



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YOUTH SPORTS GUIDEBOOK



SHIAWASSEE FAMILY YMCA
515 W. Main St.
Owosso, MI 48867
989.725.8136
www.shiawasseeymca.org

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Shiawassee Family YMCA Youth Sports Program. In this guide, you will find essential information including the philosophy of Y Youth Sports, details for most of the programs we offer and resources to help you and your child have a successful and enjoyable season.

Skill development is the main component of all YMCA youth sports and we work hard to provide a fun and friendly environment for all children.

YMCA youth sports are made possible by the dedication of our volunteer coaches. Our volunteers put in many hours of work to make the programs a success, investing their time and energy into the lives of young people in our community. If you are interested in future volunteer opportunities, please contact us.

We hope that you will take an active role in your child's experience this season. Please support your child by practicing with them at home and offering words of encouragement during games. Time spent with your child at home developing their skills builds confidence and strengthens parent-child relationships. You can also offer to help the volunteer coach by organizing a snack sheet, helping keep track of substitutions during games (this can be helpful as we strive to provide equal playing time for all but it can be difficult to manage when you are alone on the sidelines), and assisting with team communications.

Please read the information carefully and consult it regularly during the season. If you have questions or concerns you can reach the program staff by calling the YMCA at 989-725-8136. You can also email us at the addresses provided below.

Thank you for your participation!

Jen Lintner
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"All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them."
-Magic Johnson

****ALL INFORMATION IN THIS GUIDE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.****

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy for youth sports is simple: athletes first; winning second. Our goal is to develop kids' skills, fitness, and character - for today and for life. We ask that you make decisions based first on what is best for our young athletes. This does not mean that winning or striving to win is not important. We believe that winning should take a back seat to what is in the best interests of our participants, who are here to have fun and build self-confidence.

YMCA SPORTS: 7 PILLARS

- 1. Everyone plays.** Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season, everyone receives equal practice time and coaches make every effort to play every child at least half of every game.
- 2. Safety first.** Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We've modified each sport to make it safer and more enjoyable to play. We make sure the equipment and facilities are safe, and constantly supervise the players, stopping any unsafe activities.
- 3. Fair play.** Fair play is about playing by the rules..and more. It is about coaches and players showing respect for all involved in Y Youth Sports. It is about coaches being role models of good sporting behavior and guiding their players to do the same.
- 4. Positive competition.** We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. This happens when adults make decisions that have the best interest of the players ahead of winning. Learning to compete is important for youngsters and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. Through Y Youth Sports, we want to help kids learn these lessons.
- 5. Family involvement.** Y Youth Sports encourages parents/guardians to be involved appropriately in their child's participation in our sports programs. In addition to parents/guardians being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child.
- 6. Sport for all.** Y Youth Sports is an inclusive sports program. We offer programs to all youngsters regardless of their race, gender, religious creed, or ability. We ask our adult leaders to encourage and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the kids and their parents to do the same.
- 7. Sport for fun.** Sports are naturally fun for most kids. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, playing with their friends and competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children's sporting activities they dominate the activities to the point that it destroys the children's enjoyment. If we take the fun out of sports for young athletes, we are in danger of the young athletes taking themselves out of sports, so let's keep it fun for the kids.

PARENT DUTIES

- Recognize that each child is unique in terms of personal development goals and do your best to help them be successful in their own way.
- Recognize that our coaches are volunteers, not paid trained coaches. They are doing their best to provide a fun experience for all children on their team.
- Help the coach work towards a positive, fun experience for every member of the team.
- Facilitate a season focused on sportsmanship and building self-confidence in every child.
- Teach your child to win and lose graciously and that the scoreboard is not as important as the way they carry themselves.
- Set an example of good sportsmanship, motivation, and positive energy.
- Offer to help your coach in any way you are able - bring a snack, organize a snack list, help corral kids after a water break, run a drill, send a reminder, etc.
- Encourage your child to do some practice at home.
- Attend the Parent Meeting
- Notify your coach if your child is unable to attend a practice or game.
- Make sure your coach has all necessary info about your child. This includes any issues that may arise during practice or a game, such as medical, developmental or mental health challenges.
- Bring your child ready for practice or the game. They should be wearing the appropriate shoes and equipment needed for their sport, as well as clothing that is easy to move in.
- Make every effort to be on time.
- Be a good communicator.

