

PLAY WITH PURPOSE

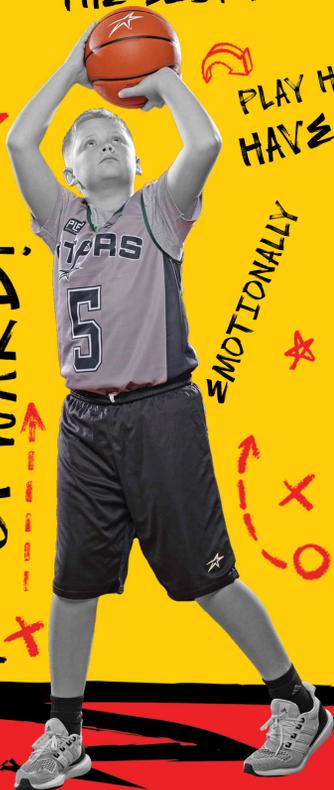
# BASKETBALL COACH PLAYBOOK

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO PROVIDING THE BEST LEAGUE EXPERIENCE!

MENTALLY

★  
LET'S GO  
UPWARD!

TEAM WORK



PLAY HARD!  
HAVE FUN!

EMOTIONALLY

PLAY WITH PURPOSE



SPIRITUALLY

★  
ATHLETICALLY



# BASKETBALL COACH PLAYBOOK

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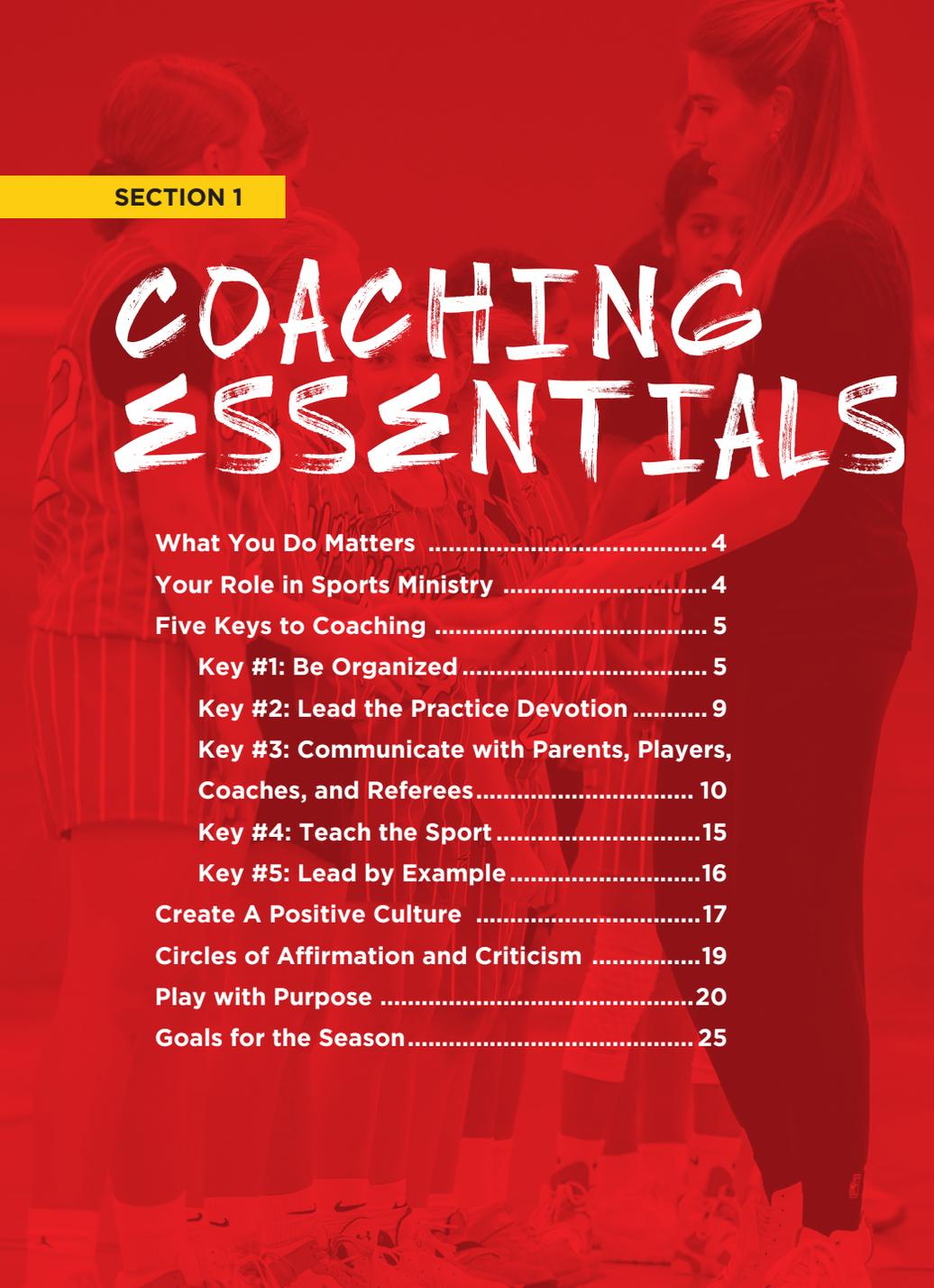
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**SECTION 1**

# COACHING ESSENTIALS

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There are ***Five Keys to Coaching*** in an Upward Sports league.

Whether you are a first-time coach, veteran coach, or somewhere in between on the coaching journey, there are five crucial things to do as an Upward Sports coach.

## ➔ **Key #1: Be Organized**

Parents want to see you value their time and are investing in their participant. This is demonstrated by how you conduct practice. Schedule at least 45 minutes on your calendar to prepare for practice each week.

The tools noted below can help you be organized to provide a great experience this season.

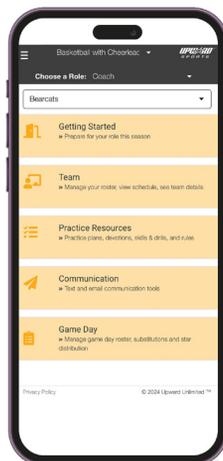
**MYUPWARD.ORG** – This is the primary tool for you as a coach. The league director will send you an invitation to access resources on MyUpward.org. After you accept the invitation and create a username and password, you should create an icon on the home screen of your mobile device for quick and easy access.

Some of the features you will find at your fingertips are outlined below.

- ◆ **Getting Started** includes how-to videos and other resources to help you this season.

- ◆ Video tutorial on MyUpward
- ◆ Referee handbook
- ◆ PDF practice plans\*
- ◆ PDF devotion content\*
- ◆ PDF Substitution and Star tracking forms\*

\*Helpful if you prefer paper copies or have limited internet access.



*\*Note: The coaches' tool can only be found through an invitation from your league director and is not listed in an app store.*

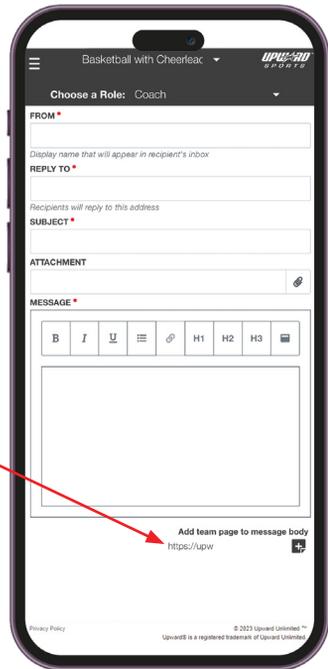
- ◆ **Team** area helps you manage your roster, see participant information, and the schedule for practices and games with the designated jersey color. There is also a link to your team page.
- ◆ **Practice Resources** provide a step-by-step outline for each practice including weekly devotion content, skills and drills, and sports rules.
- ◆ **Communication** is where you will find email and text capabilities, as well as the ability to attach a link to the team page.
- ◆ **Gameday** Gameday helps you to manage substitutions with the Upward Sports gameday rotation that is easy to follow so you don't have to worry about tracking playing time. Players can be removed from the lineup (click the minus) or reactivated (click the three stacked circles). Assign stars and take notes by clicking the star next to each participant's name.

## OTHER TOOLS

- ◆ **Practice Devotions** – As you prepare for practice, take about ten minutes each week to review the Scouting Report at the beginning of the devotion so that you can present the devotion which ends with prayer.
- ◆ **GameDay Stars** – Use gameday stars to highlight each player’s contributions made during the game each week. Stars can be tracked over the course of the season online or using the printed form in the Appendix.
- ◆ **Gospel Video** – Sent out from the league director to families to share a video version of the gospel message with them during the season.
- ◆ **Green Practice Stars** – Use these stars at practice to encourage participation in the practice devotion, scripture learning, or the goals your league has outlined for the devotion content.
- ◆ **Practice Cards** – The practice cards show the Bible verse associated with the weekly devotion. Depending on the devotion track, you will hand out cards every week or only at designated weeks noted in the devotion.
- ◆ **Practice Plans** – Use the practice plans found on MyUpward.org under the “Practice Resources.” Practice plans include skills and drills along with the practice devotion. If you are an experienced coach creating your own practice plan, be sure to include the devotion content each week.

- ◆ **Season Celebration** – Celebrate the season with your team. Your league may have individual team parties or a league-wide celebration so that you can connect with families.
- ◆ **Team Page** – Share the team page with your team to give them access to the practice and game schedule. The team page also includes your contact information and a team roster. The team page link is available to send from the communication area of the mobile view of MyUpward.org.

Share your team page from the communication area.



## ➔ Key #2: Lead the Practice Devotion

During practices, coaches use the devotion materials to lead a devotion, encourage discussion, and pray.

Before each devotion is a Scouting Report that gives coaches an inside look at the devotion for the week with detailed information about that week's topic.

After reviewing the scouting report review the devotion and make any notes before going to practice. Be patient with participants as learning more about Jesus is a lifelong pursuit and not accomplished in a single devotion.

Green practice stars and practice cards are items used to support the devotion. If you need help with presenting the devotion content, please let your league director or coach commissioner know.

### The Scouting Report features:

- ◇ **BACKGROUND** - Detailed information about that week's topic
- ◇ **BIG PICTURE** - Points to scripture for more insight on the topic
- ◇ **ENCOURAGEMENT** - Provides coaches with an inspirational quote, Scripture, or thought
- ◇ **COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION** - Allows coaches to think about the content's relevance to their own life before presenting to their team



### SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION

#### BACKGROUND

For the next three devotions, we'll take a more in-depth look at what it means for the athletes on your team to aim for excellence in their daily lives. In this devotion, we'll talk about how they can aim for excellence at school. (If you have kids on your team who are homeschooled, this is relevant for them, too. When asking for examples, call on them to share ideas based on their specific school experience if they are willing.) For kids and teens, doing their best at school is the equivalent of adults doing their best at work.

We introduce Colossians 3:17 in this devotion, which reminds us that whatever we do, we don't work simply for ourselves, our employer, or our customers—we work as representatives of God. "Verse 17 offers a general principle for Christian ethical decision. Whatever Christians do, they should remember 'who they are.' They are Christ's and all their behavior should be consistent with their bearing his name. They are saved by his grace, and all their living should be an expression of gratitude for their salvation." (John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*)

#### BIG PICTURE

For more insight, read Colossians 3:1-17; Colossians 3:23; 2 Peter 1:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT

There are many ways to show excellence in our work. While results and productivity matter, so do how we achieve them. Are you representing God well in how you treat your coworkers, employees, or boss? Are you representing God well by being honest in your business practices? Are you so concerned with profit that you ignore ethics? It's good to stop and check in with yourself occasionally to see what your work is saying about you.

#### COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Do I aim for excellence in my work? If not, what can I do to put my best foot forward?

## → **Key #3: Communicate with Parents, Players, Coaches, and Referees**

Parents on the team want you to communicate with them. Send a weekly email, text, or both to let parents know how the team is doing and remind them of upcoming events.

Parents and players watch how you respond at practices and games and how you lead the team. Your interactions influence the atmosphere of the league, if a family will return next season, and the league's and your ability to conduct ministry.

## **INTERACTING WITH PLAYERS**

This coaching opportunity may place you as someone's first-time coach. In sports ministry, you have the chance to impact someone for eternity.

### **Here are ten tips on interacting with your players:**

- ◆ Greet each player by name as they arrive.
- ◆ Always be mindful of speaking on a level they can understand.
- ◆ Explain the details of what you are teaching, demonstrate what you are teaching, have participants do it, and then apply it in a game scenario.
- ◆ Focus on one skill at a time as you teach so participants can learn each one thoroughly.
- ◆ Recognize differences in skill levels so that you can help each player improve.

- ◆ Be familiar with the devotion and allow time for discussion.
- ◆ Hold a ten to fifteen-minute meeting with parents at the end of the first practice to set expectations and answer questions.
- ◆ Allow players to be creative during the game. Teach at practice and observe and encourage during the game. You don't need to control all the player actions.
- ◆ Understand that there is a lot of information a player is processing during a game from many different areas.. When a player is not in the game, one simple question to gain understanding is, "What did you see?" This question requires listening and patience to discover what they saw from their perspective.
- ◆ When distributing stars on gamedays, give specific reasons each athlete earned a particular game-day star. Don't underestimate the value of recognizing players!

## WHAT ABOUT DISTRACTED AND DISRUPTIVE PLAYERS?

A challenge for coaches is what to do with distracted or disruptive participants. Here are four things to understand in these situations that will help.

1. Understand that players have short attention spans. Be patient.
2. Players come into practice and, like coaches, are influenced by things that have already occurred during the day. Greet

them by name to welcome them into a new environment so they know you see them.

3. Maintain engagement by cutting down on lines and lectures. To do this, ask parents to help run a drill so there are multiple stations.
4. Praise desired behavior right away, use the player's name, and let them know how it helps the team. Other players will recognize this and follow.

*If undesirable behavior continues, address it with the player and parent so that the player doesn't disrupt a learning environment. Let the parent know that you need their help, as they may be able to offer insight into working with their player.*

## INTERACTING WITH PARENTS

Start the season by getting to know your players' parents and families. Include parents in your first postpractice huddle.

### **Here are a few tips for interacting with parents:.**

- ◆ Introduce yourself to parents, share expectations, and explain why you are coaching.
- ◆ Share your contact information.
- ◆ Each week take time to have a conversation with one family.

- ◆ Encourage parents to have fun working on skills at home with their players.
- ◆ Be ready to step into any spiritual conversation with parents and talk about what you teach during devotion time.
- ◆ Demonstrate care and concern for players, so parents know you are looking out for their players.
- ◆ Be organized and prepared for practice. Parents want to know you value their time.
- ◆ Communicate one time per week through email, text, or both. Keep it short and simple.

After you receive your roster, contact the parents right away. Families are eager to hear from you, and it cuts down on the number of calls and emails a league director has to spend time answering.

## **INTERACTING WITH COACHES AND REFEREES**

An Upward Sports league can set the standard in your community by how coaches and referees interact on game days. Parents, players, and families notice how coaches and referees work together to provide a fantastic player experience. Remember, youth sports are about the youth.

### **Here are some tips on how to interact with coaches and referees:**

- ◆ Introduce yourself to the other coaches and referees on gameday, and remember their names.

- ◆ Realize that you would not have a gameday without the other team and referees. It's essential to work together.
- ◆ Review Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:7 and understand that we are all God's creation, which should be reflected in how we interact.
- ◆ Be the referee's biggest fan. If you want to have referees for your league, critical behavior does not help.
- ◆ Coaches must work together for the experience of all participants.
- ◆ Love one another, John 13:34.
- ◆ Assume positive intent first rather than jumping to negative conclusions.
- ◆ Thank the coaches and referees after the game.
- ◆ Review the Circle of Affirmation and follow it.

## → **Key #4: Teach the Sport**

Teaching the fundamentals of the sport allows players to put in place the building blocks for lifelong learning and enjoyment of the game. As players gain an understanding and work toward mastering the fundamentals you can then begin to add strategy and roles within a team.

As players learn and grow through the fundamentals any sport experience should also include learning sportsmanship, an understanding of healthy competition, and a growth mindset where players are learning with each opportunity to compound small improvements over time that lead to noticeable changes.

## ➔ **Key #5: Lead By Example**

Being an Upward Sports Coach is a unique opportunity to not only teach the fundamentals of a sport but also share the gospel and create a positive environment for participants. This begins with your understanding of how to lead by example during practices and games.

### **Three Layers of Coaching**

The three coaching layers are essential to understand the dynamics of coaching a team. They include a player, the team, and the coach.

- ◆ **THE PLAYER** - A coach will need to observe each player's skill level and teach accordingly. You may have a wide range of skill levels, with players who have experience and skill and some who have never played the sport. Work one-on-one with players and give them direction on individual skills to try at home. Celebrate success as they develop and be patient with their mistakes.
- ◆ **THE TEAM** - As you coach each individual, you must also bring the team together. In a team sport, players must learn how to work well with each other. The team concept changes as players become more mature, advance in age, and can focus on others and not just themselves. Small-sided scrimmages and in-game scenarios at practices can aid in developing the team concept. Helping them communicate with each other by using participants' names and showing them how to encourage each other will help them come together as a team.

- ◆ THE COACH - You must prepare for practice and games to coach a team. Coaches should be willing to invest the time it takes to be ready to lead. Review practice plans and think about backup plans so that you can move forward if something isn't working. Take time to check the Scouting Report section of the practice devotion and spend time praying for your team.

## Create a Positive Culture

A positive culture is one of safety, learning, and fun. A team's attitude and mindset often mirror that of its coach. Use the beginning of the season to set a tone of positivity through the weeks ahead.

- ◆ Set expectations of behavior and communicate them with players and parents.
- ◆ Start and end each practice on time.
- ◆ Encourage players to support each other by cheering for teammates.
- ◆ View mistakes as teaching opportunities, not a chance to be critical at the moment.

