Points of Emphasis

SPORTSMANSHIP
Before, During, & After a Contest

What is Sportsmanship?
- A commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity (NFHS).
- A commitment to maintain composure and respect towards opponents, officials, and staff in tense environments.
- A commitment to teaching and enforcing clear behavior expectations before, during and after contests.

Why is Sportsmanship important?
- Because it teaches life lessons of character, teamwork, and overcoming adversity.
- Because maintaining it - especially in challenging environments - sets the standard for how we all deserve to be treated.

How do I exhibit Sportsmanship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before a Contest</th>
<th>During a Contest</th>
<th>After a Contest</th>
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| ● Coaches are expected to teach their team how to execute all aspects of participation in a contest - bus behaviors, arrival and departure procedures, team movement, interaction with others, etc. | ● Be respectful of the opposing team and staff.  
● Cheer positively for your team.  
● Do not cheer/chant negatively.  
● Be respectful of the officials, understanding that everyone is human and makes mistakes, including you!  
● Stay with your team and be an active presence. | ● Honor and respect the effort of all involved. "Win or lose, act like you have been there before." -Lombardi, 1967  
● Manage/temper your competitive intensity when the final whistle blows.  
● Execute a respectful handshake line (coaches, ADs, event staff to monitor).  
● Wait to engage with fans until after the handshake and team gathering.  
● Do not invite fans on the playing surface. |

 AACPS Athletics
Points of Emphasis

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Expectations

- Leaders in our program are asked to help **Lift the Stigma** associated with mental health struggles by talking to teams about mental health and modeling caring, supportive, and understanding behaviors.
- Athletic success must take a back seat to mental health and team morale.
- Be aware of mental health “red flags” from student-athletes and staff.

*Excessive sleeping, Loss of interest in favorite activities, unexpected decline in academic performance, weight loss, loss of appetite, excessive worrying or fear, extreme mood changes, delusions / hallucinations, substance abuse, ideas of suicide, hyperactive behavior or routine lethargy, frequent temper tantrums, aggression or harm to self or others*

How do I support mental health awareness?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>As an athletic administrator</th>
<th>As a coach</th>
<th>As a student-athlete</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and expect teams to use purposefully some practice time for team bonding activities.</td>
<td>Observe student-athlete and staff behavior.</td>
<td>Know that you do have resources in the school system to help with mental health struggles.</td>
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<td>Providing resources and AACPS policies to coaches. Crisis Support &amp; Reporting document found here - <a href="https://www.aacps.org/Page/1146">https://www.aacps.org/Page/1146</a></td>
<td>Understand that team morale and mental health are important aspects of your team's success.</td>
<td>Talk to coaches, team captains, athletic department, or school counselors if you are feeling down.</td>
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<td>Providing professional development and guidance to recognize needed mental health interventions.</td>
<td>Take time for team bonding activities.</td>
<td>Be a good teammate, which includes notifying coaches if you see potential concerns with someone else.</td>
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<td>Allow student-athletes and staff the opportunity to take a mental health break if needed.</td>
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<td>Have purposeful mental health check-ins with student-athletes.</td>
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<td>Communicate with your team the roles and responsibilities of each coach on staff.</td>
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<td>Know that you do not have to be the expert if a situation arises that you are not comfortable with. Seek help from other school staff, such as school counselors. No one should feel alone, including those trying to provide support.</td>
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