COACHES

All coaches at the YMCA participate on a volunteer basis. They are required to complete volunteer training, attend a coach's meeting and are subject to a criminal background check. We take your children's safety very seriously and take steps to ensure that our youth sports programs provide a safe environment.

We are always looking for additional coaches. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a coach for the YMCA, please contact one of the following:

Kollin Lienau, 989-725-8136, klienau@shiawasseeymca.org

Tara Hermes, 989-725-8136, thermes@shiawasseeymca.org

CANCELLATIONS

Sometimes it is necessary for practices/games to be canceled due to weather. Coaches can make the decision to cancel practices due to inclement weather but only the Program Staff can make the decision to cancel games and will make every attempt to do so in a timely fashion.

If a coach cancels practice, they should notify their team immediately and notify the YMCA. They can call the front desk at 989-725-8136 to give us this information. If the Program Staff cancels games, they will post something on Facebook, let the YMCA front desk staff know, and notify coaches who should then let their teams know.

We cannot guarantee that games will be made up if they get canceled. While we make every effort to do so, occasionally the weather, holidays, or other events outside of our control prevent this from happening.

CREDIT/REFUND POLICY

- Program refunds will be given for medically verified reasons only. A refund check will be available for 10-14 days after the request is submitted.
- Requests due to change in personal circumstances will receive a credit toward future YMCA programs if the request is made prior to the first game/class. The credit will be for the amount paid less a \$15 processing fee and any other costs associated with the program start-up (uniform, individualized equipment, etc. that was purchased by the YMCA in advance for your participation.)
- Participants wishing to withdraw from the program after the first game/class will not be issued a program credit or refund.
- Program credit/refunds will not be given for cancellations due to weather; these programs may not be rescheduled.

***It is the responsibility of the parent to write down the day and time of the program when they register and to remember that information. The YMCA will not be responsible for sending reminders to participants.**

YMCA CORE VALUES

Caring: Listen and treat all players equally.

Honesty: Make the right call, even when the cost is high.

Respect: Treat players, opponents, officials, and parents as you wish to be treated. Put-downs, name calling and yelling set a bad example.

Responsibility: Know the important principles of the sport. Strive to improve your own performance as a coach, official or spectator.

CODES OF CONDUCT

We expect every Parent, Player and Coach to follow certain guidelines during the season. Those expectations are listed below. Failure to comply with our Code of Conduct may result in losing the privilege of attending YMCA youth sports events.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Parents serve as important role models to their children and all other children that they come into contact with during YMCA programs and at YMCA events. Therefore, Shiawassee Family YMCA expects each parent to agree to the following guidelines:

- Read the rules of the game as well as the objectives of the program.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of any referees or umpires overseeing games. Parents will refrain from challenging calls that have been made.
- Show appreciation of good play by both teams.
- Refrain from "coaching" on the sidelines. If parents wish to coach a team, they should contact the Y to volunteer.
- Cheer and show encouragement during games and refrain from making negative or abusive remarks about the opposing team, coach and parents.
- Follow the "24-Hour Rule" before contacting coaches after a game.
- Do not talk negatively about any players, parents, coaches, staff or volunteers.
- Report to the coach all injuries, special medical conditions (i.e. asthma) or extenuating circumstances (i.e. lack of sleep or family crisis) that may affect a player.
- Notify coaches if a player will be absent from a practice or game.
- Help enforce the Player Code of Conduct.

PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

Shiawassee Family YMCA is committed to the long-term development of young players, both as well-rounded athletes and as productive and respected members of society. We promote excellent sportsmanship with an overall attitude of community awareness and the desire to be a good citizen. Therefore, each player will be expected to follow the guidelines below:

- Players will not use profanity at any time, especially at games and practices.
- Players will show respect to the referees/officials overseeing any contest.
- Players will accept responsibility for all fouls issued and will positively acknowledge the referee's efforts after a game regardless of the outcome.
- Players will show respect to the other team's players. They will not taunt an opposing player or retaliate against an opponent for a previous foul. Players will shake hands with their opponents after each game.
- Players will accept victory and defeat with dignity.

- Players will show respect to their teammates, coaches, YMCA staff, and their parents.

