

RAF Lakenheath  
Child and Youth Programs  
(CYP)  
Coaches Handbook



# **Welcome to RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program**

Participation in athletics plays a valuable role in the development of children. Aspects of teamwork, dedication, discipline, physical fitness, self-esteem, and fair play all contribute to the overall growth of children. The RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program takes this responsibility seriously and strives to offer quality programs, which will aid in this development.

This handbook is presented to serve as a reference for you to help you understand the philosophies of the youth center regarding youth athletics, and its success. Additional information on the management of the Sports Program can be found in AFI 34-144. If everyone works together and does their best to enrich the lives of children in the RAF Lakenheath community, we can accomplish remarkable things.

We look forward to your current and continued involvement with the RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program.

Sincerely,

Katherine Andert

Youth Sports and Fitness Coordinator

226-5437

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## **Key Contacts**

Lakenheath Emergency: 911 or +44 01638527911

Mildenhall Emergency: +44 01638542667

Lakenheath Youth Center: 226-5437 or 01638525437

Youth Sports Coordinator: 226-5437

Youth Center Director: 226-2935

Weather Hotline: 226-3541

Family Advocacy: 226-8070

DoD Child Abuse Hotline: Overseas: 571-373-5348 (Local charges may apply);  
US: 877-790-1197

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of our Youth Sports Program is to provide a quality youth sports experience in a safe, positive and fun environment where children have the opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and ethically while also making friends, learning good sportsmanship, and developing fundamental sports skills.

## **Philosophy of Youth Sports**

At RAF Lakenheath, the Youth Sports Program was developed to enhance children's ethical, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual learning with the purpose of having fun. At the same time, nurturing each child's capacity to learn life-skills. The emphasis of youth sports is on skill development, co-operation, teamwork and maximum participation. The Youth Sports Program follows the National Standards for Youth Sports and develops programs that are consistent with the philosophy outlined in those standards.

Those standards include:

- A quality sports environment is developed to ensure the wellbeing of the children.
- Ensuring sports participation is fun and a portion of a child's life.
- Those involved are trained and the organization has accountability.
- A screening process of volunteers will be used to ensure the safety of the children.
- Parents must take an active role in their children's experience.
- Positive sportsmanship will be exhibited by everyone throughout the program.
- A safe playing environment is provided.
- Each child has equal play opportunity
- Drug, tobacco, alcohol and performance enhancers are strictly prohibited at any youth sports activities.

# Coaches

All coaches must attend a mandatory training that includes:

- Emergency Plan & Procedure
  - Child Appropriate Programming
  - Child Abuse Prevention & Reporting procedures
  - Tactics and Strategies of the sport
  - Inclement Weather Policy & Procedures
  - Practice Organization
  - Game Rules and By-laws
  - Legal Liability
  - Specific Drills to teach the skills of the sport
  - Psychological, Physical, Social needs of children
  - Positive Guidance/Appropriate Touch
  - Fire, Safety and Health
  - Problematic Sexual Behavior involving children and youth
  - Concussions- cause, prevention, recognition and response
  - CPR/First Aid
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- There will be a minimum of two coaches per team. One head coach and one assistant coach. Experienced coaches will be placed with first time coaches when possible.
  - Requests for certain coaches, or to be placed on a certain team with friends will not be honored. Players returning from last season WILL NOT automatically be placed on the same team they played on last year. Only the head coach and assistant coach are guaranteed to have their children on their team.
  - The coach or youth sports staff on duty at the time when first aid of any sort is applied must accomplish an Accident Report Form (AF Form 1187). These forms will be provided to each coach at the beginning of the season. If on base emergency medical care is called the Youth Program Director must be notified immediately. For non-medical emergencies the Accident Report (AF Form 1187) must be turned into the Youth Sports Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident.
    - AFI 34-144 provides guidance on players returning to activities after injury or illness. Players wearing orthopedic casts, air splints, or metal splints will not be eligible to participate in practices or games until the injury has healed completely and a doctor's note has been submitted to the Youth Sports Coordinator. Players that have been

ill should not return until fully recovered to prevent the spread of illness or disease.

