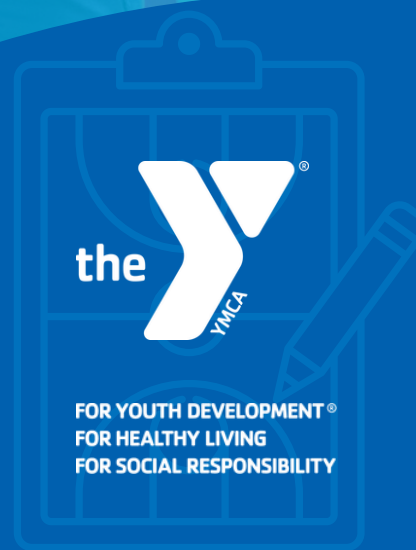




YMCA OF GREATER DAYTON

Youth Sports Character Building Playbook

DaytonYMCA.org



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

OUR MISSION

The YMCA of Greater Dayton, based on Christian principles, is a charitable organization with an inclusive environment driven to enrich the quality of family, spiritual, social, mental and physical well being for all.



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

OUR PURPOSE IN YOUTH SPORTS

The YMCA of Greater Dayton is a charitable organization committed to strengthening our community through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

YMCA CORE VALUES

Everything we do at the YMCA is guided by our four Core Values:



CARING – Showing kindness and compassion toward others



HONESTY – Acting with integrity and fairness



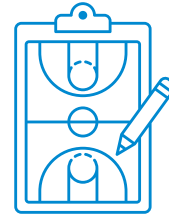
RESPECT – Treating others the way we want to be treated



RESPONSIBILITY – Being dependable and accountable

These values are for everyone and help create a welcoming environment for all families and athletes.

COACH EXPECTATIONS: CHARACTER MOMENTS



Coaches are encouraged to spend about 5 minutes each practice leading a brief “Character Moment”.

Each Week Includes:

- an opening statement
- a simple definition
- a short discussion or story
- examples related to sports and everyday life
- a team challenge



The goal is consistency, not perfection. These conversations help reinforce positive behavior, teamwork, and leadership throughout the season.

SEASON STRUCTURE (8 WEEKS)

Weeks 1–4: Caring & Honesty

How we show our values as teammates and how we live our values as leaders and individuals

Weeks 5–8: Respect & Responsibility

How we show our values as teammates and how we live our values as leaders and individuals

WEEK 1: CARING

Theme: Being A Great Teammate



OPENING STATEMENT:

“At the YMCA, we don’t just practice sports skills - we practice being good teammates and good people. This week we’re focusing on Caring.”



DEFINITION

Caring means showing kindness, encouragement, and compassion toward others.



DISCUSSION

What does caring look like on a team?

How does it feel when someone encourages you?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Cheering on teammates
- Helping someone up after they fall
- Including everyone in drills
- Encouraging someone who made a mistake



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Being kind at school
- Helping at home
- Welcoming someone new



TEAM CHALLENGE

Encourage at least 3 teammates during practice or a game this week!

WEEK 2: CARING

Theme: Leadership Through Kindness



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're revisiting Caring, but this time as leaders."



DEFINITION

Caring leaders make others feel supported, included, and valued.



DISCUSSION

How can kindness be a form of leadership?
Who on the team shows caring leadership?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Welcoming new teammates
- Supporting someone who is struggling
- Encouraging teammates during tough moments



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Standing up for others
- Helping classmates
- Being inclusive



TEAM CHALLENGE

Make sure no teammate feels left out this week.

WEEK 3: HONESTY

Theme: Playing Fair



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're focusing on Honesty, because trust is what makes teams strong."



DEFINITION

Honesty means telling the truth, playing fair, and doing the right thing even when no one is watching.



DISCUSSION

Why is honesty important in sports?
How does honesty build trust on a team?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Following the rules
- Admitting when the ball touched you last
- Not cheating to gain an advantage



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Telling the truth
- Owning up to mistakes
- Being trustworthy with friends and family



TEAM CHALLENGE

Commit to playing fair and being truthful in all situations this week.

WEEK 4: HONESTY

Theme: Character When It's Hard



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're focusing on honesty when it's difficult—not just when it's easy."



DEFINITION

Honesty means taking responsibility for your actions, even when it's uncomfortable.



DISCUSSION

Why is honesty harder in tough moments?
What happens when people make excuses?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Admitting mistakes
- Not blaming teammates
- Learning from losses



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Owning up to poor choices
- Telling the truth even when consequences exist



TEAM CHALLENGE

Take responsibility instead of making excuses.

WEEK 5: RESPECT

Theme: How We Treat Others



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're focusing on Respect—how we treat teammates, coaches, referees, and opponents."



DEFINITION

Respect means treating others the way you want to be treated.



DISCUSSION

What does respect look like during a game?
What happens when respect is missing?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Listening to coaches
- Not arguing with referees
- Shaking hands or fist bumping after games
- Encouraging teammates



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Listening when others speak
- Respecting differences



TEAM CHALLENGE

Show respect through words, body language, and actions—even when emotions are high.

WEEK 6: RESPECT

Theme: Self-Respect & Emotional Control



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're focusing on respect—not just for others, but for ourselves."



DEFINITION

Respect includes self-control, positive attitude, and emotional awareness.



DISCUSSION

How do emotions affect performance?

What does it mean to win or lose with respect?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Controlling frustration
- Avoiding negative outbursts
- Winning humbly and losing gracefully



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Managing emotions
- Being respectful online and in public



TEAM CHALLENGE

Respond to challenges with composure and maturity.

WEEK 7: RESPONSIBILITY



Theme: Owning Your Role



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This week we're focusing on Responsibility, because your team depends on you."



DEFINITION

Responsibility means being dependable, prepared, and making good choices.



DISCUSSION

What responsibilities do athletes have?

How does one person's effort affect the whole team?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Arriving on time
- Bringing proper equipment
- Giving your best effort
- Following directions



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Completing schoolwork
- Helping at home
- Taking care of belongings



TEAM CHALLENGE

Show responsibility by being prepared and giving your best effort every day.

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." — Luke 16:10

WEEK 8: RESPONSIBILITY



Theme: Being Someone Others Can Count On



OPENING STATEMENT:

"This final week is about responsibility and leadership."



DEFINITION

Responsibility means being dependable, prepared, and making good choices.



DISCUSSION

How can you lead by example?

How do your choices reflect on your team and the YMCA?



SPORTS EXAMPLES

- Helping clean up
- Encouraging teammates
- Giving full effort until the final whistle



LIFE EXAMPLES

- Helping others
- Being reliable
- Representing your community well



TEAM CHALLENGE

Finish the season strong with effort, attitude, and leadership.

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." — Luke 16:10

OPTIONAL: END-OF-SEASON RECOGNITION



Coaches may recognize athletes who consistently demonstrate YMCA Core Values:

- Caring Award
- Honesty Award
- Respect Award
- Responsibility Award



**These awards celebrate character,
not just performance.**

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEER COACHES:

Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to support YMCA youth sports.

Your leadership, encouragement, and commitment help create a positive and welcoming experience for every athlete and family we serve. Because of you, young people are learning not only skills for the game, but values that will guide them for life. We are grateful for the role you play in strengthening our YMCA community.

