

# CODES OF CONDUCT

## Pursuing Victory With Honor\*

### Code of Conduct for Teacher-Coaches of Interscholastic Age Student-Athletes

*This Code of Conduct applies to all teacher-coaches of interscholastic age athletes.*

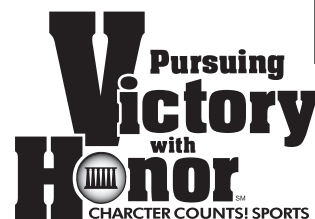
The Code has been adopted by: \_\_\_\_\_

*Athletic competition of interscholastic age children should be fun and should also be a significant part of a sound educational program. Those who coach student-athletes are, first and foremost, teachers who have a duty to assure that their sports programs impart important life skills and promote the development of good character. Essential elements of character building are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core ethical values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship (the “Six Pillars of Character”). The highest potential of sports is achieved when teacher-coaches consciously Teach, Enforce, Advocate and Model (T.E.A.M.) these values and are committed to the ideal of pursuing victory with honor. Sincere and good faith efforts to honor the words and spirit of this Code will improve the quality of our programs and the well-being of our student-athletes.*

#### TRUSTWORTHINESS

- *Trustworthiness* — Be worthy of trust in all you do and teach student-athletes the importance of integrity, honesty, reliability and loyalty.
- *Integrity* — Model high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship and always pursue victory with honor. Teach, Enforce, Advocate and Model (T.E.A.M.) the importance of honor and good character by doing the right thing even when it’s unpopular or personally costly.
- *Honesty* — Don’t lie, cheat, steal or engage in or permit dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- *Reliability* — Fulfill commitments; do what you say you will do; be on time. Except in cases of extreme personal necessity, no teacher-coach should or resign during a season.
- *Loyalty* — Be loyal to your school and team. Put the team above personal glory.
- *Primacy of Educational Goals* — Be faithful to the educational and character-development missions of the institution and assure that these objectives are not compromised to achieve sports performance goals. Always place the academic, emotional, physical and moral well-being of student-athletes above desires and pressures to win. Coaches should be viewed, first and foremost, as teachers and referred to as “teacher-coaches.”
- *Counseling* — Be candid with student-athletes and their parents about the likelihood of getting an athletic scholarship or playing on a professional level. Advise them that many colleges will not recruit student-athletes who do not have a serious commitment to their education, the ability to succeed academically or the character to represent their institution honorably. Create a more realistic understanding in student-athletes and their parents of how few athletes get athletic scholarships and become professionals and the relatively short careers of those who do.
- *College Recruiting* — Be honest and candid with college recruiters about the character and academic abilities and interest of student-athletes. Involve the parents/guardians with the college representative and take the lead in the recruiting process.

[www.charactercounts.org](http://www.charactercounts.org) • (800) 711-2670



## RESPECT

- *Respect* — Treat all people with respect all the time and require the same of student-athletes.
- *Class* — Be a good sport. Teach and model class. Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity. Encourage student-athletes to help up fallen opponents, compliment extraordinary performance, and show sincere respect in pre- and post-game rituals.
- *Taunting* — Don't engage in or allow trash talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport. Assure that student-athletes conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.
- *Respect for Officials* — Treat game officials with respect; don't complain about or argue with an official's decisions during or after an athletic event. Adopt and enforce policies and procedures to assure that the conduct and decisions of referees are subject to reasonable review. Vigorously protect referees from retaliation, blackballing or intimidation by teacher-coaches or others who are unhappy with the way a referee called a game. Assure that neither you nor your players publicly criticize an official in a manner that discredits the game, impugns the honor or the integrity of any official or subjects the referees to ridicule or hostility. Adopt whatever policies are necessary to assure the safety of referees and prevent verbal or physical abuse from teacher-coaches, student athletes or spectators. Encourage regular and formal opportunities for coaches, and in some cases student-athletes, to interact and converse with referees in non-confrontational settings.
- *Respect for Parents/Guardians* — Treat the parents/guardians of student-athletes with respect. Be clear about your expectations, goals and policies and maintain open lines of communication.
- *Profanity* — Don't engage in or permit profanity or obscene gestures during practices, sporting events, on team buses, or in any other situation where the behavior could reflect badly on the school or the sports program.
- *Positive Coaching* — Use positive coaching methods to make the experience enjoyable, increase self-esteem and foster a love and appreciation for the sport. Refrain from physical or psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, and conduct demeaning to student-athletes or others. Goals related to the basketball program should be clearly stated in a manner that is consistent with the educational mission of the institution and the basketball program should pursue these objectives in the context of the overall athletic program mission. Consider very carefully the potential impact of any incentives and disincentives proposed or agreed to in the context of the institution's sportsmanship and character-building goals.
- *Effort and Teamwork* — Encourage student-athletes to pursue victory with passion, to think and play as a team, to do their best and continually improve through personal effort and discipline. Discourage selfishness and put less emphasis on the final outcome of the contest.
- *Professional Relationships* — Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with student-athletes and respect proper teacher-student boundaries. Sexual or romantic contact with students is strictly forbidden as is verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed to or in view of student-athletes. Always put the best interests of the student-athlete above personal considerations and scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest including financial relationships that could be construed as exploitive. Guard against personal, financial, social, organizational or political factors that might lead to misuse of influence and scrupulously avoid accepting any benefits conferred by

# CODES OF CONDUCT

persons who seek to influence a decision of a student athlete. Fully disclose all relevant facts including the nature and amount of compensation to the student-athlete and his or her parents or guardians.