- Coaching staff will be responsible for the conduct of their players, team assistants, as well as parents. It is their responsibility to ensure that the actions of the whole team are respectable.
- A Youth Sports staff member will monitor all practices and games, monitor the officiating and conduct of games and will require players, coaches and parent spectators to abide by all rules and Code of Conduct Pledges. A Youth Sports staff person will evaluate facility maintenance. At the end of the season, parents are highly encouraged to fill out a program evaluation form that allows them to provide feedback about all aspects on how the sport was conducted.
  - Complaints against a coach, parent, or game official must be made immediately to the Youth Sports staff. The staff will make observations of the individual in question. The accused individual will attend a meeting to address the complaint and to offer their side of the incident. If the individual in question is found to have acted or spoken inappropriately, a suspension or removal may result.

## **Game Cancellations**

If a game is cancelled due to weather or other unforeseeable circumstances an attempt will be made to reschedule the game. However, due to time restraints and/ or field availability, some games may not be made up. It will be the decision of the Youth Sports and Fitness Coordinator when and if games are made up.

## **General Policies**

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in team activities and to support the team in a positive way as a spectator. Spectators in violation of RAF Lakenheath policies and rules or parent's code of conduct will be asked to stop or leave the playing area.
- All coaches, players and parents will comply with RAF Lakenheath policies and rules when participating in sports activities on and off base.
- A minimum play time rule is in effect for all team sports, as stated in each sports respective by-laws, at least 50% of each game. Team rosters are kept at a minimum to permit players more playing time.
- Please leave pets at home, as they are not permitted on youth fields. The only exception are officially documented service animals.

- Players are encouraged to bring their own personal water bottles at all practices and games to rehydrate themselves. The coach or team mom may choose to supplement the team with additional water. Players will be encouraged to drink plenty of water, especially during hot weather. It is the Youth Sports policy that players should never be denied fluid intake at any time during practice or games.

## **Safety**

The Youth Program policy and guidelines outlined here are implemented at practices, games and other related sporting events. These are to be followed in order to minimize the risk of abuse and neglect as well as to protect adult volunteers and leaders from false allegations.

- Each team must have a minimum of two adults (volunteer coaches or youth sports staff) at all practices and games.
- All coaches are certified and receive first aid, coaching and child abuse identification, reporting and prevention training.
- Parents are encouraged to be involved as coaches and spectators
- Playing fields and facilities are inspected before every sports and fitness activity, for possible safety hazards and/or any unsafe playing conditions.
- Players use appropriate equipment and protective gear that are examined regularly by both the volunteer coach and the youth sports staff to ensure it is safe.
- Coaches are removed if they knowingly require or allow a youth to play with a serious injury or knowingly create an unsafe environment for play.
- A stocked first-aid kit is available to every coach during all sporting events, practices and games.
- There are emergency plans established for handling injuries, hazards, and any inclement weather condition (page 7)
- Practices and games are canceled during lightening, when the site intended for use is not properly lighted, and when intended site is in disrepair or unsafe.
  - Teams will be removed from fields immediately and taken to a safe location when there is inclement weather.
  - The Youth Sports Coordinator will monitor conditions during activities.
- Coaches may not give a ride to a child who is not their own without the express permission from the parents of that child. If a child is not picked up immediately after a practice or game, and the parents of that child cannot be reached, the coach will attempt to call the emergency

contact person for that child, followed by the first sergeant and lastly the Law Enforcement Desk.

## **Emergency and First Aid Procedures**

Inform staff and volunteers that they have specific responsibilities related to the safety and welfare of young athletes. Everyone involved in the RAF Lakenheath Youth Sports Program should be familiar with these precautions. Please review carefully.

If an injury occurs:

- Reassure and calm the children, and listen to them to describe what happened and what hurts
- Look for signs of injury (blood, black and blue, deformity of joints, etc.)
- Ask for help if CPR/first-aid is needed, for someone to call 911 or to transport the injured child if parents are not present and circumstances dictate.

In the event of a medical emergency our first action is to care for the participant, notify the parent, and notify the chain of command of the medical emergency and procedures taken.

Actions to take during an emergency

- DO NOT PANIC
- Have an adult stay with the injured person at all times
- Call 911
  - Give your name and position
  - Exact location (street address, entry gate, building location)
  - Victims condition
  - Nature of injury and circumstances surrounding emergency
  - Stay on the phone until you are told to hang up
- Have someone meet emergency vehicle
- Call parents immediately
- Report accident to Youth Program Director (226-2935)
- Call parents after the accident to make sure the child is alright.

Do not forget

- You should never give a diagnosis or your opinion



- Coaches are responsible for keeping emergency numbers and medical information on each of the players at all time.
- Coaches are responsible for having a first aid kit at all practices and games. Talk to the Youth Sports Coordinator if you need more supplies.

