

LEAGUE PURPOSE

THE ELEMENTARY BASKETBALL LEAGUE (EBL) IS A MINISTRY OF SAXE GOTHA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. THE EBL WILL BE FUN WHILE TEACHING CHILDREN, AGE 6 TO 11, BASIC FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIAN VALUES, THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BASKETBALL, GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP, AND THE VALUE OF TEAM COOPERATION.

SAXE GOTHA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EXPECTS THAT ALL PARENTS, COACHES, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS WILL CONDUCT THEMSELVES AS CHRISTIAN ROLE MODELS FOR OUR CHILDREN. WE EXPECT EVERYONE TO OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT AND PRaise TO ALL THE CHILDREN.

CONDUCT & ATTITUDES

¹The facts below are part of national surveys and shows what can happen when parents or coaches take the game too serious. Children, in general, just want to have fun. When a child does take the game too serious, it is often a reflection of a parent or coach. We want our parents and coaches to be responsible for keeping the FUN in the game.

- 75% of children have dropped out of organized sports by age 13.
- 69% of children indicated that they prefer a coach that **puts more priority on fun** than winning.
- 41% of children indicated that they've awakened in the middle of the night worrying about a game.
- 71% of children said it wouldn't matter if no score were kept in the game.
- 37% wished **no parents watched them play**.
- 74% of children said they had seen out-of-control adults at their games.

How do we do our part to keep the game FUN? The bottom line is to **love & praise every child unconditionally (see appendix A, 101 ways to praise children)**. As Jesus loves each of us unconditionally, He wants us, in return, to love everyone unconditionally.

Jesus tells us that the following commandments are the two most important: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."* The second is this: ***'Love your neighbor as yourself.'*** There is no commandment greater than these." **Mark 12:30-32.**

CODES OF CONDUCT AND LEAGUE PHILOSOPHIES

1. Stop! Think! Ask yourself, what would Jesus do?

2. Coaches & parents should never express a concern with a game score or team records because it sacrifices putting all the children first and doing the right thing. Right things to do include:
- a. Playing children equal amounts of time.
 - b. Praising all children (see appendix A, 101 ways to praise children) as often as possible.
 - c. Cheering for a child that scores his first basket...even if he is on the other team.
 - d. Teaching children to tell the other team "good job."

^{1 1} Sources Include: Sports Illustrated for Kids, August 2001. USA Today, September 1990. 1997 Sports Illustrated for Kids survey which confirmed these facts for a 3rd consecutive year. Study of Organized Youth Team Sports Participation in the U.S.

- e. Teaching children to always be polite and never fuss with another player or the referee.
 - f. Teaching children to help pick up a fallen player.
 - g. Teaching children to shake hands after a “hard” play.
 - h. Teaching children not to run down the court out of control.
3. If another coach or parent does it the “wrong way,” never utilize this as an excuse to do it the wrong way yourself. Two wrongs have never made a right. Just as wrong actions can become contagious, good and “right” actions are contagious. Let’s concentrate on getting everyone doing it the “right way.”
 4. Coaches and parents should never verbally question calls made or not made by the referees during a game. We want to teach our children that the referees deserve our respect of their decisions. As they are human, referees can, of course, make mistakes, but any verbal questioning has a negative impact on the game and the children. Issues concerning a referee’s judgment should never be approached. Issues concerning a rule interpretation or on-the-court conduct may be approached one-on-one with a league representative at an appropriate time.
 5. Coaches and parents should not verbally belittle or criticize players or coaches at any time. Coaching and parenting a child involves first and foremost **praise of the good things**, (secondly, constructive instruction of the right technique should be used with a calm voice to teach players).

LEAGUE AGE GROUPS

Leagues are formed based on the player’s age on September 1st. League A will consist of players age 6 & 7, league B of players ages 8 & 9, and league C of players ages 10 & 11. Players of extraordinary talent for their age are occasionally asked to move up one age group.

LEAGUE FEES

The 2009-2010 league fees are \$45 for the first child and \$40 for each additional sibling. Our league fees have been the lowest in this area for any youth basketball league. It is part of our mission to not let a league fee ever stand in the way of a child’s participation. This is why we have the **Moore-Sharpe scholarship program** that can be used to pay league fees for those who are having difficulties and are in need of financial assistance. If you feel that you are in need of financial assistance, please contact Ray Renner, Director of Recreation & Health, at 359-7770, ext. 20. All scholarship situations are confidential.

UNIFORMS

Game shirts are provided for all players and must be worn at all games. Parents are responsible for their player’s shorts, socks, and shoes. Please have your child wear a good quality basketball shoe with proper support. In addition, the league will sell black shorts with a white EBL logo on the leg. The EBL shorts are not mandatory, but it is suggested that each team decide on a consistent team color for shorts.

COACHES

Our coaches are carefully chosen & trained to fulfill the purpose of the league. We also adhere to a church policy called “Kids First” that sets specific guidelines for anyone working with children. This policy includes an extensive questionnaire and approval for background checks.