### ***Team Huddle***

*One practical way to create a positive team culture and teach communication is to establish a team huddle at the end of practice. Have players circle up and include the coach. The coach can talk about things done well in practice.*

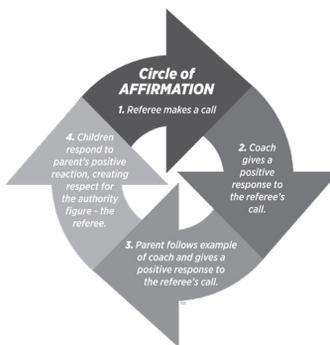
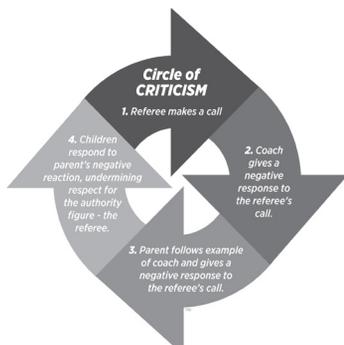
*Next, have players look to the person on their right, use*

*their name, and offer something they saw their teammate do well in practice. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a chance to speak. The topic could be different at each practice, such as something the player would like to improve on their own, something they appreciate about the other player, or something they would like to see the team accomplish in the next game.*

## Circle of Affirmation

Choosing the right gameday attitude is key to being an effective Upward Coach. Actions and reactions during games can either open or close the door to ministry. The Circle of Criticism and the Circle of Affirmation are simple diagrams that illustrate the results of a coach giving a referee either negative or positive feedback.

Coaches and referees work together as a unified team for everyone to have a great experience. Coaches stop the Circle of Criticism by starting the Circle of Affirmation.



The example set between coaches and referees using the Circle of Affirmation demonstrates to everyone how to value others, enjoy healthy competition, and create a positive environment for spectators and players to follow.

Practicing the Circle of Affirmation makes the gameday experience better for everyone.

## Play with Purpose

The influence a coach has not only helps participants to develop as players but as people who will engage as members of a community, family, and eternity.

The resources provided are created with a player development model in mind that helps us to understand we are here to Play with Purpose.

### **PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL = M.A.S.S.**

**As an Upward Sports Coach, you play a major role in encouraging your players mentally, athletically, spiritually and socially as they participate on your team.**

**This approach is based on Luke 2:52: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and all the people.”**



## MENTALLY

Mental development for young athletes is a byproduct of the weekly practices and games where players participate. Players grow in confidence, courage, decision-making, and cognitive self-regulation.

- ◇ **Confidence and Courage** - As players learn and improve, their skills and confidence will increase. Players then gain the courage to attempt new skills and recognize that mistakes are a part of the game that they can overcome.
- ◇ **Decision-Making** - The intricacies and complexities of sports help train young athletes to make correct decisions quickly. When to pass a ball, when to attempt a move, or when to make a defensive play are all part of building decision-making. Through observation and repetition, players improve their muscle memory and learn when and how to make individual and team decisions.
- ◇ **Cognitive self-regulation** - Through intense games and drills, players learn to self-regulate emotions and gain focus. Through sports, they will enter various experiences (practices, scrimmages, games, etc.) where they will learn to narrow their focus from a broad range to a specific individual focus and team responsibilities in the pursuit of attaining particular goals.



## ATHLETICALLY

Athletic development compounds through small improvements over time. Players learn and grow in their sport to achieve long term growth

- ◇ **Exercise** - In a recent State of Play report, the Aspen Sports Institute reported only 24% of youth ages 6 to 17 engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day, down from 30% a decade earlier. With many kids spending over 6 hours in front of screens each day (TVs, computers, phones/tablets), the desire to get out and be active is waning.

How can you tell if a child is getting proper exercise? Sweat. Sweat requires constant activity with little “downtime.” Practices should have drills that allow for continuous movement using various muscle groups. Avoid players standing in lines when possible. Keep practice fast-paced and fun, allowing for water breaks and short periods of rest.

- ◇ **Physical Development** - Physical development has enormous benefits for children, including stronger bones and muscles, improved heart and brain health, and lowered risk of diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Participants may learn fundamental movements that allow them to run, jump, throw, catch, balance, and change direction. Basic moves will help participants enjoy a variety of sports and begin a path to physical literacy.
- ◇ **Fun** - The key to getting kids interested in physical activity is by making it fun. Sports do just that, provided the coaches in charge are focused on the development of the athlete. Practices should teach the game using fun and safe methods.



## SPIRITUALLY

Spiritual growth is an essential part of sports ministry. You play a vital role in the spiritual development of players on your team and help them discover a sense of self and a sense of purpose. This development happens in various ways.

- ◇ **Practice devotions** - By guiding discussion around the practice devotions each week, you plant seeds of discovery within the minds and hearts of young athletes. Remember to guide every practice devotion conversation back to the gospel and what Jesus has done for us.
- ◇ **Your relationship with players** - You are a safe, trusted adult in the lives of young athletes. You hold a remarkable amount of influence. Listen intently, guide carefully, and be someone who continually points young athletes to Christ in your interactions.
- ◇ **Your relationship with parents** - The top spiritual influence in a child's life is their parents. What they learn from their home life will speak more into their spiritual development than anything else. Your relationship with a child's parents must be strong. Share with them what their child is learning each week in practice. Discuss the devotions. Talk about how their child is developing in their skills. When parents know you care and are investing in their child's well-being, they'll trust you and your spiritual influence on their child.
- ◇ **Your example** - Be ready to step into opportunities God provides during practices, games, and your communications to demonstrate and share the gospel message.

 **SOCIALLY**

Participants develop socially by learning how to work as a team, communicate, and serve others through a sport.

- ◇ **Teamwork** - Through team sports, children learn how to interact with peers and adults in positive ways. These include numerous opportunities for “selfless” behavior, focusing all mental and physical efforts towards the goals of the team. Participants learn how to navigate relationships, encourage others, and recover from mistakes.
- ◇ **Communication** - Players learn how to communicate in complex social situations with teammates and competitors. This learning carries over to other areas of life, helping them communicate in school, at home, and in other environments.
- ◇ **Serving** - Serving others becomes a critical component for social development in team sports. Children learn to share the ball, encourage teammates, and give their best effort to help the team and not just themselves.

## ➔ Goals For The Season

The goal of our sports ministry is:

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Success looks like:

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Success in our sports ministry is measured by:

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**How were you coached as a child, and how has that influenced how you plan to coach?**

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**How do you plan to grow spiritually and as a coach this season?**

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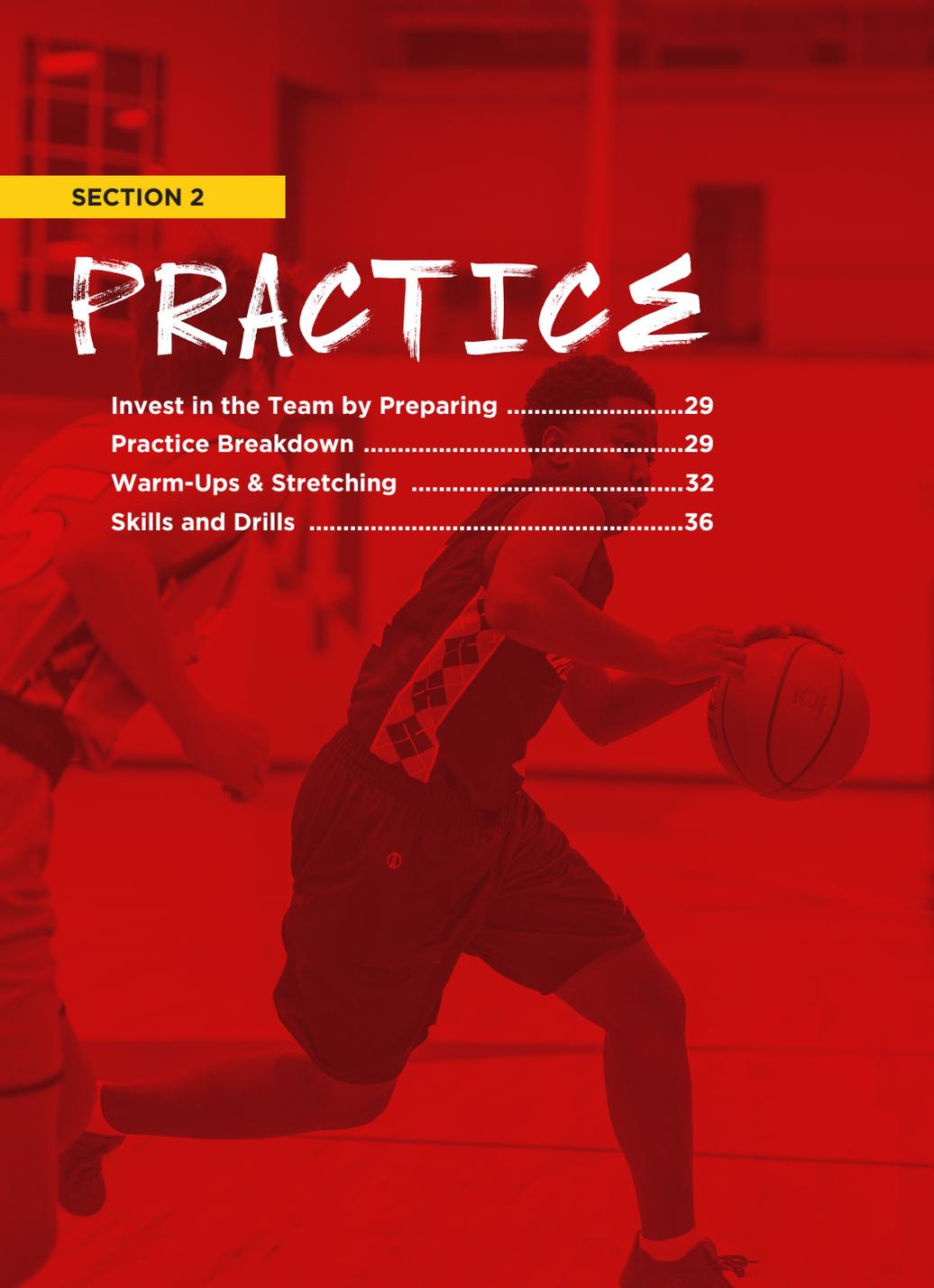
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**HEBREWS 12:1-2 READS:**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. 2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.*





**SECTION 2**

# PRACTICE

<b>Invest in the Team by Preparing .....</b>	<b>29</b>
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## → Invest in the team by preparing for practice

Your investment shows in the results each week. There are entire practice plans for each week of the season found on MyUpward.org. These plans have been designed for each age group and include age-appropriate skill development and devotion material that progress through the season.

As the season continues, you may need to modify the plans based on what takes place in practices and the game. Be sure to always focus on the fundamentals of the sport. As you become more experienced, you may begin to include other resources for practice. Be sure to use the weekly devotion material as you design a practice.

*Coaches are named as the top reason parents and players return or not each season. Parents want to see organized and detailed practices.*

## → Practice Breakdown

### **OPENING PRACTICE HUDDLE** (3-5 minutes)

Start on time the signal to the team parents that you are ready to begin. Point out a couple of things that you will cover in practice. Once games occur, use the first few minutes of practice to talk about the previous game and something you will work on from the game and highlights from the game.

### **WARM-UP ACTIVITY** (3-5 minutes)

Provide players with the opportunity to warm up their bodies slowly.

### **PRACTICE SKILLS THROUGH DRILLS** (20 minutes)

Focus on specific skills that matter to the sport. Use drills and game scenarios that reinforce skill development.

### **PRACTICE DEVOTION** (5-7 minutes)

Share the practice devotion for each week. Be mindful of the opportunities to demonstrate the gospel throughout practice, so players see you living it out.

### **SCRIMMAGE / SKILL CHALLENGES THAT TEACH** (20 minutes)

Use a controlled scrimmage or skills challenges to test their skills.

### **END OF PRACTICE HUDDLE** (3-5 minutes)

Review the skills learned at practice and praise efforts. Hand out practice cards and green practice stars and do things to create a positive team culture.

### **POST-PRACTICE TIME**

After practice, take time to get to connect with one family each week.

## Here is a chart that outlines the weekly practice plans you can

find on **MyUpward.org** - Write out a plan so you can maximize your time and are organized. This should include a Practice Focus, practice meeting, skills review, devotion (provided for you in the next section), rules review, new skills and wrap-up.

Practice	Practice Focus	Team Meeting	Rules to Cover	Skills & Drills
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Get to know each other</li> <li>· Evaluate skills</li> <li>· Set practice rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teammate introductions</li> <li>· Discuss practice ground rules</li> <li>· Introduce basic footwork, dribbling, and shooting skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Practice rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Footwork (Page 37)</li> <li>· Dribbling (Page 40)</li> <li>· Shooting (Page 49)</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Continue skill evaluation</li> <li>· Teach passing fundamentals</li> <li>· Teach positions and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Re-introduce players and coaches</li> <li>· Discuss some common violations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Traveling</li> <li>· Double Dribbling</li> <li>· Palming or Carrying the ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Footwork (Page 37)</li> <li>· Ball Handling (Page 40)</li> <li>· Dribbling (Page 40)</li> <li>· Shooting (Page 49)</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review re-start situations</li> <li>· Teach shooting fundamentals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review traveling, double dribble, and palming the ball</li> <li>· Game situations and court spacing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Three second violation</li> <li>· Common fouls</li> <li>· Help defense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Passing and Receiving (Page 46)</li> <li>· Defense (Page 57)</li> <li>· Rebounding (Page 54)</li> </ul>
4 <i>week of first game</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teach 3-second violation</li> <li>· Discuss positions on the court</li> <li>· Skill developments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review defensive rules</li> <li>· Game situations and court spacing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Three second violation</li> <li>· Common fouls</li> <li>· Help defense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Rebounding (Page 54)</li> <li>· Defense (Page 57)</li> <li>· Scrimmage or more drills</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teach offensive movement</li> <li>· Continue to teach court spacing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Discuss practice focus</li> <li>· Review the last game</li> <li>· Review basic rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review all rules as a fun quiz</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Offensive plays (Page 60)</li> <li>· Areas the need improvement from the game</li> </ul>
6-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Continue skill development</li> <li>· Analyze game performances, coach through improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review the last game and improvements that need to be made</li> <li>· Discuss practice focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Continue to review rules for clear understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Work on both offense and defense</li> <li>· Areas that need improvement</li> </ul>

## → Warm-Ups & Stretching

*Use the first five minutes of practice to get the players moving. This can be done by incorporating athletic development exercises like the examples below. Warm-up first and then follow with stretching.*

**Here are warm-up activities that you can use.** Add music, move to the beat and create a warm-up activity you will use at the start of each practice.

- ◆ **Arm Circles:** Hold arms out standing in a T and circle them.
- ◆ **Back pedal:** Run backwards while stepping back as far as possible.
- ◆ **Donkey Kicks:** In a standing position or moving forward, kick heels toward up toward your back side.
- ◆ **Feet on fire:** Running in place.
- ◆ **Heels to Hands:** Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players jog slowly with knees pointing toward the ground and their heels kicking upward toward their backsides where their hands are. Once all players have made it to the other side of the field, have them return to the starting point by sprinting back across the field.
- ◆ **High Knees:** With hands in front and waist high, lift knees up and alternate between knees. Vary speed as desired.
- ◆ **Hops:** This can be done in one spot or moving forward. It can be done on one foot of both feet.

- ◆ **Jumping Jacks:** Players jump in place, extending arms out to the side and kicking legs out to the side.
- ◆ **Log Step:** With both feet on one side of an imaginary log, high step sideways with one foot and then the other to cross over the “log.” Vary speed.
- ◆ **Lunges:** From a standing position, large step forward while keeping the back foot in place without the knee touching the ground.
- ◆ **Push-ups:** May use a modified version for very young players.
- ◆ **Running:** One minute around the room. If you have limited space, run in place and change the pace.
- ◆ **Shoulder circles:** With arms by your side, lift your shoulders and take them back down, creating a circular motion.
- ◆ **Side lunge:** Feet wider than shoulder width apart, keep one leg straight while the other bends into a squat position. Keep your back flat, chest up and rear out behind you.
- ◆ **Sprint to Backpedal:** Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach’s signal, players sprint across the field then backpedal to the starting point. As players backpedal, instruct them to lean slightly forward and land on the balls of their feet so they don’t trip and fall backward.
- ◆ **Trunk twists:** From a standing position, twist back and forth slowly.

## Here are stretch activities you may use after warm-ups.

- ◆ **Neck:** Sit or stand with arms by your side. Tilt head to the right and hold for eight seconds, then tilt head to the left and hold for eight seconds.
- ◆ **Triceps Stretch:** Bring one arm up beside your head, bending it at the elbow while reaching across with the other arm and hold. Repeat, using the other arm.
- ◆ **Biceps Stretch:** Reach one arm out straight in front of you with palm facing up. With the other hand gently push down until you feel a slight stretch in your bicep.
- ◆ **Shoulder Stretch:** Reach one arm across your chest, holding it at the elbow with the opposite hand.
- ◆ **Hug:** Reach as far as you can and wrap your arms around your chest giving yourself a hug.
- ◆ **X Stretch:** With feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart, stretch your arms and hands up and out, forming an X with your body. Reach high and stand on your tip-toes.
- ◆ **Quadriceps Stretch:** Support yourself against a wall or stationary object. Pull one heel up behind your body and hold. Repeat with opposite side.
- ◆ **Hamstring Stretch:** Sit on the floor with right leg straight out in front. Bend left leg and cross it over the right one. Pull the knee across your body toward opposite shoulder. Change legs and repeat.

