



ALABAMA 4-H LEADING WITH CHARACTER SPORTS ETHICS



Building Character in Sports Through Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship

Competitive sports have a tremendous impact on our culture, influencing the values of millions of participants and spectators. Sports and other extracurricular activities have a positive impact on youth, as demonstrated by their school performance. Based on statistics from the Josephson Institute of Ethics, the students involved in these activities have higher grades, better attendance, lower dropout rates, fewer discipline problems, and less drug use.

After entering college, a greater percentage of these students obtain a degree. Sports teach valuable lessons regarding teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship. The character of participants and spectators is greatly influenced by the coaches and by high-profile sports role models. Although there are many examples of good sportsmanship, unethical sports-related behavior does occur. These disruptive actions occur on and off the field: cheating, misconduct by players and spectators, and commercialization.

To address these issues, the United States Olympic Committee Coaching Division and CHARACTER COUNTS! Sports co-sponsored a summit of many of the nation's most informed and influential leaders in nonprofessional sports. The meeting resulted in the issuance of sixteen principles, called the *Arizona Sports Summit Accord*, along with strategies designed to lift the ethics and the character-building potential of athletic competition. The principles of the *Arizona Sports Summit Accord* are based on the Olympic philosophy that *there is no true victory unless it is achieved with honor* and the Six Pillars of Character: *trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship*.

Join Alabama 4-H in supporting the *Arizona Sports Summit Accord*! Sports can help to build character for **kids, spectators and coaches**. The choice is yours. Get involved; be a leader. Contact your local 4-H office for information about how you can get involved.

SIX PILLARS OF CHARACTER

A Person of Good Character is: *Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, Caring and a Good Citizen*

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Integrity

Stand up for your beliefs; Follow your conscience; Be honorable and upright; Live by your principles no matter what others say; Have the courage to do what is right and to try new things even when it is hard, costly, or you might fail; Build and guard your reputation and your name; Don't do anything you know is wrong; Don't lose heart if you fail or don't get what you want.





Loyalty

Stand by, stick up for and protect your family, friends, school and country; Be a good friend; Look out for those who care about you; Keep secrets of those who trust you; Don't betray a trust, let your friends hurt themselves, do anything that is wrong, even for a friend or just so others will like you, or ask a friend to do anything wrong or spread rumors and gossip that could hurt others.

Honesty

Tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth; Be sincere; Be forthright and candid; Don't lie, cheat, steal, or be sneaky, tricky, or deceptive.

Reliability (Promise-Keeping)

Keep your promises; Honor your word and commitments; Be dependable; Do what you are supposed to do; Return what you borrow; Pay your debts; Be on time.

RESPECT

Courtesy

Use good manners; be courteous, polite and civil to everyone; Don't use put-downs, insults, yelling or ridicule to embarrass or hurt another.

Golden Rule

Treat others the way you want to be treated; Respect the dignity, privacy and freedom of all individuals; Value and honor all people for themselves, not what they can do for you or to you; Respect others' property - take good care of property you are allowed to use, and don't take or use property without permission; Respect the independence of others - help them learn what they should know to make good choices about their own lives; Don't use, manipulate, abuse, demean, or mistreat anyone.

Tolerance and Acceptance

Judge others on their character, abilities and conduct, not on such matters as race, religion, gender, where they live, how they dress, or the amount of money they have; Be tolerant, respectful and accepting of those who are different from you; Listen to others and try to understand their points of view.

Nonviolence

Solve disagreements, respond to insults and deal with anger peacefully and without violence; Don't use threats or physical force to get what you want or to express anger. Don't be a bully. Don't tolerate anyone picking on someone who is weaker or smaller.

RESPONSIBILITY

Duty

Know and do your duty; Acknowledge and meet your legal and moral obligations.

Accountability

Accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices, not only for what you do but what you don't do; Think about consequences for yourself and others before you act; Think long-term; Do what you can to make things better; Set a good example; Don't look the other way when you can make a difference; Don't make excuses or blame others.



Pursue Excellence

Do your best; Persevere; Don't quit; Be prepared; Be diligent; Work hard; Make all you do worthy of pride.

