

# Youth Sports Voice

Seasonal Information for Litchfield Park Youth Sports Participants



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## Litchfield Park Youth Sports Player Placement Policy

By Franz Fuhrmann, Youth & Sports Coordinator

The Litchfield Park Youth Sports policy regarding player placement is often questioned, especially with regards to popular coaches in our league. Due to the popularity of these coaches, many of our participants register and request to be placed onto their teams, sometimes there are more requests than can actually fit onto a roster. Hopefully, we will clarify this policy as well as why this policy is in place.

The policy regarding coaching requests is that the first five players to register and request a specific coach are guaranteed to be placed onto that coaches team roster. Family members of the coach are included in this 'first five' guarantee. For example, if a coach has one child, the first four non-family members to register and request that coach are guaranteed to be placed on his/her team. If a coach has three family members, the first two non-family members to register and request that coach will be placed onto their team.

The policy was changed to include family members several years ago because there were instances where a coach registered several family members, then had several non-family members request them; essentially creating a team that played together season after season.

Once we fill all of the guaranteed roster spots from the list of registrants, players are placed onto teams using geographic data based upon the closest public school to their home residence. It is possible that teams will eventually have more than five requested players placed on their team due to the geographic placement. However, if there are two teams created in the same age division that are from the same area, we usually do not place additional requests onto a team that has used all of their guaranteed requests. In instances where we cannot accommodate all of the coaching requests, we still do try to accommodate secondary 'friend requests' when possible.

The placement of players by geographic area is in place for two reasons: (1) to assist families with carpooling to practices, and (2) to allow coaches to practice near their neighborhood if they decide not to use the practice locations we make available to our teams.

There are a couple of reasons why this coaching request policy was created and strictly followed. The first reason is to try and create parity within the league. Allowing entire teams to play together season after season creates an unfair advantage when playing against teams that have never before

played together. The implementation of this policy doesn't ensure parity as we do not know the skill level of every player in our league; however it does ensure that entire teams will not be 100% the same season after season.

We have looked at the possibility of creating a pre-season skills draft to determine the skill level of each player in an age division. However, there are several administrative issues that restrict our ability to implement this activity. The first is limited time. There are only three weeks between the end of registration and the first game date. During this tight timeline, our office is working to create game schedules, order uniforms, find volunteer coaches, and schedule referees and facilities. The second is finding evaluators that are unbiased and skilled in evaluating sport-specific talent. The third issue is how to determine the skill level and place players that are unable to attend the skill draft. Finally, implementing a skill draft implies a level of competitiveness that contradicts our recreational philosophy of placing fun and development as the foundation of our leagues, rather than emphasizing winning and losing.

Another reason for our coaching request policy is to provide our participants the opportunity to learn and develop from different coaches / coaching styles. As our participants will grow into young adults and as they do, they will eventually play for different coaches when they enter middle school and high school, therefore playing for new coaches as a child will help them cope with change as they get older. New coaches bring new challenges and possibly new responsibilities.

Finally, being placed onto a different coaches team will also bring with it the ability to meet new friends as well as continue to develop social skills. Meeting new people is a difficult prospect, but athletics helps children 'break the ice', thus making new friendships easier to create.

We understand that our policy won't be met with open arms by everyone in our leagues and we respect those differing opinions on this topic. Our suggestion to our participants is to register early to give your child the best opportunity at being guaranteed a place on that coaches roster.

Ultimately, we want our participants to enjoy their experience and although this policy isn't perfect, it does have benefits that can assist our participants in their social as well as skill development while having a great time playing the team sport that they enjoy.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Litchfield Park's Community and Recreation Services Department's mission is to enhance the quality of life in the Litchfield Park community by providing recreation, art and leisure activity in a safe and healthy environment, and to further provide a variety of wellness activities to assist our residents in gaining and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

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Litchfield Park

DISCOVER THE PARK

### Your League Fees Include

- **GUARANTEED SEVEN GAME SEASON**
- **SATURDAY GAMES ONLY**  
Depending on the number of teams in a league, there may be a weekend when your child will be scheduled two games instead of just one. This is to ensure that every team in the league is scheduled a minimum of seven games.
- **GAME UNIFORM**  
Registration includes the cost of a uniform, there are no hidden fees. Our Youth Basketball participants will receive a game jersey only. For ages four to seven, the jersey will be a microfiber tee shirt. For ages eight to fourteen, the jersey will be a reversible mesh tank top.
- **END of the SEASON AWARDS**  
Every participant will receive a sport specific participation certificate and a participation ribbon. Tee Ball participants will receive a trophy.

