments has issued a Charter to the LYSA as the provider of Youth Athletics with respect to soccer in Lafayette Parish.

1. The relationship between soccer and the Recreation Department is reaffirmed. As with any Neighborhood, it is not the intent of the Recreation Program, Department or Commission that the day to day operations of the LYSA be assumed. As a fully affiliated organization with the Lafayette Recreation Program, LYSA is subject to the fundamental precepts, objectives and procedures as enumerated in this Guide. The operations of LYSA within Lafayette Parish are subject to the same conditions and restraints as all other sports, associations and programs that are affiliated with the formal Recreation effort.

2. As enumerated above, although the aims and objectives of soccer and the LYSA are the same, the methods and procedures used by soccer are unique compared to standard Neighborhood organization. The operational methods of soccer are unique and that uniqueness is understood, allowed and approved.

Specifically, the LYSA, as the representative and Neighborhood for soccer in Lafayette, will be allowed to continue its present method of operation in the way of:

- A. Centralized organization of soccer rules, methods, procedures, registration, etc. that the LYSA presently conducts.
- B. Operation from geographic Areas with specified boundaries
- C. Centralized competition among Areas at central sites rather than simply within Areas at scattered sites.
- D. Preponderance of authority located centrally within the LYSA rather than within the Areas.
- E. Continuation of both Spring and Fall soccer seasons. It is obvious that these seasons serve a need.
- F. Continuation of a parallel organization outside the regular Neighborhood organizational structure for the foreseeable future.
- G. Continuation of the "high rec" program, if the LYSA so desires.

Select soccer will be considered as an unaffiliated program. (See Unaffiliated Programs Section) the Staff and the Commission strongly recommend that the Cajun Soccer Club and select soccer remain part and parcel of the LYSA but *is the* decision of the LYSA.

D. SOCCER APPEALS

The unique relationship of LYSA and the Recreation effort requires that special procedures be established for appeals having to do with soccer. Like all other sports affiliated with the City/Parish Program, the vast majority of disciplinary actions are unappealable. As long as it is strictly a matter of internal policy and procedure, a disciplinary action is not appealable because the Commission and the Program have no authority.

Presently, matters of discipline and appeals in soccer are handled almost exclusively through the LYSA, the Louisiana Soccer Association (LSA), and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). The appeals procedure is very structured and is administered through the State and national affiliations.

For purposes of this Guide and for the administration of soccer in Lafayette Parish, it is not the intent of the Recreation Department to usurp the authority of any national sport affiliations. **SOCCER WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THE APPEALS PROCEDURE IT PRESENTLY HAS.**

The procedure for appeals may best be described in the following scenario:

"Coach Brown" was involved in an incident with a parent. The league commissioner for the U-12 team in which Coach Brown coaches, assembles facts and presents these facts in an open hearing (with Coach Brown present if he desires to be) to the LYSA Board of Directors.

That Board suspends Coach Brown for the period of (1) year. Because LYSA is the only soccer program in the Parish, Coach Brown has, in effect, a DUAL suspension. He is suspended from the City/Parish Program. Coach Brown has appeal rights in both suspensions.

Coach Brown may appeal the "soccer" suspension through the Louisiana Soccer Association who may exonerate him or find due cause and reduce or add to the period of his suspension. If Coach Brown wants to continue pursuing the matter, he may go to Regional and National USYSA appeals committees.

Coach Brown may also appeal the "Program" suspension, but this avenue of appeals is through the Staff, the Youth Athletic Committee, and the Recreation and Parks Commission, successively. This is the same as other sports.

The Staff, Youth Athletic Committee, and Commission avenues of appeal cannot overturn or overrule an LSA and USYSF suspension. The LSA, the USYSA, etc. cannot overturn or overrule a "Program" suspension. Parents suspended from participation in the Program for violating Neighborhood boundary criteria are not eligible to serve in any official capacity in the soccer program.

