



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**Yarrow YMCA**

**YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL**  
**FRIDAY Y LIGHTS**  
**PROGRAM MANUAL**



**2022**

**Yarrow YMCA  
Flag Football**

**PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

Goals for YMCA Youth Sports programs are based on the following beliefs and principles:

◆ **PARTICIPATION. Everyone plays!**

Everyone who registers on time is assigned to a team. The coach gives both the most skilled and least skilled players equal attention. At season's end, the goal is to have had a positive experience in every facet of the sport.

◆ **FUN. We play sports to have fun!**

Players, coaches, officials, and parents are urged to follow "YMCA House Rules" including:

- Remember who this league is for
- Treat everyone with respect and decency
- Positive reinforcement for players
- Respect the game itself and calls that made within the game
- Abide by the zero-tolerance policy for physical or verbal violence

The overall environment created by the coach and reinforced by the officials is positive, relaxed and enjoyable. Winning is kept in perspective.

◆ **FITNESS. Regular cardiovascular exercise is important for a lifetime!**

Encouraging fitness and good health means developing the whole person: spirit, mind and body. Warm-up and conditioning exercises should be included in practice sessions and before games. Healthy lifestyle habits are covered in team discussions and encouraged in family activities. Physical exercise, such as push-ups or running laps, are not used as punishment.

◆ **SKILLS. Emphasize the fundamentals!**

Equipment, facilities, and rules of the game are modified according to the ages of the players. Coaches help players measure their skills, set goals, and evaluate their progress against their own standards. Team discussions enhance other skills, such as decision making and communication.

◆ **TEAMWORK. Focus on cooperation, not competition!**

Balanced teams are formed by equalizing the skills, size and abilities of players, not by recruiting only the best players. Players have the opportunity to play a variety of positions and are encouraged to help one another with skills development. Team discussions often focus on the importance of teamwork. Player skill level is assessed one-on-one between player and coach and is not announced so that players cannot compare themselves to each other.

**◆ FAIR PLAY. Fair play involves respect!**

Fair play requires a clear understanding of the rules by everyone involved- players, coaches, officials and parents. This is accomplished through training events and materials. Fair play is based on:

- Respect for the rules and the officials who uphold them.
- Respect for oneself – taking responsibility for one’s behavior and learning.
- Respect for one’s teammates – working to become a team player who unselfishly contributes to the good of the whole team.
- Respect for the other team – considering the other team an essential partner in competition.

**◆ MEMBER INVOLVEMENT. Members are the key!**

The YMCA staff administrator manages the program through involved volunteer members. Volunteer coaches and officials are carefully selected for their knowledge, experience, and support of YMCA Youth Sports philosophy. They receive training and materials on YMCA Youth Sports philosophy and program operation and receive recognition for their work.

**◆ SAFETY. Protect players from harm!**

Coaches and team parents are responsible to see that the players are safe from harm and injury at their practices and games. Playing areas are to be inspected before play to prevent hazardous conditions. Safe playing conditions for everyone is important to all. Since this is a skills based league, players are not allowed to show up wearing a helmet or pads. However, all players will need a YMCA approved helmet, a protective mouthpiece, and non-metal cleats.

## **Yarrow YMCA**

### **THE SIX PILLARS OF CHARACTER**

The Yarrow YMCA is a supporter of the Character Counts! Coalition and supports the Six Pillars of Character as a measure of positive youth development.

#### **TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Be honest. Don't deceive, cheat or steal. Be reliable- do what you say you'll do. Have the courage to do the right thing. Build a good reputation. Be loyal- stand by your family, friends and country.

#### **RESPECT**

Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule. Be tolerant of differences. Use good manners, not bad language. Be considerate of the feelings of others. Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone. Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Do what you are supposed to do. Persevere: keep on trying! Always do your best. Use self-control. Consequences. Be accountable for your choices.

#### **FAIRNESS**

Play by the rules. Take turns and share. Be open-minded; listen to others. Don't take advantage of others. Don't blame others carelessly.

#### **CARING**

Be kind. Be compassionate and show you care. Express gratitude. Forgive others. Help people in need.

#### **CITIZENSHIP**

Do your share to make your school and community better. Cooperate. Stay informed; vote. Be a good neighbor. Obey laws and rules. Respect authority. Protect the environment.

