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## YMCA of Greater Charlotte Youth Flag Football Family Playbook Spring 2023

Our flag football league is a recreational league for youth athletes ages 4-17. This league is played throughout the YMCA branches in a regional model, and will focus on practices that encourage athletes to love their sport as well as develop the fundamental skills needed to play the game.

The Y league is a true recreational flag football program where we promote at least 50% playing time in games for our athletes throughout the season.

- **What does the regional model consist of?**
  - Our association's regional model promotes a wide variety of teams, as well as exciting experiences to compete, grow, and improve skills! Athletes will have games and practices at the branches within their region, throughout the season. As well as the opportunity to compete against other YMCAs within our association footprint.
- **What are the different regions?**
  - When registering, double check what region you are registering for using the list below:
    - **North Region:** Lake Norman, Lincoln County, Lowes, & Sally's
    - **Central North Region:** Keith, McCrorey, Simmons, & Stratford Richardson
    - **Central South Region:** Dowd, Harris, & Johnston
    - **South Region:** Brace, Morrison & Steele Creek
- **Can I sign up in any region?**
  - Yes, you are welcome to register for any region but please note that our regions are set up to host branches that are geographically close to one another.
- **When will registration open?**
  - Registration for Spring 2023 opens 1/1/23 for Members and 1/15/23 for Non-Members.
- **What are the flag football league prices?**
  - All pricing is available online at [www.ymcacharlotte.org](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org)
    - My Y Program Pricing provides a scholarship to members meeting the household income requirements. Please check in with your closest YMCA branch to see if you and your family qualify.
- **What divisions are being offered?**
  - North Region: U6-U16 Coed
  - Central North Region: U6-U16 Coed
  - Central South Region: U6-U18 Coed
  - South Region: U6-U18 Coed
- **Does the YMCA have flag football for athletes 4-5 years old?**

Yes- Our U-6 age division are for our youngest athletes ranging from 4-5 years old. Athletes in this age group will learn the best parts of flag football through our Practice-Play model. U-6 teams will meet with their volunteer coaches and team one day a week on Saturday throughout the season. Teams will spend their time together practicing skills, working as team, and having fun, followed by elements of playing real games! There are no weekday meets for U-6 players unless communicated out specifically from the league. Making your family's experience easy and fun!



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- **What are the meeting days and times for each age group?**
  - U-6 divisions will only meet on Saturday for their weekly Practice/Play session.
  - U8-U18 Practices may take place Monday-Friday between 5:00-8:00pm for 55 minutes for.
  - U8-U18 Games will take place on Saturdays between 8:00am-7:00pm.
  
- **Will practices and games be held at the branch I register at?**
  - Practices and games will be held at YMCA facilities where field space is available or at CMS facilities where agreements currently exist within your region. Please note: If there are not enough teams in certain age divisions, teams may be scheduled to interleague with teams within the association and play at other YMCA branches that are not in your region.
  - We will do our best to create a consistent practice and game schedule for each team.
  - Practice and game schedules will be released in advance of the start of the season via our YMCA's league platform Playerspace.
  
- **How will practice and game locations be determined?**
  - Practice locations will be determined by the region you sign up for. Practices can be held at any of the branches within the region, but will be consistent throughout the season.
  - Game locations will also be determined by the region you sign up for. Some branches may only hold a certain age group on game day due to field sizes, others may offer multiple age groups.
  - Although we do our best to accommodate all teams, it is possible that teams within our older age divisions may interleague with neighboring regions, requiring travel between surrounding branches for games throughout the season.
  - Team practice times are primarily dependent on the volunteer coaches' availability and preference. In order to guarantee your practice day and time we encourage you to sign up to COACH!
  
- **I have a special request of what team I would like to be on, can I communicate that to the league director?**
  - All special requests for our Spring season must be submitted by **Saturday February 18th**
  - Requests can be in the form of preferences for *one friend requests, one coach requests, or one day of the week you CANNOT practice.*
  - In order to have the best chance to get your request please make sure you and any friends or requested coaches are registered before the request deadline. We encourage families to put enter request preferences in at the time of registration.
  - Although we do our best please understand that not all requests may be honored for a variety of reasons, but we make every effort to accommodate as many as possible.
  
