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**NYSA FOOTBALL**

**PLAYING TIME POLICY**

Participation in practices is guaranteed to all players (at various levels, depending on the position). Playing time in games is NOT guaranteed and will not be equally divided among players on any team. There is no minimum play requirement.

* Player safety is our number one priority. It is the number one factor in every decision made by the coaches, including playing time.
* Football requires mental durability and rigorous physical preparation. Players depend on other players to do their job on the field. This means that practices are extremely important, and the coaches will be tough on the players to have them prepared for game time.
* Coaches may have the same players for both defense & offense. While coaches would ideally like to have their 11 best offensive players and their 11 best defensive players add up to 22 individual players, this is very seldom the case. Some players are going to be more advanced than others on both Offense and Defense. Coaches will always field their best 11 to start each game.
* While the Head Coach is the last word on game day concerning any playing time decision, all coaches are involved in selecting starters and making substitutions for their given area of coaching responsibility.

**General Playing Time Expectations:**

* ***5/6U Team:***

For this age group, the measuring of team success, the score, and the player experience are all equally important. Coaches, regardless of the score, are to make playing time as equal as possible.

* **7U & 8U Teams:**

Starting at these age groups, the success of the team on the game field is factored into the playing time decisions made by the coach. Coaches are very mindful of playing time and do their best to ensure that every player takes the field for every game. In other words, the team is there to win and hopefully at the same time give every player some time on the field.

* **9U & 10U Teams:**

For these 2 age groups, the success of the team on the game field is a key factor in determining which players are on the field. The team is there to win a football game. Starting at this age, there will be games with very close scores where some may not play.

* **11U, 12U, 14U Teams:**

For older age groups, the game of football is totally different than the younger age divisions. The game is faster, the hits are harder, and players are physically challenged each time they put on their pads. On the 1st day of practice, many players who walk onto the practice field will have spent months before the season working to prepare themselves both mentally and physically to compete. Additionally, many players may have years of experience playing football and most likely on the same team. They are familiar with the offense and defense schemes of the team. These are typically the players who will get the most playing time. As the season progresses, other players may start to play at a level that enables them to “take” a more prominent role on the team.

They want to win and will try to win. Playing time is only guaranteed to those who are selected by the coaches to be starters on the Offense, Defense or Special Teams.

**Playing time and Parental Code of Conduct:**

Parent rights come with certain guidelines and a Parent Code of Conduct (Please see attached Parent Code of Conduct) that you must follow:

**Parents, conduct yourself with dignity.** You are required to act like an adult. You will not win any arguments with disorderly behavior and there will be consequences. You will be asked to leave and will not be able to come back.

For issues with playing time, encourage your player to speak directly to their coach and ask what they need to do to earn a starting position and/or get more playing time.

Never attempt to talk to a coach on game day, especially during or immediately after a game if you are upset or have questions about playing time or any event in a game. **There is a 24-hour mandatory cooling off period.** If after 24 hours, you feel you have a legitimate grievance or just want to talk to the coach about your player’s situation, contact your coach or whomever your coach has designated for you to initially contact- team mom, assistant coach, etc. Please keep in mind that we should always show respect towards one another when dealing with conflicts at any level.

**Please remember that the NYSA is a volunteer-ran organization, and our coaches give their time to help deliver a great experience to the youth in our community.**