## Yarrow YMCA

### PROGRAM QUALITY STANDARDS

To assure a quality experience for all involved, the following standards are upheld by participating YMCA's Youth Flag Football program:

#### ◆ PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Players in our YMCA flag football program wear quality uniforms. Football Jerseys and shorts will be provided. Officials are always in their standard uniforms.

#### ◆ COACHING CERTIFICATION

Our volunteer coaches are carefully selected to be the best coaches possible. They are educated and held accountable to uphold the values the YMCA exemplifies. Above all, they will teach TEAMWORK and SPORTSMANSHIP. Skills are also the focus so that every child will end the season a better football player.

#### ◆ SUPERVISED FACILITIES

A YMCA employed or volunteer staff member will be monitoring the quality of the experience and making sure the games meet reasonable YMCA standards of play.

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#### ◆ VALUES TRAINING

All participants at every level are educated and expected to exemplify the SIX PILLARS OF CHARACTER.

#### ◆ EVERYONE PLAYS

Each player on every team will always play an equitable amount of time each and every game. No player is allowed to play the entire game without sitting out at least one substitution pattern unless special circumstances allow for it.

#### ◆ RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

All YMCAs strive to maintain a safe environment in all areas. Many precautions are taken to ensure that our programs run as smoothly and risk free as possible. All facilities are monitored for safe conditions, equipment and conduct.

◆ **PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE**

In order to assure everyone that all players are protected from potential abuse, the YMCA has established a Prevention of Abuse in YMCA Program Policy.

- At least two adults attend all player and team activities.
- Non-playing activities are the responsibility of each player's parent.
- All volunteers complete a volunteer application and the appropriate YMCA director reviews and approves the applications. This includes personal reference checking.
- Volunteer leadership is fingerprinted by their YMCA for clearance prior to involvement.

**Yarrow YMCA  
Youth Flag Football  
5 v 5 Flag Football Rules**

### The Divisions

- Divisions are determined by grades K/1, 2/3, 4/5, 6/7/8.
- A complete team is five (5) players minimum. Games may be played with 4 will result in a forfeit for the undermanned team.
- Football size by division.
  - K/1 = Pee Wee
  - 2/3 = Pee Wee
  - 4/5 = Junior
  - 6-8 = Youth
- Championship Game

Top two teams in their division will play the second game played on the final Friday, February 11, 2022 to determine the Championship for that division.

### Games Schedule

- All games will start at their scheduled times. Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled game time. NO schedule changes will be made. If a team cannot be fielded at scheduled time, then that team will have to forfeit and goes in the books as a loss. The opposing team be credited with a win and the score will be reflected as 6-0.
- If both teams do not field a team, they will both be given ties for that game. Score will be reflected as 6-6.
- Games are subject to cancellation based on weather and field conditions.

### Fielding a team with a minimum of players at game time

- At game time a team can play with a MINIMUM of 5 players. Team with four or less will be an automatic forfeit. Counting as a loss in the book with opposing team being credited with a win and the score will be reflected as 6-0.

### The Game

- The field dimensions are 30 yards wide by 70 yards long which includes already two 10-yard end zones.
- No contact allowed; players will be warned & penalized for excessive contact for first infraction. Players will be ejected for successive infractions.
- A coin toss determines first possession
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three plays to cross mid-field. If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession.
- Once a team crosses mid-field they have three plays to score. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession.

- All possessions start from the 5-yard line except interceptions.
- “No Run Zones” are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5-yards before the end zone.
- Teams may use their own ball (only one allowed) during games but must pass official inspection before approval.

#### Game Clock Format

- Each game is 44 minutes long. Two 22-minute halves and a 2-minute halftime.
- The clock will constantly run except for the last 2-minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. In the last 2-minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half the clock will stop on a first down, touchdown, change of possession, incomplete pass, penalties, stepping out of bounds, and 5 second QB count.
- The clock will stop if a time out has been called by a coach or an official; players do not call timeouts
- Each time the ball is spotted, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball once the officials return to their positions on the field. Officials will warn the offense when there are 10 seconds left to snap the ball (Leniency will be given the first 2 weeks)
- Teams may not snap the ball until the officials are set. One official will be on the sideline at the line of scrimmage. The 2<sup>nd</sup> official will walk off the 7 yard rush line with a bright color bean bag then go to the opposite sideline at the rush line. (No Quick Snaps). Officials are off the field during game play.
- Games do not end on a defensive penalty. Offense will get one additional play.