- **How does my athlete receive a team uniform?**
  - The YMCA will provide your jersey as part of your registration fee. Jerseys will be distributed the second week of practice. Teams will get a variety of sizes. Players are required to wear cleats and black shorts with their jersey which is not provided by the YMCA.
  - Teams will be assigned Home Team or Away Team for each game. Please make sure your athlete wears the appropriate jersey color that corresponds with the team assignment.
    - Home Team: Lighter Color
    - Away Team: Darker Color



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- **Do I need to purchase any gear or equipment for my athlete?**
  - YMCA jerseys are included in registration fee, however **cleats** will need to be purchased and should be worn for each practice and game. The YMCA will also provide all balls and cones for the season but you are welcome to bring one –just remember to label it.
    - Football Sizes Per Division:  
Pee Wee: U-6, U-8  
Junior: U-10, U-12  
Youth: U-14, U-16,U-18
  
- **What are the season dates?**
  - Participant Special Request Deadline: Saturday February 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Team assignments released by: Week of March 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Game schedules posted by: Week of March 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Practices start: Week of March 13<sup>th</sup>
    - U-6 Team Meet & Greet: Saturday March 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 1: March 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 2: April 1<sup>st</sup>
  - No Games or Practices April 8<sup>th</sup> – April 16<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 3: April 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Game Day 4: April 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 5: May 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 6: May 13<sup>th</sup>
  - Game Day 7: May 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Make up/Post-Season: Week of May 22<sup>nd</sup> – May 27<sup>th</sup>
  
- **PLAYERSPACE: How will I see league and schedule details for my athlete’s team?**
  - Our YMCA partners with PlayerSpace, a sports league management and communication platform that connects players, parents, coaches and sports directors.

We will use PlayerSpace as our primary communication platform for sharing game schedules, team rosters, cancelations and all other important information. Prior to the start of the season, parents will receive account login information from the Sports Director within your respective region. When you receive your family account login information email, be sure to activate your account to receive communication about the upcoming season.



**PlayerSpace, allows athletes and families:**

- Convenient 24/7 online access to league information such as schedules, practice times and team information
- Emails and texts with updates on important information including schedule changes and cancellations
- The ability to post and share pictures and videos on your team’s page!

**PlayerSpace**

**For the best experience we encourage you to download the PlayerSpace app for Apple or Android. Use the QR Code to the left to download now!**

- **I am interested in becoming a volunteer coach – who do I contact?**
  - Our youth sports programs rely 100% on the dedication and efforts of our volunteer head coaches, assistant coaches, and team parents. Passionate volunteers help the YMCA expand our impact and positive reach in the community.



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- Please visit the following link, and send your regional representative an email. Contacts can be found below. <https://www.ymcacharlotte.org/mission/join-the-mission/become-a-volunteer/coach-youth-sports>
- **I am a returning coach, how can I secure my spot to coach?**
  - The same process for returning coaches, please visit the following link and send your regional representative an email. <https://www.ymcacharlotte.org/mission/join-the-mission/become-a-volunteer/coach-youth-sports>
- **Who do I contact if I have questions?**
  - Individual branch front desks can answer basic information as well as register you for the program.
  - Specific program questions can be sent to the following:
    - North: [NorthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:NorthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org)
      - Ryan Swengros can also answer regional questions at [Ryan.Swengros@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:Ryan.Swengros@YMCACharlotte.org)
    - Central North: [CentralNorthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:CentralNorthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org)
      - Ahmad Halawi can also answer regional questions at [Ahmad.Halawi@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:Ahmad.Halawi@YMCACharlotte.org)
    - Central South: [CentralSouthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:CentralSouthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org)
    - South: [SouthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org](mailto:SouthSportsRegion@YMCACharlotte.org)
- **Youth Sports Refund Policy**
  - Participants can receive a refund if requested in writing prior to the first day of practice.
  - Refunds will not be given after the first day of practice.