

2023
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TRACTOR YOUTH
FOOTBALL**

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Downriver Junior Football League Philosophy

The Downriver Junior Football League Purpose is to provide a healthy typically American, body contact sport for the average youth.

Starting with the premise that youth will play football anyway, anyhow and anywhere, the league directs this activity to proper playing fields, provides the best protection equipment and competent instruction.

The league recognizes as valid the usual criticism leveled at programs of this type, that being that the good done by the program as a whole can be outweighed by the harm derived from undue mental pressures placed upon players of this age by the need to win. The program places emphasis on the good sportsmanship, teamwork and team discipline by players, coaches, and all representatives of the franchise, which is to say perhaps that winning at any cost is what is de-emphasized.

Therefore, the weight limitations are designed to tailor the program for the average youth of 7-13, the youth who, in most cases, will not otherwise have an opportunity during their school career to participate in contact sports. Combined with the age limitations that provide for three different teams within a unit, there are achieved equal competitive standards during game participation.

The players play a good hard game, and half lose each time, as it must be. The Downriver Junior Football League wants the half that loses to be proud of the game they played and the way they played too. With that purpose accomplished, the League can be proud of its program.

TRACTOR YOUTH FOOTBALL

PURPOSE

The PURPOSE of our club is defined in our By-Laws as follows:

Purpose:

- A. The TYF is primarily for the improvement and the development of the capabilities of all youth ages 8-13 years of age with the intention of inspiring them, regardless of race, creed or national origin, to practice the ideal of promoting more meaningful lives through teamwork and sport.
- B. The specific objectives are:
 - a. To provide the means through which youth receive education and instruction in football or cheerleading.
 - b. To develop a sense of fair play, honest and fair competition and true sportsmanship.
 - c. To provide equal and competitive standards with emphasis on safeguards of the physical and emotional health of all youth involved.
 - d. To, by example, teach the meaning of team, teamwork and development of significant relationships amongst these youth.
- C. Further, it is the aim of the TYF to provide a setting of teamwork, for the youth to play, learn and excel with integrity through dedication hard work and positive influence.

Parent Participation

THE TRACTOR YOUTH FOOTBALL IS A “FAMILY” AND NEW FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

PARENTS ARE NOT ONLY WELCOME BUT **ENCOURAGED** TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY AND ALL ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Please make sure you sign up for your volunteer hours. We will do our best to find a volunteer time that is as convenient for you as possible.

Your time is very important to us. We realize that in today’s society lifestyles are very demanding and time is limited. However, we ask that as parents who expect your children to dedicate their time and efforts to the program, that you do the same.

The TYF plans of having a fun filled and exciting season. Your time will be well spent, rewarding and FUN.

Please remember that you are not limited to the **mandatory four hours per child** volunteer time. We welcome anyone willing to spare the extra time.

We look forward to working with all of you.

NOTES

ADMITTANCE

The Downriver Junior Football League permits each team one game in which they can charge a \$3.00 per person (16 and older) an admittance fee. The “gentlemen’s” agreement amongst league franchises is that it is typically the team’s first home game. This insures no one pays the admittance fee more than twice.

REGISTRATION

Registration is a vital source of funding to the TYF. Expenses are incurred once an individual has been registered. Therefore, full refunds will not be administered. We are sure you understand our situation and will respect this policy.

Practice Information

Team Practice:

All teams **will meet** at the practice field on each and every scheduled date and time. (You will be notified in advance of any schedule changes).

All teams **will meet** at the practice field when the weather is clear, cloudy, raining, hot, warm, cold, snowing, freezing, sleeting.

Practice **will start and end at the scheduled time** as directed by the Downriver Junior Football League.

Teams will not participate in practice or exercise prior to or later than the scheduled times and never without a coach present to supervise their activities. However, practice will begin promptly at the scheduled time. Thus we recommend that your player or cheerleader arrive 10 –15 minutes before practice and are prepared, dressed and ready to go.

Always send a water bottle with your child to practice. It is very important that they have access to hydration at all times.