## **CPR**

- 1) Verify that the person is unresponsive and not breathing
  - a. Shout to get the person's attention, using the person's name if you know it. If the person does not respond, tap the person's shoulder and shout again while checking for normal breathing.
  - b. If the person does not respond and is not breathing or only gasping, continue to step 2.
- 2) Place the person on his or her back on a firm, flat surface. Kneel beside the person.
- 3) Give 30 chest compressions
  - a. Place the heel of one hand in the center of the person's chest, with your other hand on top. Position your body so that your shoulders are directly over your hands.
  - b. Keep your arms straight, push down at least 2 inches, and then let the chest return to its normal position.
  - c. Push hard and push fast! Give compressions at a rate of 100-120 compressions per minute.
- 4) Give 2 rescue breaths.
  - a. Place the breathing barrier over the person's nose and mouth.
  - b. Open the airway. (Put one hand on the forehead and two fingers on the bony part of the chin and tilt the head back to a past-neutral position.)
  - c. Pinch the nose shut and make a complete seal over the person's mouth with your mouth.
  - d. Take a normal breath and blow into the person's mouth for about 1 second, looking to see that the chest rises.
  - e. Take another breath, make a seal, and then give the second rescue breath.

## **Inclement Weather Procedures**

### Emergency Procedures for Weather and Catastrophes

- In the event of base closure due to inclement weather, Youth Program facilities will be closed. Parents will be notified. If the parent, legal guardian or emergency contact cannot reclaim a child within one hour, the first sergeant will be called followed by the law enforcement office to pick up the child. Be aware of extreme hot or cold temperatures, wind speeds, heavy rain, thunder and lightning storms and darkness. Youth Sports Coordinator will call games for inclement weather. Coaches will be responsible to pay attention to weather for their practices.

### Fire Prevention

- In case of a fire, please call 911. In case of fire at the Youth Center, staff and volunteers will direct and guide youth to the relocation area for reassembling at the Youth Center. All staff/volunteers will ensure that once at the relocation area, all youth are accounted.

## **Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Free Environment**

The Youth Sports program has a zero tolerance policy for drug, tobacco, and alcohol in our facilities and on our grounds. This policy will be enforced for all involved in youth sports. Anyone under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances will be denied admittance to or removed from events and the authorities will be called. Coaches are encouraged to talk to youth and parents about the need for a drug, tobacco, and alcohol free environment for all children.

## **Team Photography Information**

Team photos are the responsibility of that team's coach and parents. Individual photography sessions will be the sole responsibility of the individual and not the Youth Sports Office or its staff. Photo's may not be taken anywhere in the vicinity of the Youth Center grounds, gymnasium or Heritage Park areas.

- Should you have any problems or complaints with the quality or quantity of photos that you receive, this complaint should be addressed directly to the photographer and not the Youth Sports Office.

## **Equipment and Uniform Concerns**

- First aid kits will be provided before the first practice to all coaches.
- We recommend the use of only sanctioned protective equipment provided by the Youth Center available for each sport. The equipment that we provide to a team must carry the National Operating Committee on Standard in Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) or American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) approval for safety. Participants may not practice or play without proper fitting safety equipment. Broken or altered equipment is not allowed.
- Some protective equipment will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to obtain
  - Shin Guards are mandatory for soccer
  - Eye glasses straps are required in all sports for children who wear eye glasses
  - Protective cups are suggested for all children playing contact sports
  - Mouth guards are required for all children playing Flag Football
- Participants should wear appropriate clothing for the sport and environment
  - No pants with pockets or belt loops
  - We encourage parents to provide participants with a good fitting pair of shoes appropriate for the sport
  - Light, loose fitting clothing made of natural fibers or a blend with cotton helps promote air circulation to the skin. They help keep the player cool in hot weather and act to prevent chilling in cold weather.
  - Blue Jeans are not appropriate clothing for any sport and can constitute a safety hazard to other children.
  - No jewelry shall be worn during a game/practice situation.
- A shirt will be issued to each player which will be returned to the coach or Youth Sports Coordinator at the end of the season.

## Transportation

Your child may need to be transported to and from a game or activity through the course of the year or sports season. The following is a list of precautions that will employ in order to safeguard the transport of your child to and from these Youth Sports functions.