- ◆ ***Pike Stretch:*** Sitting with feet straight in front of you and together, put both hands straight up and above your head and then slowly bend forward to reach your toes.
- ◆ ***Calf-Muscle Stretch:*** Lean toward and support yourself against a wall while keeping your leg straight. Press you heel to the floor. Reverse and stretch other calf-muscle.

## ➔ Skills and Drills

This section reviews the fundamental skills of basketball, explains why each is important and emphasizes the skill's basic teaching points. Each skill is followed by a basic drill that reinforces the skill. For more drills for each skill, as well as complete practice plans, go to [MyUpward.org](http://MyUpward.org).

Many of the drills described in this playbook require one ball per player. If you are limited in the number of balls you have for practice, you will need to modify the drill by creating lines based on the number of balls you have available

### ..... KEY TO DIAGRAMS .....

*Use this key for the drills located on the following pages.*

-  = **player**
-  = **player movement without the ball**
-  = **dribble**
-  = **pass**
-  = **shoot**
-  = **rebound**
-  = **screen**
-  = **coach**
-  = **sequence**
-  = **cone**

## Footwork

Proper footwork promotes balance, quickness, and readiness to make something happen on the court. Being proficient at this skill will improve a player's offensive and defensive performance.

### Basic Footwork Skills:

#### Triple Threat Position

- ◆ Provides a player the option to pass, shoot, or dribble
- ◆ Position the basketball in the “shooting pocket” with shooting elbow over the knee
- ◆ Have “strong hands” with possession of the basketball so that defenders cannot easily knock the ball away

#### Jump Stop

- ◆ Allows a player to establish a pivot with either foot off a dribble or pass
- ◆ Leap/jump should be low to the floor (like sitting in a chair), not a high jump
- ◆ Both feet hit the floor at the same time – good balance
- ◆ Land on the floor in triple threat position
- ◆ Use when catching a pass; teach “ball in air/feet in air” concept

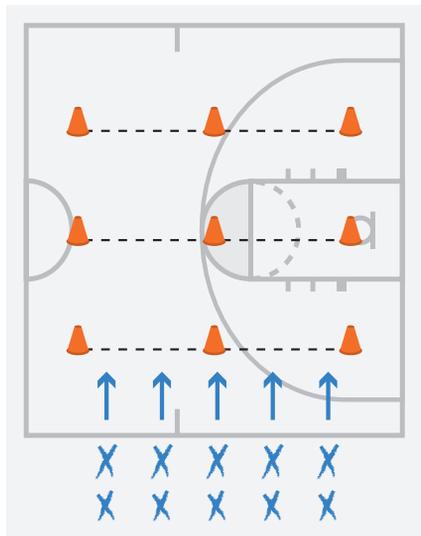
#### Front Pivot and Reverse Pivot

- ◆ Lift the heel, protect the ball, stay low, and lead with the elbow
- ◆ Allows a player to pivot in one or more directions by keeping one foot planted on the ground

- ◆ Allows an offensive player to move away from defenders while protecting the basketball
- ◆ Remind players to keep their eyes up to be able to see the court and their teammates
- ◆ This skill is also important for setting screens and rebounding

### Footwork Line Drills (No Basketball Needed)

- ◆ Players form lines on the baseline or sideline – two players deep
- ◆ Use cones or mark the court for starting/stopping spots – minimum 3 spots
- ◆ No basketball necessary – players dribble and hold an imaginary basketball
- ◆ Players will start/stop on voice command or whistle



- ◆ Players should stop at each spot with jump stop and land in triple threat position
- ◆ Pause between stops/starts to check for proper balance
- ◆ The second player in line starts as the preceding player leaves the first spot

### **Rotate the following footwork line drills:**

- ◆ Jump Stop/Triple Threat
- ◆ Jump Stop/Triple Threat/Right Front Pivot
- ◆ Jump Stop/Triple Threat/Left Front Pivot
- ◆ Jump Stop/Triple Threat/Right Reverse Pivot
- ◆ Jump Stop/Triple Threat/Left Reverse Pivot

Have each player raise his or her hand in the air that coincides with the desired pivot direction. This will help each player pivot in the correct direction.

**Variation: Add basketballs after your players understand the above concepts. Allow them to practice the above skills after picking up their dribble and receiving passes.**

### **Pivot Drill (no basketball required)**

- ◆ Players should spread out in your practice area - no basketball necessary
- ◆ Players start in triple threat position, protecting an imaginary basketball
- ◆ Instruct players to establish a pivot foot
- ◆ Practice half-turns and front/reverse pivots
- ◆ Repeat with opposite foot established as the pivot

**Variation: Add basketballs and defenders after your players understand the above concepts. Allow them to practice the above skills after picking up their dribble and receiving passes.**

## Ball Handling & Dribbling

An adept ball handler and dribbler can make things happen on the court. Mastering these skills can help create open shots, obtain better passing angles, and lead to fewer turnovers. A great offensive player must be able to handle the ball!

- ◆ Dribble with finger tips, not palms – similar to typing on a keyboard
- ◆ Proper body position, with knees bent and body flexed at the waist
- ◆ Keep head up – see the court
- ◆ Protect the basketball – use your non-dribbling arm as an “arm bar,” meaning sticking it outward with the elbow slightly bent to protect the dribble from defenders
- ◆ Work both hands – be able to go right and left
- ◆ When picking up a dribble, end in the triple threat position

### Basic Dribbling Skills:

**Control Dribble** (use against defensive pressure)

- ◆ With the body turned to the side, dribble basketball near the back knee or “in your pocket”
- ◆ Keep the dribble low and compact, below the knees
- ◆ The non-dribbling arm should be held out in front of the body to protect the ball from defenders – arm bar

**Speed Dribble** (use to push the ball up the court and on fast break situations)

- ◆ Dribble is pushed out in front of the body but controlled
- ◆ Dribble is higher and softer

**Retreat Dribble** (use to avoid defensive pressure and to keep dribble alive)

- ◆ Dribble backward (hop back) to avoid pressure
- ◆ Dribble requires a change in speed and change in direction
- ◆ Dribble teaches players not to habitually pick up their dribble when heavy, defensive pressure is applied

**Crossover Dribble** (use to break down a defender; good penetration move)

- ◆ Dribble must be kept low when crossing over from one hand to another, keeping it away from the defender
- ◆ Use head and shoulder fakes to help “sell” the move
- ◆ Goal is to get the defender on his or her heels
- ◆ Explode to the basket with speed dribble after the crossover

**Whirl Pivot Dribble** (use to avoid defensive pressure and to dribble by defender)

- ◆ Pull the basketball through low during the pivot
- ◆ Keep the basketball in the same hand until completing the pivot

- ◆ Pivot should be low and quick with head up
- ◆ Explode to the basket with speed dribble after the whirl pivot

**Behind the Back Dribble** (use to break down a defender; good penetration move)

- ◆ Use head and shoulder fakes to help “sell” the move
- ◆ Swing the basketball behind your waist, turning the hips and driving the ball down with a snap of the wrist
- ◆ Slap opposite back thigh during the exchange

**Ball Handling Drills (Team Drills)** (one basketball per player or divide your team into two groups)

### **Ball Slams**

- ◆ With feet shoulder-width apart, have players slap the basketball with fingers spread wide. Players should “slam” the ball by alternating their right and left hands.

### **Fingertip Drill**

- ◆ With feet shoulder-width apart, players pass the basketball from hand-to-hand in front of the body using only the fingertips. Move ball from ankles, to knees, to waist, to chest, to head, and to above head using the fingertips. Encourage players to keep their arms straight.

### **Side-to-Side Dribble Drill**

- ◆ With feet shoulder-width apart, have players dribble with one hand while moving the ball from side to side in front of them.

## **Front-to-Back Dribble Drill**

- ◆ With feet shoulder-width apart, have players dribble with one hand while moving the ball at their side from front to back.

## **King of the Court**

- ◆ Have all players dribble in a defined area line inside the lane, while maintaining control of the ball and defending their own dribble from other players knocking it away.

## **Defensive Turns**

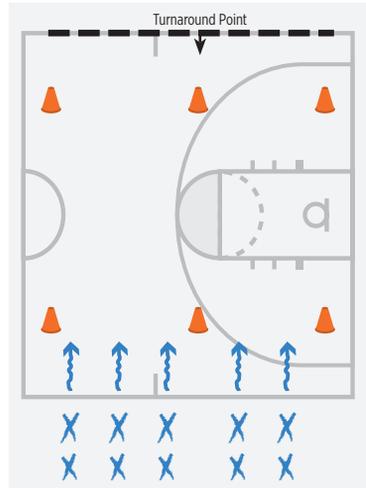
- ◆ Pair players with one basketball and a designated area about 15' wide and the length or width of the court. Without stealing the basketball, the defender must make the dribbler change their direction as they go the length of the designated area. Ball handlers must maintain control of the ball while protecting it from the defender.

## Dribbling Line Drills (three to five basketballs required)

During all dribbling line drills, you should stand in front of the players to teach, encourage, and evaluate each player's performance.

### Dribbling Line Format

- ◆ Players form lines on baseline or sideline (two players deep) - one basketball per line
- ◆ Use cones or chairs to represent stopping/starting points or change-of-dribble spots
- ◆ Players will begin the drills in triple threat position
- ◆ Players will start/stop/change dribble on voice command or whistle
- ◆ Pause between stops/starts to check for balance, arm bar, and if head is up
- ◆ At the turnaround point, require jump stops with pivots
- ◆ Work opposite hand on return dribble
- ◆ Players should end drills with a jump stop, giving the basketball to the next player in line



## **Rotate the following dribbling line drills:**

- ◆ Speed Dribble
- ◆ Speed Dribble/Control Dribble - on command, stationary control dribble
- ◆ Speed Dribble/Retreat Dribble - on command, two to three dribbles backward against imaginary defender followed by speed dribble

## Passing & Receiving

Passing and receiving a basketball allows a team to effectively and quickly move the ball around the court. A team that has players with strong passing and receiving skills will spread the defense and be hard to guard.

### Passing Teaching Points:

- ◆ Two hands on the basketball, with fingers on the sides of the ball
- ◆ Ball in middle of body
- ◆ Step toward target
- ◆ Push thumbs through ball and snap wrists, creating backspin on the basketball
- ◆ Extend arms completely as you follow through toward target

### Receiving Teaching Points:

- ◆ Both hands up in ready position – show a target
- ◆ Step toward the ball when passed – meet the pass
- ◆ “Ball in air/feet in air” concept – leads to jump stop, triple threat position, and ability to pivot with either foot
- ◆ Look the ball into the hands

## **Basic Passing Skills:**

### **Two-Hand Chest Pass**

- ◆ Basketball is held with two hands at chest level
- ◆ Keep elbows out and wide
- ◆ Passer targets the receiver's chest area
- ◆ Passer steps toward their target with either foot as the ball is thrown
- ◆ Snap the thumbs down extending the arms

### **Two-Hand Bounce Pass**

- ◆ Basketball is held with two hands at chest level
- ◆ Passer aims for a spot on the floor about two-thirds (a little more than halfway) of the way to the receiver
- ◆ Passer targets the receiver's chest area from the bounce

### **Overhead Pass**

- ◆ Basketball is held with two hands above head
- ◆ Passer targets the receiver's chest area

## **Distance Passing Drill** (one basketball for each pair of players)

Be sure to incorporate all three basic passes into this drill.

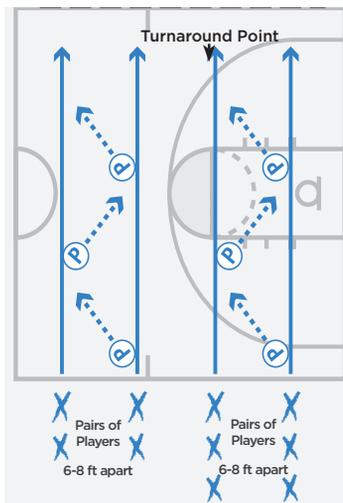
- ◆ Pair up players and have them face each other, six to eight feet apart
- ◆ Instruct players to pass the basketball back and forth using a chest pass

- ◆ After several repetitions, have each player take one to two steps backwards and continue passing
- ◆ Continue moving players back until they are passing from a challenging distance

### Two-Line Passing Drill (two basketballs required)

Two pairs of players can perform this drill at one time.

- ◆ Pair up players and have them face each other six to eight feet apart
- ◆ Establish a starting and turnaround point
- ◆ One player in each pair needs a basketball
- ◆ Using defensive slides, players move up and then back down the court
- ◆ While sliding, instruct players to pass the basketball back and forth using a chest pass
- ◆ Players pass the ball immediately upon receiving the ball



**Variation: Both players running up and down the court, rather than sliding. You may also require the receiver to perform a jump stop upon catching the basketball and immediately pass it to his or her moving partner.**

## Shooting

### Shooting Teaching Points:

- ◆ Square up shoulders to the basket
- ◆ Ball on fingertips, not palms
- ◆ The non-shooting hand should be lightly placed on side of ball (to help balance the ball)

### Practice BEEF Principles:

- ◆ **B**alance - Learn to prepare for the shot by stopping with the feet set, knees slightly bent, ready to jump (good triple threat position)
- ◆ **E**lbow - Proper shooting alignment; ball should be directly over the elbow with the wrist cocked
- ◆ **E**yes - Pick a spot (front of the rim, back of the rim, etc.) and focus on that target as the shot is being attempted
- ◆ **F**ollow through - Release the ball smoothly, completely extend the arm, and snap the wrist, which should create good backspin on the basketball

## **Lay-Up Steps** (no basketball required)

Instruct your players to shout “STEP-HOP-SHOOT” when performing this drill. Mirror this drill to practice left-handed lay-ups.

- ◆ Allow players to spread out in your practice area, at least four to five feet apart
- ◆ Players start in the triple threat position, holding imaginary basketballs with heads up and eyes on the target
- ◆ On the STEP command, players step with their left foot (right-handed lay-ups)
- ◆ On the HOP command, players raise their right knee and right arm toward the basket (visualize a string connecting a player’s right arm and right leg)
- ◆ On the SHOOT command, players extend their right arm as they shoot an imaginary ball

**Wall Shooting** (one basketball per player or divide your team into two groups)

This is a great drill to keep idle players busy while running a drill on the court that may not involve your entire team..

- ◆ Player stands about four to five feet away from the wall
- ◆ Help the player find a reasonable shooting target on the wall
- ◆ Player assumes the triple threat position
- ◆ Player shoots the ball at the target, concentrating on keeping the elbow in and full extension
- ◆ Player should finish the shot up on his or her toes with proper follow through, creating good backspin

**Variation: If coaching third through sixth-grade players, allow them to shoot using only their shooting/strong hand.**

## Two-Line Shooting Drills (one or two basketball required)

Players rotate lines after each turn. After several repetitions shooting from one side of the goal, change the designation of both lines and shoot from the other side of the court.

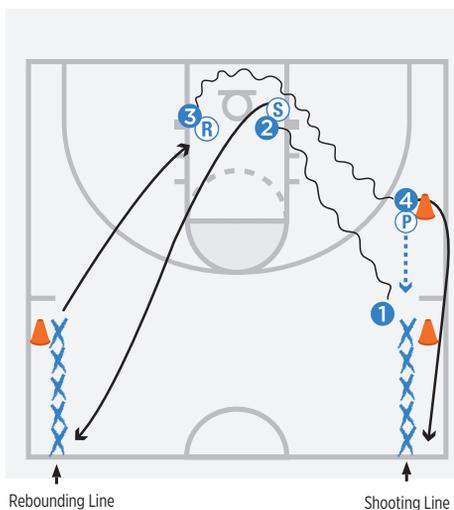
- ◆ Players form two lines opposite the goal in each corner of practice area: a shooting line and a rebounding line (use cones or chairs to mark a starting point)

- ◆ Shooting line: Assume the triple threat position, showing ready hands to receive a pass.

- ◆ Rebounding line: Players should block out an imaginary defender and rebound the ball above their head.

- ◆ The player from the rebounding line secures the rebound and dribbles to a designated cone, makes a good jump stop landing in the triple threat position, and uses proper passing techniques when passing to the next shooter in line.

- ◆ Shooter receives the basketball and performs the drill as instructed by a coach.



## Rotate the following two-line shooting drills:

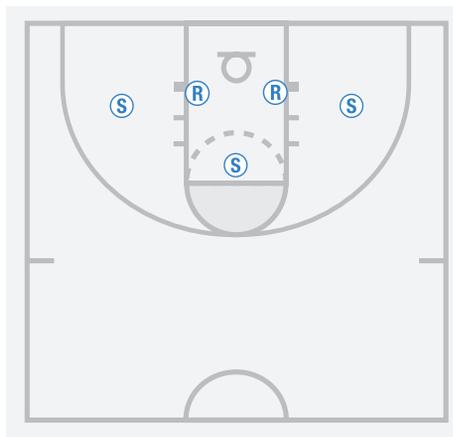
- ◆ Lay-ups - Stress jumping off the proper foot and using the backboard (STEP-HOP-SHOOT)
- ◆ Pull-up Off the Dribble - Set a cone at desired shooting spot (stress good jump stop and use of backboard when shooting from appropriate angle)

### Three Shooters (three basketball required)

Players rotate lines after each turn. After several repetitions shooting from one side of the goal, change the designation of both lines and shoot from the other side of the court.

- ◆ Shooters will be positioned anywhere inside the three-point line at three specific areas.

- ◆ Shooters will have two minutes to shoot while the two rebounders will rebound and pass back to the shooters.



- ◆ Shot locations can be changed, time can be adjusted, and shooters and rebounders rotate.