At the end of practice players and cheerleaders must leave with a parent or guardian. In the event that a parent or guardian does not show up on time coaches and/or board members are forced to wait with the child until someone arrives. Please be prompt in picking your child up. Remember, all coaches and board members are volunteers and they have families to get to, homework help that needs tending and dinners that need to be fed as well.

Weather

In the event lightning is sighted during practice, practice will be suspended 30 minutes to allow weather to clear. If weather does not clear practice will then be terminated **at the field**.

Because we practice in all kinds of weather please be prepared for muddy, dirty, messy kids. Prepare your car with old sheets and garbage bags if necessary. We ask for your patience and understanding in this.

Attendance

Practices will be held at **HEMLOCK PARK**. Please refer to your TYF Calendar for dates and times.

Practices are mandatory. The only exceptions are those beyond your control. Examples are: severe illness, a death, school activity, religious education. To be excused a note to the coach is mandatory.

If a player or cheerleader misses practice without an excuse on record that player or cheerleader will not participate in that week's game. However, that player or cheerleader will be present at the game in team apparel to support his/her team.

If a player or cheerleader misses one excused practice he or she may participate in that week's game.

If the child has two excused missed practice in one week it is up to the coach's discretion whether or not that child will participate in that week's game.

More than two excused absences from practice in one week; that child cannot participate in that week's game as per the TYF Rules.

Football players who exceed the weight limits designated for his age group as per the TYF are ineligible for player- to- player contact during practice. This player may be weighted prior to each practice.

Players and cheerleaders are not allowed to bring young siblings or friends to practice. The TYF is not responsible for non-registered minors left at practice.

Transportation

Per TRACTOR YOUTH FOOTBALL rules and the rules of the Downriver Junior Football League:

All players and cheerleaders must be delivered to any team function via motor vehicle.

All players and cheerleaders must depart from any team function via motor vehicle.

Players and cheerleaders are not to walk or ride bicycles to and or from any team function unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

NOTE: Team function is defined as any of the following:

Practice session

Football Games

Any other organized event sponsored by the association.

Players or cheerleaders who attempt to depart from any team function without proper transportation or an acceptable escort will be instructed to remain at that function until the required transportation criteria are met.

*******IMPORTANT*******

Please keep in mind that the coaches, board members and leagues representatives are not babysitters! While it is certain that one or more of us will remain at team function until such time as proper transportation is provided for each and every child, most of us would rather not spend excessive time waiting for you to pick-up your child. The cooperation of parents and players/cheerleaders is appreciated.

Equipment

Football

First Year Players and Parents

You may be faced with putting on a Football uniform for the very first time. Some boys have played for other teams, or have people in their lives who have played at one time or another. Others have little or no idea of what goes where. Maybe this will help.

Pads

- a. Knee pads with rounded end down into the knee “pocket”.
- b. Thigh pads into thigh “pockets” wide side out. Pad should curve around the thigh.
- c. Girdle pads are a bit trickier. The girdle itself is like a pair of under pants with pocket on the hip and the “tail” area.
 - i. Hip pads look like a lower case “t” on steroids. This pad is to be maneuvered into the hip area “pocket” so that the head of the “t” only is sticking out of the girdle. One on each hip.
 - ii. The “tail” pad is to be maneuvered into the “tail” area “pocket”. It’s a pain the first couple of times. You will get the hang of it.

Start Dressing

- d. Athletic supporter with hard cup already inside
- e. Girdle with pads already inside.
- f. Pants with pads already inside.
- g. Shoulder pads
 - i. Elastic strap under arm, laces snug, tied and locked
- h. Jersey with large number on back.
- i. Helmet
 - i. Strap chin guard and **insert mouthpiece.**

READY TO PLAY!!

NOTE:

Pants must be tight!!!!!! All pads inside the pants are held in place by the pant itself, therefore they need to be VERY snug. It should not be unusual for parents to have to lift the player off the floor by the pant waist and shake him into his pants!

If you have any questions or need help, please do not hesitate to ask an assistant coach.