Self-Control

Take charge of your own life; Set realistic goals; Keep a positive outlook; Be prudent and self-disciplined with your health, emotions, time and money; Be rational - act out of reason not anger, revenge or fear; Know the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do; Be self-reliant - manage your life so you are not dependent on others; pay your own way whenever you can

FAIRNESS**Fairness and Justice**

Be fair and just; Treat people equally; Make decisions on proper considerations without favoritism or prejudice; In imposing punishment be sure the consequences for misbehavior are consistent, certain and proportional to the wrongdoing - not too harsh or lenient; Don't take more than your fair share; Don't take advantage of or blame others unfairly.

Openness

Be open minded and impartial - hear people out, listen to them and consider what people have to say before you decide; Be careful - get the facts, including opposing viewpoints before making decisions, especially blaming or accusing another.

CARING**Concern for Others**

Be compassionate and empathetic; Be kind, loving and considerate; Be thankful and express gratitude for what people do for you; Forgive others for their shortcomings; Don't be mean, cruel or insensitive.

Charity

Be charitable and altruistic - give money, time, support and comfort just for the sake of making someone else's life better, not for praise or gratitude; Help people in need.

CITIZENSHIP**Do Your Share**

Be a good citizen and a good neighbor; Care about and pursue the common good; Be a volunteer - help your school and community be better, cleaner and safer; Protect the environment by conserving resources, reducing pollution and cleaning up after yourself; Participate in making things better by voicing your opinion, voting, serving on committees, reporting wrongdoing, and paying taxes.

Respect Authority and the Law

Play by the rules; Obey parents, teachers, coaches and others who have been given authority; Observe just laws; Honor and respect principles of democracy.



SPORTS ETHICS

I. TWO MODELS OF ETHICS IN SPORTS

Sportsmanship Model

- To a sportsman, the way he/she plays the game is central. Sports are seen as special activities where **honor** is found. The goal is honorable competition in pursuit of victory.
- The sportsmanship model demands a commitment to principles of **integrity** including compliance with the letter and spirit of the rules even when one could get away with violations.
- Coaches and players who practice **sportsmanship** can be at a disadvantage when competing against others who practice **gamesmanship**.
- A true sports person is willing to lose rather than sacrifice ethical principles to win. If you aren't willing to lose, you may be willing to do unethical things to win.
- A victory attained by cheating or other forms of unethical conduct is unearned and dishonorable. A true sports person believes that winning without honor is not a true victory. Coaches must remind themselves and their athletes that true competition means pursuing victory with honor.
- The Olympic Creed: *"The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just at the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well."*
- Within the Olympic concept, there is no true victory unless it is achieved with honor.

The Gamesmanship Model

- Gamesmanship sanctions ways of bending, evading and breaking the rules to provide a competitive advantage.
- The only thing that really matters is winning.
- It's the Officials' Job to Catch Me:
It's only cheating if you get caught.
It's the officials' job to enforce the rules and not our responsibility to follow them.
There are no criteria for drawing a line between what's acceptable and what's not.

Examples:

- Faked Fouls - Believe it is acceptable to fake fouls.
- Illegal Head Start - Believe it is acceptable to get an illegal head start in cross country track or leaving the line early in soccer to block a penalty kick.
- Doctoring Equipment - Believe it is acceptable to illegally "doctor" a baseball or a bat. Is raising the foul line slightly to keep bunts in play to favor a home team or altering the height of the mound or distance from the rubber to the plate in the same category?
- Surreptitious (covert) Personal Fouls - Believe it is acceptable in soccer, water polo, basketball and football to illegally hold, grab and pull on opponents.
- Physical Intimidation - Believe it is acceptable to intentionally inflict pain on opponents to intimidate them.
- "Taking Out" a Player - Aggressive supporters of the gamesmanship model believe injuring an opponent or aggravating a pre-existing injury to take the opponent out of the game is legitimate.
- Espionage - Believe it is acceptable to use elaborate means such as secret filming or electronically intercepting game signals to get information from an opponent's plans or plays. If this is acceptable, what is wrong with persuading a player from the other team to give you a copy of the play book?

Gamesmanship coaches gain advantage by violating eligibility, recruiting and practice rules just as gamesmanship athletes gain an advantage by using illegal performance-enhancing drugs and playing tactics.



WHAT IS PART OF THE GAME? WHAT IS GAMESMANSHIP?