TEAM DISTRIBUTION AND EQUITY

There are a maximum of ten players per team. The equity of our teams is foremost in keeping the league fun for the children, and there are many factors considered when putting together teams. Player ratings and player height are the primary factors, and we strive to have teams that have near identical average player ratings, and near identical average player height. In doing this, we consider carpool requests and special circumstances, but our priority always remains on creating evenly matched teams.

Player Ratings: Player ratings are a primary factor in splitting teams, and players are rated based on their accumulative score in three drills. Refer to appendix B to see the drills & how score is calculated. Actual scores are not made available for anyone's review. Other than the immediate EBL directors and committee members that handle team splits, the ratings are kept confidential.

Height and Weight: A child's height is another primary factor considered in the equity of splitting teams. The weight is not one of the primary factors in splitting teams, but it does help us to track a child's development.

Note: We will record ratings and the height and weight of players who attend the summer basketball camps. Thus, these children will normally not be rated again at the start of basketball season.

Coach's Child and Returning Players. A coach that has a child playing will always have their child on the team they coach. Players who played the year before do not automatically return to the same team. All players are redistributed from scratch. We feel the opportunity to experience new friends and coaches will give your child a more rounded experience over the years.

Girls: Our league normally consists of 10 to 15% girls. We always place two or three girls on a team together.

CAR POOL REQUESTS: WE WILL REVIEW CAR POOL REQUESTS, BUT OUR PRIORITY WILL ALWAYS BE ON FORMING EVENLY BALANCED TEAMS. THUS, MANY REQUESTS CANNOT BE HONORED.

GOAL HEIGHT

Goal height is 8' for ages 6 & 7, 9' for ages 8 & 9, and 10' for ages 10 & 11

PRACTICES

All practices are on Saturdays, with the exception of the first three weeks where players will practice on their normal game night, as well as on Saturday. Saturday practices are the foundation of our league, and we ask each parent to make every effort to get their child to each practice on time. The earliest practice start time is 8:30 am and the latest is 2:30 or 3:30 pm (depending on the number of teams). Teams will begin practice with 30 minutes in a classroom. This time will be utilized for a theme-based devotional, prayer requests, prayer, coach/player communication, and coach/parent communication. Teams will then receive one hour of practice time on the court.

ONE PARENT SHOULD ALWAYS CHECK WITH THE COACH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASSROOM SESSION AND REMAIN FOR ANY IMPORTANT COMMUNICATIONS. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO STAY FOR PRACTICES, BUT IF YOU NEED TO LEAVE

DURING PRACTICE, PLEASE RESPECT YOUR COACH'S TIME BY ALWAYS PICKING UP YOUR CHILD ON TIME.

DEVOTIONALS AND LEAGUE THEME

This year, we will teach children teamwork, how and why we lend a hand to others, and community service. Some devotions will match up with these themes and each team will do one community service project (about two hours) as a team.

FIRST PRACTICES AND PARENTS' MEETING

The first few weeks there are no games, so children will practice on the same weeknight that they normally have games, as well as the normal Saturday practice. The first practice for 10 & 11 year-olds will be on November 12th; and the first practice for all other ages will be on Saturday, November 14th (This is the second practice for ages 10 & 11). Parents are asked to stay in the classroom on the first Saturday practice, November 14th, for a team meeting with coaches.

On the weeknight practices of November 16th, 17th, and 19th, there will be a parents' meeting during the same hour that your child practices. You will be instructed as to the meeting location. It is very important that each parent attend this meeting. If one parent can't make it, it is very important for the second parent (or even a grandparent), to get the information and pass it on.

GAMES

All teams will be scheduled for either 8 or 9 games. There will be one game per week. Children, ages 6 & 7 play games on Tuesday, children, ages 8 & 9 play games on Monday, and children, ages 10 & 11 play games on Thursday. Game times will be 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm.. Leagues that have a larger than anticipated participation may have to play at 5:30, 6:30, and 7:30 PM. Unless there is a snow make-up situation, final games and team parties will be the week of February 8th.

GAME RULES

See appendix C for complete game rules

PLAYING TIME

All children must play a minimum of two quarters (half of the game). In addition, there are going to be several games where one or two children may be absent from a game. This creates extra playing time for the children. We ask coaches to split potential additional playing time as equally as possible for all children. For example, if two players are absent from a game, this creates four quarters of extra playing time to distribute to eight players. This enables each player to participate an extra half of a quarter. Refer to the playing rules in appendix C.

EDUCATIONAL LIBRARY

We have a resource library with many books and videos full of instruction on coaching and learning basketball drills and fundamentals. We have material that will be helpful to coaches, parents, and players. These are available to be checked out, so please inquire if interested.

PICTURES

We do have a picture day where your child will get a team & individual picture taken. We are careful to review pricing and quality of several photographers to get you the best product at the best price. This year's picture date is Saturday, December 5th, during your normal practice time. Individual make-up picture opportunities will be offered on Saturday, January 16th.

