Dear Parents / Coaches/Volunteers:

I want to take this opportunity to put into writing our coaching philosophy and goals for your child and the 2014 CWJRD football season. Youth sports can be an exciting and fun opportunity for a child to learn new skills, make new friends, and have fun. As fun as it can be for your child, different expectations from the coaches, parent(s), and players can take away from that positive experience in a number of ways. As you read through this letter please make sure that our philosophy fits with your expectations of what you want for your child and how our program is run. If not, this is your opportunity to let us know and ask questions.

CWJRD youth football will be entering its third year with the MSL (Mid-State League). We were unanimously voted in a few years ago and have had two successful years with the league. Let us continue this effort by having a great 2014 football Season.

New head coaches entering the program will be required to attend at least one (1) coach’s clinic hosted by a sanctioned member of the OHSAA or NCAA. As always, all coaches are encouraged to attend continued education football clinics, programs and functions.

This year the football commissioners, the CWJRD board, and Director Val Webster will continue to work closely with the high school football program and Varsity Head Football Coach Phil Mauro in an effort to further develop and improve our youth program.

Also this year, in an effort to increase awareness of sports related concussions, all commissioners, directors, coaches and program officials involved in youth sports will be required to take concussion training and must be validated via a testing process. All youth athletes, 10 years of age and older before July 1, 2014, will be required (mandatory) to be baseline tested. Specific guidelines have been developed that address the testing process and the return to play requirements. Informative materials will be made available.

The MSL league rules, by-laws, and more specific details concerning the 2014 football season will be updated and posted on the CWJRD website in the coming months. In the mean time, please take a moment to review our program philosophies, objectives and expectations.

Coaching Philosophy
• We believe that kids gain confidence and a love for the game through positive feedback from parents, coaches, and other players. Skill level develops at different rates for kids, but effort and having fun can always be achieved. We will try to always provide positive feedback for effort.
• We think it’s important that a coach takes more than a casual interest in the players. We strive to talk with all the players 1 on 1 at some point during the practices and games. We may not be successful getting to every player each day, but want them to know that we’re interested in what they have to say and more importantly, want them to know that their coaches/commissioners/directors like them as a person.
• We believe in trying to make practices as fun and entertaining for the kids as possible, while at the same time providing them with the necessary instruction to improve. We’ve found that kids expect and respond well to structured and organized practices. Attention span is often limited with this age group, so we will strive to keep them moving and active.
• Teamwork and developing friendships is an important part of any team sport. We always try to tell the kids how important it is for them to support each other and to always be positive towards their teammates.
• Competition is an important element of any sport and as kids grow they naturally become more competitive. We don’t talk to the kids about “needing to win a game” or “how important it is that we win”. We feel that our role and that of the parents is helping the kids develop the ability to deal with competition in a healthy way. Effort and attitude are the primary focus. If we can achieve that, then chances are we'll win a number of games that we are capable of winning.

We will work on teaching the basic fundamentals and skills during practice, but believe that game time is their time. We will give instruction during the game if we feel it will help with their performance during the game, but in general we try to let them enjoy the game. We don't think any of the kids want to be told what they did wrong during the game. It is our hope as parents you will do the same. At this age, missed opportunities can ruin the game of football for some kids. If your child misses a block or tackle, tell them how proud you were of the effort they made to get in front of it. Strive to make them feel good about their contribution. Our goal is to have every child feel that they played a great game that day.
Objectives
With this age group, we have 5 primary coaching objectives which are equally important.
   1. Help them develop skills necessary to be successful and to prepare them for next season.
   2. To have fun and have the kids develop a love for the game.
   3. Learn about the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
   4. Give positive reinforcement based on effort rather than results.
   5. Provide a safe and healthy environment for all the kids on the team.

Player Expectations
1. Always convey positive attitude & willingness to learn. Giving your best effort is all that is needed.
2. Players ALWAYS show respect for the coaches, parents, and other players on the team.
3. Avoid constantly requesting to play a specific position or refusing to play a position the coach(s) request of you. *(Not everyone can be the quarterback).* Know that each position is equally important to a team’s success.
4. Spend time outside of practice perfecting what you have learned. Effort and drive are always appreciated.
5. Have fun (smile & laugh).

Always give 100%
E @ Elevate - Take your game to the next level.
F @ Focus - listen and learn.
F @ Fun - remember it’s a game and always have fun.
O @ Ownership - responsible for your actions on & off the court
R@Respect@ - sportsmanship. Respect your coaches, teammates and opponent.
T @Teamwork - working together.

Parent Expectations
1) Please try to get your child to practice and games on time. Understandably, this can be difficult at times and impossible at other times, but it’s really hard to conduct practice or get ready for a game when players continually show up late or not at all. It is equally unfair to the rest of the team whom depend on a specific number of teammates needed to compete. If you know your child will be late or won’t be able to make it to a practice or game, please let your coaching staff know in advance if possible.
2) Help out with team volunteer opportunities. We have a number of items that require parent help.
3) Get involved in playing ball with your child. This may be helping out with practice or playing catch in the yard on days we don’t practice. Kids love it when their parents get involved. Repetition is also crucial for skill improvement. There simply isn’t enough organized practice time for the kids to become completely comfortable with everything that will be taught. Support the coaching effort by continuing to work at home on the skills and drills taught at practice. If you have questions on how to conduct a specific drill, please don’t hesitate to ask your coaching staff.
4) Please encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game and practice.
5) Please contact the commissioners directly if you have any issues or questions. Same holds true if your child isn’t happy about something. We want to know if there is a problem right away. With this age group, very small things can cause a child to be upset. These problems can be fixed very easily if we know about them and can address them quickly.
   *If during any practice or game you have a question/concern that does not sit right with you and has caused the slightest bit of agitation, we *WANT* to hear about. Discretely approach the head coach, directors, or the commissioners at any time *AWAY* from the team, other parents, and general fans. We hope the reasoning behind this is self-explanatory.*
6) Safety is a primary concern for us. Unfortunately, we can’t watch every child every second. If you see any situation that you believe is a safety concern, please step in and help. Make sure you follow up with your head coach, directors or the commissioners so that we know what has happened.
7) Please cheer for your child during games, but try to refrain from yelling instructions to them. Remember this is their opportunity to enjoy playing in the game. Much of the fun is lost if their Mom or Dad is always yelling instructions.

Thank you,

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CWJRD Football Commissioner

**CWJRD Website** [http://www.cwrecreation.com/](http://www.cwrecreation.com/)