#### Time Outs

- Each team has two-time outs per half. Timeouts do not carry over between halves.
- Coaches & Officials call timeouts only; players (on or off the field) do not call timeouts
- Time outs will only stop the game clock for 30 seconds. The offense must snap at the completion of the time out.
- If time out is called after a touchdown the clock will not run during the extra point. The clock will begin again on the first snap after the change of possession.

#### Attire

- Cleats are recommended and allowed as long as they do not have metal spikes. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece and YMCA approved soft helmet; there are no exceptions. Inspections will be made at the beginning of each game by one of the officials.
- Shirts must be tucked in. If a shirt is not tucked in and gets pulled on by a defender going for a flag, then the player with the ball is considered down.
- Flags must be worn on each side of the players’ hips with the flags pointing out. Recommended that players check their flag alignment at the line of scrimmage before the beginning of each play to avoid unfair advantages created by improper flag alignment.
- YMCA FLAG jerseys must be worn during play.

#### Scoring



- TD = 6 points
- Extra point - 5 yards out = 1 point (no run zone), 10 yards out = 2 points.
- Safety = 2 points
- Forfeits are scored 6-0 for the winning team

#### Mercy Rule

- After one team is winning by twenty-eight points or more at half time the following will take place.
  1. The losing team gets the first offensive possession of the second half to continue regular play. If they do not score, game is over.
    - If losing team does score on the first offensive possession then the game will continue.
  2. The winning team scores again on their possession.
    - Then the losing team will have one more possession to try to score. If they do not score, game is over, if they do score game will continue.

#### Season Standings Tie Breakers

- Two teams tied for one place will be resolved in the following order.
  - Total points allowed during the season
  - Point differential (total points scored vs total points allowed)
  - Coin toss
- Three or more teams tied for one place will be resolved in the following order.
  - Total points allowed during the season
  - Point differential (total points scored vs total points allowed)
  - Coin toss if two teams are still tied. Drawing if three teams are still tied.

#### Start of a Play

- The offense can ask the referee before the play to spot the ball on the left hash mark or right hash mark. The hash marks will not be marked on the field so that will be determined by the official. If not requested the ball will be placed in the middle of the field.
- Players may not be moving forward when the ball is snapped.
- The ball must be snapped between the legs to start the play. Note: K/1 Division only – if the snap is dropped, the official will allow two retry attempts and after that it will be ruled a loss of down. Note: 2/3, 4/5, 6-8 division a dropped snap or quarterback drop the ball is spotted at location where ball is dropped and the down is consumed.
- Coaches are to be off the field in all divisions besides K/1 and 2/3 during a play. In the K/1 and 2/3 divisions the coach must stand 10 yards behind the 7-yard rush line before the play begins.
- In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
  - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

### Rushing the Quarterback

- Players who desire to rush the quarterback directly must be behind the “Rush Line” at 7 yards (**Note: 6-8 division will be 10 yards**) from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. An official will designate the “Rush Line” at 7 yards (10 yards) from the line of scrimmage.
- When the ball is snapped, players who are not 7 yards (10 yards) from the line of scrimmage may not enter into the backfield until the ball has left the Quarterback’s (whoever takes the snap) possession.
- The rusher should not be in a direct line with the quarterback. The rusher should start **5 yards** to either side of where the ball is spotted to prevent the offense from obstructing a straight path. **The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher or penalties may be given for blocking.**

### Running

- The quarterback (player who takes the initial snap) may not run with the ball unless the ball has been pitched, handed off, or thrown back to them.
- Teams may pitch, handoff, or throw back the football in the backfield only.
- The player who receives a backwards pitch, handoff, or throw back may throw the ball forward or backward as long as they are not beyond the line of scrimmage.
- “No Run Zones” are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5 yards before the end zone.  
\*Exception for the K/1 Division: They may run the ball when going for 1 extra point after scoring a touchdown. “No Run Zones” still enforced on all other plays in K/1 Division
- The ball is spotted where the runner’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player’s front foot.
- The front foot must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown. The ball does not have to cross. If a player dives, then the ball will be spotted at the point the runner leaves his feet while diving.
- The center who snapped the ball cannot receive a direct handoff from the quarter back in any way. The ball must be tossed, pitched, or the center can run behind the quarter back to be eligible for a run.
- Players may not block at any time. **Once an offensive player has possession of the ball across the line of scrimmage (due to a pass or run), all other offensive players must stop and hold their position. If a defender is impeded by an offensive player who is not stationary there will be a penalty given (Note: K/1 division will be more lenient)**
- Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

