



Character Development:

Youth football coaches (& parents) have a great opportunity to influence the character development of our players and the likelihood of them wanting to continue playing in future seasons. The influence we have on players is the most important part of coaching youth football. Below are some good suggestions that may be of help:

Get more Information – The Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) is an organization which has great information on the proper role coaches should play. Check out their website: www.positivecoach.org. USA Football also has good material on this topic. A great book for coaches is “Season of Life” by Jeffrey Marx about NFL all pro Joe Ehrmann’s approach to youth coaching and “Our Boys” by Joe Drape.

Attend NYO Functions with Outside Speakers – Jim Easterling has been a very successful NYO coach and is a member of the Football Committee. Jim’s focus is helping coaches integrate character lessons as part of the instruction of their teams. Jim will also arrange for outside speakers to address individual teams. Each season Jim coordinates having one or more outside speakers will address parents, players and coaches. Please have your child attend!

Drafting of Players: Players are assigned to teams by means of a draft which is attended only by coaches. The following sections explain the draft process:

Which players are eligible?

To be eligible for the draft, players must have registered and been accepted by NYO and then must have attended Training Camp and Tryouts. If a player cannot attend Training Camp and /or Tryouts, that player must request permission of the League Director to be eligible for the draft and for subsequent participation. If such permission is granted by NYO for a player to miss Tryouts, those players must at a minimum attend a make-up tryout NYO on **August 12, 2017** at 10:00 during which players will be weighed, timed and made available for all coaches of that league to meet.

- In the Bigs, which is for players in the 6th and 7th grades, only the son of the head coach can be protected during the draft. If the head coach does not have a son, then that team will have no protected players.
- In the leagues involving players in the 2nd through 5th grades the son(s) of the head coach and the son of one assistant coach may be protected during the draft.

Additional Rules Concerning Protected Players:

- Experienced NYO football coaches, meaning those that have coached in the program for multiple years, will not be permitted to protect the son of a new assistant coach if that player is slotted in the top three rounds of the draft.
- Even coaches who have not coached NYO football for multiple years will be discouraged from protecting more than one player slotted in the top two rounds. Such protection may be disallowed by the League Director. Where such protection is permitted, the League Director will implement appropriate remedial measures to promote competitive balance. As an example, teams that have in rare occasions been permitted to protect two players in the first round have typically not selected another player until the 5th round or later. League Directors will determine the draft order of teams with any players slotted in the first two rounds. The draft order of the remaining teams will be determined by pulling names from a hat.
- In order for any player to be “protected,” that player’s father must attend and actively coach as much as any other coach on that team. There have been periodic situations in the past where a player is protected and the player’s father ends up not being an active coach. If a protected player is drafted by a team and the father is determined not to be actively coaching as much as any other coach associated with that team, the team will be barred from participating in the playoffs.
- The ranking of protected players by each team will continue to be used as one item of information by each League Director in the slotting process. Prior to the draft, the rankings will be shared with all teams.
- In all matters with respect to the draft and protected players, the League Director will have absolute authority to make any decisions, within his sole discretion, to promote competitive balance within the league.

How are Protected Players Drafted?

By **July 31st**, each team should notify its League Director which player(s) on its team will be protected. Immediately after tryouts, NYO will obtain comments from all coaches in the league regarding the sons of coaches who will be protected and slotted during the draft. Based on those comments and other factors, including but not limited to age, size, speed, experience and position, the League Director will assign (“slot”) those players in the respective round of the draft as determined in his discretion. The protected players will then be drafted in the assigned round. The assigning of players will be determined before the draft, and all coaches will be advised. This will be handled in the fairest possible manner; however, the decisions of the League Director are final. The League Director may also assign the specific order of the draft for certain teams. If a team has two protected players assigned in the first round, the League Director will establish appropriate remedial measures such as, but not limited to, prohibiting that team from making another selection until at least the fifth round or later.

Who can Attend the Draft?

Only the head coach and one assistant coach for each team can attend the draft. If an assistant coach has a son in the draft, who has not been assigned a draft round in advance, that assistant will not be allowed in the room until after his son is drafted.

Equipment provided by Parents: (Not applicable to Flag football)

Players must wear: molded rubber cleats, a high-quality helmet, mouth piece, shoulder pads, mesh practice jersey and white football pants with leg & hip pads. Arm pads, hand pads, towels and eye shields are optional. If worn, eye shields must be clear and towels must be small and white. Supplementary head gear provided by companies such as Guardian and Protech may be worn in practice but are not permitted during games. NYO has an “Equipment Day” at which quality equipment can be purchased and fitted. The date for the function this season will be Saturday, July 29, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in the NYO gym. Parents should purchase equipment only from sources that can properly fit equipment on players. This is particularly important for helmets and shoulder pads.

