

2026 YOUTH SPORTS PARENT HANDBOOK

CLINTON COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU

hopes that all parents who have children participating in the County Sports Programs will read and familiarize themselves with the information in this Sports Handbook.

“To play the game is great; to have fun playing is greater!”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if I want my child to play for a different town?

You must sign-up in your HOMETOWN and request a Player Release. You can request a release for 5 different reasons:

1. Your town does not have an age/gender appropriate team.
2. Your town is sharing players to form a combined team with another town.
3. Your town has reached it's "Roster Limit".
4. You live closer to a different town's field/gym than your own town's.
5. Your child has a parent coaching for a different town.

If one of these reasons does not meet your child's circumstances—a Player Release can not be granted. Please note: a town does not have to agree to release a player or agree to accept a player. Player Release Requests must be submitted each year for each sport—just because you were granted one last time does not guarantee you will be granted one this time. Player Release Request forms can be found on our Website.

Can my child stay on a lower level team an extra year?

You will need to fill out an Age Waiver Request and submit it to the Youth Bureau. Age Waiver Requests are only appropriate for players who would be unsafe playing at their age appropriate level—not because they simply miss the cut-off. If a request is deemed appropriate an evaluation of your child at their age appropriate level will then be scheduled. Age Waiver requests can be found on our Website.

Can my child move up a level?

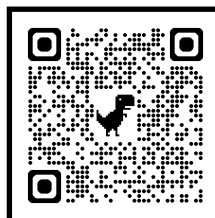
Once a Player is eligible for the County Program (i.e. they have met the minimum age requirements for that sport) it is the decision of your Youth Commission if a player will be "moved up" There is no mechanism to move a child into the County Programs if they do not meet the minimum age requirements.

Why isn't my child getting equal playing time?

The County Rule is that all players who attend practice and are not sitting for disciplinary reasons receive equal playing time. Has your child missed practices? Are they late for practices or games? Have they been behaving appropriately?

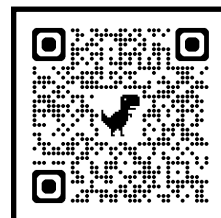
Why don't the Sports Officials do a better job?

Each County Certified Official is Trained by a Recreation Supervisor and our Recreation Director. We do everything we can to prepare them and they do a very good job! But being a Sports Official is hard! Imagine if that were your 14 year old son or daughter Officiating the game. They are trying their very best and for many of them it is their first job. They get better with each and every game they do; but if you scare them off your child's games will no longer be officiated at all!



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PROGRAM AGE GROUPS

Basketball

Grade Classifications Same for boys & Girls

Grade 3&4 Grade 5&6

Baseball/Softball

<u>Age Group Classification</u>	Born on or After	Born on or Before
Grasshopper 7,8,9 yr. olds	8/1/15	7/31/18
Pee Wee 10,11,12 yr. olds	8/1/12	7/31/15
Pony 13,14,15,16 yr. olds	8/1/08	7/31/12

Soccer

<u>Age Group Classification</u>	
Mites	Grade 1,2
Pee Wee	Grade 3,4,5
Bantams	Grade 6,7



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MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if I don't like the team my child gets placed on?

Each Youth Commission breaks their teams up themselves. If you have issues or concerns with the way your Town has broken up teams please bring it to the attention of the Youth Commission or Town Supervisor. The County Rule Books request towns with multiple teams at the same level split up age groups so there is a mix of all age and ability levels on each team and no "All-Star" teams are formed.

Is it safe for my child to participate in multiple activities during the same season?

Taking one or two days off of any particular sport each week can help prevent Overuse Injuries. SafeKids Worldwide encourage athletes to play a variety of sports to help balance muscle movement, prevent mental fatigue (aka "burnout") and decrease the risk of overuse injuries. Cross-training with other activities that utilize other muscles and playing different sports throughout the year will make kids well-rounded athletes.

For more information on Overuse Injury Prevention, Concussions and other Sports Safety Tips visit the Sports Safety section on the Youth Bureau Website. <https://www.clintoncountyny.gov/youthbureau/recreation/sports-safety-information>

MAKING A GOOD TEAM PLAYER?

- Encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches & spectators/parents at every game and practice.
- Make sure they attend every practice & game that is reasonably possible and notify their coach if they cannot.
- Make sure they do their very best to listen & learn from their coaches. Don't be afraid to speak to them if they are acting out during a practice or game.
- Treat their coaches with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or abilities and the players should expect to be treated likewise.
- Make sure they have fun during their sports experience and alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
- Get involved with their team in some capacity because it's important to them to see you excited about the sport too!
- Help them do their very best in school & remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Parents & Spectators Are EXPECTED TO:

- **Refrain from using abusive language, inappropriate behaviors, smoking, vaping, consuming alcohol or drugs when attending County games and practices.**
- **Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for ALL players, coaches & sports officials at each game and practice.**
- Place the emotional & physical well-being of the children ahead of any personal desire to win.
- Insist upon the child playing in a safe & healthy environment.
- Support the coaches & officials working with the children to provide a positive & enjoyable experience for all. Remember that the game is for the children NOT the adults!
- Do their very best to make youth sports fun for the children.
- **Treat other players, coaches, fans & officials with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or ability.**
- Help the children enjoy the youth sports experience within their personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever they are capable of doing.
- Recognize, understand & appreciate that all players, coaches and officials are committed to doing their very best to provide a safe, enjoyable learning experience for the children.
- **Remember, we are a non competitive league. The purpose of our league is to learn, for both players and officials. Being a spectator is a privilege. If you are not acting appropriately you will be asked to leave.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us!

CLINTON COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU

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Your child's success or lack of success in sports is not a reflection of what kind of parent you are.

But having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient and tries their best **IS** a direct reflection of your parenting.

One of the Clinton County Youth Bureau's most important objectives is that the youth participating in our programs enjoy themselves. By striving to work more closely with parents, coaches and sports officials, we hope to see our youth enjoy their sports experience even more. We are confident that by better acquainting yourselves with the expectations surrounding these "instructional" programs you will more fully enjoy your role as a supporter of your child's youth sports experience. **"THANK YOU"** for your cooperation in this endeavor!