VII UNAFFILIATED PROGRAMS

There are several programs in Lafayette Parish that use Recreation facilities but that are not integral parts of the Parish Recreation Program. Programs such as Little League Baseball in the Broadmoor area, Bidy Basketball played by various groups, AAU Basketball, USSSA and ASA Youth All-Star teams, and select soccer.

These programs offer organized youth athletics to the youth of the community and, for the most part, are extremely well administered, well financed and well intentioned. They do a good job providing service to participating youths. For various reasons in each case, however, they lie outside the scope of the Recreation Program. This Guide and the Recreation Department has no authority over these programs.

Because participants, parents and coaches involved in these unaffiliated programs are taxpayers, they have a right to use Recreation and Parks facilities just as anyone else has. The aim of the Recreation and Parks Commission and Department is to provide facilities for everyone needing them, but with a priority for those sports, Neighborhoods and activities WITHIN IT'S OWN PROGRAM FIRST.

VIII. THE COMMISSION

The Recreation and Parks Commission is a duly constituted Commission of Lafayette. The Commission consists of eleven members of the community who have exhibited interest and accomplishments in Recreation. Of the eleven, each council member makes one appointment and the Mayor/President has two appointments. The Commission was established in it's present form in October 1985 and after the initial term, all members serve staggered 4-year terms. The Commission serves without pay.

The duties of the Commission are as follows:

1. Develop and maintain a master plan for Recreation in Lafayette.
2. Provide an effective lobby to the legislative administrative bodies in Lafayette for Recreation needs.
3. Provide legislative bodies with assistance in securing the necessary funding levels to accomplish the Recreation task.
4. Maintain a close contact with the day-to-day operation of the Recreation effort.
5. Provide administration assistance to the Recreation Staff in securing manpower, money and material to perform their job.
6. Initiate the budgetary process and coordinate the budget among the Staff, Administrations and Councils.
7. Provide coordination to see that recreational needs are met equitably on a Parish-wide basis.
8. Establish with the Staff, a personnel selection and training procedure to develop a professional recreation program.
9. Assist the staff in maintaining and updating departmental procedure to develop professional recreation program.
10. Assess the progress of the Recreation Department in an annual formalized review.
11. Provide a highly visible, energetic forum for identifying and solving recreation problems.
12. Initiate and coordinate complete recreation consolidation between the City and Parish programs.
13. Act as the liaison between the public and the government and vice versa in all matters pertaining to Recreation.
14. Act as the court of last appeals in all procedural matters relating to the administration of the Youth Athletic Program and any other appeals made to the Staff.

The Commission is charged with the task of developing and overseeing the aims, methods and procedures for the entire Athletic Program. The Commission will be the final arbiter of any problem that might arise either within a Neighborhood, within a sport or among Neighborhoods and sports. The Commission is neither a law-making body nor an administrative body; it is a meditative body with the charge to oversee all of Recreation.

The Commission is to set the tone and thrust of the Athletic Program in the Parish. These volunteers have an interest and a proven track record in Recreation and they have devoted a large portion of their lives to the Youth Athletic effort, both at the coaching level and at the Neighborhood administrative level.

The authority of the Commission does not supersede or transgress upon any public official or body, duly elected from the Consolidated Government. The authority that the Commission has is derived directly from the governmental body of Lafayette Consolidated Government.

1. The Commission shall advise the Council and Mayor/President on all such matters as the Commission deems appropriate, necessary and in the best interest of the Recreation and Parks programs of the operations, programs, and fees.
2. The Commission shall make such rules and regulations as it deems appropriate and necessary for the conduct of its affairs not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Louisiana, the Parish, the City, as exist now or may hereafter be enacted.

XI THE STAFF

The staff of the Recreation and Parks Departments is composed of paid employees of Lafayette Consolidated Government. They work in a coordinated manner to administer the Program and the entire Department as a whole. As regular employees, they report along lines of authority to their supervisors within the Department. While they depend on the Commission for guidance, they are under the direct and complete authority of their supervisors. The Commission has no direct authority over them. An organizational chart of the titles and the direct responsibility of the positions is included in the attachments.

