

Sports and Youth Ministry; 15 Ways the Coordinator of Youth Ministry can work closely with parish and school sports

1. Get to know the coaches and offer your support and if possible your help.
2. Offer to help coaches with prayer before and after practices and at games. Put together a booklet of prayer for athletes.
3. Invite former or current coaches to help at youth ministry events. You might need to settle for their help only during the off season, but it will be worth it.
4. Attend sporting events and sit in the cheering section where you can interact with students. Call the Diocesan Recreation Association (614.241.2580) for a free pass for admission to grade school sporting events.
5. Send the athletes congratulatory notes on big wins and encouragement notes after losses. When someone has a great game or is athlete of week or MVP then highlight them in your newsletter.
6. Attend the school athletic banquet at the end of the year and offer to help if you have the time.
7. Send out a monthly sports devotion or prayer every month to all athletes in your parish.
8. Share your youth ministry calendar with the coaches and athletic directors (AD) as soon as you compile it. If there are serious event conflicts, then invite the coach or AD to have coffee to amicably work things out.
9. Send "get well cards to athletes who are injured and try to visit them if someone is in the hospital.
10. Participate in the Diocese of Columbus coaches' Play Like a Champion training which brings a focus on coaching and sports as ministry.
11. If you really have time and enjoy sports, offer to help coach. Make sure to consult your family and your boss (pastor!) to set a limit on how much time you can devote to helping coach but even if you help part time, then certainly the players and other coaches will welcome your help.
12. Have an attitude of understanding when teens miss youth events because of games and practices. AD's and coaches are having the same scheduling issues and challenges that you have with the busy lives and schedules of families, teens, and competing school and parish functions.
13. Pray for the coaches and game officials. Send them encouragement.
14. Join your parish team for mass if they celebrate mass together before a game.
15. Offer to assist with creating a special blessing or prayer service for athletes at the beginning or end of the sport season.