Helmet Information

Helmets must fit properly

The helmets provided to our football players are the “Air” type helmets. All of these helmets meet or exceed the safety requirements for our level of competition.

To assure that each player benefits from the safety features of these helmets we must insist that the following guidelines be observed:

Only a coach can adjust the air in the helmet “bladder”. Special lubricants, needles and pumps are required.

Jaw pads must touch the players face to be effective and properly fit the helmet to the player.

Properly fit, the player will need to develop an ability to spread the bottom of the helmet to get it over his ears and off his head.

First year players often find removal of a properly fit helmet to be difficult. Rather than provide smaller pads and reduce effectiveness of the helmet, we suggest the player apply some lotion to the pads and his ears to make removal of a properly fitted helmet easier.

Chin straps need to fit the cup portion of the strap to the player’s chin. If the strap is “tight rope” tight and still does not “cup” the chin, see an assistant coach immediately.

Face masks are all coated. The coating can be scraped off or knocked off during normal use. It is a rule violation for there to be any exposed metal on the face mask during a game. If you notice any expose metal see an assistant coach immediately.

The two top “temple” area clips on the helmet must be of the white plastic exterior.

Helmets may be cleaned using soft rags and mild liquid detergents. However, there is a lot to be said for a scuffed up helmet.

Eyeglasses may be worn with the helmet if necessary. NO GLASS LENSES ARE ALLOWED. Players who wear regular glasses use straps to hold their glasses in place. We recommend that you visit your eye doctor with a properly fitted helmet before purchasing any straps of special athletic glasses.

You must provide the following equipment for your football player:

One piece molded spike shoes. Metal or removable spikes are not allowed. Pre-season break-in is recommended.

Athletic support with hard cup.

White game socks.

You will be provided with one mouthpiece. He will chew through it.

Your child will be provided with all other necessary equipment to play the game of football. He will be given one set of a complete uniform. If he wears though or losses what is distributed to him by the DHR it must be replaced. If he is without any portion of his required uniform he cannot participate in either practice or game. This includes but is not limited to all pads, girdle, practice uniform (jersey, pants) etc. All of these items are available at local sporting good stores. Game uniforms will be replaced by the TYF at the guardian’s expense.

Equipment Hand-in

Uniforms must be turned in LAUNDERED CLEAN at the end of the season on the specified day. If it is not laundered you will be asked to take it back home, wash it and return it to the TYF at a specified time and location of *our* convenience. If the complete uniform and equipment is not turned in or is damaged beyond normal wear and tear you automatically forfeit your deposit and will be invoiced the full replacement value of the equipment.

Equipment

Cheerleading

Equipment Hand-Out

A. Cheerleaders are provided with the following equipment:

1. Skirt (or cheer pants if necessary for religious beliefs)
2. Vest
3. Hoodie
4. Pants
5. Cheerleading Bag
6. Pompoms (provided at coach's discretion)

B. Cheerleaders are required to purchase the following equipment:

Turtle neck body suit

cheerleading briefs *

White "Game Day" athletic shoes * (must be purchased as a team and only worn at the Games and Competition)

White athletic shoes with arch support (for practice)

Hair ribbon (must be purchased as a team)

White ankle socks

White gloves and headband (for use in cold weather)

* These items will be available for purchase at Equipment Hand-Out. If you miss Equipment Hand-Out, you will responsible to purchase these items on you own prior to the first game.

Equipment Care Instructions

A. Skirt (or pants) and Vest

Wash in cold water and hang to dry (DO NOT PUT IN DRYER)

Use mild detergent and Stain Stick if necessary. Do not use bleach including color-safe bleach.

Do NOT iron.

B. Warm-Up's

Wash in cold water and dry on low heat.

Use mild detergent and Stain Stick if necessary. Do not use bleach including color-safe bleach.

Do NOT iron.