COACH EXPECTATIONS

- Remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for them, not the adults.
- Learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- Be a positive role model and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- Do not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player or parent. Examples include booing, taunting, refusing to shake hands, using foul language or gestures.
- Do not encourage behavior or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes.
- Teach players to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Demand that players treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- Teach players that doing one's best is more important than winning. Players should never feel defeated by the outcome of the game or their performance.
- Praise players for competing fairly and trying hard.
- Never ridicule or yell at players for making a mistake.
- Emphasize skill development. Coaches will de-emphasize games and competition in lower age groups.
- Respect the officials and their authority during games. If there is a question, coaches will not confront officials during game play, rather they will wait until a timeout.
- Give all players a fair amount of playing time.
- Work hard at every practice to improve each player's skill.
- Contact Shiawassee Family YMCA as early as possible if they are unable to attend a practice or game.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

BASKETBALL

Winter: Practices begin the week the kids go back to school following the winter break. Games will either begin the first weekend after practices start or the second weekend.

**Dates are subject to change due to holidays/weather conditions/staffing/etc.*

Practices are one hour each week. Practice day/time is decided on by the coach. Games are typically on Saturdays although depending on the number of teams we may experiment with using other days for some games.

Team jerseys will be handed to the coach on the morning of the first game. We order jerseys based on what is available so no requests.

Practice and game location: Shiawassee Family YMCA

Pictures will be taken if we have a photographer available. If we are able to schedule pictures, coaches will be given a day/time and will share that information with the team. Everything will be handled by the photographer so all questions should be directed to them. Please do not call the YMCA with picture questions.

In a typical season, we will hand out medals (or another award) to the team that won the most games in the divisions made up of grade 4 and older. We do not typically hand out participation awards.

Requirements

- Tennis shoes are required
- Comfortable pants or shorts, a ball in the appropriate size (see below), and water bottle are all recommended.
- Children should NOT wear jewelry to practice or games. That includes earrings and bracelets. If your child has recently had their ears pierced and cannot remove the earrings yet, they need to have them covered by band-aids, tape or a headband wide enough to cover the entire lobe.
- Basketball shoes should be carried into the building and put on when you arrive. Wearing the shoes outside brings in water, mud, salt and other things that make for hazardous conditions for the players.

Equipment

- The Y provides balls, cones and pinnies.
- Equipment is stored in the gym closet. All items used for practice should be put back neatly when done.
- All small basketballs should be stored in the closet not left out in the gym for

everyday use.

- Game balls are only brought out on game days. They are not to be left in the gym or closet. Game balls will be stored in the program director's office.
- If you notice that basketballs are low on air, please take them to the front desk or borrow a ball pump from the desk.
- Sports equipment is very expensive and we require a lot of it. Please make sure that your team is taking care of the equipment they use and that everything gets put back properly.

Team Formation

At the YMCA, we believe that every child deserves to play in a fair and balanced environment. To provide such an environment, we try to make our teams as balanced as possible in terms of age and physical ability. We do not take requests to be placed with a specific coach or teammate. This is to ensure that the playing field remains as balanced as possible and that teams can be formed in a timely manner. The only exception to this is that coaches will always have their own child on their team.

Requests for accommodations due to schedule conflicts with practice day/times will be considered, but are not guaranteed.

FLAG FOOTBALL

Season varies. We plan to attempt a summer league in 2024.

Practices and games are typically combined for Flag Football. Because of this, plan on weekly meetings going a little longer than the typical one hour for other programs. If the program grows, we can take another look at how we set this up and change if necessary.

Practice/game location: First Church of Christ, 585 E. North St, Owosso.

Participants will be notified of any changes before the program begins. There may not be access to bathrooms so participants should plan accordingly.

We participate in the NFL Flag program and order jerseys through them. We select teams based on jersey availability so please do not request a certain team. Jerseys are handed out at the first meeting of the season. Each player is also given a belt. This belt should be worn to each practice/game so please do not forget it at home. Belts are very large and can be cut to better fit each child.

Pictures will be taken if we have a photographer available. If we are able to schedule pictures, coaches will be given a day/time and will share that information with the team. Everything will be handled by the photographer so all questions should be directed to them. Please do not call the YMCA with picture questions.

