



## **HARTFORD YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB PARENTS HANDBOOK**

Welcome players and parents to the Hartford Youth Football Club (HYFC), a non-profit organization, dedicated to the youth of the community and the sport of football. The HYFC is affiliated with the Wisconsin All American Youth Football League (AAYFL). *The program is not affiliated with the Hartford School district or the Hartford Recreation Department.*

### **PURPOSE**

This handbook sets forth the background, philosophy, objectives, policies, and codes of ethics for the Hartford Youth Football Club, Inc. as established by the Board of Directors. It is intended to serve as a guide for all participating student/athletes, parents/guardians, coaches and administrators to follow in the course of their involvement with HYFC. The handbook will be updated on an annual basis.

### **BACKGROUND**

HYFC was established in 1988 to allow student/athletes in grades 6, 7, and 8 to compete in an organized tackle football league. In 1993, HYFC was incorporated as a volunteer organization operating as a non-profit corporation.

### **GOAL**

The goal of our program is to educate youth on the proper techniques of football stressing teamwork, discipline, commitment, and fair play while providing a learning and caring environment.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the program is open to anyone who wishes to participate. There will be no cuts. Students must be residents in the Hartford Union School District.

## **POLICIES**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

HYFC is open to all children in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 living within the Hartford Union High School District. Per All American Youth Football League (AAYFL) rules, no player can participate in the league on or after his or her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

HYFC offers equal sports play opportunity for all student/athletes regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.

HYFC reserves the right to curtail a player's involvement in practices and games due to academic and/or disciplinary problems.

### **MOVING UP GRADE LEVELS**

In an effort to provide our kids with optimal playing opportunity and well balanced teams, our coaching staff always reserves the right to work with parents to identify players who may be moved up a grade level. This is a common practice and is based on size and ability, and is done consistent with league rules. Players will not be moved without parent and player consent. We believe balancing players across team levels improves playing time at each team level, and helps to keep our program competitive. It is not our policy to turn any players away from the opportunity to play football.

Coaches will follow guidelines established by the board when considering movement of a player. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with the head coach from the grade level you wish to speak with.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration for HYFC kicks off at our annual banquet in November. Registration consists of returning a completed registration form and submitting the registration fee. The registration fee is noted on the yearly registration form (\$100 in 2010).

Registrations are now taken year-round, and time of registration determines season of play (if registered between November to the following August, it is for that following season in September; if registered between September and October, it is for the following year's season, not the current September-October season).

## **VOLUNTEERING**

Each player's family is asked to provide at least 5 hours of volunteering to help the program, equip the players, prepare for and host games, provide a year-end banquet for the players, and fulfill tasks needed to help operate the club. A refundable volunteer/equipment deposit is required when picking up equipment. The fee will be refunded at the end of the season (or can

be applied to the following year's registration) if 5 hours have been documented with the volunteer coordinator. If volunteer hours are not documented, the deposit is not refundable.

## **COACHES**

Coaches are selected by the Board of Directors and are required to interview, meet AAFYL guidelines, and pass certification courses. At the discretion of the board, coaches will be refunded for their children's registration fee at the end of the season. Coaches' hours also will count for the parent volunteer requirement.

## **DRUG, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL FREE**

All student/athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, and administrators must be drug, tobacco, and alcohol free at all HYFC practices, scrimmages, games, and meetings.

## **FINANCES**

HYFC derives its income from registration fees, fundraisers, concession stand sales, and donations.

Expenses include football equipment, equipment repairs, raffle tickets, AAYFL fees, AAYFL insurance, registration advertisements, postage, photocopies, concession startup, referee fees, coaches' clinics, trophies, awards, and miscellaneous.

## **EQUIPMENT**

HYFC maintains an inventory of equipment sufficient to suit up our players. Equipment provided by HYFC includes helmets, shoulder pads, knee pads, thigh pads, pants, jerseys, and mouth guards. Individuals are responsible for their own shoes and personal protective equipment. Pants/jerseys not returned clean will be assessed a \$10 fee.

## **MEDICAL**

It is recommended that all student/athletes have a complete physical examination every two years.

