

Welcome to OPC-Sports Children's Sports Programs! We hope that your experience as a participant in this and any future program will be fun, fulfilling, and exciting. All our programs combine ministry to children and families with instruction in elements and skills of sports, teamwork, sportsmanship, and an effort to provide each child with the opportunity for equal playing time and a chance to play different positions during the season. We believe that a good experience early in a child's athletic journey will result in a better understanding and attitude once they determine where their talents and preferences may eventually lead them.

BELOW IS THE PARENT INFORMATION FOR ALL OF OUR OPOPC-SPORTS. Please read this parent information thoroughly.

OPC-Sports Parent & Player Information

PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY

It is the mission of Oak Park Church Recreation Ministry to offer Christ-centered character building, self-esteem, skill enhancing instruction, and spiritual nurturing to children and families of our church and community through our OPC-Sports program. As a sports program, we will always strive to increase skill development, game strategy, game rules, and enjoyment of sports. It is our hope that sports can be **Christ-like and competitive** with an emphasis on doing one's best while respecting the coaches, officials, and opponents. We as parents have a difficult job that offers great rewards. We must provide a safe, fun environment for our children to exercise and develop physical skills that will lead to a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle. We must encourage them positively with love and always remember that the *most important thing to them* is to have **FUN**.

We are a **Developmental League** which has certain rules that demand that our focus is not on winning games. Our program is designed to teach sports in a safe way in which *each* child is given an opportunity to learn skills, increase their knowledge of the game, gain self-confidence and enjoy being part of a team. Each coach is required to focus attention on all players.

League **Player Game Rotations** are put in place to make sure all players play an equal amount of time, start and finish games and receive an equal amount of time and attention from the coach. This means that coaches are restricted from adjusting the league required player game rotation. There may be a game where normally when behind in score, a coach could put all the better skilled players in to increase their chance to win. But because of the rotation rule, it is not their turn to finish the game. This can be hard for some players and parents to understand but this is the nature of OPC-Sports.

On certain occasions when the score of a game becomes lopsided, we have a **Grace Rule** that

requires the team in the lead to ease up, back their defense up to let the opposing team attempt to score all at the cost of losing a game. Another example may be requiring a coach to adjust their game strategy to use the grace rule during a mismatch of talent by asking the team to pass the ball 5 times before shooting. Sometimes it may be asking teams that are in the lead to not let the one player who has scored many points to not shoot again. This is what is called a developmental league. If a player is told not to shoot again and they do, they may be benched by their coach.

Winning is good but our purpose is to develop each player. This means that OPC-Sport's is not for everyone. Some parents and players would enjoy a more aggressive league where the main focus is winning as many games as possible or having as much playing time as possible. We understand that. We are developing sportsmanship and spiritual values more so than indulging an instinct to win. We want them to learn to win and lose gracefully. Due to this being a developmental program, this league is not beneficial for higher level experienced players and based on evaluations, those participants may not be able to participate in the league. While playing in a developmental league may keep them active in their sport, it can diminish their skills they've already developed. It is much more beneficial to those players to continue with higher level playing leagues. We are here to encourage the development of players in the beginning of their skill learning.

League Positive Affirmation Rules:

Remember that OPC-Sports is a positive environment. We do not permit parents to speak harshly to their own children, other children or parents. We do not permit arguing with a referee or umpires. Coaches must never use negative comments to players, other coaches or officials. Please keep this in mind if you invite a guest to our campus and make sure they know our rules. We want our players to hear only cheers and see lots of smiles. These rules are in place to ensure that our focus is on what is best for our children. Children want to have fun and play the game. If you witness someone that you feel is not aware of these rules, please bring it to our attention. Please thank them every chance you get.

CAMPUS RULES:

Please review our campus rules below and instruct visitors you bring:

- Always speak positively toward your child and/or any other player.
- Always speak positively toward an adult (coach, volunteer or another parent).
- Please direct any complaints regarding a call made by an official to **Larry Oliver, Director of Recreation Ministry at 251.377.6101 or oliverlarry@comcast.net** . Do not approach the official.
- Please react in an appropriate manner regardless of your child's performance or team's performance.

VOLUNTEERS:

OPC-Sports is volunteer-based. This program is built by the hard work of many people who are volunteering their time. All our coaches are VOLUNTEERS. We cannot form our league without the volunteers and their gift of time. This means they are ready, and willing to give their time serving you and your child. Coaches, assistant coaches, team moms, officials and other volunteers are what make this league possible. These people work hard to ensure that all the children who participate will experience God's love, peace and understanding.

Please consider volunteering to be a head coach, assistant coach, team parent, and to help officiate. Volunteer coaching forms are online. No experience is required and we provide all the tools you need including a manual. This is a great chance for you to serve God through this ministry and spend time with your child. All coaches must complete a coaching packet located at the visitor desk or on online at opcsports.com/opcsports-volunteers. We need YOU...*Thank you in advance for volunteering!*

LEAGUE ASSIGNMENTS:

Understand that each child must attend and complete an evaluation (see schedule) before they can be placed on a team. Teams are mathematically balanced according to evaluation scores.