There Are Two Major Considerations - Safety and the Integrity of the Game:

- Sportsmanship promotes safety and the integrity of the game.
- Gamesmanship promotes tactics and practices that may be unsafe and can violate the integrity of the game.

Safety of Athletes

- Many rules are designed to prevent conduct that creates unnecessary risks of injury.
- Techniques that inflict pain or endanger athletes violate the fundamental premise of athletic competition.
- **Examples:** Throwing at a batter for any reason, physical intimidation, intentional injuring, tripping and similar tactics often justified as “part of the game” introduce dangerous elements into the game.

Violating rules can endanger athletes.

Integrity of the Sport

- Every sport has developed over the years with rule refinements.
- Rules establish standards of fair play and define the game.
- When behavior patterns develop that corrupt the game such as chop blocking or spear tackling in football, flagrant fouls or hand checking in basketball the matters are addressed by additional rules or instructions to officials to enforce existing rules.
- What Is Proper and Part of the Sport?
 - In considering if a tactic is proper, the question to ask is, “Does the tactic use skills and abilities intended to be measured by the sport?”
 - Another way to look at it is, “Does the tactic favor athletic and strategic skills envisioned by the rule makers?”
 - To say a tactic is “part of the game” is to say it is consistent with the intended nature of the game.
 - Gamesmanship tactics that change the nature of the game are unethical because they violate the integrity of the sport.

For Example:

Intentional Strategic Fouls

In some sports, specific penalties are prescribed for specific rule violations such as delay of game in football, personal fouls in basketball. In these specific situations, the traditions of the sports permit a player to “take the penalty” by deliberately violating the rule for strategic reasons. Coaches teach players when and how to make the decision to intentionally foul as a strategy of the game.

Undetected Fouls

If intentional rule violations like pulling shirts in soccer or tripping in hockey are a legitimate part of the game, the skill of fouling and avoiding detection is important and should be taught by coaches like any other legitimate technique. This places great value on non-athletic skills.

Taunting

Most taunting is amateurish and ineffective. If taunting and trash talk are legitimate parts of the game to unsettle an opponent or pump oneself up, why don't we teach athletes to do it well? Why not teach



athletes to refer to hurtful, private information about an opponent? Why not have psychologists train athletes to really get under someone's skin? After all, anything worth doing is worth doing well.

Equipment Tampering

The clearest example of unethical tactics is equipment tampering. Illegally altering equipment to gain an advantage violates the integrity of the sport. Illegal alteration of the playing field is also corruption of the sport.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Demonstrate Trustworthiness by Being Honest; Keeping Promises; Being Loyal and Practicing Integrity in the Sport, to Individuals and the Educational Institution.

Refuse to Cheat:

- Cheating is defined as deliberately violating the rules or traditions of a game to gain an unfair advantage.
- In some sports, like basketball and hockey, established traditions of the game permit a player to foul an opponent and take a penalty as a matter of strategy. This is not cheating.

Refuse to Lie or Deceive in Communications or Representations .

- Coaches and players should not lie or deceive an athlete, parent, official or others in any manner.
- In many sports, deception of an opponent during a game is “part of the game.” Thus it doesn't violate the principle of integrity to “fake out” an opponent.

Refuse to Fake Injuries or Fouls .

It is not honest or trustworthy to fake an injury to gain advantage or extra time.

It is not honest or trustworthy to fool an official into making a bad call.

Call Plays Against Oneself.

- Many volleyball coaches train their players to call a “touch” if a ball hit them before going out of bounds and the official missed the play.
- In tennis, many coaches consider it proper sportsmanship to call a ball out that the umpire did not call.
- Golfers are expected to report extra strokes and call penalties on themselves.

Honor the Letter and Spirit of Rules.

- A sportsperson should not use manipulative tactics or legalistic evasions to justify conduct clearly intended to be prohibited. This includes official rules of the sport and rules regulating recruitment, eligibility compensation, practice limitations, equipment tampering as well as drug and alcohol use.

RESPECT

- Be Respectful by Being Civil, Polite and Gracious.
- Treat Athletes, Parents, Officials, Fans and Others With Respect.
- Show Respect for Opponents.

Win and Lose With Class.

- Bragging or boasting of victory are forms of unsportsman-like behavior as are complaining, blaming bad luck on officials and whining in defeat.
- Celebrations that demean an opponent or appear overly self-congratulatory are unsportsmanlike.
- The saying, “An athlete who scores ought to act as if he/she has done it before,” is applicable.