### Passing

- The quarterback (player who take the initial snap) has 5 seconds to pass the ball if no players rush from the 7-yard rush line and cross the line of scrimmage. If the ball is not thrown, the play is dead, resulting in a loss of down. The ball returns to the line of scrimmage. (Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, there is no 5-second count).
- The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack, but the pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage or it is a penalty.
- If the defensive team rushes the quarterback from behind the "Rush Line", there is no 5-second count once they cross the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions may be returned even if caught in the endzone; The ball will be spotted where the intercepting player's flag is finally pulled. Touchbacks occur if the interceptor does not leave the endzone. The ball will be spotted on the offensive 5yd line.
- When an interception occurs on an extra point the play is ruled over. No returning extra points.
- The rusher may not hit the quarterback's arm, or knock the ball out of the quarterback's hand. The rusher must keep their hands below their shoulders and play the flags. 5/6 and 6/8 are an exception. Players may attempt to knock the ball out of the air. Contact with the quarterback or his/her throwing arm will result in a penalty.

### Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched back or handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
- Players that run out of bounds during a play are not eligible to come back in and make a reception.

### Play is ruled dead when the following occurs:

- The offensive player with possession has his flag pulled. Note if defensive player pulls the offensive player's flag before they receive the ball, the defense must pull the second flag to end the play.
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown is scored
- Ball carrier's knee or elbow touches the ground
- 5 second count on quarterback (no defenders rushing)
- Incomplete pass
- Ball hits the ground (no fumbles)
- Ball carrier's flag falls off
- Any player who starts a play without a flag is down where they touch the ball.
- There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where it hit the ground.
- If an offensive player has one flag pulled by a defender before he/she receives the ball, the defenders must now pull the other flag to end the play. If an offensive player has both flags pulled by a defender before he/she receives the ball, it is a defensive penalty 5 yards from the line of scrimmage or half the distance to the goal and an automatic first down.

- The player throwing the ball cannot receive his/her own pass unless a defender has tipped the ball first.

Defensive Penalties: Most penalties result in a 5yd penalty and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

- Offside / Illegal Rush
  - Only one player at a time may go in motion. Player in motion may only go parallel or back. No forward motion. Forward motion before the snap will result in a penalty of false start.
  - **Please note that all offside penalties will result in a 5 yard loss but not loss of down and not automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.**
- Pass interference (ball will be placed at the spot of the foul & auto 1<sup>st</sup> down)
  - If this occurs in the endzone, the offensive coach can choose to spot the ball inside or outside the “no run zone”
- Illegal contact (holding, bump and run, blocking) \* Note: the officials will determine incidental contact which may result from normal play.
- Delay of game (all delay of game penalties stop the clock).
- Holding
- Tripping
- Roughing the quarterback - the rusher may not knock the ball out of the quarterback’s hand and must attempt to go for the flag.
- A defender who dives for flags and makes contact with the ball carrier will be penalized.
- **Tackling will NOT be tolerated! Malicious tackles or several tackling penalties on one player may result in being ejected from that game and possibly more pending further deliberation.**
- **Excessive contact - even if the defender is making a play on the ball. If the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be sat out of the game and may be removed from the league.**
- Last Man Rule - If there is no one in between the player and the endzone, and it is clear to the official that the offensive player would have scored if they were not held, a touchdown will be awarded.
- All defensive penalties are five yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down except illegal rush/offsidings, delay of game, and pass interference. Illegal rush and delay of game are just 5yd penalties and repeat the current down. Pass interference which is added on to the end of the play.

Offensive Penalties: Most penalties result in a 5yd penalty and a loss of down (no loss of down if the play resulted in a first down before the penalty occurred)

- Illegal motion / False start
  - Please note that all offside penalties will result in a 5 yard loss but not loss of down and not automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

- Pass interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender).
- Impeding the rush (the offensive players must avoid the rusher).
- **Flag guarding (ball carrier may not stiff arm, slap at, push away, or use the ball to deflect a defender's attempt to grab their flags). This will result in a 10 yard penalty from the action and a loss of down.**
- Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- Delay of game (all delay of game penalties stop the clock).
- Excessive contact - If the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be sat out of the game and may be removed from the league.
- All offensive penalties are five yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down, except flag guarding and blocking, which is from the point of infraction.

