

6.2.9 *Coaches in Catholic Youth Athletics.* If athletics organizations are responsible for overseeing the youth ministry mission of youth athletics, then it's the coaches and the

adults that assist them in the day-to-day meetings, practices, games and tournaments who are key to making youth athletics a ministry with young people and their families. Their roles are twofold: to develop young athletes, and to help form young Christians. Athletics organizations are expected to exercise great care and attention in the recruitment, selection, preparation, training and support of coaches. Our children – God's precious children – are in their hands. Coaches of teams under Catholic auspices in the Archdiocese should:

- (a) **Charter compliance:** Abide by and uphold the Organizational Documents of the athletics organization and the mission, goals, principles, policies and procedures of this Charter, including the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection, and the Code of Conduct (see Section 8, p. 43).
- (b) **Sportsmanship:** Represent the team with a high level of sportsmanship, integrity and respect towards team, parents and opponents at all times (sidelines and practices included).
- (c) **Player development:** Support and assist in the spiritual, emotional, social and physical development of all players by providing opportunities for athletic skills training, character development, and spiritual growth.
- (d) **Faith and spirit:** Work with the athletic organization's Spiritual Liaison to ensure an environment conducive to growth in faith, character, and virtues. Reinforce with children and their families the importance of faith and religious practices including Sunday Mass, Holy Days of Obligation and regular, ongoing religious education.
- (e) **Regular prayer:** Ensure that prayer happens at each practice and game.
- (f) **Head coaches:**
  - (i) Ensure that assistant coaches are clear on the Code of Conduct (see Section 8, p. 43) and how they are expected to enforce it in practice. All coaches, including head coaches, are expected to sign and submit copies of the Code of Conduct affirming their commitment to it. These should be retained and kept on file at the parish, or non-parish school.
  - (ii) Meet prior to the beginning of each season with the Spiritual Liaison to review evaluations from the previous season or year, and to plan for ongoing quality improvement.

6.2.10 *Coach Recruiting and Selection.*

(a) Age Requirements:

(i) Head coach (at high school or elementary levels): A head coach should be at least 21 years of age and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.

(ii) Coach (at high school level): At least 21 years of age and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.

(iii) Coach (at elementary level): At least 19 years of age, a high school graduate, and in compliance with the *Decree on Child Protection*.

(b) Criteria:

(i) In recruiting and selecting coaches for teams, athletics organizations are expected to seek out, recruit and select persons based on these criteria:

A. Virtues: Lives the values and virtues of the Catholic faith whether or not a member of the Catholic Church.

B. Capabilities: Knowledgeable about coaching children in a particular sport.

C. Rapport: Exhibits a positive rapport with both children and adults.

D. Maturity: Exhibits appropriate maturity (e.g., level-headed, able to control temper, take responsibility for mistakes, accept criticism).

E. Commitment: Able to commit the time necessary for preparation, practices and games.

(ii) In large organizations with athletics directors and/or head coaches, they are preferred to be active, practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church and active in their parishes.

6.2.11 *Minimum Requirements for Coach Preparation.*

(a) Compliance with Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection* (see Section 4.3.1, p. 18).

(b) Annual Coaches' Athletics Ministry Meeting.

(i) Annual training and updates: The athletics organization is expected to have at least one meeting per year for all coaches in which they receive a presentation of the mission, principles and goals of Catholic Youth Athletics ministry (see Section 1, p. 7) and Code of Conduct (see Section 8, p. 43), along with any updates