

MIDDLETOWN
YOUTH FOOTBALL
& CHEERLEADING
2009 GUIDELINES

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Welcome to Middletown Youth Football and Cheerleading!

Our association belongs to the Rhode Island Southeast Massachusetts Pop Warner Conference, Inc. (RISMA) and the national Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. Some facts about Pop Warner:

- ◆ Pop Warner is the only national youth football and cheerleading program in the USA! Celebrating its 80th year!
- ◆ More than a quarter-million kids, 33,000 coaches, and 500,000 parents and friends. We estimate more than 3 million volunteers and supporters nationwide!
- ◆ Pop Warner kids range in age from 5-15, with the majority in the 8-13 range. Yes, girls can play football and boys can be cheerleaders.
- ◆ The only national youth sports organization, which also emphasizes Education. Participating kids must have demonstrated satisfactory classroom progress or school endorsement before they can compete! We annually recognize Academic All-American scholar/athletes. Scholarships are provided for higher education! We emphasize to our players and cheerleaders that it's their score in the classroom, not on the field, that's most important.
- ◆ The oldest established coaching education and instruction program among any national youth sports organization. Keeping our program safe and fun for our kids is among our highest priorities!
- ◆ Pop Warner Little Scholars has working relationships with the National Football League; Walt Disney World All-Star Sports Resort; NBC Sports; and a growing number of corporate contributors, sponsors and licenses.
- ◆ High school football and cheer coaches rely on Pop Warner kids who have had training in the fundamentals in their sport and who have discipline and teamwork/leadership skills.

How we keep it safe, fun & fair:

- ② Kids compete with kids of similar age and size. Pop Warner is the only youth football program that sets and enforces a strict age/weight matrix that reduces the risk of injuries.
- ② Did you know Pop Warner football and cheerleading is safer than soccer? According to the U.S. Consumer Safety Commission Pop Warner have fewer serious injuries than youth soccer!!
- ② Pop Warner has strict rules and guidelines for protecting the safety of our kids. Our rules require that every participating child play in every game.
- ② Pop Warner provides clinics for football and cheerleading coaches every year.
- ② Pop Warner's national office provides the best insurance program in American youth sports!

Visit our web site: www.eteamz.com/islanders

SPORT CODE OF CONDUCT

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character"

I therefore agree:

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
2. I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
4. I will try to learn the rules of the game and will learn the policies of the association.
5. I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players.
6. I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing or taunting or using profane language or gestures.
7. I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of the athletes.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
9. I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, and color, sex or ability.
10. I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.
12. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a competition.
13. I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning.
14. I will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches on the game field, and will take the time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
16. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports and sponsored events.
17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or board members of the organization.

Written warning

Parental game and/or practice suspension with written documentation of incident(s).

Coaches may suspend a player or cheerleader from any activities due to medical, disciplinary reasons or poor attendances at practices. Coaches will advise parent/guardian(s) of any suspensions.

1. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Only new players and cheerleaders must have an original birth certificate. Birth certificates must contain the county/state seal of birth state. Hospital and other birth mementos cannot be accepted. Original birth certificates must be held until the end of August. We must present original birth certificates at a state certification. Returning/previously registered players and cheerleaders do not need to present a birth certificate as we have a certified copy from last year. Copies of birth certificates will be maintained as long as a child is in our program. All players and cheerleaders also need a copy of the end of the year report card, a signed registration form, signed parent permission waiver and a physical.

The official forms given to you at registration and on our web site are the only acceptable official registration forms. They must be fully complete, front and back with parent information and doctor's signature. A separate type of physical form may be accepted if a child has already received a physical before registration. Physicals must be dated no earlier than January 1, 2009.

Pop Warner focuses on scholastics, so a copy of the end of the year report card is used to attest scholastic fitness and to submit for scholastic awards. Talk to a coach or board member if there is a concern on your child's grades. A minimum overall GPA of 70 is required for participation. If a child does not have this minimum talk to a coach or board member - there is a separate form to be completed by the school.

We prefer to have all documentation by July, but all required paperwork must be received no later than the first day of practice. Talk to a coach or board member if there is a problem in obtaining required documents and if there is a financial concern.

2. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Middletown Youth Football will provide financial assistance in order that every child will be able to experience the benefits our organization provides. Speak to an Executive Board member. Families receiving financial assistance must provide some volunteer time with their child's team, at home games and fundraising events. If volunteer time cannot be given, financial assistance will not be approved. If financial assistance is given and parent/guardian does not perform any time volunteering, then their child will be dropped from our program. Our Board of Directors may approve exceptions to this policy.

3. REFUND POLICY:

Requests submitted prior to start of practice on August 1, 2009:	Full Refund
After practice begins, but prior to equipment handout:	50% Refund
After equipment handout:	No Refund

All refund requests must be made in writing and presented by:

Hand deliver written request or email to Tina Vars at nikang3@cox.net

4. PRACTICE:

August 1st is the start of our season. During August practice will be Monday thru Friday, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. for most football teams. Cheer practices may vary, but usually match football practice. All teams practice at Gaudet Field. Cheer may use school gyms starting around September. Flag, Tiny-Mite and Mitey-Mite teams practices may be less hours. During August, the maximum practice is 10 hours per week. After Labor Day 6 hours are the maximum hours of practice per week. Coaches or team parents will call to cancel practice. Do not assume practice is canceled if you do not hear from anyone. Practices may still be held even if it is raining. Talk to the coach if your child has other regular commitments.

5. GAMES: According to Pop Warner rules, each player is guaranteed a mandatory minimum number of plays during each game (every snap or kick of the ball counts as a play). A definite game schedule will be provided as soon as possible. Dates are subject to change depending on each town's schedules. There will be a game every weekend. Regular season runs until the end of October unless teams are in play-offs or championships. Home games are usually on Saturday. Away games are usually on Sundays. Attendance at games is mandatory!

6. ATTENDANCE:

Football and cheerleading are team sports! Absences are difficult for coaches to plan for their team. Be at the field on time! Special commitments must be brought to the attention of a coach. Unexcused absences may result in removal from the team/squad. Parents, not friends, are required to call a coach for absences. Shopping, beach, etc. are not excused absences.

7. DRESS:

Children must wear comfortable, but not baggy clothing for practice. Uniforms will only be worn for games and other official Pop Warner events. We are not school affiliated, so uniforms **WILL NOT** be worn to school! Proper footwear is required for safety. Uniforms issued are **loaned** and must be kept in good condition. Parents will pay for a ruined uniform piece. Cheerleaders must wear a shirt, sweatshirt or jacket over their uniforms before and after games. All uniforms will be returned at the end of the season. For safety reasons jewelry for players and cheerleaders is not allowed. Hair beads and headwear with knots is not allowed. A medical bracelet will be allowed if the coach is notified. Excessive makeup and nail polish will not be allowed.

8. CONDUCT:

No offensive language or fighting from adults or children will be tolerated. Disagreements will be brought to the attention of the head coach. Good sportsmanship and being a team player is expected. Poor conduct, lack of respect towards coaches, trainers, team members and other MYF members and poor sportsmanship will result in suspensions and/or removal from a team.

9. TRANSPORTATION:

Children are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from games and practices. Inform a coach of any transportation problems. Parents are encouraged to car pool. Coaches are not responsible for transportation unless prearranged well in advance. **PARENTS MUST PICK UP THEIR CHILDREN PROMPTLY AT THE END OF PRACTICES OR GAMES!** Transportation may be provided for play-off and championship games.

10. FUNDRAISERS:

Middletown Youth Football is a non-profit organization and relies heavily on fundraisers to provide safe and adequate equipment and to run this association to benefit your child. All players and cheerleaders must participate in all fundraisers. If player or cheerleader does not participate in fundraisers, parents may be asked to donate an equivalent sum to replace the funds lost due to non-participation in mandatory fundraisers.

11. VOLUNTEERS:

Parents are expected to support their children and their team. A small amount of time helping in the concession stand, gate or field during a home game, helping with phone calls, assisting with equipment and many other ways you can support our organization and your child. Even an hour helps! For those families receiving financial assistance volunteer time is mandatory.