## Rebounding

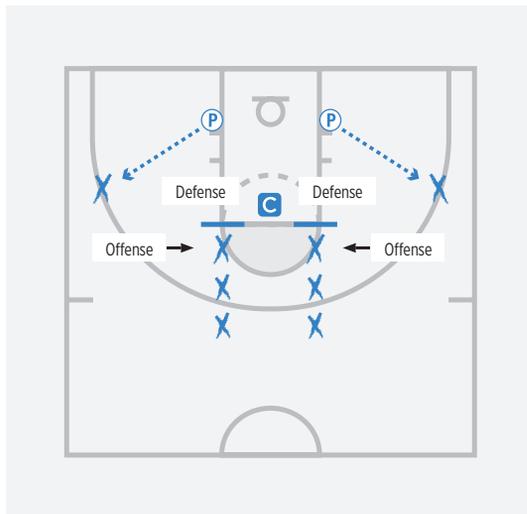
When discussing offensive rebounding, remind players that each shot taken by a teammate is a pass to them! Second chance points (put-backs) can be a big contributor to a team's offensive production.

### Rebounding Teaching Points:

- ◆ Defensive player stays between the opponent and the basket
- ◆ Using a front or reverse pivot, the defensive player pivots and makes contact with the opponent's body when the ball is shot ("block out")
- ◆ Defensive players should yell "shot" to signal a rebounding opportunity
- ◆ Hold the "block out" position momentarily, with the head up and body facing the goal
- ◆ Release the "block out" - be hungry for the basketball
- ◆ Secure the basketball
- ◆ Be strong with the basketball, keeping the ball at chin level with elbows out

## Rebound Outlet Drill (no defender, one basketball required)

- ◆ Facing the basket, players form two lines: one at the corner of the free-throw line (elbow), the other at the foul line extended (wing)
- ◆ Coach stands at the other elbow with a basketball. Coach throws the ball off the backboard
- ◆ The first player in line at elbow catches the rebound with strong hands, elbows out, and ball to the chin. The player then pivots toward the first player in the wing line and throws a two-handed chest pass
- ◆ Player from the wing line passes ball back to the coach
- ◆ Both players swap lines and drill is repeated with second players in each line



## **Rebound Outlet Drill** (with defender, one basketball required)

- ◆ Facing the basket, players form two lines: one at each corner of the free-throw line
- ◆ Place one player at each wing area to serve as an outlet receiver
- ◆ The player in the front of each line will turn his back toward the basket (defensive player), facing the next player in line (offensive player)
- ◆ When the coach shoots the basketball, the defensive players will yell “shot” and pivot into the offensive players to obtain a good “block out”
- ◆ Offensive players cannot move
- ◆ Once a defender secures the basketball, pivot and throw a crisp overhead outlet pass to an outlet receiver
- ◆ Players rotate from offense/to defense/to outlet receiver/to back of the line

**Variations: You can use one line instead of two. For an additional variation, when the ball is shot, the offense can move and try to score off a missed shot**

## Defense

### Defensive Teaching Points:

- ◆ Proper defensive stance
  - Stand with feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart
  - Knees bent, with waist slightly bent forward
  - Good balance - ready to move and slide
  - Place weight on the inside front of the feet, but not on the toes
  - Extend arms to the side, slightly bent
  - Open hands, so palms face the offensive player
  - Eyes on the offensive player's chest or "head on the ball"
- ◆ Ball/you/basket principle: When the offensive player being guarded has the ball, the defensive player should stay between this assigned offensive player with the basketball and the basket
- ◆ See the ball at all times
- ◆ Sprint down the floor on a change of possession, stopping any fast breaks

## **Defensive Slides Drill** (no basketball required)

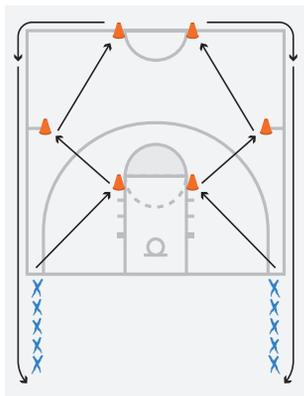
Focus on players' feet sliding (rather than hopping or skipping) and players maintaining a proper defensive stance. Have fun with this drill! Allow players to express enthusiasm and desire by slapping the playing floor and yelling "DEFENSE" on command. Drill should last 20-30 seconds. Allow a short rest and repeat as desired.

- ◆ Allow players to spread out in practice area, at least four to five feet apart
- ◆ On command, players yell "DEFENSE" and freeze in the defensive stance
- ◆ On command (either verbal or hand signals), players will slide left, right, up, and back

## Zigzag Drill (no basketball required)

Focus on players making a drop step each time they turn (rather than crossing their feet) and on players sliding correctly while maintaining a proper defensive stance.

- ◆ Form a line of players at one end of your practice area
- ◆ Set-up cones or chairs in a zigzag pattern, spaced 10-12 feet apart (minimum 3 spots)
- ◆ On command, the first player in line will assume the correct defensive stance and will slide in a zigzag pattern as dictated by the cones or chairs



- ◆ The next player in line starts as the preceding player leaves first spot
- ◆ As each player reaches the final spot, he or she should sprint back to the end of the line

## ➔ Offensive Plays

The following offensive plays are provided to help your team with floor spacing and floor balance. These plays are intended for Levels 3 and 4.

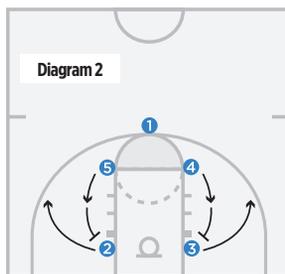
**Reminder: View the Skills and Drills videos on the coach section of MyUpward.org for live demonstrations of the following offensive plays.**

### Half-Court Sets

#### Box Set - Motion

##### Scoring Options

- ◆ Player 5 posting up on ball-side block
- ◆ Player 4 coming off of low screen
- ◆ Player 3 cutting to the free-throw line
  - Players 2, 3, 4, and 5 are in the “box” offensive set (diagram 1)
  - Player 1 (point guard) yells “MOTION” or “GO” to start the play (player 1 should keep dribble alive until passing)
  - Players 4 and 5, who are standing outside the lane area at the free-throw line extended areas, will screen down for players 2 and 3 (diagram 2)

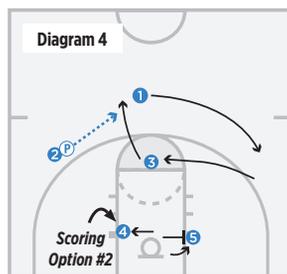
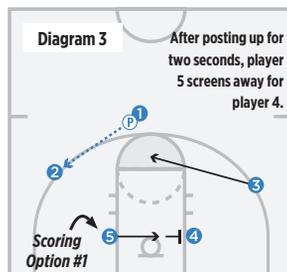


(Continued on next page)

- Before the screens occur, players 2 and 3 will take two to three steps toward the lane area (to set up their defenders) and then make hard V-cuts to their respective wing areas (diagram 2)

## Procedure

- ◆ Player 1 will pass the basketball to player 2 or 3 (assume player 2 in this example) who will square up to the basket (diagram 3)
- ◆ Player 5, post player on the ball-side of the court, will post up for two seconds (diagram 3)
- ◆ After two seconds, player 5 will screen away for opposite post player - player 4 (diagram 3)
- ◆ As player 5 turns to screen away for the opposite post player, player 3 will cut toward the free-throw line and player 1 will “fill” his or her spot at the wing (diagram 3)
- ◆ If a pass cannot be made to player 4 coming off the low screen or to player 3 on the cut to the lane area, player 3 will move to the top of the key area to receive a pass from player 2 (diagram 4)
- ◆ If the pass is made to player 3 at the top of the key area, team will be in the “box” offensive set again (diagram 5)



## **Box Set - Double Down**

### **Scoring Options**

- ◆ Player 3 coming off of low screen
- ◆ Player 2 coming off the double screen

### **Procedure**

- ◆ Players 2, 3, 4, and 5 are in the “box” offensive set
- ◆ Player 1 (point guard) yells “DOUBLE” or “GO” to start the play (player 1 should keep dribble alive until making a pass)
- ◆ Player 1 dribbles to right-side of the goal - can go to right or left (diagram 1)
- ◆ As player 1 dribbles to the wing area (attack zone), player 2 will screen away for player 3 (diagram 1)
- ◆ Player 3 cuts to the ball-side block area hoping to receive a pass from player 1 (diagrams 1 and 2)
- ◆ As player 3 cuts to the ball-side block area, players 4 and 5 will set a double screen in the middle of the lane for player 2 (diagram 2)
- ◆ Player 1 looks for player 2 as he or she curls around the screen for an open jump-shot (diagram 3)

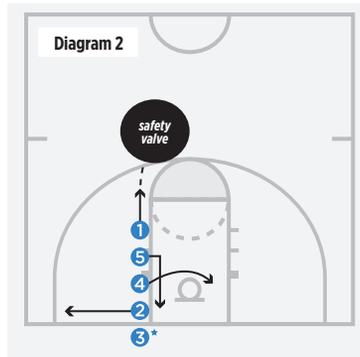
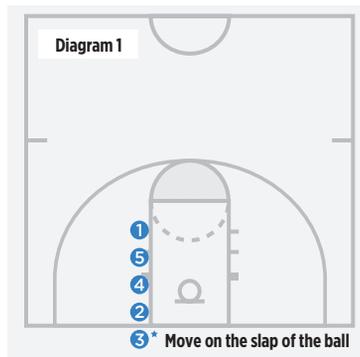
## Inbounds Plays

Players should use fakes and jab steps to set up their defenders and get open. Encourage players coming off a screen to rub shoulders with the screener. As the person throwing in the basketball can pass to any teammate, encourage ready hands.

### Stack - Baseline

- ◆ All four players line-up straight across from the player throwing in the basketball (diagram 1)
- ◆ When the passer slaps the basketball or yells “break,” the players move simultaneously as follows (diagram 2)

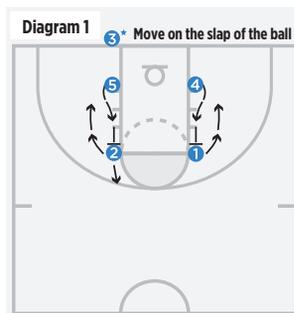
- First player in line breaks to ball-side corner
- Second player in line cuts to opposite block
- Third player in line moves straight down to block area toward the ball
- Fourth player in line takes two to three steps back, serving as a safety valve



**Reminder: This play can also be used on the sideline, with players moving in the same pattern as above.**

## Box - Baseline

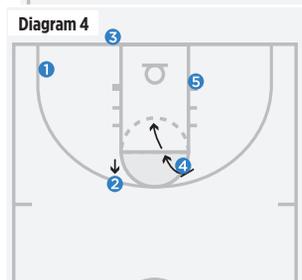
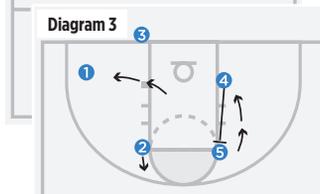
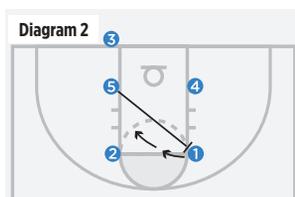
- ◆ Each player takes a spot outside the lane area, with the post players (Players 4 and 5) at the block areas and the perimeter players (Players 1 and 2) at the free-throw line extended areas. Player 3 will throw in the basketball (diagram 1).



- ◆ When the passer slaps the basketball or yells “break,” the players move as follows:

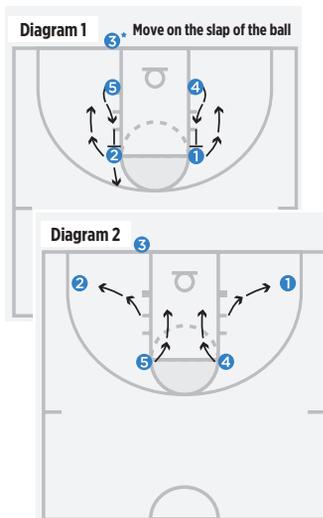
### Box Option #1

- ◆ Player 5 sets a diagonal screen for Player 1 (diagram 2)
- ◆ Player 1 waits for the screen and moves toward the basketball to the opposite block (diagram 2)
- ◆ If Player 1 does not receive the basketball, he or she continues to the ball-side corner (diagram 3)
- ◆ Player 4 moves up to set a screen on Player 5, who cuts down toward the weak-side block (diagram 3)
- ◆ Player 4 rolls toward the middle of the lane after setting the screen (diagram 4)
- ◆ Player 2 serves as a safety valve (diagram 4)



## Box Option #2

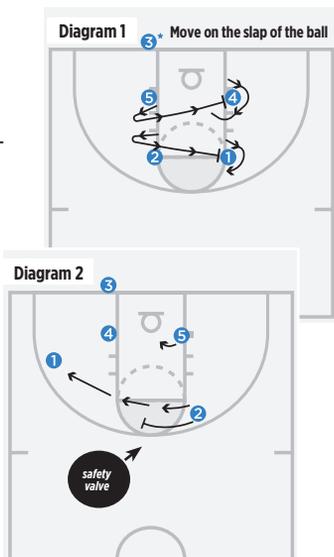
- ◆ Players 4 and 5 screen up for Players 1 and 2 (diagram 1)
- ◆ If a pass cannot be made to either 1 or 2, they each move to the closest corner (diagram 2)
- ◆ After setting the screens, Players 4 and 5 should roll back toward the ball (diagram 2)



## Box Option #3

All four players will take one to two steps toward the closest sideline to set up their defenders (diagram 1)

- ◆ Players 5 and 2 will both cross-screen for Players 4 and 1 on the weak-side (diagram 1)
- ◆ After setting a screen, Player 5 will turn around with ready hands (diagram 2)
- ◆ Player 2 will roll back to ball-side, free-throw line extended area to serve as a safety valve (diagram 2)





## SECTION 3

# PRACTICE DEVOTIONS

## BIBLICAL VIRTUES

WEEK 1:	EXCELLENCE .....	70
WEEK 2:	EXCELLENCE .....	73
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WEEK 8:	GOOD NEWS .....	91
WEEK 9:	HUMILITY.....	94
WEEK 10:	HUMILITY.....	97
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## ➔ Devotions

As an Upward Coach, you are not only teaching skills for the sport but also values for life. The devotion time allows you to teach the character of Christ through biblical virtues. This season will focus on virtues which are taught in your practices and are highlighted by Bible verses. The chart below is designed to assist you as you organize and prepare for your devotions. It shows the biblical virtues and verses for each group of practices.

PRACTICE NUMBER	BIBLICAL VIRTUES	VERSE
Week 1	<b><i>Excellence</i></b>	No Key Verse This Week
Week 2	<b><i>Excellence</i></b>	And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus. Colossians 3:17a (NLT)
Week 3	<b><i>Excellence</i></b>	And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus. Colossians 3:17a (NLT)
Week 4	<b><i>Excellence</i></b>	And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus. Colossians 3:17a (NLT)
Week 5	<b><i>Diligence</i></b>	Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)

PRACTICE NUMBER	BIBLICAL VIRTUES	VERSE
Week 6	<b><i>Diligence</i></b>	Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)
Week 7	<b><i>Diligence</i></b>	Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)
Week 8	<b><i>Good News</i></b>	For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)
Week 9	<b><i>Humility</i></b>	Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NLT)
Week 10	<b><i>Humility</i></b>	Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NLT)
Week 11	<b><i>Humility</i></b>	Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NLT)



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

This season, our devotions will focus on three virtues—excellence, diligence, and humility—with excellence being the overall theme. This first devotion will explain why these characteristics are so important. We should aim for excellence because God created us—and the rest of the universe we reside in—with excellence beyond measure. And He made humans His representatives on earth. Living, creating, working, and interacting with excellence is our mandate as those tasked to govern the earth and care for all its creatures (Genesis 1:28). We all share in this responsibility. And though we are prone to failure, God still calls us to do our best to represent Him. Excellence, as God has designed it, truly requires both diligence and humility. If we want to honor and follow Him, we will aspire to His idea of excellence—goodness manifested in action.

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Genesis 1-3. *If you don't own a Bible, you can download the YouVersion Bible App for free.*



**ENCOURAGEMENT**

Your role as a coach this season is an opportunity to aim for excellence. How can you be the best coach you can be for these young athletes? How can you aim for excellence as you present these devotions to your team and work to teach them important truths from the Bible? What preparation do you need to do for practices and games? Write down your answers to these questions and put that list in a place where you will see it throughout the season.

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

Is representing God with excellence something that drives my life? Why or why not?

**Bible Translation Note:** All Scripture quotations in this devotion track are taken from the New Living Translation (NLT) of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.

## PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM

**BOTTOM LINE**

I want to aim for excellence.

**ASK (All Ages): Can anyone tell me what the word “excellence” means?**

If I said something you did at practice was excellent, it means that you did a great job. If someone shows you a movie they think is excellent, then they think it was a really great movie.

Excellence describes something that is really well done. Usually, a lot of hard work goes into something excellent. Really, being excellent means putting your best foot forward. This season, we’re going to be talking about excellence and some other important characteristics that go along with it.

Did you know that the Bible also talks about excellence? God wants us to do our best. He wants us to do our best when it comes to following Him, but He also wants us to do our best in everything else we do, too.

**ASK (All Ages): Why do you think God wants us to do our best?**

The Bible teaches that God created the whole universe. He created Earth and everything on it, including us! He created all the plants and animals, all the oceans and mountains. And after He created everything, the Bible says, “Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!” (Genesis 1:31)

God created with excellence. Everything He made was very good. He made the universe unbelievably huge, amazingly detailed, and thrillingly beautiful—out of nothing! And He made it so it all moves and works together to support life. He made the solar system and the water cycle and the human eyeball!

God defined excellence with His creation, and His whole creation truly was excellent and beautiful. But He created humans to be special. The Bible says that we are made in His image. That means that we are His representatives. He made us to be like Him in many ways. He gave us the job of caring for the earth on His behalf. So, if we are going to be like Him and represent Him well, we want to do our best to copy His excellence.