## RESPONSIBILITY

- *Life Skills* — Always strive to enhance the physical, mental, social and moral development of student-athletes and teach them positive life skills that will help them become well-rounded, successful and socially responsible. Discuss ethical and sportsmanship issues in relation to actual and hypothetical situations occurring or likely to occur in practice or games.
- *Advocacy of Education* — Advocate the importance of education beyond athletic eligibility standards and work with faculty and parents/guardians to help student-athletes set and achieve academic goals. The academic performance of student-athletes in terms of grades and actual graduation should be a major factor. Assure that interscholastic programs do not unduly interfere with the ability and motivation of student-athletes to achieve their academic potential. Encourage student-athletes to think of themselves as students first and athletes second. Provide comprehensive support programs that can help student-athletes deal with academic issues. Be attentive to the grades and effort of student-ethics and sportsmanship in materials about the athletic program and athletes as well as upcoming exams and papers.
- *Advocacy of Honor* — Prominently discuss the importance of character, vigorously advocate the concept of pursuing victory with honor in all communications. Stress that good character, ethics and sportsmanship are essential to honorable athletic competition and that victory attained in any other way is empty and unworthy.
- *Good Character* — Foster the development of good character by teaching, enforcing, advocating and modeling (T.E.A.M.) high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and the Six Pillars of Character. Look for opportunities to state and reinforce positive messages consistent with the Pursuing Victory with Honor campaign.
- *Role-Modeling* — Be a worthy role-model. Always be mindful of the high visibility and great influence you have as a teacher-coach and consistently conduct yourself in private and coaching situations in a manner that exemplifies all you want your student-athletes to be. Teacher-coaches should emphasize in oral and written communication the on- and off-court responsibility of teacher-coaches and student-athletes to be worthy role models and positive ambassadors for the institution.
- *Personal Conduct* — Refrain from profanity, disrespectful conduct, and the use of alcohol or tobacco in front of student-athletes or in other situations where your conduct could undermine your positive impact as a role model. A comprehensive communication and who observe what reasonably appears to be misconduct are obligated to report their observations.
- *Protecting Athletes* — Put the well-being of student-athletes above other considerations and take proper steps to protect them from inappropriate conduct. High school programs should discourage student-athletes and teacher-coaches from participating in non-conforming basketball programs.
- *Access* — Help make a broad spectrum sports experiences available to all diverse communities.
- *Improper Commercialism* — Be sensitive to and avoid unwholesome commercialism including inappropriate exploitation of your name or the name of the school and undue financial dependence on corporate entities. Carefully consider the impact on students and the general public of permitting commercial advertising in arenas and stadiums.

Understand that there is no free equipment and that the cash value of the equipment is simply a payment in kind for the benefits sought by the commercial entity.

### FAIRNESS

- *Fairness and Openness* — Be fair in competitive situations, team selection, discipline and all other matters. Be open-minded and willing to listen and learn.

### CARING

- *Safe Competition* — Put safety and health considerations above the desire to win. Never permit student-athletes to intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to themselves or others.
- *Caring Environment* — Consistently demonstrate concern for student-athletes as individuals and encourage them to look out for one another and think and act as a team.

### CITIZENSHIP

- *Honoring the Spirit of Rules* — Observe and require student-athletes to observe the spirit and the letter of all rules including the rules of the game and those relating to eligibility, recruitment, transfers, practices and other aspects of interscholastic competition. Demand integrity and observe and enforce the spirit and letter of the rules. You should not engage in or allow any conduct designed to evade rules governing fair competition.
- *Promoting Sportsmanship* — Promote sportsmanship over gamesmanship; don't cheat. Resist temptations to gain competitive advantage through strategies (such as devious rules violations, alteration of equipment or the field of play, or tactics designed primarily to induce injury or fear

of injury) that violate the rules, disrespect the highest traditions of the sport or change the nature of competition by negating or diminishing the impact of the core athletic skills that define the sport. Establish and regularly practice pre- and post-game rituals and traditions that reinforce the principles of sportsmanship. Specially acknowledge acts of good sportsmanship on the court.

*I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and acknowledge that I may be disciplined if I violate any of its provisions.*

---

Teacher-Coach Signature

Date

\*Our athletic program endorses the *Pursuing Victory With Honor Arizona Sports Summit Accord*.

"Pursuing Victory With Honor" and the "Six Pillars of Character" are service marks of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.