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the coaches in writing of any special conditions that their student/athlete may have (e.g. asthma, allergies, etc.).

HYFC coaches strongly encourage each player to start a daily conditioning routine at least two weeks before the first practice. Players and/or parents/guardians may contact the coaches at any time during the registration period to obtain guidance on recommended conditioning exercises.

Student/athletes are required to immediately inform their coaches of any injury or condition which may affect their participation in a practice session, scrimmage, or game.

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the coaches should their student/athlete suffer any injury requiring medical treatment as a result of participation in a HYFC practice, scrimmage, or game.

## **INSURANCE**

It is strongly recommended that all student/athletes have adequate health insurance coverage.

The AAYFL maintains a liability insurance policy.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

HYFC strongly encourages parental involvement. HYFC coaches welcome comments and questions from parents. The best time to talk to coaches is after practice sessions; not on game days, and not on the telephone. Written comments and questions are also welcome.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Should a parent/guardian have a concern with HYFC, the grievance process outlined below shall be followed. Hopefully, resolution can be attained after the first step; however, should this not be the case, the process provides a “going up the ladder” approach which is designed to produce a fair and mutually acceptable solution.

1. The parent/guardian shall speak directly to the coach after a practice session as soon as possible after the concern has arisen.
2. The parent/guardian shall document the concern in writing and send it to an HYFC board member. The board will gather the facts and propose a solution to the parent/guardian and coach.
3. If a satisfactory solution is not found, the parent/guardian may attend the next scheduled board meeting.

## **PRACTICES**

Unless otherwise noted by the coaches, all practices will be held on the practice fields located behind Hartford Union High School. Practices will be held rain or shine, but not when lightning is present.

AAYFL rules state that a player must have 10 hours of conditioning practice time before participating in any physical contact. After equipment is distributed, it is expected that each player will come to practice each day, on time, well rested, fully equipped, and ready to participate.

Pre-season and in-season practices are usually held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M. Additional pre-season practices are usually held on Wednesday evenings from

5:00 to 7:00 PM and on Saturdays from 8:30 to 11:00 A.M. Official practice schedules will be provided by the coaches.

## **GAMES**

Unless otherwise noted by the coaches, all home games will be played at the Town of Hartford Town Hall field located on Hwy K in Hartford. Locations of away games will be announced by the coaches at the last practice session immediately preceding the away game. Maps will be provided or can be found at [www.aayfl.org](http://www.aayfl.org).

## **VIOLATIONS**

In the case of repeated or serious violations of its policies, HYFC reserves the right to provide an on-the-spot refund/immediate expulsion of the player associated with the offending party.

## **REFUND POLICY**

There will be no refunds after the first team scrimmage in August, unless the player transfers school districts, or for certain cases that must be approved by the HYFC board of directors. All refunds will be partial, and start at 75% subject to board approval.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **OBJECTIVES FOR ALL**

To support HYFC throughout the community.

### **OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENT/ATHLETES**

To have fun

To develop a strong work ethic

To learn football fundamentals

To improve playing skills

To prepare for high school football

To develop physical vigor and desirable habits in health and safety

To develop friendships

To learn and exemplify good sportsmanship

To realize that athletic competition is both a privilege and a responsibility

#### OBJECTIVES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND SPECTATORS

To require sportsmanship, fair play and good citizenship for participant and spectator alike

To promote positive team spirit and morals

To treat visiting teams and fans as guests of HYFC and of the community

#### OBJECTIVES FOR COACHES / BOARD MEMBERS

To take responsibility in adhering to the philosophy and objectives of HYFC

To recognize coaching as teaching in its truest form

To work toward a goal of team and individual improvement during the course of the season

To give careful consideration to the physical condition of the student/athletes at all times

To deal fairly with each student/athlete and be responsible to individual needs and concerns

To provide opportunities for each student/athlete to actively participate in practice sessions and whenever possible in game situations

To conduct oneself in the highest professional manner

To provide, through association, a positive role model for the student/athletes

#### **APPENDIX**

AAYFL Player Code of Conduct

AAYFL Parent Code of Conduct

Club Website: [www.hartfordyouthfootball.com](http://www.hartfordyouthfootball.com)