12. CHEER COMPETITION:

All spirit squads except Flag, Tiny-Mite and Mitey-Mite must compete in competitions. RISMA competition will be held in October. First and second place squads will compete at the New England regional level in November.

13. MASCOTS:

Nationally, Pop Warner does not recognize mascots. Five and six year old cheerleaders will be placed on either Flag or Tiny-Mite.

14. ALL UNIFORMS:

Uniforms are specially ordered for each team and are very expensive. Football equipment issued ensures the safety of your child. We are not school affiliated, so uniforms **WILL NOT** be worn to school for "spirit day", Halloween or any other non Pop Warner event and will not be loaned to friends. Pop Warner is not a school-affiliated sport. Correct footwear is also required. Sandals, "skippies", heavy type sneakers and shoes are not allowed.

15. PARENTS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT OF ANY PIECE THAT IS RUINED, LOST, PERMANENTLY STAINED OR ALTERED.

We do realize accidents do happen, but uniforms must be maintained in good condition. Uniforms must be returned clean at the end of the season. Uniform/equipment care information is provided below and must be followed. Parent/Guardian(s) agree to return all gear issued to a player within 10 days of the player's last date of participation. Failure to return the player's gear will result in a \$350.00 charge. Failure to return a cheerleader's uniform will result in a \$175 charge. By signing the registration, parent/guardian(s) further agrees to pay all legal costs and fees incurred by Middletown Youth Football & Cheerleading in attempting to retrieve the player's gear.

16. FOOTBALL UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:

Your child will be issued a helmet, mouthpiece, chinstrap, various pads, belt, practice and game jerseys and practice and game pants. (Flag team will be issued jersey, pant and mouthpiece). You will be required to purchase sneakers with cleats. Metal spikes are not allowed. An athletic supporter and cup is mandatory for practice and games for all football players (Yes, even Flag). A male football player will not be allowed to participate without a supporter and cup. There is also special protective equipment for female football players. Talk to a coach. You may purchase a player's girdle and socks from MYF. Uniforms must not be altered. Our helmets are cleaned and certified for safety by a separate company to ensure proper safety. Do not make any adjustments to helmets (including face masks, shoulder pads, etc.) Changing any part of the helmet voids the safety certification. Talk to a coach if there is a problem with fit.

17. CHEER UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS:

Depending on the team, your child will be issued a skirt and shell. You will be required to purchase sneakers and "lollies" (royal blue cheer briefs) and possibly a warm-up suit. A sales representative may fit all cheerleaders for cheer sneakers and warm-up suits. A white bodysuit is also usually required. Speak to a coach if there is a financial problem. No alterations are allowed on cheer uniforms! You may move the button on the skirt to adjust fit, but no other alterations are allowed! Talk to a coach if there is a problem with fit.

18. FOOTBALL EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM CARE: See a coach if there are any problems or concerns with equipment issued. Remember - parents will pay for any uniform/equipment piece that is ruined. A jersey costs approximately \$85 each. Jerseys and pants are supposed to fit very snug. Pads should not roll or move.

Helmets, Chinstraps and Mouthpieces

- a. Do not replace the facemask with one of your own.
- b. Do not apply any stickers, labels, decorations, etc. to the outside of the helmet.
- c. Bandanas/hair beads, etc. may not be worn under helmets. Skullcaps may be worn.
- d. Chinstraps are washable. Good quality chinstraps are provided and must be returned if you supply your own chinstrap.
- e. Mouthpieces must attach to the facemask and should not be cut (except Flag team). MYF will supply a mouthpiece and reasonable replacements while supplies last. You may have to purchase a mouthpiece if your child loses/ruins excessive amounts. Clear mouthpieces are not allowed. You may choose to supply your own as long as you check with our equipment manager. Mouthpieces do not have to be returned.

Shoulder Pads, Girdle Pads, Thigh Pads and Knee Pads

- a. These may be washed, but do not place them in a dryer.

Girdles/Socks

- a. These should be washed often. Girdles and royal blue socks are available for purchase through MYF. Girdles are necessary, socks are optional. You may purchase your own girdle, but we offer UnderArmour at a cheaper price than most stores.