The program staff will make a decision each season on if there will be awards or not. As the program grows, this decision may change.

Requirements

- Mouth guard (children will not be allowed to participate without one)
- Tennis shoes
- Comfortable clothing and water are recommended
- Belt and jersey
- Children should NOT wear jewelry of any kind during practices or games.

Equipment

- We have a limited number of footballs but the coaches will bring everything to practices.
- If your child brings a football to practice, they should make sure it has their name on it and that they are okay with other children possibly using it. If it will be an issue, please leave it at home.
- Because we are using another facility for this program, we ask for help from parents and players to make sure that everything (including trash) gets picked up at the end of each day. We want to leave the area better than we found it so we can continue to be allowed use by this fantastic community partner. We appreciate your help picking up equipment at the end of practice and helping the coaches make sure things are taken care of.

Team Formation

At the YMCA, we believe that every child deserves to play in a fair and balanced environment. To provide such an environment, we try to make our teams as balanced as possible in terms of age and physical ability. We do not take requests to be placed with a specific coach or teammate. This is to ensure that the playing field remains as balanced as possible and that teams can be formed in a timely manner. The only exception to this is that coaches will always have their own child on their team.

Requests for accommodations due to schedule conflicts with practice day/times will be considered, but are not guaranteed.

GYMNASTICS

September-May

We offer three different gymnastics classes:

Bitty Bugs

Tumblebugs

Tumbleweeds

Our instructor is our only instructor. Occasionally things come up and class will be canceled. A makeup session is always offered when this happens. We will notify you of that day/time at the next class. Sometimes this requires us to reschedule the start date of our next session but we will always offer participants a full 6 classes.

Children should wear comfortable clothing and no jewelry.

Parents are expected to participate in Bitty Bugs. We ask that parents wait in the hall during the other classes. We have a Dutch door that is ideal for peeking in if you'd like but please understand that the instructor will have better luck with the entire group if parents are not in the room. Participants will show parents what they have learned periodically throughout the session.

ITTY BITTY SPORTS

This is an opportunity for ages 2-4 (depending on the program) to begin to experience following directions, making new friends, listening skills, playing with others, sharing, and more. We look forward to offering them a fun experience that may center around a certain sport. However, we do not expect them to be basketball or soccer stars by the time they are done. While our intention may be to practice some fundamentals, we realize that things can change quickly with this age group. If they aren't feeling an activity that we are doing, we may change things up and do something else. These programs are designed to be more playtime than getting them ready for a game.

If your child has any fears or difficulties participating, please let us know. We are happy to work with you to provide the best experience possible.

Many, but not all, of our Itty Bitty programs require parent participation.

JUDO

Year-round. Judo is a unique program because the participants build on everything they have learned in previous sessions. They will test for different belts when the instructors feel they are ready and may even attend competitions as they grow in the sport.

We are very lucky to have skilled black belts as our instructors. They are passionate about the sport and about sharing it with others. This program is for children and adults. Although the starting age is set at 8, we may consider younger children if they are mature enough. Please talk with our program staff or instructors if you want them to consider your younger child for class.

Requirements

- All judo participants must wear a gi. These can be purchased through us or on your own. Gi sizing is a bit unusual so please see us if you have any questions.
 - Participants will not wear shoes in the dojo.
-

NERF WARS

Year-round. Nerf Wars is a fun activity that we started in 2023. It is not a regular program but an event that we offer on a regular basis.

The majority of these events will be for grades K-6.

Every person that participates must have a signed Nerf waiver on file. If you drop your child off without signing the waiver, your child will not be allowed to participate. If you have already signed it once, you do not need to sign again.

We do not provide eye protection, but encourage you to bring your own if you have concerns.

K-6 Nerf Wars will be held using only dart blaster guns. We ask that you do not bring any of your ammo. That will be provided by the YMCA. All participants will need to bring their own guns, however. We do not have any on hand.

Nerf events are limited in space and typically held in the basketball gym. It is very loosely organized and we let the kids determine how each event will go. We typically provide some structured games and some time for free-for-all. Supervision is provided by YMCA staff. Parents are welcome to stay and watch from the bleachers or drop their kids off then return at the end of the event.