Duties of the staff with respect to the Athletic Program are as follows:

1. Provide the initial point of contact for all inter-Neighborhood and inter-sport activities.
2. Provide guidance and supervision for all programs.
3. Provide sufficient space and facilities to efficiently run all programs.
4. Provide or perform maintenance of the above facilities.
5. Provide day-to-day operation of all aspects of the program.
6. Provide season-to-season continuity of the various athletic activities.
7. Provide professional management of all athletic activities.
8. Provide new and innovative programs for the youth of Lafayette Parish
9. Provide the time frame for athletic seasons for various programs in the Parish including the priority of field and facility usage.
10. Maintain professional contacts with other recreation programs throughout the country for the exchange of ideas.

X. THE COACH

In any athletic program, coaches are the second most importantly persons involved; players being the most important. Coaches are really in charge of their team. All program coaches are volunteers and, as such are not paid; but the rewards are tremendous.

A. QUALIFICATIONS

In most situations, Neighborhoods solicit coaches at sign up time. Depending on volunteer coaches is about the only way this Program can survive.

The necessary qualifications for a coach of a particular sport vary. For league play, characteristics needed include commitment, a real love of kids, and organization/discipline. While just about any personality type can be a successful coach, and the truly technical aspects of any sport can be self-taught, the attributes above are absolutely indispensable.

Each Neighborhood, the Staff and the commission have the right, and more importantly, the DUTY to discipline coaches who will not or cannot live up to the standards of this Program and this Guide. Examples of misconduct are included in the Discipline and Appeals section. Although disciplinary hearings are always unpleasant, the potential for harm to Youth Athletes is so great as to mandate that a tight rein be kept on coaches' behavior. Because such activity happens entirely within the confines of the Neighborhood, the burden lies initially and primarily with the Neighborhood (and LYSA) in identifying, targeting and disciplining those who willfully act counter to the acceptable manner.

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING. WINNING ISN'T THE ONLY THING. The winning of an athletic contest should never be more important than the welfare of an individual player. Standards in the league are never more important than teaching the fundamentals to all players. The quality of a Neighborhood's athletic program is never measured by how many All-Star championships that Neighborhood has attained. Competition in athletics is natural and most players are naturally competitive. The idea that must get across to coaches is to strive for excellence in the players, then the win/loss record will take care of itself. Teaching fundamentals, teaching sportsmanship, playing everyone on the team, *having FUN, that is what it is all about*. A coach's aim should be to make the good player better, make the mediocre player good and insure that the poorer players improve and have fun.

All head coaches must obtain an ASEP Certification to *vote* for or coach in the post-season. The ASEP (American Sport Education Program) is a *program* focused on making volunteer youth sport coaches keenly aware of their responsibilities to provide for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of the youths on their team.

Coaches= Code of Ethics:

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as an ASEP Coach by following the LRPD Coaches= Code of Ethics.

-I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.

-I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

-I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.

-I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

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

-I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

-I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.

-I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.

-I will remember that I am a youth *sports* coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

B. PRACTICE

The setting up of practice schedules is an important part of athletics. Because many people are involved in jobs with irregular hours, hard fast rules are difficult to set. Whatever practice requirements are, the coach must remember that the players have many other phases of their lives to attend to. While the coach must cover the basics and teach players the sport, athletics are just a portion of their total development. Please remember that excessive practice is usually detrimental, not only to the individual child but also to the aims the coach is trying to reach. Neighborhoods are charged with setting reasonable limits of practice time with relation to the various age levels for each sport, and the policing of these limits. Because of the skills to be taught and the caliber of athlete, more practice for All-Star and competitive teams may be appropriate.

C. OFFICIALS

We have officials of various competency levels participating in our athletic programs. Many of them are high school students who are paid nominal sums by the City to officiate games. We know it is tough to sit by and watch an official blatantly miss a call which would result in your team losing a contest. Because of the natural coach's bias, there might not be such a thing as good officiating. The only way a program like ours can work is to take the good with the bad. We expect the coach to be a leader in displaying good sportsmanship and judgment. Attitudes are infectious. If a coach loses his temper at an official, the parents and kids will pick it up. Then, instead of the kids playing their opponent, they are playing against the official. It is really easy for a coach to lose a ball game by overreacting to a call. If you have a question on any call, the correct procedure is to request time out and discuss *it in a civil manner*. Any attempt at storming out on to the field or court or any attempt to harass the official will almost invariably result in punitive measures against your team. It is useless to argue a judgment call.

