



The Junior Code for Living

Because I am an example for others, I will try to live by the following Code. When I make mistakes, I will say that I am sorry and try to do better.

As an individual:

- ✓ I will try my hardest in practice and in games.
- ✓ I will play by the rules.
- ✓ I will be kind to everyone, and will not call others names.

As a member of a team:

- ✓ I will put the team ahead of myself.
- ✓ I will try to help everyone on the team be friends with each other.
- ✓ I will follow the team rules made by the coach.

As a member of society:

- ✓ I will always try to set a good example for everyone who sees me.
- ✓ I will do my part to help others in my community and world.

Here's how you can personalize the Code:

Your Club or Team's Name

YOUR PHILOSOPHY

In this space you write whatever you want, such as "Our team offers young athletes an opportunity to have fun, develop their skills, and play games. We expect every player to"

As an expression of these values, we expect everyone to commit to the following:

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(if desired those involved can sign)

Athlete _____ **Team** _____

Coach _____ **Parent** _____

WHY HAVE A CODE?

Webster's Dictionary defines "code" as "any system of principles or rules." Codes are important in our lives. They surround us in written and unwritten forms. The written ones are such things as the laws by which we live, the religious creeds or affirmations that we make, the oaths and mottoes we take as part of social, service, and scouting organizations as well as the "mission statements" that are a part of corporate America. There are many unwritten but clearly understood codes at home, at work, and on the street.

ABW's Code for Living is intended to be a unifying set of principles around which people of all ages and sports interests can join together. It is not intended to replace either the written or unwritten codes of one's religion, family or work, but to provide unity, focus, support and direction to those who care about sports leadership and our country.

The Code for Living is important for the individual because:

1. It provides a clear standard for each person. It reminds us that we have responsibilities to our teammates, our society, and ourselves. The Code provides foundational principles upon which each of us can build and develop our lives.
2. It allows us to set our own goals within it. That is, while it provides a clear framework, we have the freedom to focus on different elements within it according to our age, gifts, and desire. Therefore, how we choose to live it out will be a challenge that will require constant reflection, with new goals set for ourselves as each year passes.

The Code is important for the team because:

1. It provides a common set of values on which the team can build. Teams are made up of individuals, and yet a team only emerges when the individuals come together in support of common goals. The Code provides one of the foundations upon which a true team can be built.
2. It recognizes that we have a collective responsibility for one another and for our communities. We need each other and can only be successful with each other. In other words, no one person can make a team or a community.
3. It represents a commitment to the team. Each person knows what he or she can expect from the other. That knowledge builds confidence and promotes team spirit.

The Code is important to society because:

1. It acknowledges the responsibility we all have as members of society, and represents a commitment to the betterment of our communities and world.
2. It makes it clear what our values are and encourages others to follow. We are at a time when it is important for people who share common values to stand together, and by doing so to provide an example for others to follow and join.

ABW and Your Team

Ideas for those working with younger athletes

Sports are a great way for kids to develop character, learn what it means to be a part of a team, and become good citizens. Or, in short, sports are a way to learn about life. The Code for Living articulates the fundamental building blocks of a good character. What is important in the formation of young people is that they hear a consistent message, that it is repeated, and that it is lived out in their lives and in the lives they see.

The Code for Living is brief so that it can be easily remembered. Here are some easy ways that it can become a part of your team.

1. Introduce it by giving the players a copy at the end of practice. Go through it, so that they all understand what each tenet means. Explain to them how the Code articulates the kind of person you expect them to be.
2. Ask each player to take it home, go over it with their parents or guardians, and have both sign it. When they return it, make a copy and give them the original so they can take it home and put it on the refrigerator or some similar place where they can see it.
3. Since there is a preamble and eight tenets, have each athlete volunteer to memorize either the preamble or one tenet. At the beginning of practice, have the Code recited by those who are responsible for each tenet. You might want to line them up so you just go down the line, or just hold up 1-3 fingers for whichever tenet it is (individual and team each have three points, society has two) and they can speak accordingly. After a couple of days you should be able to do this in less than one minute.
4. After a few days, encourage everyone to join in as best they can with the recitation of the tenets. They will begin to learn the other tenets in a gradual way.
5. You could ask an athlete to give an example of their tenet, doing just one tenet a day. Or, you can talk about it yourself.
6. The ABW website has a Tip of the Week. It gives a one minute example of how the Code is reflected in everyday events that you can present to your team.
7. You can give out an award each week for the player who best exemplified a particular tenet or section of the Code. For the ABW Player of the Week, a “certificate” could easily be created either by the coach or the ABW office.
8. At the end of the season, present one or more “Spirit of ABW” awards to the team.

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