SOCCER

Fall Dates: Practices begin the week after Labor Day. Games begin the 2nd or 3rd Saturday in September

Spring Dates: Practices begin the first or second week of April. Games begin the 2nd or 3rd Saturday in April.

**Dates are subject to change due to holidays/weather conditions/staffing/etc.*

Practices are one hour each week. Practice day/time is decided on by the coach. Games are Saturday mornings and will last approximately 45 minutes-1 hour.

Team shirts will be handed to the coach on the morning of the first game.

Practice and game location: Hugh Parker Soccer Complex
1177 Farr St., Owosso

Pictures will be taken if we have a photographer available. If we are able to schedule pictures, coaches will be given a day/time and will share that information with the team. Everything will be handled by the photographer so all questions should be directed to them. Please do not call the YMCA with picture questions.

In a typical season, we will hand out medals (or another award) to the team that won the most games in the U9/U10 and U11/U12 divisions. We do not typically hand out participation awards.

Requirements

- Tennis shoes or cleats are required
- Shin guards are required - your child will not play without them
- Soccer socks, comfortable pants or shorts, a ball in the appropriate size (see below), and water bottle are all recommended.
- Shin guards should be worn under the soccer socks.

Equipment

- The Y provides balls, cones, pinnies and pug goals for teams to use during practices and games.
- Equipment is stored in the cage inside the building at the soccer field.
- Keys are handed out sparingly. We ask that coaches work together to keep the building open during practice/game times and closed/locked when not in use. You will either be given a key or told who will open the building each day.
- Sports equipment is very expensive and we require a lot of it. Please make sure that your team is taking care of the equipment they use and that everything gets put back properly.
- Ball Sizes - the size ball used in soccer depends on the size field that is used and the age of the child. If your team is playing on one of the smaller fields (#4, 5, 6, 7) they will use a size 3 ball. If your team plays on Field 2 or 3, they will use a size 4 ball.

Team Formation

At the YMCA, we believe that every child deserves to play in a fair and balanced environment. To provide such an environment, we try to make our teams as balanced as possible in terms of age and physical ability. Whenever possible, we try to form teams using the birth year chart put out by the MSYSA because that is how other soccer programs form teams. Because of this and time limitations, we do not take requests to be placed with a specific coach or teammate. This is to ensure that the playing field remains as balanced as possible and that teams can be formed in a

timely manner. The only exception to this is that coaches will always have their own child on their team.

Requests for accommodations due to schedule conflicts with practice day/times will be considered, but are not guaranteed.

VOLLEYBALL

Fall: Practices begin the week after fall soccer ends. Games will begin after the first or second practice. Our goal is to have 6 games during the season. **Dates are subject to change due to holidays/weather conditions/staffing/etc.*

Practices are one hour each week. Practice day/time is decided on by the coach. Games in the past have been on Saturday mornings. The game schedule will be determined by the holidays, number of teams and other programming.

Team jerseys will be handed to the coach on the morning of the first game. We order jerseys based on what is available so no requests.

Practice and game location: Shiawassee Family YMCA

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The program staff will make a decision each season on if there will be awards or not. As the program grows, this decision may change.

Requirements

- Tennis shoes are required.
- Knee pads are required.
- Comfortable pants or shorts and a water bottle are recommended.
- While a child does not need their own volleyball, it is nice at home for them to have something to practice with. Our participants (through grade 6) use a Volleyball Lite.
- Some players may want to try wide arm bands or wear long sleeves as they often experience some discomfort when getting used to hitting the ball repeatedly.
- Children should NOT wear jewelry to practice or games. That includes earrings and bracelets. If your child has recently had their ears pierced and cannot remove the earrings yet, they need to have them covered by band-aids, tape or a headband wide enough to cover the entire lobe.
- In the case of inclement weather, tennis shoes should be carried into the

building and put on when you arrive. Wearing the shoes outside brings in water, mud, salt and other things that make for hazardous conditions for the players.

Equipment

- The Y provides balls, cones and net.
- Equipment is stored in the gym closet. All items used for practice should be put back neatly when done.
- The YMCA staff always appreciates help setting up the net or taking it down.
- If you notice that basketballs are low on air, please take them to the front desk or borrow a ball pump from the desk.
- Sports equipment is very expensive and we require a lot of it. Please make sure that your team is taking care of the equipment they use and that everything gets put back properly.

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