Equipment provided by NYO or Team: (Not applicable to Flag football)

NYO provides jerseys; all other equipment is provided by the player. Most teams have their players wear these jerseys at practices as well as the games. Coaches should distribute a jersey to each player at the beginning of the season, and once games start players are prohibited from rotating jerseys during the season. Due to the similarity in jersey colors between teams the league may provide for certain games generic jerseys to provide more color contrast. NYO will issue to each team two balls and a kicking tee.

Uniform Limitations - NYO limits supplemental uniform items regardless of whether the items are paid for by coaches or parents. Therefore, each team is allowed, but not required, to supplement the NYO supplied jersey with only the three items noted below. (The purchase of practice jerseys or colored pants by the team is not permitted). **Pants must be white.** No additional uniform related items will be permitted:

1. Helmet painting & decals – Helmets may **NOT** be disassembled during the painting process
2. Socks – Matching socks
3. Scrimmage vests / jerseys – generic, sleeveless pullovers to be worn over jerseys for distinguishing offensive and defensive teams during practices and scrimmages, OR generic unmarked mesh jerseys with a cost not to exceed \$10.

Filming/Videotaping: (Not applicable to Flag football)

NYO discourages videotaping the games of opposing teams. NYO prefers the use of video, if used at all, solely be of your own team as a teaching aid. Videotaping the practices of opposing teams is prohibited. The firm that provides video services at NYO is HiFive Productions. The contact person is Sherilyn Fivash, who can be reached 404-723-5923 and hifiveproduction@aol.com.

Footballs:

Two balls and a kicking tee are provided to each head coach at the beginning of the season. Most coaches find it is helpful to get a couple more balls for use during the season. In terms of the size of the balls used during NYO games, the Mighty Might Flag, 2nd grade and 3rd grade leagues use a “PeeWee” size ball. The 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th grade leagues use a “Junior” sized ball. During games, it is permissible for teams to alternate either rubber or leather balls while they are on offense provided they are the correct size.

Game Schedules:

Mighty Might flag games are scheduled for Fridays and Saturdays. Games for the older age groups are primarily scheduled during week day evenings; there will be some games played on Saturdays. The regular season will run through early November followed by playoff games. Game schedules will be announced once the final number of teams is determined. All schedules and scores will be available through the NYO website, www.nyosports.com.

Game Schedule Changes:

Changing game times should be avoided if possible. If a team must change the time for one of its games, the head coach of the team needing the change should contact the League Director or Commissioner about available times at which time the game can be rescheduled. Excluding Mighty Mights, make up games are normally scheduled on Saturdays. The coach needing the change should contact the opposing coach to attempt to work out a new game time. In this situation, the opposing coach is encouraged to cooperate with the rescheduling request but is not required to do so. In the event that a game is cancelled due to bad weather, both coaches should follow this same procedure. Once a new game time is scheduled be sure parents are notified.

Goals for NYO Football:

There are three primary objectives of the NYO football program:

1. Teach sound fundamental football skills.
2. Encourage as many young players as possible to continue playing football in later years.
3. Use football as means for teaching character lessons as mentioned on above.

To accomplish these objectives the program relies upon volunteers who are good coaches and more importantly fine men to lead impressionable players.

Injuries/HEADS UP/Player Safety:

Player safety is a top priority for parents and coaches. NYO is a member of USA Football and subscribes to its Heads Up program which is designed to enhance player safety. Important points of emphasis within the program include: Awareness of Concussion symptoms by coaches and parents, removing from play any player suspected of having a concussion, use of high quality, properly fitted equipment (particularly helmets and mouth pieces), instruction of Heads Up tackling techniques by coaches, understanding of heat illnesses by coaches and parents, and understanding of proper diet and hydration by coaches, parents and players. Parents and coaches are encouraged to attend the Fall Sports seminar at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and the Parent Meeting for NYO Football on August 12, 2017 in the NYO gym. Some of this material will be summarized at the Parents Meeting on August 12th. Coaches and parents should keep a cell phone with them on the fields. In the event there is any concern about a serious injury, call 911 immediately and do not move the player. While there are often physicians at the Park that can assist, don't waste time attempting to locate them; call 911 first. Emergency services will arrive at the entrance to NYO close to the gym so have someone near that area to direct the EMT unit to the player's location. If a player on your team is injured to the extent he will miss one or more games please notify your League Director. Coaches and parents will be provided with information concerning concussions, hydration, heat illnesses and general injuries. Be familiar with this information. IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT ABOUT WHETHER A PLAYER HAS INCURRED A CONCUSSION HE SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM PLAY. NYO suggests downloading [USA Football's Heads Up](#) and [CoachSmart](#) apps to your smart phone. Coaches and parents must be vigilant about recognizing concussion symptoms. Children's Healthcare of Atlanta offers the following hotline that you can call if you have questions about concussions including whether it's appropriate to take a player to the hospital. Keep this hotline # in your phone: CONCUSSION HOT LINE - 404-785-5437.