If a coach has a specific point and wishes to protest a game, each Neighborhood has a appeals procedure set up. The Staff handles protests between Neighborhoods. The ultimate word on any protest for whatever reason shall be the Recreation and Parks Commission.

IX THE TEAM

A. PHILOSOPHY

The unique thing about team sports is the creation of the team itself. The team is more than just a collection of athletes. It is a group combined for some common purpose that takes on a personality of it's own. While each player on the team contributes to that personality, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

In the lower levels (ages) of participation, most of the players will not have participated in team activity before. The idea of sharing, of working hard, of really going out and giving their best for a concept is a valuable part of growing up. To be part of the team, to share, to be able to depend upon others, and to be dependable are all requisites of modern society. The team concept teaches that while there is room for individuality, there is little room for a loner. Excellence and achievement are rewarded only as they contribute to the team effort. Individual "hot doggers", even with brilliant effort can almost always be beaten by a solid team effort. This is a concept the program tries to teach.

B. TEAM SELECTION

The Neighborhood drafting process may vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and from sport to sport. The Neighborhood itself shall select the type of draft it will use in the various sports and under various conditions. Again, it shall be deemed an internal policy of the neighborhood as to exactly which procedure will be used. The Chartering process specifies that the method be formalized and written down. The Commission and the Staff shall have no authority to designate a drafting procedure for a Neighborhood, nor will it generally hear any appeals on the matter

Whatever they are, the procedures are to be designed with the following objectives in mind:

1. Provide for as equal a division of talent as possible.

Parity among teams enhances the quality of play, the success of the league, and the enjoyment of participants and spectators. If there is inter-Neighborhood play, it will be required that multiple teams from the Neighborhood shall be of comparable quality. For example, if Neighborhood A has 2 girl's softball teams and will compete against other Neighborhoods, the teams shall be of as nearly the same talent level as possible. It is not allowed to "stack" *such* a team to provide a competitive advantage over another Neighborhood. Select the All-Star team at the beginning of the year and use this team to compete against other Neighborhoods is not allowed. This practice is protestable by other Neighborhoods and, if found guilty, a Neighborhood could be barred from post-season and All-Star competition.

The drafting of a team is of utmost importance to the balance of the league. The draft is not as critical in baseball and softball where one person cannot ordinarily dominate a sport. In sports like basketball and soccer, particularly in the younger age groups, it is relatively easy for one player to dominate the play on the team. In such circumstances, one dominant player makes the team a winner and two make someone else will draft the team for him. The Neighborhood should attempt to assist new coaches and those unfamiliar with the drafting process or the athletes involved, in getting as equable a draft as possible. The quality of play is really enhanced by all participants when there is absolute parity among teams.

2. Provide that a child will play on his parent's team, unless the parent specifically desires not to coach the child. To keep the other aims of the Program, the recommended policy is that children of head coaches follow their parents while assistant coaches follow their children. (The child must be drafted to get his father as an assistant coach. It is allowed for a parent to be a coach or assistant coach on a team other than the one his child is playing for.). Qualified siblings should play on the same team unless specifically requested differently by the parents.

The actual drafting order, and drafting method etc., is primarily the responsibility of the Neighborhood. The Neighborhoods and LYSA are asked to keep in mind the objectives of a yearly draft when determining the actual methods to be used. Only in methods of gross violations of the principles of the Program will the discipline and appeals process be initiated.

Even after the draft, neighborhoods must continue to register children until all teams in the league are equal. After they are equal a waiting list may begin.

Sample Draft Procedures:

-All participants will go through an evaluation procedure in throwing, catching, hitting and fielding. Coaches should watch and rate each player. From this evaluation process the player will be selected on teams.

