

# LYME RECREATION POLICY

## ORGANIZATION

The Recreation Commission is charged with running Lyme's youth athletic programs throughout the year. The Commission consists of nine voting members, appointed by the Selectmen, and a Recreation Director, hired by the Town. The Commission holds public meetings on the fourth Monday of every month and encourages public participation. We are also members of the Upper Valley Recreation Association and abide by their more general recreation policies.

## PHILOSOPHY

Broad participation: Our programs should provide children, parents, and coaches with the broadest possible opportunities for participation. The emphasis should be on inclusive, rather than exclusive or highly specialized activities. Where equal and separate programs do not exist, girls and boys will be provided with equal opportunity to participate.

Balance: We recognize a significant connection between academics, athletics, and other youth activities. Athletic programs and schedules should not be allowed to dominate youths' free time, and program leaders should maintain close contact with teachers and parents to ensure a reasonable balance in everyone's lives.

Financial Self-sufficiency: Each program should be primarily self-supported through user fees. Scholarships must be available to ensure that no child will be excluded from participating for financial reasons. Private fundraising and public tax dollars should be used for facility maintenance and major capital improvements.

Local Emphasis: We strive to maintain positive relationships with other neighboring communities, coordinating schedules and competing near home whenever possible.

Have fun: We believe the goal of "having fun" should take precedence over winning.

## LEVELS OF PLAY

Our programs span a wide range of ages, with varying expectations for time commitment and structure.

Kindergarten-Grade 2: Minimal travel, informal games, skill development, meet 1-2 times per week, very low key.

Grades 3-4: Limited travel, skill development, working as a team, 6-10 organized games, meet 1-3 times per week.

Grades 5-6: Travel within 30 mile radius, building on skill development, teamwork, 10-16 organized games, meet 2-3 times per week.

Grades 7-8: Travel within 30 mile radius (occasionally more), greater skill development,

teamwork and strategic play, meet 3 or more times per week. In many local towns, programs for this age are incorporated into the school, which can raise the competitive level.

## TEAM SPORT POLICIES

Sportsmanship: Coaches, players, and spectators are representatives of their town and are expected to act accordingly. The Lyme Recreation Code of Conduct is printed on the last page of this booklet.

Skill development: All teams will emphasize the pleasure of skill development and physical fitness over a preoccupation with winning.

Safety first: All decisions on whether to cancel a game, play an injured player, or other matters will place the safety of the players above all other concerns.

Academic standing: The Recreation Commission reserves the right to restrict a child's participation based on the recommendation of his or her school administrators.

Practice and games: Whenever possible, coaches should balance their schedules to allow for at least one practice for every game they play.

Uniforms: Basic uniforms are provided (often for a small fee). Specialty equipment (e.g., catcher's equipment) will be loaned by the Recreation Commission when needed.

Cancellation: Cancellations may occur, at the coach's discretion, due to bad weather or other conflicts.

Communication: Coaches should clearly communicate to parents and players, at the outset of the season, their expectations. They should keep participants informed of practice and game times, schedule changes, and other policy matters.

Participation: Players at all levels should participate fully in every practice. In Grades 4 and below, coaches should aim to give every player equal playing time in games. In Grades 5-6, every player should, on average, play at least half of every game. In Grades 7-8, when many opposing teams are based in schools rather than Recreation programs, coaches should still strive to give every player minimum meaningful minutes, usually defined as one quarter of playing time. Coaches may limit playing time based on failure to attend practice or to observe other team rules; however they are encouraged to keep player participation and skill development as long-term goals in mind as they balance playing time across the season.

Parental Complaints: If you have a complaint or concern involving your child's coach or another player on the team, please go directly to the coach first. If the issue is not resolved at the team level, contact the Recreation Director. As a last resort, unresolved complaints will be heard before the Recreation Commission at its next monthly meeting, with all involved parties in attendance. The resolution of such complaints will be conducted fairly and openly and made a part of the public record of that meeting.

## INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

### Recreation Commission:

- Establish goals for Town recreation programs.
- Review budgets and set registration fees at a level adequate to cover anticipated costs of program.
- Promote planning, development and maintenance of Town recreation facilities.
- Take appropriate action with complaints.

### Recreation Director

- Appoint Commissioners to oversee individual sports programs.
- Prior to the start of the season, prepare and present a program budget to the Commission.
- Organize and conduct program registration, including collection of fees, health forms, and other documents.
- Take appropriate action with complaints.
- Establish game schedules and update rescheduling as needed.
- Coordinate field care and equipment procurement.
- Recruit, train, and schedule officials for games.
- Keep records of any injury reports.
- Provide a wrap-up presentation to the Commission at the end of each sport season.

### Individual Sport Commissioners:

- Recruit and select coaches.
- Encourage coaches' attendance at relevant coaching seminars and clinics.
- Provide coaches with relevant program materials.
- Work with Director in finalizing game schedules.
- Meet with coaches at the end of the season to solicit input and suggestions.