- Two adults will always be in the vehicle
- The driver will have the proper qualifications
- Driving records and driver's license of all staff and volunteers are checked, verified and kept on file before permitting them to transport children.
- All government vehicles used receive a regularly scheduled maintenance inspection and get routine fluids check before each use.
- All vehicles contain a fire extinguisher, warning triangle and first aid kit in the event of an emergency while in transit.
- Use of seatbelts is mandatory for all occupants of military government vehicles.
- Occupancy levels will never exceed the limit set by the vehicle manufacturer.
- Emergency information and consent forms will be requested for each child beforehand and carried by the driver.

RAF Lakenheath Youth Center uses government passenger vans to transport children. At no time will a volunteer coach or youth program staff person be permitted to transport a child in their own personal vehicle without the express written permission of the parent of that child. Any such permission granted should be forwarded to the Youth Programs Office for verification and records.

Parents may grant permission to other parents to transport their child to and from practices and games when that parent has a child on the same team without seeking special permission from the Youth Programs Office. However in no way can the Youth Programs office be held responsible or liable for this arrangement in the event that there is an injury due to a vehicle accident.

The number one priority of the Lakenheath Youth Sports Program is the safety of all its participants. All efforts are made to ensure that the safe environment is maintained at all times including during the transport of children when it is necessary.

## Removal Procedures and Suspension

All coaches, parents, and players must establish and maintain the highest standard of behavior and integrity. The Lakenheath Youth Sports program provides a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free environment. In addition, our program provides a profanity and violence free environment. Any violation of the NYSCA Code of Ethics will be addressed and if appropriate, disciplinary actions will be pursued.

The following are un-sportsmanship conduct and are not allowed at RAF Lakenheath.

- Foul or abusive language- verbal language, writing on clothing, etc.
- Vulgarity or obscene gestures- any gesture that can be perceived as vulgar or obscene.
- Physical Violence- tripping, hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, etc.
- Use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
- Harassment- harassing of anyone at the sporting event (children, parents, coaches, referees, or the sports coordinator)
- Child Endangerment- Knowingly injuring other children
- Threatening words or actions- threatening a child, coach or referee in any manner.

Remedial actions include:

1. Warning
2. Probation
3. Season Suspension
4. Ban from all RAF Lakenheath Youth Program Sports

Coaches: Each coach signs the NYSCA Coaches' Code of Ethics. If the coach does not honor this code, he or she will be counseled and possibly lose coaching privileges. Any coach dismissed from a game for unsportsmanlike behavior will be disqualified for the remainder of the game and the next official game in which that respective team participates.

Parents: Each parent signs the NYSCA Parents' Code of Ethics. This pledge specifies what is expected of the parents. Parents who break the code of ethics can and will be asked to leave the playing area. The playing area includes the surrounding area with close enough proximity to cause further disruptions. Repeated offences will result in permanently being barred from attending sporting events. In addition, each parent must attend one Mandatory Parent

Children: Each child Orientation per year. Orientations are offered throughout the year, prior to the beginning of each sport season.

Children: The expectation is that all children will follow sportsman like behaviors. The behavior of the children is a reflection and the responsibility of the teams coach and the child's parents. If a child is observed breaking the rules, they will first be given a verbal warning followed by a suspension for the rest of the game. If their behavior does not change, they will be given a two game suspension and lastly they will be suspended for the rest of the season.

## **Excused Absence**

If at any time you know you will need to miss a practice or game, please let the Youth Sports Coordinator know as soon as possible. Absences include:

- Deployment
- TDY
- Sickness
- Emergency Leave

It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child makes it to practice. If a child cannot make it to practice, they will be unable to develop the skills to play at games.

## **Minimum Play Rules and Inclusion Policy**

Everyone Plays: Any eligible child can register and be assigned to a team, regardless of athletic ability. No registered child is ever excluded from participation!

Play time: The minimum play rule requires all children to play at least half of the game.

Different levels: Leagues are designed to meet the age and experience levels of each child. Our league age grouping are as follows:

- 5-6 years of age
- 7-8 years of age
- 9-10 years of age
- 11-12 years of age
- 13 years of age and up

Children with disabilities: Because our program's belief in inclusion is so strong, we will make any reasonable accommodation for children with disabilities. We only ask two things:

- A physician's note allowing for participation in youth sports
- An "Inclusion Action Plan" can be coordinated between parents, the youth sports coordinator, and the coaches.