**ASK (All Ages): What does it mean to represent someone else?**

To represent someone is to speak and make decisions based on what that person would want. The CEO of a company might send a representative to a business meeting to speak for the CEO and make decisions according to what the CEO would want.

If God wants us to represent Him, that means that He wants us to show others who He is through how we live and the decisions we make. Not only does He want us to follow Him, but He also wants us to live and create with excellence. He wants us to create excellent friendships, excellent ways to solve problems, excellent buildings, excellent music, and more. When we work hard to do our very best, we are representing God and His excellence.

But it's not quite that easy, is it? Excellence is so good because it's so rare. Not long in the Bible after God created the world, we read about how humans failed to follow God and sin entered the world. Lots of darkness and difficulty came with it. And now, it's not so easy for us to be excellent all the time. We all struggle. We all fail sometimes. We all fall down. But God still wants us to try our best to be excellent in everything we do.

Sometimes, this might make us sad or discouraged because we know how hard it is to try to be excellent. But no matter what, God loves you. His love for you doesn't change depending on what you do. It is steady. It is more than we could imagine. It is excellent. Because of this, aiming for excellence isn't about trying to do something for God. Aiming for excellence is about wanting to honor God by representing Him well. And we'll learn a lot more about what that looks like this season.

**ASK (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up): Why do you think God made us His representatives on earth? How does our excellence point to Him?**

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for bringing this team together this season. Thank You for creating the universe and creating us. You are truly excellent in every way. Please help us learn to represent Your excellence as we live our lives. Teach us what it really means to live that way. We love You, Lord. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

For the next three devotions, we'll take a more in-depth look at what it means for the athletes on your team to aim for excellence in their daily lives. In this devotion, we'll talk about how they can aim for excellence at school. (If you have kids on your team who are homeschooled, this is relevant for them, too. When asking for examples, call on them to share ideas based on their specific school experience if they are willing.) For kids and teens, doing their best at school is the equivalent of adults doing their best at work.

We introduce Colossians 3:17 in this devotion, which reminds us that whatever we do, we don't work simply for ourselves, our employer, or our customers—we work as representatives of God. "Verse 17 offers a general principle for Christian ethical decision. Whatever Christians do, they should remember 'who they are.' They are Christ's and all their behavior should be consistent with their bearing his name. They are saved by his grace, and all their living should be an expression of gratitude for their salvation." (John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*)

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Colossians 3:1-17; Colossians 3:23; 2 Peter 1:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

There are many ways to show excellence in our work. While results and productivity matter, so do how we achieve them. Are you representing God well in how you treat your coworkers, employees, or boss? Are you representing God well by being honest in your business practices? Are you so concerned with profit that you ignore ethics? It's good to stop and check in with yourself occasionally to see what your work is saying about you.

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

Do I aim for excellence in my work? If not, what can I do to put my best foot forward?

## PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM

## VIRTUE

EXCELLENCE is  
doing your best.

## KEY VERSE

And whatever you do or say, do it as  
a representative of the Lord Jesus.  
Colossians 3:17a (NLT)

## BOTTOM LINE

I can aim for  
excellence at school.

Excellence means doing your best. Last time, we talked about how we should aim for excellence because God created us to be His representatives on earth. We want to be excellent because He is excellent.

One of the ways we can be excellent is by doing our best at our work. For adults, that usually means doing our best at our jobs. For kids, that usually means doing your best at school.

**ASK (All Ages): What do you think it looks like to be excellent at school?**

When it comes to being excellent and doing your best at school, we most often think of getting good grades. But there's more to it than that.

First of all, school is easier for some people than others. And different people have different strengths. One subject in school—like math, maybe—might be easier for you and harder for your friend. Meanwhile, a different subject—like reading—might be easy for them and more difficult for you. Working hard and doing your best might look different for different people. One student might have to work a whole lot harder to get a B than another student did to get an A. What matters is trying, putting in the time and effort, and asking for help when you need it. If you do all those things, you are aiming for excellence, even if you don't get the best grade in the class.

Besides assignments, tests, and projects, there are other important ways to be excellent at school, too. Excellence means being respectful to your teachers and listening to them. It means being honest and not cheating. It means treating your classmates as you want to be treated and being kind to them.

**ASK (All Ages): What are some other ways you can be excellent at school?**

In the book of Colossians in the Bible, it says, "And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father." (Colossians 3:17) It goes on to say, "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." (Colossians 3:23)

**ASK (7<sup>th</sup> Grade and up): How does it change your motivation to be working for God rather than working for people?**

If we are working for God, as representatives of Jesus, we want to try our best in everything we do. We want to represent God well and create good in our little part of the world just like He has created good in the whole universe. That means doing our best at school, work, home, and in everything we do.

## LET'S PRAY

God, please help us represent You well in our work. Help these young athletes be students who work hard and do their best. Help them remember that they aren't working for themselves, their parents, their teachers, or anyone else. They are working to honor You. Amen.

### **GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER**

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

### **PRACTICE CARD REMINDER**

If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 2" at the end of practice.



## SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION

### BACKGROUND

God is as excellent in His generosity as He is in His creativity. He not only gives us life and the capabilities we need to survive, but He also gives each of us gifts and abilities that we can use to thrive. The athletes on your team will have talents and skills they are already aware of, some they are just discovering, and even some they haven't yet uncovered. In this devotion, we'll point out that making the most of our gifts takes hard work. It's up to each of us to decide how and to what extent we will use the gifts God has given us. If our talents and abilities are gifts from God, we ought to use them as God intended us to use them: to honor Him and serve others.

Though the Hebrews who escaped from Egypt in the Old Testament were exiles and former slaves, God made it so that they left with riches. When it was time to construct the Tabernacle, a sacred and mobile meeting place where their leader Moses and the high priests would commune with God, Moses called on the people to bring all the supplies needed for the construction. And they did. In fact, they brought more than enough! As the whole community was bringing physical gifts to God, those who had relevant abilities helped in other ways. A man named Bezalel, called "a master at every craft," oversaw the construction. The craftsmen, seamstresses, designers, engravers, embroiders, weavers, and more all used their gifts to work together to build this important place where God would interact with His people. This is a beautiful blueprint for us to bring our gifts to God and use them for the good of the community and the worship of the Lord.

### BIG PICTURE

For more insight, read James 1:17; Exodus 35:20-36:7, Exodus 12:31-42.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

"In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly."

Romans 12:6-8

### COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

How can I use the gifts and abilities God has given me to honor Him and serve others?

## PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM

## VIRTUE

EXCELLENCE is doing your best.

## KEY VERSE

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.  
Colossians 3:17a (NLT)

## BOTTOM LINE

I can aim for excellence with my gifts.

**ASK (All Ages):** Raise your hand and tell me about a talent you have or something you're really good at.

Wow! There are some very talented people in this group! So far this season, we've been talking about excellence, which means doing your best. Last time, we talked about aiming for excellence at school and in any work you do. Today, I want you to think about how you can be excellent when it comes to your talents, gifts, and abilities.

Let's think about some examples. You're all here today because you're on our team and want to have fun and grow as athletes. Sometimes, our talents include athletic ability and being really good at sports.

**ASK (All Ages):** What does it take to be an excellent athlete?

An excellent athlete practices *a lot*. They listen to their coaches and trainers. If they get hurt, they go to the doctor so they can heal right. They try to eat healthy and stay active. They stretch so they can be more flexible. They study their sport and learn the best techniques and strategies to do well.

These are the kinds of things it takes to be excellent at something. Even if you're naturally talented, you still have to put in the work. Steph Curry is the greatest three-point shooter of all time, but he became the greatest by practicing. Steph is known to shoot at least 250 three-pointers a day. Meanwhile, legendary gymnast Simone Biles trained three to seven hours a day, six days a week, to prepare for the 2024 Olympics, where she ultimately won three gold medals. Excellent athletes know they've got to put in the work to become excellent.

I know all of you have talents and abilities outside of sports, too. Some of you are really creative and like to draw, write, or play music. Some of you might be super handy and crafty. You like to help fix things or build things. Some of you can beat everyone you know at a certain video game.

One thing all these things have in common is that it takes a lot of practice, study, and hard work to become excellent at them.

**ASK (All Ages):** Tell us about one of your other talents. What does it take to be excellent at that?

Another thing all these things have in common is that they are all gifts God has given us. The Bible says, “Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens.” (James 1:17)

**ASK (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up):** How might looking at your talents as gifts from God change how you use them?

God wants us to use the gifts He has given us to honor Him and do good for others. We want to use them in ways that help others or bring joy to people. We want to do our very best, but we also want to make sure that we aren’t worshipping the gifts God has given us instead of worshipping Him.

In the Old Testament, when Moses and the Israelites were building the Tabernacle, which would be a special place for God to meet with Israel’s spiritual leaders, the Bible says, “So the people of Israel—every man and woman who was eager to help in the work the Lord had given them through Moses—brought their gifts and gave them freely to the Lord.” (Exodus 35:29)

Those who were skilled craftsmen came to help build everything needed for the Tabernacle. The women who were skilled at sewing brought fine thread and cloth. Everyone contributed material gifts like gold, silver, gemstones, wood, leather, and more.

When God gives us gifts, He doesn’t just want us to use them for ourselves. He wants us to do good and be excellent in how we use them.

**ASK (All Ages):** What is a talent or ability you have that you could use to help others or worship God?

## LET’S PRAY

God, thank You for the many wonderful gifts You have given us. Show us how we can use our talents and abilities to honor You and to help others. Give us the determination to work hard and put in the practice to become excellent in these gifts. We want to glorify You with them. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

In our culture, we tend to think of excellence in a very individualized way. But as we consider the kind of excellence that God wants from us, we must be prepared to look beyond ourselves. Excellence cannot be purely individual because so many of the challenging choices God calls us to are not about ourselves—they are about us in relation to the people around us. God is looking for representatives who work together as people who bear His image. He is looking for unity, mutual love, and respect. We must do our part as just one person in any given relationship, but we are not alone. Excellence in relationships requires vulnerability and willingness to trust someone else. Excellence in relationships doesn't mean checking off boxes but daily adapting to the wants and needs of the people around you, learning to appreciate who they are, and authentically loving them just as they are. This is the kind of love Jesus embodied and the kind of love we should emulate to the best of our ability.

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Ephesians 4:21-32; Galatians 6:7-10; Exodus 20:12; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

“Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other . . . When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.”

**Romans 12:9-13**

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

Do I aim for excellence in my relationships? What would it take for me to be an excellent friend, coworker, parent, spouse, etc.?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM**
**VIRTUE**

EXCELLENCE is doing your best.

**KEY VERSE**

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.  
Colossians 3:17a (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can aim for excellence in my relationships.

We've been talking about excellence and how we want to do our very best in our work and with the gifts God has given us. But there's another area where we should want to be excellent, too—in our relationships with other people.

Let's think about some of the relationships in our lives. Raise your hand if you're someone's son or daughter. Now, raise your hand if you're someone's sister or brother. Grandson or granddaughter? Cousin? Niece or Nephew? Okay, what about if you're someone's friend? Are you a classmate? Are you a student? Are you a teammate? Everybody's hands should be raised for that one!

We all have relationships that are important to us. Just as we can reflect God's excellence in our work and through our talents, we should also want to reflect God's excellence in how we treat people. God made all of us in His image and loves all of us. He wants us to be kind and good to each other because He is kind and good to us.

**ASK (All Ages): What do you think it looks like to be an excellent friend?**

An excellent friend treats their friends as they want to be treated. They care about their friends and do their best to be there for them, treat them with kindness, and help them when they need help.

The Bible says that we should "be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32) There's another verse that says, "Whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith." (Galatians 6:10)

**ASK (All Ages): What do you think it looks like to be an excellent family member?**

One of the Ten Commandments reminds us how important family is. It says, "Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you." (Exodus 20:12)

**ASK (All Ages): What do you think it looks like to be an excellent teammate or classmate?**

The Bible makes it clear that teamwork is important. It says, "Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help.

But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

We won’t be perfect in our relationships, and that’s okay. But God does ask us to put our best foot forward and work hard to do our very best in our relationships. We want to do our very best to be kind, respectful, caring, thoughtful, helpful, and forgiving. God is all these things toward us, so we want to be all these things toward the other people in our lives.

## LET’S PRAY

God, thank You for the people You have placed in our lives—our friends, family, teammates, and more. Help us to be excellent friends, family members, and teammates ourselves. Help us to treat people the way we want to be treated. We love You, Lord. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



## SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION

### BACKGROUND

Our next virtue this season is diligence. It's clear how diligence contributes to excellence. While hard work doesn't always lead to excellence, you'll rarely see excellence achieved without it. In this devotion, we'll introduce the topic of diligence by looking at the story of Joseph from the Old Testament. Joseph faced many difficult trials, but he worked hard and trusted God through everything. Even though Joseph couldn't see the bigger plans God had in store, he still stayed faithful to God—as he knew God would be faithful to him.

“Why was Joseph so great? He was great because of his faith in God, which manifested itself in a magnanimous attitude toward others and his magnificent attitude toward difficulties. A strong faith leads to a good attitude. When those two essentials are in place, troubles become challenges to face not reasons to quit.” (Charles R. Swindoll, *Joseph: A Man of Integrity and Faithfulness*)

### BIG PICTURE

For more insight, read Galatians 6:9-10; Genesis 37; Genesis 39-45.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

Think about any goals you have in your life right now. Are you working toward them with diligence? If not, what obstacles are holding you back? Think about any challenges you are facing. What is required to faithfully and diligently overcome them? Take some time to pray and consider how trusting in God can help you stay the course and address your goals and challenges with diligence.

### COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Under what circumstances am I most diligent? Least diligent?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM**
**VIRTUE**

DILIGENCE is working hard to meet a goal.

**KEY VERSE**

Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.  
1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can work diligently because God is with me.

We started this season talking about excellence. One thing that's pretty clear about excellence is that it usually takes a lot of hard work. One author estimated that it takes about 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert in something. That's a lot of practice! Putting in hard work day after day, hour after hour, is sometimes called diligence. Diligence means working hard to meet a goal.

**ASK (All Ages): Do you know someone who is very diligent? Who is it and how do they show diligence?**

When we think about diligence, we might think about people who achieved great things after many tries. It took Thomas Edison over 2,000 tries to make a working lightbulb. The Wright Brothers had many unsuccessful attempts before they finally made the first powered flight in an airplane. Diligent people have to be willing to fail sometimes. They have to be willing to put in hard work, even if they don't see results right away.

The Bible tells us many stories about people who were diligent in following God. Even when they faced obstacles, they kept going and didn't give up. They knew that God was with them and would help them.

Let me tell you about one of these people. His name was Joseph. He was sold into slavery by his own brothers and taken far from home to another country. But Joseph didn't give up. He worked very hard and became the most trusted slave in the household of the man he worked for. Unfortunately, Joseph was accused of something he didn't do and was thrown into prison. Even there, Joseph worked hard. The head jailer put him in charge of all the other prisoners. Finally, Joseph was released from prison—but he still didn't stop working. He became the second most powerful man in the country and was in charge of saving up food for a coming famine. All his hard work paid off when he saved countless lives during the famine, including the lives of his own family, who came to the country where Joseph was to buy food.

**ASK (All Ages): How was Joseph diligent? What do you think made him keep working hard, whatever situation he was in?**

Even when he felt alone, Joseph trusted that God was with him and would help him. And God is the one who gave Joseph great success in everything he did. God worked in Joseph's life to bring about bigger plans than Joseph could even see at the time. He used Joseph to save his whole family.

**ASK (All Ages): How can trusting in God help you work hard and stay diligent?**

There's a verse in the New Testament of the Bible that says, "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." (Galatians 6:9) God wants us not to get tired of doing what is good, doing what is right, and following Him. He can bring bigger plans out of our work than we can even see now.

**LET'S PRAY**

God, thank You for the diligent people in the Bible who help teach us what it looks like to follow You through ups and downs. Help us to be diligent and not get tired of doing good. Help us to honor You by working hard and not giving up. Amen.

**GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER**

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

**PRACTICE CARD REMINDER**

If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 5" at the end of practice.



## SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION

### BACKGROUND

J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote that “the chief purpose of life, for any one of us, is to increase according to our capacity our knowledge of God by all the means we have, and to be moved by it to praise and thanks.” The things we spend our time doing and thinking about are the most important things in our lives. If anything is worth spending our time on, it is certainly our relationship with God. This devotion will encourage your players to get to know God and His word.

### BIG PICTURE

For more insight, read 1 Timothy 1:1-14; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Psalm 1:1-3.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

“Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years.” (Charles Spurgeon)  
Whether you are new to the Bible or have spent your entire life studying it, there is so much of value to learn. Consider how you might take a more intentional approach to studying Scripture with diligence in your own life.

### COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Am I diligent in studying the Bible and deepening my relationship with God? Why or why not?

## PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM

## VIRTUE

DILIGENCE is working hard to meet a goal.

## KEY VERSE

Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.  
1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)

## BOTTOM LINE

I can be diligent in learning about God.

Last time, we started talking about diligence. Diligence is working hard to meet a goal.

**ASK (All Ages): What are some goals that kids your age might want to work hard to achieve?**

You might work really hard to be a good athlete, to get a good grade on a test, or to learn how to play an instrument. These are all great goals! And there are many more you can have, even at a young age. But there is another goal that is really important that you might not think about as much.

One of the best goals you can have in life is to get to know God better. No matter how old you are, growing in your relationship with God is really important! God created you, loves you, and wants to have a relationship with you. Even though you can't see Him right in front of you, there are still many ways you can get to know God better.

**ASK (All Ages): What are some ways you might be able to get to know God better?**

One of the best ways to get to know God better is to pray. Prayer is simply talking to God! He will always hear you when you talk to Him. Even though He knows everything about you, He wants you to talk to Him and share what you think, express how you feel, and ask Him for help when you need it.