C. Cheerleading Bag

1. Hand wash in cold water and hang to dry (DO NOT PUT IN DRYER)

2. Use mild detergent and Stain Stick if necessary. Do not use bleach including color-safe bleach.

3. Do NOT iron.

Equipment Hand-in

Uniforms must be turned in LAUNDERED CLEAN at the end of the season on the specified day. If it is not laundered you will be asked to take it back home, wash it and return it to the tyf at a specified time and location. If the complete uniform and equipment is not turned in or is damaged beyond normal wear and tear you automatically forfeit your deposit and will be invoiced the full replacement value of the equipment.

Basics You Need to Know

As Per Downriver Junior Football League

Football

Players are to arrive one and a half hours before their scheduled kickoff time to prepare for weigh-in. Second and third kickoff weigh-in at half-time of the preceding game.

Each player must weigh-in before each game. Players must meet league weight requirements in order to participate in the game. If a player exceeds the weight limit by more than three (3) pounds during two (2) consecutive weigh-ins, he must be removed from the roster. League weight requirements are as follows:

- Freshman Ages 8-9 Maximum Weight 120 pounds
- JV Ages 10-11 Maximum Weight 140 pounds
- Varsity Ages 12-13 Maximum Weight 165 pounds

Based on a 32 player roster, each player is required a minimum of 5 (five) plays from scrimmage per half.

At no time are parents and or fans allowed on the game or practice field. No exceptions. In order to be on the practice or game field you must be a coach, league representative or board member in good standing and registered with the Downriver Junior Football League as such.

You must have your player to practice on time each day. Tardiness will result in disciplinary action. Your child may have to run laps, do “down-ups” or even sit out a quarter. Essentially, you as parents have complete control over this. Yes, your child may have to pay the price for your getting stuck in traffic. Please know this now and be supportive of your coach when he takes action. Discipline is good.

You must pick-up your player from practice on time each and every day. Your TYF coaches and other members are not babysitters. Please respect their time. They as well have families, dinners and homework to get home to. If you are late picking up your child he may have to run laps the following practice do “down-ups”, or even sit out a quarter. Yes, your child may have to pay the price for your getting stuck in traffic. Please know this now and be supportive of your coach when he takes action. Discipline is good.

Basics You Need to Know

As Per Downriver Junior Football League

Cheerleading

Cheerleaders are to arrive, on game days, one hour before their scheduled kickoff time prepared for warm-up.

You must have your cheerleader to practice on time each day. Tardiness will result in disciplinary action. Your child may have to run laps or sit out during "Show & Yell". Essentially, you as parents have complete control over this. Yes, your child may have to pay the price for your getting stuck in traffic. Please know this now and be supportive of your coach when he takes action. Discipline is good.

Age Requirements

- Mascot - Ages 5-7
- Freshman - Ages 8-9
- J.V. - Ages 10-11
- Varsity - Ages 12-13

Mascots

- Mascots are to be accompanied by a parent at all times during all DHR events including practices, games and competition.
- Mascots are prohibited from partner stunts and are restricted to only basic cartwheels, ground rollovers, splits and jumps.

Attire

- During practice, games and competition, hair must be pulled back from the cheerleader's face in a ponytail or braid. Barrettes, hair clips, bobby pins or any other metal or plastic item are NOT allowed.
- Shirts or blouses with zippers, hoods, snaps and/or pockets loose fitting v-neck shirts will not be worn during practice when performing stunts.
- Cheerleaders must wear athletic shoes with arch supports at all practices, games and competition.
- Jewelry of any kind is prohibited for all cheerleaders during all practices, games and competition.
- Make-up, nail polish, body and hair glitter is prohibited for all practices, games and competition. Nail length must not be visible when looking at the palm of the hand. No artificial nails allowed.
- Scarves can be worn for religious beliefs, but for safety reasons partner stunting is not allowed.

Game Day Equipment Requirements

- Cheerleaders must come prepared for every game. Full uniform must be worn upon arrival to the field.
 - Skirt (or Cheer Pants)
 - Vest
 - Turtleneck (weather permitting)
 - Cheer Briefs
 - White Ankle Socks
 - "Game Day" Shoes
 - Hair up with Hair Ribbon secured
- Cheerleading bags must be brought to EVERY game. All the following uniform and equipment must be in the cheerleading bag.

