



COACHING POLICY

The actions of all WYLA coaches are to be consistent with the guiding principle of developing all of our athletes according to both the WYLA Mission Statement and the Town of Waterford Co-Sponsored Organization Guidelines.

MISSION STATEMENT: *WYLA is committed to providing a high-quality lacrosse experience where equitable treatment of players and fundamental skill development take priority over winning, and where every player feels like an important part of the team, learns life lessons of value beyond the field, and improves in the fundamental skills of lacrosse.*

COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Setting the proper tone:** Coaches will both teach and model good sportsmanship and respect for rules of the game, opponents, officials, teammates, and themselves among WYLA members and fans.

- **Equal playing time:** For all age groups, playing time will be distributed evenly and fairly among all players, regardless of their lacrosse abilities.
 - Playing time will not be reduced due to absence. Frequent absences can and should be discussed with the parents and the player and can impact playing time.
 - When isolated situations arise where the coach is considering playing a member less time (e.g. health or safety concerns), the coach should discuss the option with the parents and the player to ensure they are in agreement. If the coach needs support or advice s/he can reach out to the WYLA Coaching Chair, a Board member or the Board of Directors to seek guidance and support.

- **Field Positions:** In order to develop, players will be rotated to play all field positions regularly. This is consistent with WYLA's philosophy of developing solid, fundamental lacrosse skills in all players.
 - U15 players may have a preference for certain positions. They can be allowed to play in that position more often as long as allowing it does not interfere with providing other players reasonable opportunities to play that position as well.
 - Playing all field positions benefits members by:
 - 1) helping them overcome fear they may have about being unable to play a particular position;
 - 2) improving their overall understanding of the game, especially the valuable contributions made by all positions.
 - Players should be encouraged to try playing goal keeper but not be compelled to play it.

- **Games:**
 - Only the head coach may communicate with the referees.
 - No more than four coaches are allowed on the sideline.
 - Coaches should try to avoid yelling commands from the sidelines. Players find this confusing and distracting. Constructive feedback can be provided to players when they come off the field.
 - Players will be discouraged from complaining about opponents or referees. If the players are agitated, a coach will help settle them down by reassuring them and reminding them to focus on their own play, not their opponents'.
 - If a player is exhibiting poor sportsmanship, on or off the field, the coach should address the behavior with the player. If it continues, the coach should sit the player for the remainder of the game.
 - When a concern about safety arises:
 - 1) The head coach will call a time out.
 - 2) The head coach will meet with the referees and opposing coach.
 - 3) If the perceived safety concerns are not addressed, and the coach continues to be concerned about player safety, s/he is encouraged to end the game and leave the field with his or her team.
 - 4) Efforts should be made to demonstrate good sportsmanship (e.g. allow the players to shake hands before leaving) and try to leave the game on a positive note.
 - 5) The head coach will explain what occurred to the WYLA President, Coaching Coordinator, or other Board designee as soon as is practical.
- **Practices:**
 - Coaches will communicate with team members' families as much as possible, especially regarding changes in schedules.
 - Practice plans dramatically improve the quality of a practice and should be utilized regularly.
 - WYLA recommends incorporating conditioning into drills.
 - Drills should include opportunities for players to use both hands.
 - Practice is a good opportunity to execute the PCA skill "filling the emotional bucket". Coaches can refer to the PCA website for examples of how to accomplish this.

COACHING DESIGNATIONS:

Recruitment and designation

- The WYLA Board of Directors will solicit and accept names of candidates for coaching positions.
- The Coaching Chair, or another Board designee, will meet with prospective coaches and may contact references.
- The Coaching Chair will make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding which applicants should serve as head coach, assistant coach, and when a candidate is not recommended for appointment.

Training and Certification

- Prior to working with athletes, all coaches (head coaches and assistants), must complete the following:
 1. US Lacrosse membership
 2. Criminal background check
 3. Positive Coaching Alliance online course: *Double-Goal Coach: Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons*.
 4. US Lacrosse online course: *Level 1 Men's/Women's*
- Valid US Lacrosse Coaching certification is **required** for head coaches in order to serve a second or subsequent season, unless the Board of Directors grants an extension.
- WYLA actively supports the development of its coaches. When approved in advance by the Board of Directors, WYLA will pay US Lacrosse membership, certification course fees, or other programs related to coaching education and development.
- WYLA will offer workshops and ongoing support to coaches as identified by the Board of Directors or requested by coaches.
- In accordance with Waterford's Co-Sponsored Organization Guidelines, WYLA will conduct evaluations of each coach. This will include feedback from players and their families.

Removal of a Coach

- The WYLA Board of Directors can remove a coach when it believes a coach's actions are in conflict with WYLA's Mission Statement or are otherwise not in the best interest of WYLA's players.
- Any Board member can temporarily remove a coach immediately, from a game or practice, if the Board member believes it is warranted under this policy. That Board member will notify the President and Coaching Coordinator as soon as possible of the reasons for the removal.
- The Board of Directors will determine when a coach is to be removed from the position permanently.