# Parenting Education: Encouraging Commitment

by Dr. Lee Hancock, Associate Professor of Kinesiology at CSUDH

...Article excerpt from August 28, 2013...

## Gently encouraging commitment in your child

Child to parent – “Dad, I am tired I don’t want to go to practice.” Or “Mom, I have too much homework I can’t go to practice.”

Some typical responses from us – “You made a commitment you need to follow through”; “Get in the car its time to go.”; “You should have done your homework earlier” etc...

While your responses may be just what needs to happen, these things are often met with push back and angst...so what to do? As we know kids sometimes need a push but wouldn’t it be better if we could get them to want to do it on their own?

Here is a suggestion: Do it together – Build your team.

1. **When these statements come – do you inject your thoughts right away or do you ask a question back?** Meaning – when the child says I have homework could you respond by saying what the homework is? Is it difficult? What types of problems/assignments are you up against? From there perhaps it moves into let’s take a look at it together.
2. **Once you take a look at it together perhaps there is some dialogue about how this is difficult,** I can see why you are up about it. This can usually only take a minute or so...and that minute is better spent chatting together than yelling at each other.
3. **What could be going on here is poor time management.** This is not the time to solve that, but perhaps on the ride home after practice you can share how you have handled multiple responsibilities – gotten up early, late, during lunch, etc. Make it a chance to dialogue about setting time out early to do the homework.
4. **Or what could be going on is she or he is frustrated and doesn’t want to go.** Again, a time to chat about that isn’t right now. Perhaps on a car ride you can chat about times where the going got tough you had to dig in. Or talk about a popular figure that went through hard times and then pushed through.

Dr. Lee Hancock is a USSF A licensed coach, Associate Professor in the Kinesiology Department at CSUDH in California, and sport psychology consultant for youth, college and professional athletes, parents, teams and coaches.

## 2014 WINTER YOUTH SPORTS SCHEDULE

- Sat., Jan. 11, 2014 ..... Week 1 Games
- Sat., Jan. 18, 2014 ..... Week 2 Games  
Picture Day
- Sat., Jan. 25, 2014 ..... Week 3 Games
- Sat., Feb. 1, 2014 ..... Week 4 Games
- Sat., Feb. 8, 2014 ..... Week 5 Games
- Sat., Feb. 15, 2014 .... Week 6 Games  
Team & Individual Photo’s Delivered  
Participation Certificates & Ribbons Delivered
- Sat., Feb. 22, 2014 .... Week 7 Games  
Parent Survey

## Future Registration Dates

### SPRING SPORTS

- Youth Basketball and Youth Soccer  
Registration Starts ..... Jan. 13, 2013  
Early Bird Period Ends.. Feb. 18, 2013  
Late Period Ends ..... Feb. 24, 2013  
First Game..... Mar. 29, 2013  
Last Game ..... May 10, 2013

## Problems with Your Photos?

If you have any issues with your team or individual photos, please contact the photography company directly using the following contact information.

**Sports PHOTOS**  
by Love Story

**YOUTH BASKETBALL**  
Love Story Sports Photography  
Phone: 623-742-7000  
<http://www.lovestoryphoto.net>

**Sports Trivia:** Which basketball team and city has won the most NBA titles? ~ Answer below

*Sports Trivia Answer: Boston Celtics*



## Litchfield Park Youth Sports Leadership Team

The dedicated LP Youth Sports Staff wishes to thank all of the Volunteer Coaches and participant families for support and loyalty to help our City achieve its goals.

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Online Registration Website:  
[online.activenetwork.com/LitchfieldPark](http://online.activenetwork.com/LitchfieldPark)