Ratio Requirement: IAW AFI 34-144

## **Sportsmanship**

How we define sportsmanship:

- Sportsmanship has much to do with one's perspective. Good sportsmanship is reflected in respect and compassion for others, respect for the pre-defined sport, and a strict adherence to personal morality. Many sportsmanlike actions within the youth sports field are a result of a loss of perspective. Adults losing perspective and forgetting that the children and their many needs come first often result in behavior that teaches the children how to be poor sports. We must remember that children learn behavior, such as poor sportsmanship, from watching their parents, coaches and other adults around them.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Child abuse is any non-accidental injuries to a child, sexual activity with a child, or verbal abuse of a child that is demeaning and results in emotional illness or social maladjustment. Maltreatment can be by a parent, guardian, or any other adult responsible for the child's welfare on a temporary or permanent basis.

Child neglect is failure to provide adequate medical care, food, clothing, or supervision necessary for the safety and well-being of a child and/or blatant disregard of a child's emotional illness.

There are four types of maltreatment:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal/emotional abuse

- Neglect

Signs of abuse/neglect:

- Suspicious location of injuries
- Physical and behavioral indicators
- Verbal reports by a child

Reporting suspected child abuse/neglect:

- You do not have to wait for or look for proof before reporting suspected abuse/neglect.
- Report any concerns of suspected cases of child abuse/neglect immediately. You can contact the Sports Coordinator, the Youth Center Director, or to the Family Advocacy Office.
- You will be asked to provide a written statement for record and will work cooperatively to make a report to the Family Advocacy Office.

## **Positive Guidance**

Children need guidance from adults by the use of showing what a caring and supportive relationship looks like. Positive guidance is also the use of appropriate touch and showing respect towards the individual's personal privacy and space. Positive guidance can be used for nurturing, keeping children safe, or assisting with hygiene.

Some techniques used with positive guidance are:

- Consider possible reasons for behaviors
- Listening
- Understanding development
- Providing opportunities for choices
- Establishing limits and rules
- Anticipating and preventing challenging behaviors
- Indirect guidance
- Reinforcement
- Redirection
- Intentional Environments
- Logical and natural consequences
- Conflict resolution
- Providing language to identify expressions of emotions
- Modeling prosocial behaviors



- Be in control without being overly controlling
- Restraint

Some inappropriate guidance techniques:

- The use of threats or derogatory remarks about children or their families.
- Spanking, slapping, biting, hitting, pinching, yanking, shoving, shaking, pulling hair or any other form of physical abuse.
- Threats, name-calling, sarcasm, belittling, testing or any other form of verbal abuse.
- Isolation away from adult contact/sight.
- Confinement in closets, boxes or similar places.
- Binding to restrain movement of mouth or limbs.
- Withholding or forcing meals, snacks, toileting, outdoor play experiences or rest time.
- Allowing children to remain in soiled or wet clothing.
- Intimidating a child with facial expression, tone of voice or a physical presence.
- Touching children in uncomfortable or inappropriate ways.
- Coercion or other forms of exploitation of a child's lack of knowledge.

## **Concussion: Cause, Prevention, Recognition & Response**

What is a concussion?

- A brain injury caused by a bump or blow to the head.
- You cannot see a concussion.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

- If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs of a concussion.
  - Appears dazed or stunned
  - Is confused about assignment or position
  - Forgets an instruction
  - Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
  - Moves clumsily
  - Answers questions slowly
  - Loses consciousness
  - Shows behavior or personality changes
  - Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
  - Can't recall events after hit or fall

- Symptoms reported by athlete
  - Headache or “pressure” in head
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Balance problems or dizziness
  - Double or blurry vision
  - Sensitivity to light
  - Sensitivity to noise
  - Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
  - Concentration or memory problems
  - Confusion
  - Does not “feel right”

How can you help your child prevent a concussion?

- Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.
  - Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
  - Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
  - Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
  - Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion

What should you do if you think your child has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away.
  - a. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play.
  - a. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon, while the brain is still healing, risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.
  - a. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

## **Problematic Sexual Behavior Involving Children and Youth**

Penn State University and the Military Family Learning Network (MFLN) have trained RAF Lakenheath Child and Youth Programs on Problematic Sexual Behavior or PSB. This training was designed to help those who have frequent contact with children of all ages to assist Family Advocacy Personnel in determining if a referred incident warrants engagement of the Multi-Disciplinary Team. This standard program will assist subject matter experts on what is common, less common or uncommon behaviors in youth ages 2-18. Any concern or knowledge of potential behaviors will be immediately addressed with a CYP Director or Training & Curriculum Specialist.