Practice Pants and Game Pants

- a. Wash often in cold or warm water. Do not use chlorine bleach.
- b. These may be dried in a dryer.
- c. Belts will be supplied for the pants and may also be washed.
- d. Do not cut or alter pants. See a coach if there is a problem with fit.

Game Jerseys and Practice Jerseys

- a. Wash often in cold or warm water. Do not use chlorine bleach.
- b. Game Jerseys should be air dried, but may be dried in a dryer. Use a delicate or permanent press setting, not a hot setting.
- c. Game Jerseys should never be worn anywhere except for a game.
- d. Do not cut, or alter the jersey. If there is a problem with the fit, see the coach or the equipment manager.

19. CHEER UNIFORMS AND CARE. See a coach or the Cheer Coordinator if there are any problems or concerns with uniforms issued. Remember - parents will pay for any uniform piece that is ruined. A cheer skirt costs approximately \$80 each. A shell costs \$65 each.

Skirt and Shell

- a. Wash only in cold water. Do not ever use chlorine bleach.
- b. Hang up to dry. Skirt pleats will fall in place if hung up to dry.
- c. Do not iron.
- d. Do not have dry-cleaned. Dry cleaning will ruin the fabric.

Do not cut, sew or alter the skirt and shell in any way! The button on the skirt may be moved to accommodate fit, but this is the only alteration allowed!

Bodysuit, briefs, socks and sneakers: A white bodysuit is usually needed. Royal blue briefs (lollies) are mandatory. Low white socks and white sneakers are required. These items are offered for sale thru our organization, usually at a lower price than in stores. Our sneakers are

cheer sneakers are designed for the safety of cheerleaders. See a coach or the cheer coordinator for specific requirements. We also offer these items for sale thru our cheer vendor.

20. PARENT CONCERNS/QUESTIONS: Concerns should be discussed first with the head coach of your child's team. We ask that you follow our chain of command. Cheer questions should be addressed to coaches then our Cheer Coordinator. Football questions should be addressed to coaches then our Football Coordinator. For further questions, clarifications and issues not resolved speak to our President. We want to know your opinions & concerns in order to provide a better program and environment for your child. You can also send an email to middletownislanders@hotmail.com. Our monthly board meetings are also open to parents.

21. WEB SITE: Our web site will contain information about schedules, games, events, notices, etc. Make sure you check frequently for updates. Pictures of teams, names or action photos will be posted on the web site. Names will never be associated with a child's photo. If you object to having your child's name or photo on our web site, notify us as soon as possible. If you do not notify us we assume you have no objection.

22. EVENT DATES:

A firm schedule will be given at the beginning of the season. Game schedules are subject to change during the season due to field availability and other unforeseen occurrences.

Registration:	April 30 th and May 2 nd
Paperwork turn-in:	July 18 th - Equipment also to be issued
First day of practice:	August 3 rd for all teams, 5:30 pm (Some teams may start practice August 1 st in the morning)
Opening Day:	August 1 st , Gaudet Field - Fun day for all!
Parent Meeting:	August 6 th Gaudet Field bleachers
Car Wash Fundraiser:	August 8 th
Tag Day Fundraiser:	August 15 th (Mandatory – details provided later)
Round Robin games	To be announced
Official weigh-in	August 29 (Mandatory for all football except Flag)
First official game	August 30
Team Photos:	Dates to be determined

Other events planned are dances for the kids, a spaghetti dinner and our annual award banquet.

CONTACTS – EXECUTIVE BOARD: Our web site has a complete listing of our board/coaches

President:	Tina Vars	849-6680	nikang3@cox.net
Vice President:	Carl Brietzke	841-9440	mtrhead11@aol.com
Football Coordinator:	Graham Sellar	846-0767	gsellar@cox.net
Cheer Coordinator:	Renee Brietzke	841-9440	nee4me@aol.com
Secretary:	Tracey McGowan	847-9813	traym1@cox.net
Concession Manager:	Donna Ennis	847-3667	pookie110@aol.com
Fundraising Coordinator:	Tracy Perry	846-7221	traykon@aol.com

COACH AND OTHER BOARD MEMBER CONTACTS ARE LISTED ON OUR WEB SITE

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.eteamz.com/islanders