

Purpose

The National Standards for Athletic Coaches are intended to provide direction for administrators, coaches, athletes and the public regarding the skills and knowledge that coaches should possess. The overriding premise in the development of this document is that its contents be used to ensure the enjoyment, safety, and positive skill development of America's athletes.

Summary of Standards

Domain: Injuries: Prevention, Care and Management

- Standard 1 Prevent injuries by recognizing and insisting on safe playing conditions.
- Standard 2 Ensure that protective equipment is in good condition, fits properly and is worn as prescribed by the manufacturer; ensure that equipment and facilities meet required standards [American Society for Testing Materials, (ASTM) and U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, (USCPSC)].
- Standard 3 Recognize that proper conditioning and good health are vital to the prevention of athletic injuries.
- Standard 4 Prevent exposure to the risk of injuries by considering the effects of environmental conditions on the circulatory and respiratory systems when planning and scheduling practices and contests and implementing programs for physical conditioning.
- Standard 5 Be able to plan, coordinate and implement procedures for appropriate emergency care.
- Standard 6 Demonstrate skill in the prevention, recognition and evaluation of injuries and the ability to assist athletes with the recovery/rehabilitation from injuries that are generally associated with participation in athletics in accordance with guidelines provided by qualified medical personnel.
- Standard 7 Facilitate a unified medical program of prevention, care and management of injuries by coordinating the roles and actions of the coach and a National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA) certified athletic trainer with those of the physician.
- Standard 8 Provide coaching assistants, athletes and parents/guardians with education about injury prevention, injury reporting and sources of medical care.

Domain: Risk Management

- Standard 9 Understand the scope of legal responsibilities that comes with assuming a coaching position, i.e. proper supervision, planning and instruction, matching participants, safety, first aid and risk management.
- Standard 10 Properly inform coaching assistants, athletes, and parents/guardians of the inherent risks associated with sport so that decisions about participation can be made with informed consent.
- Standard 11 Know and convey the need and availability of appropriate medical insurance.
- Standard 12 Participate in continuing education regarding rules changes, improvements in equipment, philosophical changes, improved techniques and other information in order to enhance the safety and success of the athlete.

Domain: Growth, Development and Learning

- Standard 13 Recognize the developmental physical changes that occur as athletes move from youth through adulthood and know how these changes influence the sequential learning and performance of motor skills in a specific sport.
- Standard 14 Understand the social and emotional development of the athletes being coached, know how to recognize problems related to this development and know where to refer them for appropriate assistance when necessary.
- Standard 15 Analyze human performance in terms of developmental information and individual body structure.
- Standard 16 Provide instruction to develop sport-specific motor skills and refer the athletes to appropriate counsel as needed.
- Standard 17 Provide learning experiences appropriate to the growth and development of the age group coached.

Domain: Training, Conditioning and Nutrition

- Standard 18 Demonstrate a basic knowledge of physiological systems and their responses to training and conditioning.
- Standard 19 Design programs of training and conditioning that properly incorporate the mechanics of movement and sound physiological principles taking into account each individual's ability and medical history, avoiding contra-indicated exercises and activities and guarding against the possibility of over-training; be able to modify programs as needed.
- Standard 20 Demonstrate knowledge of proper nutrition and educate athletes about the effects of nutrition upon health and physical performance.
- Standard 21 Demonstrate knowledge of the use and abuse of drugs and promote sound chemical health.

Domain: Social/Psychological Aspects of Coaching

- Standard 22 Subscribe to a philosophy that acknowledges the role of athletics in developing the complete person.
- Standard 23 Identify and interpret to co-coaches, athletes, concerned others and the general public the values that are to be developed from participation in sports programs.
- Standard 24 Identify and apply ethical conduct in sport by maintaining emotional control and demonstrating respect for athletes, officials and other coaches.
- Standard 25 Demonstrate effective motivational skills and provide positive, appropriate feedback.
- Standard 26 Conduct practices and competitions to enhance the physical, social and emotional growth of athletes.
- Standard 27 Be sufficiently familiar with the basic principles of goal setting to motivate athletes toward immediate and long range goals.
- Standard 28 Treat each athlete as an individual while recognizing the dynamic relationship of personality and socio-cultural variables such as gender, race and socio-economic differences.
- Standard 29 Identify desirable behaviors (self-discipline, support of teammates, following directions, etc.) and structure experiences to develop such behaviors in each athlete.

Domain: Skills, Tactics and Strategies

- Standard 30 Identify and apply specific competitive tactics and strategies appropriate for the age and skill levels involved.
- Standard 31 Organize and implement materials for scouting, planning practices and analysis of games.
- Standard 32 Understand and enforce the rules and regulations of appropriate bodies that govern sport and education.
- Standard 33 Organize, conduct and evaluate practice sessions with regard to established program goals that are appropriate for different stages of the season.

Domain: Teaching and Administration

- Standard 34 Know the key elements of sport principles and technical skills as well as the various teaching methods that can be used to introduce and refine them.
- Standard 35 Demonstrate objective and effective procedures for the evaluation and selection of personnel involved in the athletic program and for periodic program reviews.

Domain: Professional Preparation and Development

- Standard 36 Demonstrate organizational and administrative efficiency in implementing sports programs, e.g. event management, budgetary procedures, facility maintenance, participation in public relations activities.
- Standard 37 Acquire sufficient practical field experience and supervision in the essential coaching areas to ensure an adequate level of coaching competence for the level of athlete coached. This would include a variety of knowledge, skills and experiences.