Learning to Coach at NYO:

Regardless of your background in football, there is a steep learning curve to be an effective coach at NYO. The challenge for new coaches is teaching what they may already know about football in context with players of these ages. Please take this learning process seriously. New coaches should get help by the following means:

- USA Football – NYO is a member of USA Football which provides substantial education for coaches. All NYO head coaches and assistant coaches must be certified through USA Football.
- Mentor Coaches –New coaches will be assigned a mentor coach who has experience in coaching at NYO. New coaches must communicate and rely on the advice of these guys to help understand what is necessary in order to have a successful draft, well organized practices, and appropriate communications with parents.
- Coaches Clinic(s) – All new coaches (head coaches and assistants) are required to attend a clinic(s) lead by several experienced NYO coaches and a master trainer from USA Football.
- Coaches Committee – New head coaches should be assigned and experienced coach who can assist with reducing the learning curve during the first couple of seasons as a head coach.
- Football Committee – In addition to each league’s director, there are several members of the Football Committee who have coached at NYO for several years and want to help new coaches.

Grade Based Leagues – Beginning with the 2017 season, players will be divided between leagues based on school grade rather than age. Complementing the grade based division of players will be a maximum age for each league.

League	Comments and cut off dates
Flag football	This league will be for players in kindergarten and first grade. Players who turn 7 prior to March 1 will be required to play in the 2 nd grade league.
2 nd Grade league	Players who turn 8 prior to March 1 st shall be required to play in the 3 rd grade league.
3 rd grade league	Players who have not turned 8 by September 1 st shall be permitted to participate in the 2 nd grade league upon request to NYO. Players who turn 9 prior to March 1 st shall be required to play in the 4 th grade league.
4 th grade league	Players who have not turned 9 by September 1 st shall be permitted to participate in the 3 rd grade league upon request to NYO. Players who turn 10 prior to March 1 st shall be required to play in the 5 th grade league.
5 th grade league	Players who have not turned 10 by September 1 st shall be permitted to participate in the 4 th grade league upon request to NYO. Players who turn 11 prior to March 1 st shall be required to play in the 6 th grade league.
Bigs (for players in the 6 th and 7 th grades)	Players who have not turned 11 by September 1 st shall be permitted to participate in the 5 th grade league upon request to NYO. Players who turn 13 prior to September 1 st shall not be permitted to participate.

Playing in a Younger or Older League:

NYO does not permit players to participate in a younger age group. NYO recognizes that there are a few players for whom such an arrangement might be beneficial. However, implementing the “play down” concept across a large league has been problematic. For players wanting to participate in an older league should submit that request to Football@NYOsports.com.

Playoffs:

Upon completion of the regular season, all teams will qualify for the playoffs. Based on regular season records, league directors will seed the teams and announce the playoff brackets.

Practice Schedule, Time and Frequency:

A schedule will be distributed to coaches during the summer that will describe when each team can practice at NYO’s Chastain fields vs. offsite fields. Teams will still have latitude as to which days they can practice but location (either at Chastain or an off-site field) will vary based on the Practice Schedule. Practices can begin the day following the draft. Each League Director will establish the schedule prior to the commencement of practices. During the pre-season (before September 7th), Bigs and Littles can have four practices a week and Pee Wees can have three practices a week. Beginning September 7th, teams in all leagues can have no more than two practices a week. The week will run from Sunday through Saturday. Practices cannot be "saved" in one week for later use. The schedule for practices will be decided upon by the head coach and communicated to parents.

Volunteers are Needed:

Coaches are the back bone of the football program, but many more volunteers are needed to support the NYO football organization. There are lots of opportunities. Volunteer roles include: assisting at tryouts, being a team mom, working the chains during the game, or being score board operator during games. In addition, we need a few individuals who might be interested in writing short articles and or taking photos for the NYO website.

Weather

As quickly as possible, announcements of game cancellations and field closings will be posted on the NYO website, and notifications will be distributed to coaches and parents by email. Sometimes NYO will close the fields, even if rain & lightning have passed, in order to avoid damage to the turf. If bad weather develops closer to game time, officials will determine whether or not games can be played. At all times parents and coaches need to use good judgment about bad weather concerning player safety and for not damaging wet fields. NYO is equipped with a lightening detection system situated above the press box overlooking the Bronco baseball field. If this horn goes off with a single loud blast, leave the fields quickly. Dugouts and pavilions are NOT safe options. If the yellow light is spinning on top detection system that means the all clear has not sounded and all fields are closed. The system will provide three short blasts when it is safe to return to the fields. In the event bad weather delays the kick off of a game which is followed by later game(s). Officials will delay the start of the first game for no more than 45 minutes after which time the first game will be cancelled and later rescheduled.