

THE YMCA PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SPORTS

YMCA Youth Super Sports is not just another sports program. We have a mission, and that mission is stated in our Seven Pillars of YMCA Youth Super Sports.

Pillar One—Everyone Plays. We do not use tryouts to select the best players, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Super Sports. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season everyone receives equal practice time and plays at least half of every game.

Pillar Two—Safety First. Although kids may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We've modified each sport to make it safer and more enjoyable to play. Coaches make sure the equipment and facilities are safe, and they teach the sport as we've prescribed so that the skills taught are appropriate for athletes' developmental levels. And coaches constantly supervise their players and stop any unsafe activities.

Pillar Three—Fair Play. Fair play is about playing by the rules—and more. It's about coaches and players showing respect for all involved in YMCA Youth Super Sports. It's about coaches being role models of good sporting behavior and guiding their players to do the same.

Pillar Four—Positive Competition. We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. The right perspective is when adults make decisions that put the best interests of the players before winning the contest. Learning to compete is important for youngsters, and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. Through YMCA Youth Super Sports we want to help kids learn these lessons.

Pillar Five—Family Involvement. YMCA Youth Super Sports encourages parents to be involved appropriately in their child's participation in our sports programs. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials, and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child's participation. To help parents get involved appropriately, YMCA Youth Super Sports offers parent orientation programs.

Pillar Six—Sport for All. YMCA Youth Super Sports is an "inclusive" sports program. We offer programs to all youngsters regardless of their race, gender, religious creed, or ability. We ask our adult leaders to encourage and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the kids and their parents to do the same.

Pillar Seven—Sport for Fun. Sports are naturally fun for most kids. Sometimes when adults become involved in children’s sporting activities they overorganize and dominate the activities to the point that it destroys kids’ enjoyment of them. If we take the fun out of sports for young athletes, we are in danger of the young athletes taking themselves out of sports.