

OLE MISS YOUTH COACHING CODE OF CONDUCT

As a coach I understand the role I play in not only teaching youth skills involving the sport I am coaching, but also life skills.

I realize that youth are watching me and that I play a critical role in modeling respectful behavior that will teach youth that violence never equals strength. Respectful team relationships are based on good communication, trust, friendship and equality for everyone. Each individual in a team environment feels supported and connected. A great team environment builds on allowing everyone to express their thoughts and opinions.

As a successful coach, at my first practice with players I will go over the player code of ethics and let them know I respect each one of them and that I am available to talk with them in private if a concern around respect arises during the season. As a successful coach I will utilize teaching moments during practices and/or games guided by the following principles:

- 1) TAKE A CLEAR STAND:** I will make sure players and player's parents/guardians/caretakers know how I feel about disrespect, use of abusive or inappropriate language, controlling behavior or any forms of violence. I will apply these standards to in-person interactions, and to those that take place on social media.
- 2) MANAGING DISAGREEMENTS AND CONFLICT:** I will model respectful conflict resolution skills in my interactions with players, parents, coaches and game officials. I will work to settle disagreements respectfully and in person, rather than addressing grievances through social media.
- 3) UNDERSTAND THE PRESSURE AND THE RISKS THAT YOUTH FACE:** Preteens and teens, in particular, face new and increasing pressure about sex, substance abuse, bullying and dating. While they may not express it, young teens want to have their parents and role models take time to listen – and help them sift through situations that they face.
- 4) KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “BYSTANDER and UPSTANDER”:** Teach your players how to speak up when they see or hear something that's not OK. They may defend their silence by explaining that they don't want to be a “snitch” or get involved. Explain that there are often safe ways to call out bad behavior and that the lack of action can sometimes lead to even greater dangerous outcomes and abuses.
- 5) ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE:** Conversations about relationships do not have to focus solely on risky, negative behavior. Take time to give positive feedback, too, when they make healthy choices in dealings with friends and family.
- 6) YOUR LANGUAGE MATTERS:** If your players hear you using slang or derogatory terms to describe women and girls, they are very likely to model your behavior and your vocabulary.

Put downs and derogatory jokes may seem harmless, but in the grand scheme of things, they are not. Do your best to respect others by using language that is empathetic, positive and appropriate.

- 7) **BE PREPARED TO MAKE MISTAKES:** You will make mistakes. Accept that, but continue to help young people make responsible, smart choices while trying to maintain that delicate balance of being sensitive but firm.
- 8) **NO MEANS NO:** Pressuring someone to do something they don't want to do is not OK. This applies to both in-person situations, as well as digital correspondence. Teach young people that forcing someone to send provocative embarrassing or nude photos is wrong.
- 9) **MAKE THE MOST OF "TEACHABLE MOMENTS":** If a professional athlete is found guilty of abusing their partner, for example, take the time to reinforce the message that even famous people are responsible for their actions.

I have read and understand the objectives listed above and will to the best of my ability follow these expectations. I understand that by holding myself accountable for this code of conduct. I am creating an environment for my team that focuses on respect during competition and practices.

Signed by Ole Miss Youth Sport Inc. Coach

Date

Witnessed by Ole Miss Youth Sport Inc. President

Date