-From the number of players, the number of teams should be determined. Example: 115 players, 2 teams with 12 players, 7 teams with 13 players: A 9 team league.

-A draft meeting is then scheduled with all 9 coaches. The first through 9 draft picks are random selected from a hat.

Drafting Order By

Team #	#4	#2	#5	#1	#8	#9	#3	#7	#6	
First Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Picks
Second Round	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	
Third Round	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
Fourth Round	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	

Fifth Round	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Sixth Round	54	53	52	51	50	49	48	47	46
Seventh Round	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Eighth Round	72	71	70	69	68	67	66	65	64
Ninth Round	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Tenth Round	90	89	88	87	86	85	84	83	82
Eleventh Round	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Twelfth Round	108	107	106	105	104	103	102	101	100
Thirteenth Round	109	110	111	112	113	114	115		

If players are added after draft they would go in draft order (116, 117, etc.) or picked randomly.

A team officially becomes a team in the Lafayette Recreation and Parks program when the fees are paid and the roster is officially submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department at the requested deadline.

XII THE PARENTS

Parents are not meant to be forgotten *in* the Athletic Program scheme. They are the taxpayers and the people who pay the registration fees. They are the ones who transport the players from one field or court to another and from one season to another, year after year. They are the ones who stand on the sidelines and sit in the bleachers cheering their children on. They have a right to have a say in how the children are treated and how their tax monies are being spent. They have a right to know, and the rest of the Program is ultimately responsible to them.

Because of the unfavorable publicity that competitive athletics has gotten, some coaches and educators have advanced the notion that youth athletic contests ought to *be* played behind high fences with the parents and fans nowhere in sight. It is our Youth Athletic Program philosophy that instead of isolating the parent, what is needed is involvement. Instead of criticism, what is needed is hard work at correcting the deficiencies. Instead of trying to circumvent the rules, we should try to strengthen them and the product we have: Youth Athletes.

There are some guidelines that the parents can follow for the good of the Program.

1. Support your child's activities. One of the most rewarding times in a child's life is the first time they achieve in an athletic endeavor. Be there to share that with them.
2. See that your children attend practice. They can't get better without practicing.
3. Ask what you can do to help. The coach will invariably need help in organizing practice, calling parents, getting refreshments, etc. If you can't give money, give of your time and yourself.
4. If you can help coach, help at practice. At the game, let the coach(es) do the coaching. Four people yelling instructions at a 7 year old is at least three too many.
5. Let the officials do the officiating. They get paid for it. Your interference will probably be detrimental to the team.

6. Remember that those are just kids out there trying to do what they have been taught. The whole object of the Program is for them to have fun doing it. Everyone makes mistakes. There are no college scouts watching them play. Their play in this Program will not win or lose them the Heisman Trophy or the Cy Young Award.
7. Remember the Program is run "For the Kids".
8. Do not bring any alcoholic beverages (including beer) to the contests. These beverages are allowed at all City and Parish parks. **BUT THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED AT ANY YOUTH ATHLETIC CONTEST.** Consumption of alcohol at athletic contests will result in expulsion from the area or the suspension of the contest or both.

Any parent determined to be flagrantly disregarding the spirit and rules of the Guide will be asked to cease, then will be asked to leave the area. If problems continue, the Neighborhood or Staff is specifically authorized to bar attendance of problem parents. This discipline is appealable to the Commission through the Staff.

Parents Code of Ethics

- I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents= Code of Ethics Pledge.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to *encourage* a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth - not for adults.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials, with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.
- I will require that my child=s coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches= Code of Ethics.

XIII THE PLAYERS

The role of the player is the most important and the simplest.

LEARN
PLAY
GROW
ENJOY

Players= Code of Ethics

- I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Players= Code of Ethics Pledge.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
- I will do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
- I deserve to play in an environment that is *free* of drugs, tobacco and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it=s important to me.
- I will do my very best in school
- I will remember that sports is an opportunity to learn and have fun.

YOUTH ATHLETIC GUIDE

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A MANUAL OF METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Respectfully submitted by:

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