Another great way to get to know God better is to read the Bible. The Bible is God's message to us. It tells all about how He has worked throughout history and His plan for the world. You can learn so much about God by reading the Bible. If you need help understanding the Bible better, you can ask your parents or someone at church for help. If you've never read the Bible before, a good place to start is the book of Luke in the New Testament. It will tell you the story of Jesus, God's Son, during His time on earth!

You can also get to know God better by spending time with people who know Him well themselves! Maybe someone in your family knows God really well and you could talk to them about Him. Or maybe it's a teacher or pastor from church. If you have questions about God, don't be afraid to ask!

**ASK (All Ages): Why do you think it's important to be diligent in getting to know God?**

The apostle Paul was a leader in the early church who told many people about Jesus. He

became a mentor to a young Christian named Timothy, whose mother and grandmother had taught him about God and read him the Bible from an early age. Paul wrote to Timothy and said, "You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

**ASK (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up):** What does this passage teach us about why it's important to spend time learning about God from the Bible?

God created everything, including you. He knows everything, including everything about you! When you get to know God, you will better understand the right way to live to follow Him. You will have wisdom in your life. And you will be better able to see the amazing things God is doing in your life and in the world around you. Best of all, you will see that God Himself is amazing, and that having a relationship with Him is the greatest goal of all.

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for giving us ways to know You better. Thank You for revealing Yourself to us through the Bible and through Your Son, Jesus. Help us to work diligently to know You. Give us understanding and wisdom in our lives. We love You, Lord. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

While it is important for kids to learn about excellence and diligence, one of the dangers of emphasizing these things is that they could become overwhelmed or burned out if they do not also learn about balance and moderation. Rest is one of God's great gifts to us, but it is also one of His imperatives for us. He created us to need rest. Too often in our culture, that fact is ignored. We overload our schedules and overstimulate our minds. While it is good to work hard, have goals, and stay busy, God's wisdom and desire for us is that we would do all this in moderation. He knows life is tiring, and He wants us to take breaks. He wants us to take time to rest our bodies and our brains. He built it into the very act of creation, the very order of life.

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Genesis 2:1-3; Psalm 127:1-2; Mark 6:30-31.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'"

**Matthew 11:28-30**

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

How can I make more time for healthy rest in my life?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM**
**VIRTUE**

DILIGENCE is working hard to meet a goal.

**KEY VERSE**

Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.  
1 Corinthians 15:58b (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can learn how to rest.

**ASK (All Ages):** Imagine you showed up to practice one day, and I had the team run 500 laps. Then, after the 500 laps, I told you we were going to scrimmage another team. How well do you think you would play?

**ASK (All Ages):** Imagine that before a really important test, you stayed awake for three nights straight. How well do you think you would do on the test?

So far this season, we've been talking about working hard and doing our best. These are great things! But guess what? It's also important for us to rest! An important part of being a diligent person and someone who works for excellence is knowing when it's time to take a break!

**ASK (All Ages):** Why do you think it's important for us to rest?

The Bible tells us that when God created the world, He spent six days creating everything: the stars and planets, the land and oceans, the plants and animals, the people. Then, on the seventh day, God rested. The Bible says, "On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation." (Genesis 2:2-3)

God doesn't get tired like we do. But He still rested because He wanted to celebrate His creation and because He wanted to make a model for us to follow. He wanted us to remember that it is important to rest!

God also created us to need sleep each night so that we can wake up refreshed every morning. When you have trouble sleeping or don't get enough sleep, it can really mess you up! Your brain and body do not run well without sleep. It seems like God knew that if He didn't make us to need rest, we might have a hard time taking a break!

But rest is about more than just sleep. While getting a good night's sleep is super important, so is just taking time off from working hard or doing lots of activities all the time. If you're working hard, your body and your brain need breaks to recharge. You'll usually be able to think clearer and work harder after you relax for a little while.

**ASK (All Ages):** What are some things you like to do to relax?

One important way to rest your brain (and your eyes) in our modern times is to take some time

away from screens. It can wear you down more than you realize to stare at a tablet or a TV screen for hours at a time. Even things that seem relaxing can be things we need to take a break from! Think about this. When was the last time you just sat outside or in a comfy chair in your house and just talked to God? If it's been a while, or it's something you've never done, why don't you give it a try this week? See how many things you can think of to thank God for. Enjoy resting and letting your body and mind be still for just a few minutes. Think about how God rested from creation and how He wants you to rest so you can keep creating and working hard toward great things yourself.

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for rest. Help us to learn to relax and take a break when we need one. Help us to remember that You want us to pause sometimes and take time away from working hard. Let our rest help us recharge and keep our brains and bodies in good shape. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



*This week's devotion includes a gospel presentation.*

**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

For us humans, excellence and diligence come with a caveat. Unlike our excellent God, we are not perfect. We can do our best and work our hardest, but we will all fail at some point. And the truth is, we usually fail a lot. A big part of life as humans is reckoning with failure when it challenges our personal goals and aspirations. But we must also reckon with the failure of sin and what it means as we relate to our perfect and holy Creator. No effort on our part can secure our good standing before the Almighty God. Yet, in His excellent goodness and love, God sent His Son, Jesus, to make us right with Him—not based on anything we can do, but based on His sacrificial actions on our account. His death and resurrection allow those who believe in Him to be reborn, restored, renewed, redeemed, and recreated in His excellence rather than our own.

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 10:9-10; John 19-20.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

Have I trusted in Jesus to restore my relationship with God, or am I trying to earn God's favor on my own?

## PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM

## VIRTUE

The GOOD NEWS is that Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins.

## KEY VERSE

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.  
2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)

## BOTTOM LINE

Jesus made a way for us to be with God.

So far this season, we've been talking about excellence and diligence. These are important characteristics that can get you far in life. When you aim for excellence and work with diligence, you are reflecting God and His creative work. Remember, God made each of us in His image, and we are like Him in many ways.

But, there are other ways that we are not like God. You see, when God made us, He gave us the ability to choose for ourselves whether or not we would follow Him and His wisdom for life. We can choose to do things His way or our way. And sadly, from the first humans down to us, everyone has chosen to do things their own way instead of God's way. This is called sin. Sin is anything we do, say, or think that disobeys God and goes against His plan for creation. It includes things like stealing, lying, and selfishness.

The Bible says that all people have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. Even the people who seem like they're the best the world has to offer fall way short of living how God wants them to. We have all chosen to disobey God. And, because of that, we are separated from God by our sin—both now and forever. We can't have a relationship with Him because He is completely perfect and truly excellent, and we aren't. We can have all the diligence in the world, but we will never be able to do enough or make ourselves good enough to meet God's standards. It's impossible.

**ASK (All Ages): Why is sin so serious?**

Thankfully, that's not the end of the story. You see, God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth to live among us and to show us more of who He is. Jesus did live a perfect life. He was excellent in every way. He never sinned. He taught people about God and showed them God's love by caring for them, healing them, and helping them.

But some people didn't like the things Jesus said and did. They arrested Jesus, and He was sentenced to die a terrible death on a wooden cross. He was killed, even though He had done nothing wrong. Three days later, though, something amazing happened. God raised Jesus from the dead! He came back to life! He appeared to many of His friends and continued to teach them for a few weeks before returning to heaven, where He is still alive today!

**ASK (All Ages): What stands out to you about what Jesus did?**

You know how I said we could never do enough or make ourselves good enough to meet God's standards? Well, when Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He actually made a way for us to meet God's standards and have a relationship with Him.

The Bible tells us that the biggest consequence of sin is death. So, when Jesus, who was the perfect Son of God, died on the cross, He took the punishment for all our sin. He took all our sinfulness on Himself and paid the price. Then, when He rose back to life, Jesus conquered sin and death forever. He proved that He was stronger. The Bible says, "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Now, when we put our trust in Jesus and ask God to forgive our sins, He will forgive them, because Jesus has already paid for them! That way, we can have a relationship with God through Jesus. Romans 10:9-10 says, "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved."

Meanwhile, Jesus' perfect righteousness is given to us. While we will still mess up and won't be perfect while we're on this earth, when we believe in Jesus, God sends His Holy Spirit to live in us and help us grow to be more like Jesus. And after we die, we'll live with God forever!

**ASK (All Ages):** How does it make you feel to think about everything Jesus did for you?

If you have questions or want to talk more about what all this means, I'd be happy to talk with you after practice.

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to make a way for us to have a relationship with You. Let all of us here trust in Jesus to save us. We are so grateful for what Jesus has done for us. We love You, Lord. Amen.

*If someone has questions about following Jesus, let your League Director know and ask them about the follow-up process for your league. Also let the parents know their child is asking questions. If the family does not attend church, this would be a great opportunity to invite them to come to church with you.*

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

### PRACTICE CARD REMINDER

If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 8" at the end of practice.



## SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION

### BACKGROUND

Our final virtue for this season is humility. There is something in our sinful nature that can easily turn into self-interested pride when we are praised for excellence or achieve something through hard work. Even if we know that all people are made in God's image, we can see ourselves as better or more deserving than others. But God's definition of excellence, as seen in the person of Jesus Christ, embraces humble, generous, sacrificial service rather than pride. Jesus said of Himself: "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45)

In this devotion, we'll look at one of the most beautiful passages that explains His humility (Philippians 2:1-11) and one of the most poignant actions that exemplifies His humility (John 13:1-17). The context of each passage is striking. Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians from prison, and it speaks to his willingness to suffer for the sake of the gospel. He encouraged the Philippian church to embrace humility as he himself followed Jesus' example of humility. Meanwhile, details of the Last Supper from Luke 22 let us know that the foot-washing narrative in John 13 comes soon after Jesus' disciples have been arguing about who is the greatest among them (a frequent argument among them, which we'll come back to in Practice 10). In response, Jesus unexpectedly performs the actions of a servant—stunning them all by showing them exactly where they belong if they truly want to follow Him: humbly serving others.

### BIG PICTURE

For more insight, read Philippians 2:1-11; John 13:1-17.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

Humility is not a highly-valued virtue in our culture. Instead, we are inclined to seek fame, self-promotion, and whatever gets us ahead. It is perhaps one of the most significant hallmarks of Jesus' upside-down Christian ethic to be a person who will genuinely "consider others as more important than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3 CSB) Yet, by nature, someone who is truly humble probably does not draw much attention to themselves. Think about someone in your life who exemplifies humility. What can you learn from them?

### COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

What comes to mind when I think about humility?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM**
**VIRTUE**

HUMILITY is treating other people as more important than yourself.

**KEY VERSE**

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.  
Philippians 2:3 (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

Jesus is our example of humility.

We've talked a lot about excellence this season. Trying to be excellent is a great thing, but we have to be careful because one thing that can sometimes come along with excellence is arrogance. Arrogance is thinking you're better than other people. It means you always put yourself first and think you're more important than anyone else. And it's not a good way to live. In fact, the Bible teaches that we should avoid being arrogant and, instead, we should be humble.

**ASK (All Ages): What does humility mean?**

Humility is treating other people as more important than yourself. It doesn't mean that other people are better than you or that you should think of yourself as bad. Not at all! Instead, humility means having a correct view of yourself. Someone who is humble realizes how small they are next to how big, mighty, and awesome God is. At the same time, they know that God made all people with value and dignity, and if they respect God, they should respect other people, too. They understand that God wants us to love one another as we love ourselves. He wants us to serve others. He wants us to follow Jesus' example of humility.

Jesus is the best example of humility. He is the Son of God, yet He came to earth and was born as a baby, grew up in a poor family, and faced a lot of hard times and suffering before dying a painful death on the cross. He didn't have to do any of this! He is the Creator of the universe and the King of Kings. But Jesus did all this because He loves us.

**ASK (All Ages): How did Jesus show humility?**

There's an awesome section in the book of Philippians in the New Testament that talks about this. Many Bible scholars believe some of these words were actually lyrics from a song that early Christians sang. It says:

"You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross." (Philippians 2:5-8)

Jesus humbled Himself in every way by becoming human and dying on the cross. And while He was on earth, Jesus didn't act like a king. He acted like a servant. He listened to people and

helped people. He even washed His disciples' feet, which was a job for a servant. When He did this, He told His disciples, "And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you." (John 13:14-15)

### **ASK (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up): How can Jesus' humility inspire us to be humble?**

Now, listen to the rest of that early Christian song from Philippians. This is what God says He will do for Jesus because of how He humbled Himself. It says:

"Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11)

Wow! If this is how much God values Jesus' humility, think about how happy it will make Him to see us follow Jesus' example of being humble ourselves.

### **LET'S PRAY**

God, thank You for Jesus' example of humility. Help us to be so grateful for what He has done for us that we can't help but humbly serve the people around us. Help us to follow Jesus' example and have the right view of ourselves and others. We want to honor You by living humble lives. Amen.

#### **GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER**

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

#### **PRACTICE CARD REMINDER**

If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 9" at the end of practice.



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

If Jesus is our greatest example of humility, it's ironic that this seemed to be one of the concepts that His closest followers most struggled to comprehend. On multiple occasions, they argued over who was the greatest among them, over who deserved a position of honor at Jesus' side. They still expected Him to be a Messiah who would conquer with worldly strength and grant them power and status. Meanwhile, Jesus was welcoming the outcast, healing the broken, and feeding the hungry. His disciples could not see that He was already demonstrating the true essence of His kingdom: service and sacrifice. It was not until His astonishing act of washing their feet (which we talked about last practice) and His subsequent death and resurrection that they seemed to get the idea. "This is the most unanticipated and paradoxical characteristic of Jesus' upside-down kingdom. The Lord of glory will serve and suffer and die for his disciples. What then should their response to such love be? Certainly, not lording it over each other by jockeying for the most important position. Greatness in Jesus' value system is making oneself small, becoming a slave who has given up his or her choices." (Michael Card, *John: The Gospel of Wisdom*)

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Mark 10:35-45; Luke 22:20-26; Matthew 18:1-4; Philippians 2:3-5.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

Healthy humility comes not from self-degradation but from confidence in your identity in Christ. When you know you are loved and valued by God, you can serve others without offending your own pride or worrying about appearances. It's not about putting yourself down (or making yourself look good, for that matter) but about lifting others up.

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

Is serving others a priority in my life? Why or why not?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM****VIRTUE**

HUMILITY is treating other people as more important than yourself.

**KEY VERSE**

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.  
Philippians 2:3 (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can be humble by serving others.

Last time, we started talking about humility. Humility is treating others as more important than yourself. We learned about how Jesus is our greatest example of humility. Even though He is God, He came to earth to live as one of us, and He eventually gave His own life up for us.

Jesus' own disciples, His closest followers, had a hard time figuring out what Jesus was really trying to teach them about humility. One time, two of his disciples, James and John (who were brothers), asked Jesus for a favor. They said, "When you sit on your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left." (Mark 10:37)

**ASK (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up): Why do you think James and John asked Jesus this?**

James and John wanted the best seats in the house. They wanted Jesus to say they could be the most important people (next to Him, of course). It's kind of like when kids argue over who gets to be the line leader or fight over who gets the first piece of cake at a party. James and John wanted to put themselves first.

But Jesus told them they didn't understand what they were saying. When the other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they weren't happy! "So Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.'" (Mark 10:42-45)

**ASK (7<sup>th</sup> Grade and up): What was Jesus trying to say here?****ASK (All Ages): What does it mean to serve someone else?**

The Bible tells us what it means to serve others. It says, "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too." (Philippians 2:3-4)

Serving someone else might mean when you like cheese pizza the best but also like pepperoni, you let your friend who only likes cheese take the last piece of cheese while you take a piece of pepperoni. Serving someone else might mean spending your Saturday visiting your grandpa in the hospital instead of playing video games.

Serving is all about seeing other people as important and treating them that way. It's about looking for ways to help someone else and make their day better.

**ASK (All Ages):** What are some ways you can serve your teammates? What about your family? What about people at school?

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for the many ways the people in our lives look out for us and help us. Please show us how we can serve other people. Help us be aware of the needs around us and look out for other people as much as we can. Amen.

### GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



**SCOUTING REPORT | COACHES, HERE'S AN INSIDE LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S DEVOTION**

**BACKGROUND**

We're wrapping up our devotions with a lesson that can easily apply to all the virtues we've studied this season. An important aspect of humility is forsaking pride and being willing to admit and learn from your mistakes. It is nearly impossible to serve others, aim for excellence, or work diligently when you aren't willing to face your faults. This goes for the mistakes we make simply out of imperfection and the sins we commit out of selfishness. The latter are more serious, of course. The Bible instructs us to confess our sins to God and turn away from them in repentance. Amazingly, "there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1) Yet, God wants His children to confess and repent all the same, showing we understand the seriousness of our sin and that, though our flesh deceives us, we truly desire a better way—God's way.

**BIG PICTURE**

For more insight, read Proverbs 16:18; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-10; James 1:2-3; James 5:16.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

Sometimes, we think admitting when we mess up is weak or shameful. However, there is actually great strength in admitting your failures to others and confessing your sins to God. When we choose humility over pride, we respond to conviction with repentance. We strengthen ourselves for the next time we face temptation or hardship. We make room for the Holy Spirit to help us grow more like Christ. The benefits that come from admitting your faults are far greater than saving face for a moment.

**COACH'S QUESTION FOR REFLECTION**

What is a mistake you recently made that you can learn from?

**PRACTICE DEVOTION | SHARE THIS WITH YOUR TEAM**
**VIRTUE**

HUMILITY is treating other people as more important than yourself.

**KEY VERSE**

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.  
Philippians 2:3 (NLT)

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can be humble by learning from my mistakes.

This season, we've talked about excellence, diligence, and humility. These things all go together because they are all ways we can honor God by how we live. But one thing that can get in the way of excellence, diligence, and humility is pride.