COMMUNICATION

A coach or the team parent should develop an email list and/or set up the VT Net phone system (a phone tree) to keep communications open and timely. This will allow them to send out reminders & updates to everyone. In return, we expect the parents to communicate with the coach when their child may need to miss a game or practice, or if there is any situation that may have an effect on the team.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK AND CARDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Coaches will give out ribbons to a player of the game/week after each game. Your child will receive this honor once during the year. Also, three times during the year, your coach will be sending out cards to your player with words of praise and encouragement, and a special goody placed inside the card.

AWARDS AND TEAM PARTY

In keeping with the league philosophy, every player will receive an award at the end of the season. The coaches will present these awards at a team party after the last game of the season. The league will provide four large pizzas, paper products, and ice for the party. The parents are asked to bring drinks, cake, and any additional food items needed to feed the children and attending family.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

We always need good leaders for our children.

COACHES: WE NEED NEW COACHES EACH SEASON. INDEPTH BASKETBALL KNOWLEDGE IS NOT REQUIRED AT THIS LEVEL. THE MOST IMPORTANT REQUIREMENT IS THAT YOU LOVE CHILDREN AND THAT YOU WILL TEACH OUR CHILDREN POSITIVE LIFE LESSONS. WE PROVIDE A COACHING CLINIC, VIDEOS, AND BOOKS THAT WILL ASSIST YOU IN TEACHING THE BASKETBALL FUNDAMENTALS. THE TIME REQUIREMENTS ARE ONE GAME PER WEEK (MONDAY, TUESDAY, OR THURSDAY) AND ONE PRACTICE PER WEEK (SATURDAY).

TEAM PARENTS: THE TEAM PARENT WILL SERVE SEVERAL IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS. THIS PERSON MAY ASSIST THE COACH WITH PARENTAL COMMUNICATIONS, ASSIST IN FORMING A TEAM THAT FUNCTIONS WELL AS A UNIT, ASSIST IN ORGANIZING POST-GAME SNACKS, AND MAY ALSO ASSIST THE COACHES IN ANY WAY DURING THE GAMES OR AT PRACTICE.

TEAM SNACKS. WE NEED PARENTS TO TAKE TURNS BRINGING TEAM SNACKS TO BE SERVED AFTER EACH GAME. THIS IS A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP, CELEBRATION AND PRESENTATION OF PLAYER OF THE WEEK.

SCOREKEEPERS. WE NEED PARENTS TO TAKE TURNS ASSISTING WITH SCOREKEEPING DURING GAMES.

FIRST AID AND SAFETY

There is always a first aid kit available during practices and games. Included in this kit is a blood spill kit that is used for the safe clean up of blood. This prevents the spread of bloodborne pathogens. Coaches are shown how to use this kit, and any parent may be trained on request. In addition, we are taking measures to insure that a doctor or CPR/first aid certified person is on-site during games and practices. If you observe an emergency situation:

1. DO NOT MOVE THE INJURED PERSON!
2. Send someone to call 911 immediately.
3. Try to locate a doctor or someone medically qualified. If nobody is in the immediate vicinity, try to get someone to search while you stay with the injured person.
4. Keep the immediate area around the injured person clear of non-medical people. Do everything you can to keep this person calm if they are conscious. If possible, have a relative or very close friend assist in keeping the injured person calm.

PARENTAL ASSISTANCE WITH SAFETY

There will be a high number of children in the gym most of the time and this poses many safety issues. Here are some specific ways all parents can help:

1. Parents who come to games or practices with their player's sibling(s), should keep these children in control for everyone's safety.
2. The Total Life Center classrooms are not set up to be playrooms, and there are often other functions or meetings going on during games. Therefore, young children should remain under control and with their parents so as not to cause disturbances or hurt themselves. It is acceptable for more mature children to go into room 151, 152, 153, or 154 (when available) to study or talk quietly.
3. Please remind your players and siblings not to run in the halls. In the gym, only players who are in a game or practice should be running.
4. Please remind your players to remove any jewelry, etc. prior to games and practices. Earrings and other jewelry could cause injury to a player.
5. Players should bounce a ball only inside the gym and never in hallways or other rooms.
6. Children should utilize quarter and halftime breaks to walk across the court during games. Parents, please assist smaller children.
7. All basketballs shall remain in the ball cage (except game ball) during games. These balls are there for teams to warm up with between games and at halftime.
8. Please do not allow your children to bring their own basketballs into the church during games and practices. It becomes very dangerous and confusing when you have dozens of basketballs bouncing around the gym during play.

PARENTAL INPUT

We always welcome input from the parents. You may talk to the league staff at any time you are here, or call 359-7770 x20 or email eb1@saxegotha.org to give us input on the league. We pray that the Elementary Basketball League is an enjoyable experience for you and your child.