Warm-Up Jacket
Warm-Up Pants
Turtleneck (if not worn with uniform)
White Gloves and Headband
Water Bottle
Pompoms (if issued)

Conduct

Players & Cheerleaders

Go to practice. There are very few acceptable excuses for missing practice.

You should always be on your best behavior. Others will judge the entire association by your conduct. You are an official representative of the DHR. This position of responsibility and representation should not be taken lightly. No profanity or trash talk. Remember, people do not see you; they see the name across your chest. Always respect your opponents and officials regardless of the situation.

The TYF will not tolerate any misbehavior, backtalk, swearing or fighting. Discipline is a fundamental principal of our training program. Failure to comply with the rules or to cooperate with coaches will result in benching or removal from the program based on degree of infraction. Parents will be notified immediately if there is a problem. The TYF expects complete cooperation and assistance of parents in all disciplinary actions.

Fighting that occurs on the game or practice field between any player or cheerleader with another team member or opposing team member will result in immediate removal of those players or cheerleaders from the game or practice session. Any player or cheerleader ejected from a game or practice session will not participate in any team activity until an agreement has been reached during a meeting between the player or cheerleader's parents, head coach and an executive board member.

Parents

Parents should always behave in a sportsmanlike manner. Parents, coaches and other involved adults should be examples of such sportsmanship and respect.

The TYF will not tolerate any foul language or gestures, fighting or any other disruptive behavior from parents or other fans that would take the focus away from the children during any practice session, game situation or TYF event.

Parents and fans will not be allowed to criticize referees, coaches or players of either team. Cheering and words of encouragement are desirable support. **RULE OF THUMB: NO NEGATIVE REMARKS**

The TYF will remove any individual behaving in such a manner from the event. Such behavior will directly affect your child's membership with the association. We ask you as parents to help monitor these situations. Please relay to family and friends also in attendance, that such behavior will not be tolerated and will only hurt the program and the player they are wishing to support.

League commissioners will be able to sit in on all TYF events. The TYF can be fined monetarily as well as with "sportsmanship points". The loss of these league points will affect our team's opportunities at post-season play and competition. To make it clear, your behavior in the stands can keep your child from being allowed to win a championship or compete in cheer competitions.

Parents cannot interrupt practice unless it is an emergency. There should be no distractions for your child during their practice time. Thus, communication with your child will not be allowed unless it is an emergency.

PARENTS/SPECTATORS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE PRACTICE FIELD.

PARENTS/SPECTATORS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE SIDELINES DURING THE GAME, WHETHER HOME OR AWAY.

The TYF realizes that many of our parents have had experience either with football or cheerleading. We also realize that you want to share those experiences with your child. With that in mind, please remember that your child is being taught the proper technique to prepare him or her self to be safe and produce on game day.

The TYF asks that you do not diminish the authority of the coaches by negating, “second guessing” or questioning their methods or techniques. If you do disagree with something please refer this to the proper channels before expressing to your child your issue.

If you have any questions for your child’s coach contact him or her via telephone or after practice. Please respect the time of the coaches. Remember, that after practice they have families, dinners and homework that they need to get home to as well.

The TYF realizes that parents will have issues; whether it with coaches, referees, or even other parents. **DO NOT INVOLVE YOUR CHILDREN.** We would like these issues to have minimal or preferably no affect on the children. Therefore, we ask that if one of these issues is to arise please take your issue through the proper channel.

The Channel

At the end of this handbook are three Complaint/Comment forms. If you have either a complaint or comment please fill out this form and turn it into any Executive Board member (see board member list) or E - mail it to the TYF . **EMAIL ADDRESS HERE** Your complaint will be kept confidential unless you request otherwise. Mr. John Tanner is head of this committee and will contact you once he has received your correspondence in writing. A name must accompany your grievance in order for action to be taken. Unsigned grievances will simply alert the TYF to the specific situation. The TYF will hear all issues and do our best to make your experience with us a pleasant one.