It's great to be proud of yourself when you do a good job. But pride is dangerous when it gets in the way of you doing what you really need to do. Being proud might stop you from learning to be excellent at something because it makes you think you don't need to get any better. Pride might get in the way of diligently working hard at something because it says that you should take the easy way to do something rather than working hard to do something the right way. And pride can definitely get in the way of humility because being too proud makes you think that you're better than everyone else and that you should always put yourself first.

This is why the Bible says, "Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16:18 CSB)

**ASK (All Ages): What is it like to be around someone who is too proud? How can pride make things worse?**

One of the best ways to make sure you aren't being too prideful is to be willing to admit when you make a mistake. Someone who is humble and not too proud is someone who wants to learn from their mistakes. Pride can make you want to act like you never mess up. But the best way to learn and grow is actually to realize when you mess up and try to do better the next time.

**ASK (All Ages): When was a time when you learned from a mistake you made? How did it help you do better the next time?**

If you are humble and willing to learn from your mistakes, you will sometimes have to apologize and ask for forgiveness. We all hurt other people sometimes—whether it's on accident or on purpose. If you want to be an excellent friend or an excellent brother or sister, you will learn to apologize to your friends or siblings when you do something that hurts them.

It's also important to confess your sins to God when you disobey Him. You can let Him know that you're aware of what you did wrong and ask for His forgiveness. When you believe in Jesus, you can know that He will always forgive you. But it helps to talk to God about the times we mess up and ask for His help to do the right thing next time. He wants to help you live in a

way that honors Him!

Learning from your mistakes is helpful in many areas of life. It's how we grow and get stronger. It's how we become who we want to be. And, through the power of the Holy Spirit, it's how we become more like Jesus.

## LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for a wonderful season. I'm so grateful for this team. Help us all to remember what it means to live in a way that honors you. We want to do our best to be excellent, diligent, and humble. Most of all, we want to serve You and reflect Your excellence to the world. We love You, Lord. Amen.

### **GREEN PRACTICE STAR REMINDER**

If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

◆ NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



**SECTION 4**

# GAMES

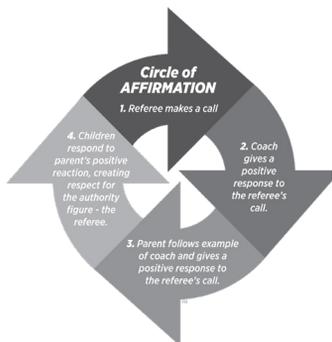
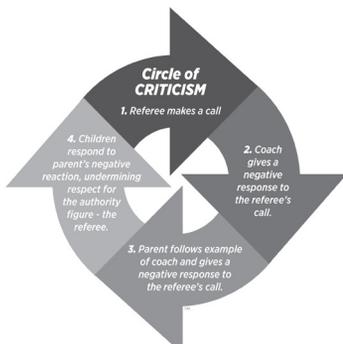
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Game days are fun and exciting and are an opportunity for players do demonstrate what they have learned.

## Circle of Affirmation

Choosing the right game day attitude is key to being an effective Upward Coach. Actions and reactions during games can either open or close the door to ministry. The Circle of Criticism and the Circle of Affirmation are simple diagrams that illustrate the results of a coach giving a referee either negative or positive feedback.

Coaches and referees work together as a unified team for everyone to have a great experience. Coaches stop the Circle of Criticism by starting the Circle of Affirmation.



The example set between coaches and referees using the Circle of Affirmation demonstrates to everyone how to value others, enjoy healthy competition, and create a positive environment for spectators and players to follow.

Practicing the Circle of Affirmation makes the game day experience better for everyone.

## ➔ The Levels of Upward Basketball

Upward Basketball suggests a four-level, age-appropriate format that progresses with each player. Each level of Upward Basketball is tailored to meet players where they are in their age development and ability, allowing them to reach their full potential.



## Basic Rules for Levels 1-3

**Note: These rules do NOT apply to Level 4.**

Except where the following rules apply, play is governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations' (NFHS) Rules Book [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)

### Game Format:

- ◆ Referees lead both teams in prayer at center court before every game. This sets the tone and focus for the game.
- ◆ A coin flip or other impartial method determines which team receives possession first. In jump ball situations, possessions will alternate. This promotes fairness for both teams while adhering to the NFHS rule for jump ball situations.
- ◆ Clock format: Running clock throughout the game, stopping only for pre-determined substitutions at the end of each segment and halftime.
- ◆ At the end of each segment, the team that receives the ball next is based upon the direction of the possession arrow. This avoids the offensive team that may have possession in the next segment from stalling at the end of a period.
- ◆ All coaches will adhere to the Upward substitution system. The substitution system allows for equal playing time for all players.
- ◆ There are no timeouts. This allows more playing time

and keeps the games on time.

- ◆ Teams switch goals at halftime. This rule is in compliance with NFHS Rules. It also evens any advantage that may occur because of the court.
- ◆ Any game ending in a tie should remain in a tie. No overtimes are played so games stay on schedule.

## Rules for Play

### Defense:

- ◆ Man-to-man defense will be played at all times in Levels 1-3. In a man-to-man defense, players are only guarding the opponent that closely matches their ability and height. This allows for a more competitive system for every player on the court while creating an equal opportunity for each player.
- ◆ Defensive players must stay within approximate arm's reach of the player they are guarding. This prevents defenders from sagging or crowding an area of the court to gain a defensive advantage. When a violation occurs, award the team in possession a throw-in from the spot nearest to the violation, or have the player step back and establish their dribble.
  - After a warning to the player, the player will be assessed a personal foul for subsequent violations.
- ◆ Double-teaming is not allowed and prevents players not guarding their correct player from stealing the ball off the dribble. However, help-and-recover defense is

strongly encouraged in the instances below. Help-and-recover lets a player temporarily guard another player as outlined in the examples below, but must leave as the other player gets within arms reach as double teaming is not allowed.

- Lane Area: If a defender is in the lane and the player they are guarding is within arm's reach, the defender may provide help defense against another player who is inside the lane area.. Since many goals are scored in the lane, it provides the defense more opportunity to properly defend this area.
  - Picks and Screens: Defensive switching is allowed on offensive picks or screens. The non-screened defender can help his or her teammate by temporarily switching until the teammate recovers to defend their offensive player. This is commonly referred to as "help-and-recover." This prevents the offense from continually setting screens to gain an advantage.
  - Fast Breaks: When a transition begins in the backcourt and the offense quickly moves the ball up court, another defensive player may help-and-recover. Upon stopping the fast break, defenders should return to guarding their assigned players. This rule is meant to prevent the defenders from helplessly watching the offensive player score without being able to help.
- ◆ At the beginning of each segment, players will line up at half court and "match up" with whom they are guarding.

This act is performed to promote equal player match-ups. Equal match-ups combined with man-to-man defense create five competitive pairings on the court.

- ◆ Full-court presses are not allowed. Defensive players may not guard their opponents in the backcourt. This will allow for more play to occur in the front court and create an equal opportunity for each player to participate both on offense and defense.
- ◆ When playing on a short court, backcourt violations will not be called. If playing on a regulation-size court (84 feet) as opposed to cross-court, backcourt violations should be called. 10 seconds should be called on short courts or regulation size courts.
- ◆ A player committing two fouls in one segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. The next player in the rotation comes in as the substitute and is rewarded some extra game time. This does not change the normal rotation as the fouled-out player does not re-enter the game until they are next scheduled to do so. This rule allows the offending player time to regroup during the remainder of the segment while realizing that there is a consequence for the violation.

### **Offense:**

- ◆ The offense must purposefully attack the defense in every situation – no stalling or throwing the ball into the backcourt to “reset” a play or “retreat” from the defense. After a warning from the referee, a violation will be called resulting in a turnover. This will prevent

a team with the lead from running the clock out by staying in the backcourt where the opponent is unable to play defense.

- ◆ Isolation plays will not be a part of Levels 1-3 because they take away the opportunity for improvement for all players and contradict the spirit of the rules. For offense this prevents players being positioned at half-court to isolate defenders away from the play.
- ◆ Non-shooting fouls will result in the ball being in-bounded from either the baseline or sideline. All shooting fouls will result in two free throws. By not administering “bonus” situation free throws, all players on the court can contribute to consistent game action.
- ◆ No score will be given for a basket in the wrong goal. It will be treated as a turnover and will be taken out along the baseline. This will prevent further embarrassing a player for making this mistake.

## Level 1 (K5) Modifications

RULE	EXPLANATION / COMMENTS
Goal Height	7 feet
Ball Size	27.5"
Games consist of six, 6-minute segments and an 8 minute halftime. One minute is allotted for substitutions between segments.	This keeps games to approximately an hour time frame.
Score is not kept	The focus of this age is to learn fundamentals, not winning and losing.
3-second violation is not called	Referees should advise players of this potential violation but not penalize.
Coaches are allowed on the floor with players	The focus is for coaches to instruct and encourage players at all times.
Stealing the ball from the dribbler is not allowed	To encourage the offensive player to dribble with correct form without the pressure of having the ball stolen.
Stealing the ball off a pass is not allowed	To encourage the offensive player to pass with correct form without the pressure of having the ball stolen. A block should not be considered a steal. Errant passes can be picked up by any player.
Violation is not called for having two hands on the ball while dribbling	Due to limited hand-eye coordination, this allows a player to establish correct dribbling form through rhythm and pressure on the ball.
Violation for double dribbling is called but does not result in a turnover	Players should learn the concept of double dribble but should be allowed the opportunity to correct it without penalty.
Violation for traveling is called but does not result in a turnover	Players should learn the concept of traveling, but should be allowed the opportunity to correct it without penalty.
Violation for traveling is not called when a player shuffles feet when trying to set up for a shot	Because this age group is single skill focused, players will tend to shuffle their feet when focusing on setting up for a shot. This is corrected as the player develops in skill as he gets older.
Fast Breaks are allowed in any transition situation	Players at this age will learn proper transition offense.
Free throws are awarded on all shooting fouls	Two shots are attempted by the fouled player at the 8'-10' line. Offense may have up to 2 players on the lane, not including the shooter. Defense may have up to 3 players on the lane. After the last free throw attempt, the ball becomes live.

## Level 2 (1st & 2nd Grade) Modifications

RULE	EXPLANATION / COMMENTS
Goal Height	8 feet
Ball Size	27.5"
Games consist of six, 6-minute segments and an 8 minute halftime. One minute is allotted for substitutions between segments.	This keeps games to approximately an hour time frame.
Score is Optional	Focus on teaching young athletes the proper skill development traits needed to handle winning and losing after a game. This will translate into life lessons.
3-second violation is not called	Young athletes at this age should focus on offensive basics (dribbling, passing, shooting, and rebounding).
One Coach per team is allowed to walk the sidelines to encourage and instruct players	Players will be able to focus their attention on the coach standing. Walking the sidelines allows the coach to instruct and encourage players at all times.
Free throws are awarded on all shooting fouls	Two shots are attempted by the fouled player at the 10' line. Offense may have up to 2 players on the lane, not including the shooter. Defense may have up to 3 players on the lane. After the last free throw attempt, the ball becomes live.
Stealing the ball off a dribble or pass is allowed	Players at this age should be taught and held to these basic basketball rules.
Double dribble violation is called in all circumstances	
Traveling violation is called in all circumstances	
Fast breaks are allowed in any transition situation	

## Level 3 (3rd & 4th Grade) Modifications

RULE	EXPLANATION/COMMENTS
Goal Height	9 feet
Ball Size	28.5"
Games consist of six, 6-minute segments and an 8-minute halftime. One minute is allotted for substitutions between segments.	This keeps games to approximately an hour time frame.
Score IS kept	Young athletes at this age should learn how to handle winning and losing after competition. This translates into life lessons.
3-second violation is called and results in a turnover	At this age, young athletes should understand the concept of offensive movement by not allowing an offensive player to stay in the lane more than 3 seconds
One coach per team is allowed to stand in their coach box area to encourage and instruct players.	Players will be able to focus their attention on the coach standing. Walking the sidelines allows the coach to instruct and encourage players at all times.
<p>Clock runs continuously with special rules in effect with fewer than two minutes remaining in the game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Non-shooting fouls result in the offensive team getting one point and the ball.</li> <li>◆ Shooting fouls result in the offensive team scoring two points. The opposing team then takes possession.</li> <li>◆ Players fouled in the act of shooting and making the basket are credited with the basket plus one point. The opposing team then takes possession.</li> </ul>	<p>Because the clock does not stop, this rule keeps the game moving without wasting the running game clock on lining up for free throw attempts</p>
Free throws are awarded on all shooting fouls.	Two shots are attempted by the fouled player at the 12' line. Offense may have up to 2 players on the lane, not including the shooter. Defense may have up to 3 players on the lane. After the last free throw attempt, the ball becomes live.
Stealing the ball off a dribble or pass is allowed	Players at this age should be taught and held to these basic basketball rules.
Double dribble violation is called in all circumstances	
Traveling violation is called in all circumstances	
Fast breaks are allowed in any transition situation	

## Level 4 (5th Grade & Up) Rules

\*The following rules are exclusive to Level 4. They follow a more traditional middle school format and game play. Except where the following rules apply, play is governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations' (NFHS) Rules Book [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)

RULE	EXPLANATION / COMMENTS
Referees lead both team in prayer at center court before every game	This sets the tone and focus for the game
Goal Height	10 feet
Ball Size	28.5" (girls), 29.5' (boys)
Games consist of 4, six minute quarters	Follows middle school rules and allows game to begin and end within an hour timeframe
The clock stops at each whistle	Stoppage of play includes violations, fouls, out-of-bounds play, timeouts, and injury
Overtimes are 2 minutes in length (regulation clock)	<p>Gives both teams the opportunity to win the game with reasonably extended time. If the game is still tied at the end of the first overtime period, you have two options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The game ends in a tie</li> <li>◆ First team to score a basket wins the game (no extra time needed)</li> </ul>
Teams are allowed one 30-second timeout per half (1 per team per half)	This allows a coach to meet with players and adjust strategy during a game
All games are played on a full-sized regulation court (no cross court)	This is appropriate floor size for players at this level
A jump ball is used to start the game and overtime period	Athletes at this age have the physical ability to jump for the ball to obtain possession. It also follows the NFHS rules for starting a game or overtime
Zone and man defenses are allowed (both may be used throughout the season)	Players at this level possess the ability to defend and attack both zone and man principles. Zone and man defenses are a part of the game of basketball and should be understood by players as they prepare for the next level.
Press defense is allowed in the backcourt at all times except if a team has a 15-point advantage	To promote fairness and integrity of the game, teams with a 15-point advantage should drop into a basic half-court defense.

(cont.)

## Level 4 (5th Grade & Up) Rules (cont.)

RULE	EXPLANATION / COMMENTS
<p>All players are allowed five fouls each game. After the 5th foul is committed, the player is out for the remainder of the game</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Beginning with the fifth team foul in each quarter, bonus free throws are awarded to the fouled team (2 shots).</p> <p>The number of fouls counting towards the bonus resets at the end of each quarter, so the bonus free throws do not carry over from quarter to quarter.</p>	<p>This rule follows traditional middle school rules format</p>
<p>Three point shots are allowed only if the court features a three-point arc.</p>	<p>Courts without a 3-point line should not award 3 points no matter the shot distance</p>
<p>Playing time requirements for each player in Level 4 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Each athlete plays a minimum of ¼ of each game</li> <li>◆ Each athlete must play in both halves of each game</li> </ul>	<p>Level 4 does not use the substitution system found in Levels 1-3. This allows flexibility in managing playing time for each coach based on the game situation while promoting fair game participation for all players</p>
<p>End of season tournaments are encouraged for Level 4</p>	<p>End of season tournament play adds excitement to your league. (see Resources on MyUpward.org for tournament templates)</p>

## → Upward Substitution Rotation

- ◆ The basic Upward substitution system applies to ONLY Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 divisions.
- ◆ Level 4 division does not use the basic Upward Substitution Rotations detailed in this training guide. Playing time for this division are:
  - Each player plays a minimum of 1/4 each game.
  - Each player must play in both halves of each game.
- ◆ In Level 1 games consist of six 6-minute segments with an 8-minute halftime. Levels 2 and 3 plays six 6-minute segments with an 8-minute halftime.

The Upward Substitution Rotation for Levels 1-3 is designed to provide every player equal opportunity for improvement. The substitution system ensures the following:

- ◆ Every player will play at least half of the game. This helps all players have an opportunity to play and have fun.
- ◆ No player will sit out more than six minutes at a time. This allows each player to be involved in consistent game action and assists in keeping players focused and engaged in the game.
- ◆ The starting lineup shifts down one player every game allowing every player to be in the starting lineup. This gives all players a time to be on the field first.
- ◆ Coaches are not open to being accused of making unfair substitutions by using a set substitution system. A coach

can simply point to the substitution system as setting the playing rotation.

- ◆ Coaches are free from monitoring playing time for each player. The substitution system allows coaches to focus more on instructing and encouraging players than awarding playing time.
- ◆ Playing time for all players is virtually even over the course of the season. This gives all players game experience and allows them to be a contributing teammate.

When using MyUpward, mark the game complete to see a summary of the stars and notes you took during the game for easy post game star presentation.

**Reminder: MyUpward makes the substitution system easy to manage. It shows the game by game per period rotation where you may activate players, remove players from the lineup, take notes and track game day stars.**

## USING THE APP FOR SUBSTITUTIONS

Select the Game Day tab and your game number.

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a game day. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home / Games / Game'. Below this, the screen is divided into two main sections. The left section lists players with their names and jersey numbers, each preceded by a star symbol. The right section shows a grid of substitution options, with each option consisting of a position code, a position label, and a circle containing a minus sign.