Please Note: Age/Grade requirements are not negotiable. Coaches and Assistant Coaches will coach their own children unless otherwise requested.

Our teams are formed by an evaluation process – not “try outs”. Due to the nature of our drafting process in our developmental league, **special requests for teammates are not accepted**. With such a wonderful and large number of children in our leagues it is impossible to place children with their favorite coach on their most convenient night at the ideal time with their best friend, etc. There may be certain criteria that will qualify as an exception, such as siblings in the same age league. We draft teams so that the talent levels on each team will be as close to equal as we can make them. Your child will meet new friends on every team in every season! Encourage them so as to excite them about the sport and the new experiences that await them.

Please fill in all the blanks on the registration form clearly so that the information may be entered into the computer accurately. Addresses (including e-mail) and phone numbers are vital for you getting information regarding activities in a timely manner.

OPC-Sports Communications:

Every year we work well in advance to put together the details of the season so that you have information at your fingertips - literally on paper and digitally in several ways. Please be sure you read this parent info THOROUGHLY and connect to the links below to stay updated.

- Parent Info Packet - part of your registration online instructions are to download this packet. This contains all the details for the entire season, including a calendar of the season. You can print or download to this your device-you will need to refer to this often.

- Website - Our website has all the information on all our sports we do all year. Specific pages contain registration links, documents, schedules and other info for the sports currently in season.
 - opcsports.com
- Social Media – Most all our announcements, such as practice time changes or last-minute cancellations, as well as upcoming season reminders, will be posted on our Facebook and Instagram page as well as some snapshots and videos of some of the season. This is a must if you would like that kind of information to be delivered to you immediately. Email servers can delay these last-minute information emails for hours - Facebook and Instagram are INSTANT.
 - Facebook: [facebook.com/oak.park.recmin](https://www.facebook.com/oak.park.recmin)
 - Instagram: [@recmincsports](https://www.instagram.com/recmincsports)

Parent Conferences:

All first time OPC-Sports participants families MUST attend the PARENT ORIENTATION, which is given at 6pm on evaluation nights.

Parents are expected to be present at all practices and games. You must bring your child to the coach, and you may not drop them off and leave.

PARENT & PLAYER RULES:

- As representatives of Oak Park Church, your words and actions will be reflective of *Christian Values*. No foul language at practice or games. Please do not bring alcohol or use tobacco at practices or games.
- Please use Positive Affirmation toward all players, coaches & referees. Keep negative comments to yourself.
- Each child, upon signing up for OPC-Sports, has agreed to play and abide by all church and OPC-Sports rules. Any rule/regulation not complied with will be brought to the attention of the Direction of Recreation and will be dealt with accordingly.
- No insurance is provided.
- **No refund of money will be allowed after the coaches meeting due to the advance payment required to order custom-made uniforms.** Any refunds prior to the coaches meeting will be charged a \$10 administrative processing fee. Any late registrations requesting a refund will not be refunded the late fee in addition to the administrative

processing fee. In the event of a hardship or special circumstance, please contact the Director of Recreation.

- Once on the roster, each player must notify the coach when unable to play or practice. Please have your child at the game 15 minutes before the start time.
- **No player is allowed to wear jewelry to practice or games.** No rings, bracelets, necklaces, other body piercings or EARRINGS. If your child has recently had their ears pierced, we cannot make an exception to this rule. This is a safety hazard we must follow.

PLAYER BEHAVIOR:

Any player who does not follow the league rules, referee calls, or coaches' direction may be disciplined by missing an opportunity to play or may be asked to leave the game and go sit with their parents. Recurring situations will be addressed by the Director of Recreation Ministry. Coaches and/ or Recreation staff will try everything possible to motivate each player before using this rule. The head coach or Recreation staff will first talk to the parents of the child, with the child present, to warn them of the possible results of such behavior. If the coaching staff are not getting the proper response from the player, then the matter will be referred to the Director of Recreation Ministry. This rule is to help control games better, keep children who are not paying attention from getting hurt, and to give coaches the ability to coach the whole team with sportsmanlike attitudes. **REMEMEMBER: OUR COACHES ARE VOLUNTEERS.**

When a player's behavior is unsportsmanlike at any time when on campus for a OPC-Sports event, the following steps will be taken:

- The coach should talk one-on-one with the player concerning the issue. This should be a one-time conversation.
- Coach should talk with parents and player about the issue privately and then communicate to Director of Recreation Ministry the results of the meeting.
- If this behavior continues, the Director of Recreation Ministry will invite the parent(s) to participate with the child on the field and to be always on the bench with them.
- If the behavior continues or if parents are not willing to participate, the Director of Recreation Ministry will facilitate further actions before the player is allowed to return.

In the event a child physically abuses another person at any point in time, immediate action will be taken:

- The parents should be asked to immediately remove their child from the practice or game for safety reasons.
- The closest Recreation staff should be notified asap. The Director of Recreation Ministry will immediately meet with the families involved.

- The Director of Recreation Ministry will facilitate further actions before the player is allowed to return.