### Sportsmanship / Roughing

**Trash talking and use of foul language will not be tolerated.** The official has the right to determine language that is offensive. (Trash talking is language that may be considered offensive to the official, opposing players, coaches or spectators). **The official may eject players, coaches, and parents from the game for trash talking.**

Personalized trash talking is an auto ejection. Example, "you suck" versus "this sucks". Personally attacking another participant (including parents, officials, coaches) is not allowed in any manner.

If the official witnesses any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any other unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game.

**The league director reserves the right to eject any involved party from a game.**

## **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**

### Overtime

- A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
  - If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of

- overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
- o The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
  - Each team has one possession in overtime that starts at midfield and get 3 downs to score followed by PAT. They may elect to go for one or two points.
  - Both teams must “go for two” from the 10-yard line starting with the third round of overtime.
  - The final points earned in overtime will be added to the final score.
  - All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
  - There are no timeouts.

### Identification/Medical Releases

All coaches must carry their rosters and medical release forms at all times. It will be the responsibility of the individual coaches to make sure the participants are playing in the appropriate age divisions.

### Emergency Procedures and First Aid

No two emergencies are the same. While the various steps and suggested actions outlined below represent sound procedures, your own good judgment should be the final authority until you are able to contact a superior. Generally, your responsibilities include:

- Prevention of incidents before they happen.
- Handling the situation at the time of occurrence.
- Notifying the necessary people after the incident.
- During or following most emergencies it is necessary to inform others.

In general, the Sports Director is the key person to be notified in case of injury or incident, and a YMCA incident/accident report should be completed immediately following the emergency.

### Team Parent

All teams are expected to have at least one adult in attendance at all team activities, in addition to the coach. **One (1) home team parent is responsible for keeping score on a team-provided whiteboard for games.**

### Transportation

Transportation is the responsibility of each player's parents. The coach and/or team parent is not to be responsible for transporting players. YMCA insurance does not cover any transportation by volunteers or parents.

### Conduct

All coaches and players represent the YMCA in a positive and mannerly fashion. All coaches head and assistants must sign the Coaches Code of Conduct Pledge.

### **Sportsmanship Line**

All games will conclude with a sportsmanship line-up handshake.

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Any unsportsmanlike conduct by players, coaches and fans will not be a part of the YMCA Flag Football League. Officials and the Sports Director have the responsibility to stop the game if situations get out of control.

### **Substitution Rules**

All players must be substituted. **NO** player plays the entire game unless necessary due to lack of participants.

### **Behavior**

Players, Coaches, or Team Representatives involved in fights, vulgar confrontation or negative behavior will receive an instant expulsion from the YMCA league. Players, Coaches or Team Representations receiving (2) Unsportsmanlike penalties during regular league play will be ineligible for post season play. Branch teams forfeiting (2) regular league games will be terminated from further league play.

## **YMCA REFUND POLICY**

**100% minus \$50 jersey fee before Dec 15; No refund after Dec 15**

## **Yarrow YMCA Code of Conduct**

All team members, coaches and supporters must maintain the highest standards of conduct at all times. Profanity, loud or rowdy behavior, ridiculing players, fans, referees, or coaches; fighting, shoving, and arguing are not allowed. It is expected that the team coach will ensure the observance of the Code of Conduct by each team member. Violation of the Code of Conduct after a warning may result in suspension or expulsion of individual players, coaches, fans, or teams.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

YMCA policy prohibits sexual harassment in any form, including verbal, physical, and visual harassment. Any employee who believes he/she has been harassed by a co-worker, supervisor agent of the employer, participants/members, volunteers or vendors should promptly report the facts of the incident and the names of the individuals involved, in writing, to his/her supervisor, the branch Executive Director, Vice President of the branch operations, Director of Personnel or the president. All reports will be treated confidentially.

The person who receives the complaint must report, in writing, the details of the incident to the branch Executive Director and the association's Personnel Director.

The branch Executive Director, Personnel Director or President will immediately investigate all such claims and take the appropriate corrective action.

Anyone found guilty of sexual harassment will be disciplined up to and including immediate termination for cause.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

The Fair Employment and Housing Commission regulations define sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harassed; the following is a partial list:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexual suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters
- Verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions



- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations
- Physical conduct: touching or blocking movement