Demonstrate Appreciation of Opponents.

- Coaches and players should willingly and graciously acknowledge good plays and outstanding effort of opponents. They should applaud respectfully when opponents are introduced and when they are injured.



Help a Fallen Opponent.

- Coaches should teach their players to help a fallen opponent get up.

Shake Hands With and Cheer Opponents With Sincere Respect.

- Coaches and players should sincerely and respectfully participate in pre- and post-game rituals including shaking hands, touching boxing gloves or giving cheers.

Refuse to Fight With Opponents.

- It is improper to fight with an opponent other than in strict combat sports such as boxing, wrestling and martial arts.

Refuse to Taunt or Trash Talk

- Athletes should not engage in “in your face” taunting, trash talking, ridiculing or other disrespectful behavior.

Refuse to Use Profanity.

- Coaches should not use nor allow athletes to use profanity or obscene gestures in practice or games. Both are disrespectful.

Assist Opponents.

- One of the highest and most admirable forms of sportsmanship is an athlete assisting an opponent by doing more than he/she has to, such as lending needed equipment or by other means.

Be a Thoughtful and Gracious Host.

- Treat visiting teams and fans as guests, not as invaders. Make teams and fans feel welcome and provide for their comfort. Provide locker rooms, bathrooms and shower facilities that are clean, open and available at appropriate times.

Show Respect for Athletes.

When engaged in coaching, coaches must recognize the power they hold over athletes and therefore make reasonable efforts to avoid engaging in conduct that is personally demeaning to athletes and other participants.

(USOC 4.03b)

Follow the Classroom Standard:

- To teach and model respect and to promote the educational goals of athletics, a coach should only use techniques that would be appropriate in a regular classroom.
- Can you imagine a math teacher screaming at a student, using demeaning names, or physically grabbing, pushing or hitting a student to help the student learn?
- Treat the playing field and locker room as classrooms.

Respect Beliefs.

- *Coaches must respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own.* (USOC 1.06)

Refuse to Harass:

- *Coaches must not engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socioeconomic status.* (USOC 1.09)

Show Respect for Teammates.

- Athletes should show respect and appreciation for teammates by cheering, complimenting and supporting each other before and after events.
- Athletes should avoid showing frustration at a teammate for an error or bad performance.
- Athletes should be team players. Coaches should stress the team over the individual and de-emphasize individual statistics and star treatment.
- Athletes should refuse to harass or put down others.



Show Respect for Officials.

- The traditions of some sports such as baseball and basketball allow coaches to argue with officials; most sports do not.
- Players should show respect to officials during all interactions.
- Coaches, players, parents and fans should be respectful of officials whether they agree or disagree with calls. Disrespectful talk should not be allowed.

Coaches and players should not be combative.

- A coach's conduct must be within the bounds of respectful disagreement. A coach should refrain from challenging or protesting calls in an insulting or combative manner.
- A protesting coach should not touch an official, kick dirt or throw anything at or in the direction of an official.

RESPONSIBILITY

Exercise Self-Control

- The behavior of coaches has a significant impact on teaching young people to control their tempers.
- Coaches and athletes should demonstrate self-control by not displaying anger or frustration toward other athletes, coaches, parents, officials, fans, or the media.
- Coaches and players should not engage in physical altercations.

Pursue Excellence

- Coaches should be the best they can be in all phases of coaching responsibilities from skill building to character building and counseling.

Develop and Maintain Competence

- Coaches should develop and demonstrate professional knowledge of:
 - * Rules and strategies of the sport.
 - * Basic coaching principles for the age group coached.
 - * Fundamentals of first-aid
 - * Methods of teaching and reinforcing good character through athletics.

Provide for the Safety and Welfare of Athletes Above All Else

- The safety and health of athletes should be the priority in practices, during games and in the environment provided.
- Athletes should be drug-free.

Discourage the use of any illegal drug whether it is for enhancing athletic performance or recreational use.

- * Ensure that strict and sure negative consequences are imposed on athletes who violate drug laws and policies.

- Athletes should be alcohol and tobacco-free.

- * Strictly and consistently enforce institutional alcohol and tobacco policies whether the coach personally agrees with them or not.