### Coaches:

- Work with the Director and Sport Commissioner in assigning players to teams, scheduling games, and allocating practice time.
- Notify parents of team policies and expectations, game and practice schedules, and the like.
- Make sure you are well-versed in the rules of play, including those particular to your team's level of participation.
- Make an effort to attend recommended coaching clinics.
- Ensure that recreation equipment and uniforms are accounted for and maintained in good condition.
- Make sure that you have a first aid kit on hand during team functions.
- When in doubt, never play a sick or injured player.
- Serve as a positive role model of god sportsmanship. Expect and demand good sportsmanship of players toward teammates and opponents in practice and games.
- Notify the Director and players' parents of any changes in scheduled games or practice times.
- Make sure drivers are aware of their responsibilities.

### Parents:

- Register your child for the program and pay all necessary fees (or submit a scholarship application) prior to the first official meeting.
- Help your child arrive at games and practices on time and with all necessary equipment and clothing.
- If your child is out of school due to illness or unexcused absence, s/he may not play on the day of absence.
- Be aware of and follow the coaches' policies for players.
- If you choose to link your child's ability to play sports to her/his academic performance, be sure your child understands this from the outset of the season.
- Serve as an example of good sportsmanship. Turn setbacks into opportunity by helping your child work toward skill improvement and god sportsmanship.
- Provide positive reinforcement by attending games, giving praise, and showing

affection.

- Recognize the value of volunteers, officials, and coaches. Help by volunteering.
- Refrain from providing individualized coaching to your child during practices and games.
- If you have a problem with something regarding the team or your child specifically, please observe the complaint policy outlined above.

Players:

- Be courteous and respectful to your coach, the other team's coaches and players, and the officials. You represent yourself, your team, and your town.
- Exhibit team spirit and loyalty at all times. Encourage your teammates.
- Attend all scheduled practices and games, or notify your coach in advance that you will not be able to attend.
- Report all injuries to your coach.
- Do not leave the gym, field, or other facility without the knowledge of your coach. Stay with the team whenever you travel out of town. The coach is responsible for your well-being.
- Respect the property of others.
- Turn in any uniform or other equipment that belongs to the Town and was issued to you for the season as directed by the coach at the end of the season. You are responsible for replacement of lost or abused equipment or uniforms.
- Be courteous to volunteer drivers.
- Wear your mouth guard at all times during games and practices.

### CONDUCT POLICY

The intent of the Town of Lyme and the Recreation Commission in sponsoring this sporting event is to:

- encourage fun for everyone;
- help players learn teamwork and good sportsmanship; and
- offer a positive experience to everyone, regardless of which team wins or loses.

Please assist the players, coaches, officials, and spectators in fostering good

sportsmanship and promoting positive experiences during the sporting event.

Conduct that is disruptive or interferes with the game, players, coaches, officials, or spectators is prohibited at sporting events. Profanity, threats, vulgar gestures, insults, or similar conduct berating players, coaches, officials, or spectators, have no place at the event. Such conduct is contrary to the Town of Lyme and Recreation Commission's goals of providing a reasonably safe, orderly, and positive sporting event. The sponsoring authorities will not tolerate disruptive or offensive conduct during the sporting event.

Any person who does not comply with these guidelines may be warned, or asked to leave the event by the coaches and/or officials, after consultation among the coaches and officials. If the person refuses to leave, the sponsoring authorities may take one or more of the following steps:

- suspend the game;
- end the game;
- ask security personnel or police officers to escort the person from the premises;
- ask the Recreation Commission to bar that person temporarily or permanently from attending Recreation Commission sporting events, after providing the individual with an opportunity to offer a response to the Commission, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Town of Lyme Board of Selectmen on April 30, 2003, authorizing such action.

If anyone cannot or will not comply with these guidelines, please do not attend the event. By attending the sporting event, you agree to abide by these guidelines.

#### INJURY POLICY

The coaching staff has initial responsibility for the safety and welfare of each player on the team. The general rule in treating sports injuries is to administer only the first aid treatment of which you have knowledge. The following steps should be taken in caring for an injured player:

- Administer only the first aid of which you have knowledge.
- In the case of a suspected neck or back injury, **DO NOT MOVE THE INJURED PLAYER**. Notify trained medical personnel immediately.
- When in doubt about the severity of an injury, always call trained medical personnel to administer treatment.
- In the event a player is transported to the hospital for treatment, the parental permission form must accompany the player, and the parent must be notified immediately.

An accident report must be completed on all injuries requiring medical attention of any kind, and within 24 hours of the injury.

Chemical ice packs should NEVER be used on open wounds or head wounds. The coach is responsible for ensuring that all chemical ice packs are properly disposed of.