WAIVERS and RELEASES (these are signed by you on registration form at time of registration)

Liability Waiver

I, the undersigned applicant, parent or guardian of applicant for participation in the athletic program of the Recreation Ministry of Oak Park Church, Mobile AL. do hereby release and discharge Oak Park Church, the Recreation Ministry of Oak Park Church, and its authorized agents, servants, employees, volunteers, representatives and staff from all liability of any kind and character which might be asserted on behalf of myself or applicant against said released parties. Furthermore, in the event of an accident if the said staff or representatives are unable to contact the parent(s) or guardian(s), we hereby grant permission to said staff or representatives to administer necessary first aid, and/or take applicant to the nearest medical facility for additional treatment.

Multi-Media Release

OPC Recreation Ministry offers a video of photos from the season for your enjoyment. By signing your child up to participate in this sport you agree to give Oak Part Church permission to use these photos in publications, advertisements or video records approved by Oak Park Church as related to the recreational activity. This acknowledges that your child's picture might be used in these publications. Please understand that with the number of children playing in our league and parents taking photos, it is nearly impossible to prevent photos from being taken of your child.

Parking and SECURITY:

You are advised to please park in the paved parking lot. ALWAYS watch for others crossing the road from one parking lot to the next. Children have been known to “dart” across – please be careful!

PLEASE SEE THAT ALL TRASH IS PUT INTO A RECEPTACLE!

DO NOT LEAVE ANY VALUABLES IN YOUR VEHICLES!!! Church parking lots are assumed to be “trusted” area, and this is taken for granted. Please do not leave your valuables in sight!!

Inclement Weather Policy Regarding Outside Play

The Recreation Ministry will monitor conditions daily. Decisions on canceling practice or games **will not be made, in most cases, until practice or game time.** Games and Practice will be

cancelled if the Recreation Ministry feels it would be unsafe to play. **Definition of Unsafe:** lightning, thunder, torrential downpours, strong winds, extreme heat or cold temperatures, or high percentage of predicted weather of this nature. Outdoor sport practices and games may be played in the rain!! Coaches or referees may STOP a game or practice if the weather conditions warrant. Parents and coaches should be prepared with appropriate rain wear. We will notify coaches and coaches should notify the team parents. We will post any changes on Facebook and Instagram as well. Parents are encouraged to follow these social media platforms for instant information. If you have not heard from your coach, you should assume practice or game is being held. The main thing we emphasize to all parents is *it is ultimately the parent's decision to come to a practice or game during inclement weather.*

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no make-up practices or make-up games for WEATHER-RELATED issues.

This is so that we can keep our format of teaching skills through repetitive drills, in-depth coaching, including one-on-one coaching as needed, during practice times because this is the time when players learn the most.

Indoor practices may be canceled due to dangerous traveling conditions with weather such as tropical storms/hurricanes, tornado warnings, hail, etc.

OPC-Sports Emergency Plan:

Lightning Disturbances:

- Except in the case of a local storm emergency, lightning emergencies will only affect outdoor sports.
- Staff should be assigned to monitor weather conditions prior to the event.
- A 30 second or less “flash to bang” count calls for the removal of people from the playing fields to appropriate shelter.
- Once play has been suspended, 30 minutes must expire after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming play.

National Federation of State High School Associations

Communicable Disease and Skin Infection Procedures:

- While the risk for blood-borne infectious diseases and skin infections remains low in sports, proper precautions are needed to reduce the risk of spreading the condition to others.
- Proper hygiene is expected for all players, coaches, and associated personnel.

- Any known illness or condition that may be considered infectious should be evaluated by a physician before the participant comes to the event.
- OPC-Sports personnel reserve the right and responsibility to refer any participant for medical evaluation before allowing their participation.
- Wounds that are bleeding must be covered and blood-soaked clothing must be changed before the participant is allowed re-enter the game.
- Caregivers are encouraged to wear protective gloves to treat wounds.
- All contaminated surfaces must be cleaned with disinfectants before being used again.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin should be reported to the coach and league director as soon as possible.

Emergency Procedures:

There should be no Recreation Ministry sanctioned sports activities without Oak Park personnel on campus and available in case of an emergency.

- OPC-Sports/Recreation Ministry personnel should have thorough knowledge of first aid resources and procedures.
- When an injury occurs, or a child/adult shows symptoms of a medical condition that may require attention, the coach must be notified at once. The coach will then notify Oak Park Recreation Ministry staff and report the condition.
- Parents and family members will be the first resource if a child or adult needs transport to a medical facility or temporary care (ice bag on a knee, etc.)
- Injuries or symptoms that appear serious may require emergency medical personnel. 911 should be called as soon as that determination is made.

In the case of a potentially harmful situation on the field (angry fan, growling dog, etc.) children and adults will be moved away from the situation before or while OPC-Sports and/or Recreation Ministry officials deal with the situation. Any official may determine if emergency personnel are needed and call 911. Safety is our first concern.

SPECIFIC SPORT SEASON INFORMATION:

Please go to the sport's page by using the drop-down menu on the top right-hand of your screen.