Protect Athletes From Physical Abuse, Sexual Harassment or Exploitation

- * Coaches should not engage in or permit anyone under their control or influence to engage in physical abuse of athletes or any form of sexual harassment or exploitation.

Prepare Athletes to Deal With Temptations and Pressures

- * **Special sport-related temptations and dangers for student-athletes**

- NCAA violations including work, compensation and gifts.
- Use of performance enhancing drugs.
- Unhealthy practices to gain or lose weight.



- Win-at-any-cost attitudes that promote cheating and unsportsman like conduct including reckless disregard of health and safety, excessive violence or the intent to injure another player, taunting or excessive celebration and disrespect for officials.

*** Off-the-field temptations and dangers for student-athletes**

- Minimizing the importance of academic performance and education.
- Using recreational drugs including alcohol and tobacco.
- Gambling, such as point shaving, and dealing with gamblers
- Sexual promiscuity and related concerns including pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Violence, including fighting and sexual assaults.
- Being challenged or taunted.
- Dealing with false and unfair accusations.
- Unrealistic belief in having a career as an athlete.
- Ignoring social and emotional needs.

Be Positive Role Models

- *Coaches must articulate and enforce policies that assure athletes and others under their supervision exemplify good character and conduct themselves as positive role models on and off the field.*

(Arizona Sports Summit Accord #4)

Maintain the Integrity of the Sport.

- Coaches should pursue, teach and demand that sportsmanship over gamesmanship is demonstrated.

Maintain a Respectful Atmosphere and Environment.

- Coaches and athletic administrators should create and maintain a respectful atmosphere and sports environment.
- Visitors should be protected from improper and unsportsmanlike behavior of fans. This includes providing security.

• Regulate spirit groups.

- * Coaches and athletic administrators should assure the behavior of mascots, cheerleaders, drill teams and bands demonstrate good sportsmanship.

- * Negative or demeaning cheers and actions of all sorts should be prohibited.

- * Individual members of spirit groups who jeer, taunt or throw things at opposing players or fans should be disciplined and, if necessary, removed.

- * Mascot conduct should be regulated as closely as athlete conduct.

Regulate Spectators

- The conduct of spectator's should be regulated to reflect high standards of sportsmanship.
- Coaches should educate and hold parents to high standards of sportsmanship.

Uphold Educational Goals of Athletic Competition

- Sporting events sponsored by educational institutions should reflect the educational goals of athletic competition, and behavior that undermines them should be prohibited.

FAIRNESS

- Ensure Teams and Athletes Play by the Rules and Treat Others Fairly.
- Anything That Gives an Unfair Advantage Violates the Spirit As Well As the Integrity of the Sport. When One Side Breaks the Rules, There Is No Longer a Level
- Playing Field and the Nature of the Competition Is Changed Unfairly.
- Coaches Should Pursue, Teach, Model and Demand That Sportsmanship Over Gamesmanship Is Demonstrated.
- Gamesmanship Violates the Rights of Opponents and the Integrity of the Sport.



CARING

- Put the Welfare of the Athletes First.
- Provide for the Safety, Health and Security of Athletes, Opponents, Officials and Fans.
- Consider the Psychological and Physical Impact of Words, Decisions and Actions on\ Athletes and Others.
- Ensure Opponents, Officials and Fans Are Treated As Guests.

CITIZENSHIP

Model Good Citizenship by Honoring the Rules and Principles of Sportsmanship.

Model Good Citizenship in Coaching Activities and in All Other Aspects of Life.

Support the Educational Goals of the Educational Institution.

Maintain the Integrity and Purpose of the Sport by Following the Rules.

- When one side breaks the rules, there is no longer a level playing field and the nature of the competition is changed unfairly.
- Gamesmanship violates the rights of opponents and the integrity of the sport.



How Do We Implement CHARACTER COUNTS?
Answer who, when, where and how, as applicable, for the following:

Orient Administration and Obtain Their Support.

Identify Sports Ethics Project Leader.

Form a Sports Ethics Leadership Team.

Train Project Leader and Leadership Team.

Identify/Benchmark the Current Good Behaviors and Unacceptable Behaviors.

Develop Project Objectives and Action Plan.

Measure Effectiveness of Sports Ethics Initiative.

Keep Sports Ethics alive by applying the Six Qualities of an Effective Character Education Program.





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