Bottom Line

The bottom line here is RESPECT. Let us show mutual respect among parents, coaches, players and cheerleaders. There may be times we do not see eye-to-eye on specific issues. Ultimately our goal is the same. We all want what is best for our children.

They are OUR children. So let us always look toward the greater goal; a wonderful all around youth athletic experience for our children.

The Contract

All families must have a Parent/Guardian Code of Contract signed and on file with the TYF in order for your child to be eligible to play or cheer. This contract will be covered thoroughly in the Mandatory parent meeting. An additional copy for your records is included in this handbook.

DHR Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct is to develop parental support and positive role models for our athletic program. In the tradition of excellence, one purpose of the TRACTOR YOUTH FOOTBALL is to promote the physical, moral, social and emotional well being of each member. Parents and guardians are an integral part of this process.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONDUCT

1. Pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement to my athlete and his or her team, coaches and organization. An encouraging remark is a wonderful motivator.
2. I will not only be a "my child" fan but I will be a "my team" fan.
3. Pledge to provide a positive atmosphere of good sportsmanship to opposing teams, coaches and referees.
4. Maintain positive behavior and attitude at all athletic contests.
5. Respect the professionalism and position of the game official.
6. Refrain from use of foul language.
7. Refrain from shouting criticism at my athlete and his or her coach or team.
8. Refrain from interfering with the coaching staff.
9. I will let the coach be responsible for my son or daughter during practice, games and team related activities and refrain from "sideline" coaching.
10. I will remember that youth athletics are intended to be fun and that the game is for the youth not the adults. This is their time.
11. I will refrain from making derogatory remarks to players, other parents, game officials and other league representatives. Simply put, if I can't say anything nice I won't say anything at all.
12. Assist in providing for athletes safety and welfare.
13. Teach my child that doing his or her best is of greater importance, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or competition.
14. I will volunteer 4 (four) hours of my time to make my child's experience a better one and I will participate in the mandatory fundraiser.
15. There is no smoking or alcohol consumption at games, practices or any other DHR event.
16. I will not go onto the practice or game field at any time.
17. I will support my football player or cheerleader by having them to practice on time and I will pick them up on time.
18. I will be sure that my player or cheerleader will have the proper equipment and clothing every time he or she is on the field.
19. I will bring this agreement and code to the attention of those family members and friends that attend the TYF events.
20. I will actively assist the TYF officials in the enforcement of this conduct agreement by monitoring guests.
21. I will not attempt to circumvent any rules or guidelines of the TRACTOR YOUTH FOOTBALL.
22. I will read the Parent Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Agreement

The parent/guardian agrees to:

1. Abide by the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct.
2. Encourage my son or daughter to also abide by the rules of the TYF.
3. Encourage good sportsmanship by personally demonstrating positive support for all players, cheerleaders, coaches, and game officials.
4. Be involved in my son or daughters athletic program.
5. Ask my athlete to treat other players, cheerleaders, coaches and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, religion or ability.
6. Encourage my athlete to attend school on a regular basis and strive for excellence academically.
7. Inform my athlete of the dangers of using and discourage the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
8. Provide unconditional love, acceptance, and emotional support to my athlete regardless of the games outcome.

It is the policy of the TYF that grievances should not be addressed during or immediately following any practice or athletic contest. If a situation arises where a parent or guardian wishes to meet with a coach or address a specific issue or complaint please use the Complaint/Comment form or contact your coach an appropriate time in an appropriate manner with respect.

I/We, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____, TYF athlete, acknowledge that I/we have read the terms of the Code of Conduct. I/We agree to conduct my/ourselves according to the terms of this Code of Conduct. I/We also understand that if I/we or our athlete chooses to violate any of the terms of this code or any other rules of the TYF or DJFL our athlete's current and future participation in TYF athletics may be limited or terminated.

Parents Name (Printed) _____ Athlete's

Squad _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

____/____