**Star Symbol**  
Assign a game day star and include specific notes

**Square**  
Enter a player's position

**Three Dots**  
Reactivate a player who was removed from lineup

**Circle with Minus Symbol**  
Remove a player from the lineup

Player	Position	Substitution Option
Q Hearne #2	5SF	A
C Flaughter #4	2SG	B
S Flaughter #3	1PG	C
R Miller #31	3SG	D
C Wheeler #10	4PF	E

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## ➔ Filling Out the Substitution Form (Paper Version)

If you are not using the app, you may use the paper copy of the substitution forms in the back of this book.

### Step 1

Rank players according to skill level starting with letter "A." This ranking is based on evaluation score and what you observe at pre-season practices.

### Step 2

For Week 1, begin with Player "A" and work down the first column (A-E). These are your starting five.

### Step 3

Begin the rotation where you left off in the previous segment. If you are at the bottom of your list, be sure to go back to the top until you have five players in the segment.

**Week 1**

PLAYER NAME	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A Beth	X	X	X		X	X
B Ann	X	X		X	X	X
C Susan	X	X		X	X	
D Kim	X		X	X	X	
E Mary	X		X	X		X
F Karen		X	X	X		X
G Amy		X	X		X	X
H						
I						
J						

### Step 4

Continue this process for the remainder of the segments.

For Week 2, begin with Player “B” and fill in five players for the starting lineup.

Using the previous method, you would then fill in the rest of the form accordingly for Week 2.

## Week 2

PLAYER NAME	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A Beth						
B Ann	X					
C Susan	X					
D Kim	X					
E Mary	X					
F Karen	X					
G Amy						
H						
I						
J						

## Substitution Scenario

It's Week 3 and, as game time approaches, Mary has not arrived (she is supposed to be in the starting lineup for Week Three). She did not call prior to the game and inform you that she will not be present.

How to Fill Out the Form: Since it's Week 3, you'll start with Susan followed by Kim. For the first segment only, draw a line through the box for Mary. Fill in the box for Karen and Amy (this now gives you four players). To occupy the fifth spot, fill in the next person in the rotation (Beth). This is your new starting lineup for Week Three.

### Week 3

PLAYER NAME	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A Beth	X					
B Ann						
C Susan	X					
D Kim	X					
E Mary	---					
F Karen	X					
G Amy	X					
H						
I						
J						

For the second segment, start with the next person in the rotation (Ann) and work down the form to include Susan and Kim. Draw a line through Mary's box and continue down the form to include Karen and Amy.

If by the third segment Mary has yet to arrive, draw another line through her name and begin with the next person in the rotation (Beth) to begin this segment. Continue this lineup with Ann, Susan, Kim and Karen.

### Week 3

PLAYER NAME	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A Beth	X		X			
B Ann		X	X			
C Susan	X	X	X			
D Kim	X	X	X			
E Mary	---	---	---			
F Karen	X	X	X			
G Amy	X	X				
H						
I						
J						

If Mary arrives during halftime, continue with the current cycle including Mary in the proper rotation. Then continue with the rest of the rotations through the end of the game. As you can see with the previous example, it is important to NOT fill out your form prior to the game. If a participant is absent, it is best to fill out your form segment by segment in case the absent player arrives at some point during the game.

### Week 3

PLAYER NAME	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A Beth	X		X	X	X	
B Ann		X	X	X	X	
C Susan	X	X	X	X		X
D Kim	X	X	X	X		X
E Mary	---	---	---		X	X
F Karen	X	X	X		X	X
G Amy	X	X		X	X	X
H						
I						
J						

## → Game Day Stars

If your league is using Game Day Stars, you have an Award Stars booklet. These multi-colored stickers are given to each player at the end of every game. Star presentation should be an exciting time. Encourage parents to cheer as stars are distributed to each player. Make specific points why each participant receives a particular star. Notes you or your assistant coach take during the game should be used during this time as you encourage their efforts.

**Tip: Find a location off of the court and take your time with this activity after the game.**

Here is an example of how to conduct a star presentation:

“During the game today Luke was in the right position on defense every time with his arms out and palms up and defending the other players strong hand. Luke made great decisions and made the defensive stop each time. Today Luke will get the red star for his defensive effort. Great defense today Luke!”

Use the star distribution form on MyUpward in the Gameday area or in the back of your coach playbook to track which stars each participant has received. Make an attempt to award each participant all five stars throughout the season.

*Encourage players to display the stars they receive on their jersey for iron-on stars or posters for sticker stars. Here is a list of the Game Day Stars and what they represent.*



***EFFORT** (blue star) means giving your best at all times, regardless of the circumstances. Look for a player who always gives their maximum effort, no matter what.*



***DEFENSE** (red star) is for a player who can slow down or stop an opponent from making a play on the field. Defense requires an awareness of being in the correct position, hustle, and hard work.*



***SPORTSMANSHIP** (gold star) is a player who treats teammates and opponents the way you want to be treated. They show respect for themselves, teammates, opponents, referees, coaches, and the game by demonstrating sportsmanship.*



***CHRISTLIKENESS** (white star) is someone who is doing their best to imitate Jesus through your words, actions, and attitudes. Examples include sacrificing for the team, unselfish, being a leader, encouraging others, and playing tough.*



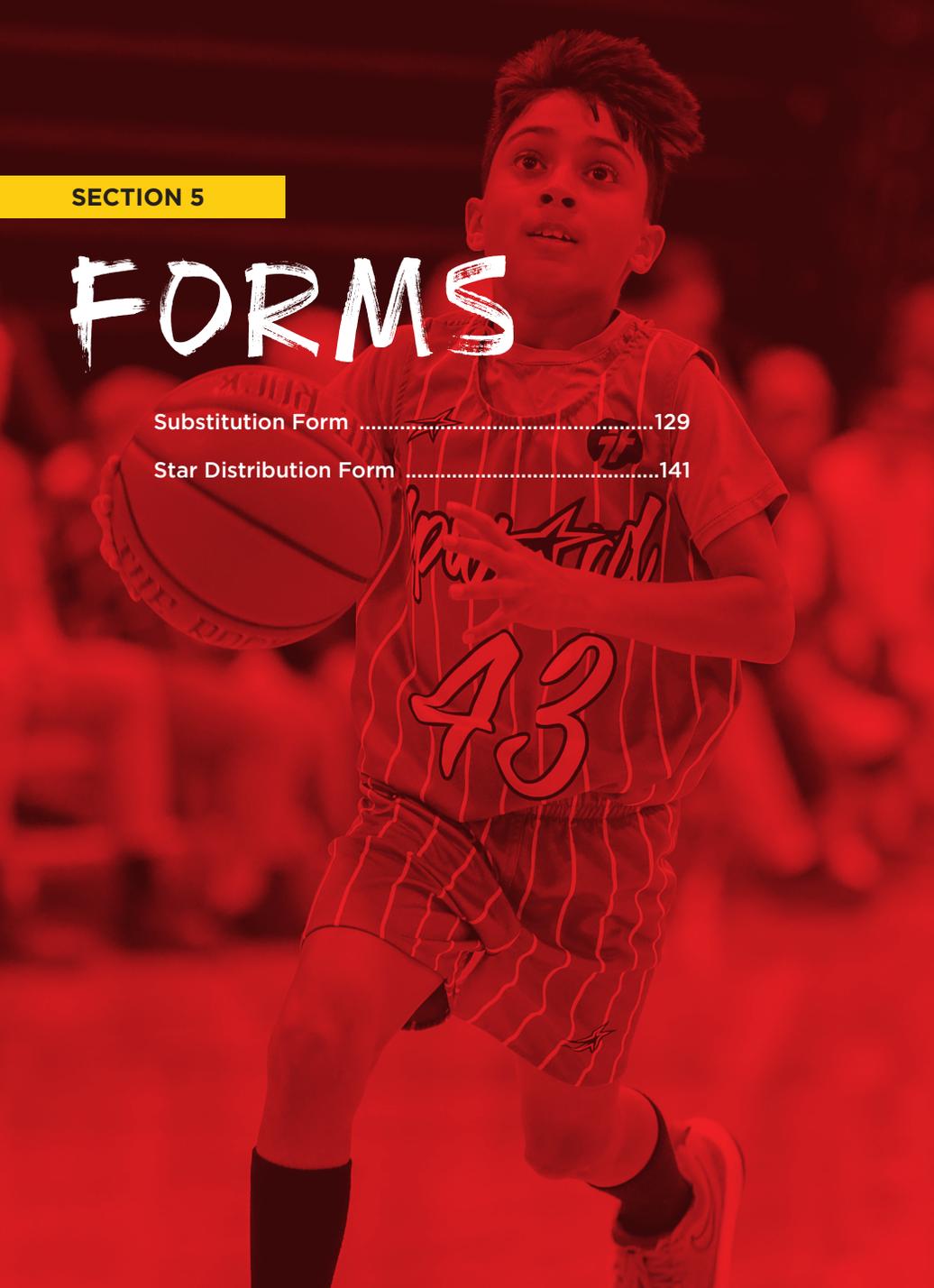
***OFFENSE** (gray star) is someone who puts their team in a favorable position that leads to a scoring opportunity. Offense requires being aware of your teammates and their opportunities and using your skills to advance your team's goals. This could be finding an open teammate with a pass, good ball control, and taking a good shot.*



SECTION 5

# FORMS

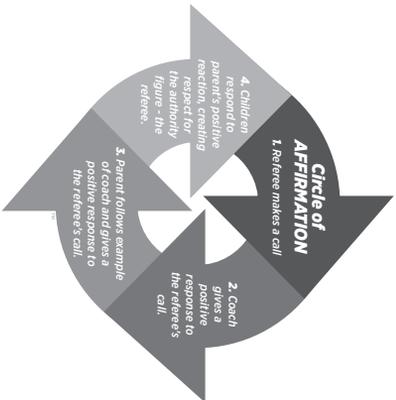
Substitution Form .....	129
Star Distribution Form .....	141



**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		Notes / Stars
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					
F					
G					
H					
I					
J					

**POST GAME**



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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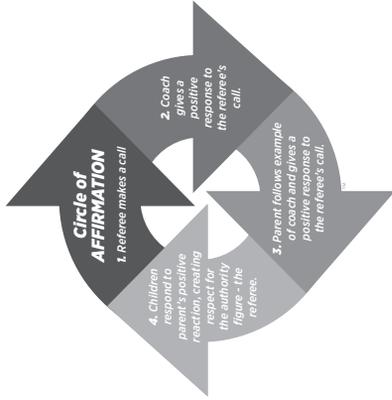


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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF			POST GAME
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	Notes / Stars
A							
B							
C							
D							
E							
F							
G							
H							
I							
J							



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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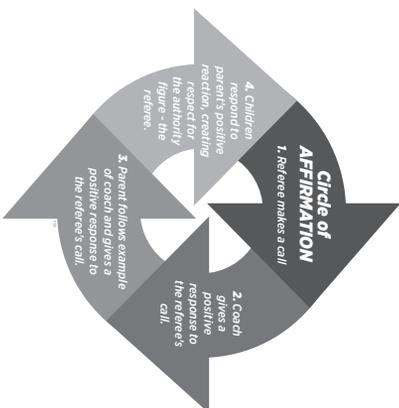
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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Game - Sub-Form</b>		<b>FIRST HALF</b>				<b>SECOND HALF</b>				<b>POST GAME</b>	
<b>Player's Name</b>	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	<b>Notes / Stars</b>				
A											
B											
C											
D											
E											
F											
G											
H											
I											
J											



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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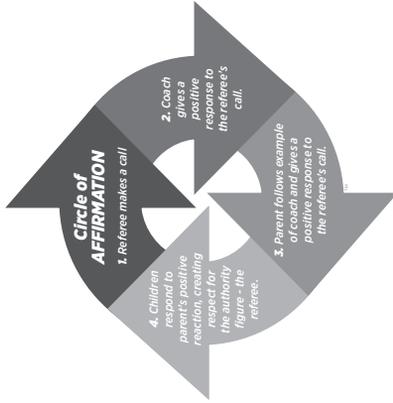


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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Game - Sub. Form

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		POST GAME		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	Notes / Stars
A							
B							
C							
D							
E							
F							
G							
H							
I							
J							



NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:

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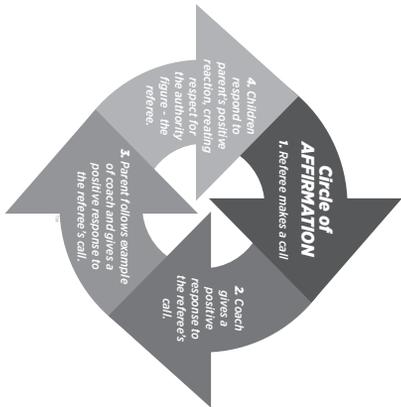


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SCORE: -

**Game - Sub-Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		Notes / Stars
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					
F					
G					
H					
I					
J					



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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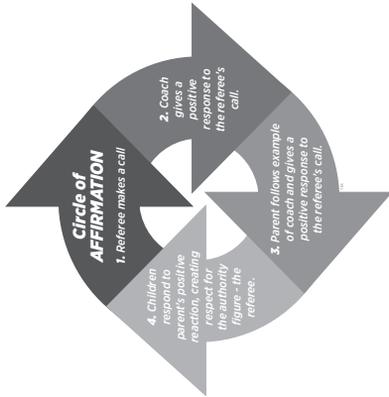


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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF			POST GAME
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	Notes / Stars
A							
B							
C							
D							
E							
F							
G							
H							
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J							



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Game - Sub. Form

Player's Name	FIRST HALF				SECOND HALF				Notes / Stars
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min			
A									
B									
C									
D									
E									
F									
G									
H									
I									
J									

### NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:

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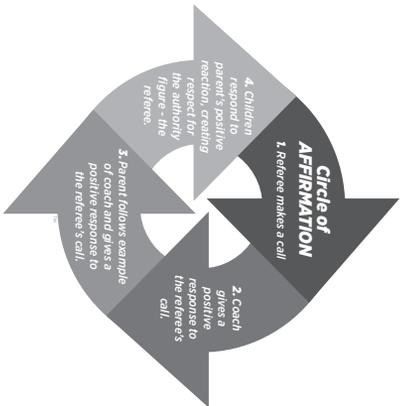


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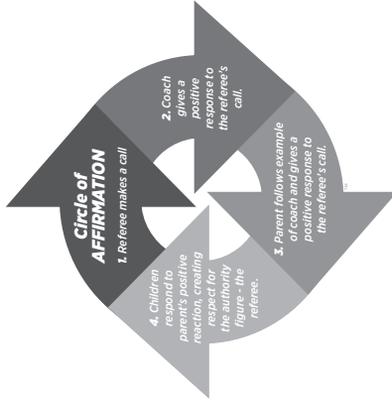
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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



## Game - Sub. Form

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		POST GAME	
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min
A						
B						
C						
D						
E						
F						
G						
H						
I						
J						



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Game - Sub. Form

Player's Name	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF			Notes / Stars
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	
A							
B							
C							
D							
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I							
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NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:

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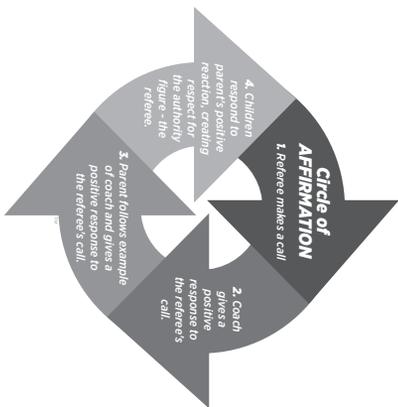


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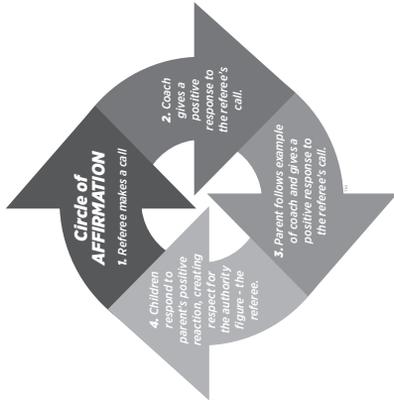
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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		POST GAME		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	Notes / Stars
A							
B							
C							
D							
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J							



**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF			SECOND HALF			Notes / Stars
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	
A							
B							
C							
D							
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**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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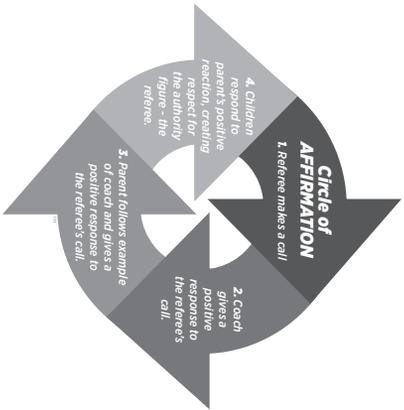


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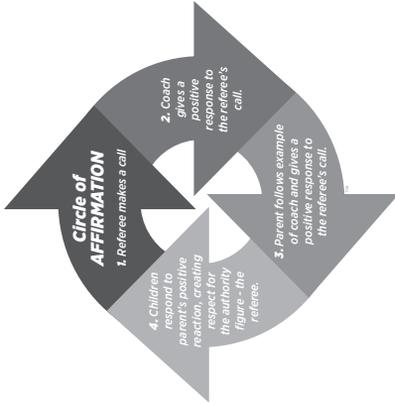
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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



**Game - Sub. Form**

Player's Name	FIRST HALF		SECOND HALF		POST GAME		
	18 min	12 min	6 min	18 min	12 min	6 min	Notes / Stars
A							
B							
C							
D							
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**NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:**

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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



◆ NOTES

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**Accept the invitation from your League Director to MyUpward.org and have access to:**

- *Team roster*
- *Practice and game schedule*
- *Practice plan and devotion material*
- *Videos for practice*
- *Communication tools*
- *Game day management*
- *Tutorial videos*

