**Spring Mills Football Association Parent/ Coach Relationship Policy**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to our student-athletes. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand the expectations placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the head coach of your child’s team. Any and all communication regarding players should be directed to the head coach only and not the assistants or team moms.

**Communication Parents Can Expect From the Coach:**

• Philosophy of the head coach for the team

• Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all members of the team

• Location and times of all practices and games

• Team requirements; i.e.: volunteer duties, fundraising, practice commitments, behavioral expectations, safety issues, and informational sources

• Procedures should your child be injured during practices or contests

• Discipline that could result in the denial of your child’s participation

**Communication Coaches Can Expect From Parents**

• Concerns expressed directly to the head coach only (in private)

• Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

• Disclosure of medical or other limitations

• Specific concerns regarding a coach’s philosophy and/or expectations

As your child becomes more involved in the Spring Mills Youth Football program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand, however, that there may be times when things do not go the way you or as your child wishes. Both of which can be valued life lessons. Regardless, at these times a discussion with the coach is encouraged.

**Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches**

• The treatment of your child mentally and physically

• Ways to help your child improve

• Concerns about your child’s behavior

• How you can help the program by volunteering you time to help with field set up, concessions, trash and clean up, fundraiser or anything else you feel will be beneficial to your team or the program.

As a parent, it is very difficult to accept your child’s not playing as much as you may hope. Our coaches are dedicated and experienced. They make judgments based on what they believe to be best for all youth involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child’s coach. Other issues, such as those listed below must be left to the discretion of our qualified staff.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

• Playing time

• Team strategy

• Play calling and game strategy

• Other student-athletes

There are situations that arise that may require a conference between the coach and parent. This dialogue is encouraged. It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the others position. When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be used to help promote a resolution of the concern.

Procedure to Use in Discussing Concerns with a Head Coach

1. Call (or email) to set up an appointment. Please keep in mind that our coaches and other volunteers have careers of their own and meeting time during the normal business day may be limited. Coaches email addresses will be provided to you once the teams are established or can be obtained from the team moms.

2. Please do not attempt to initiate a discussion or confront a coach before or after a game or practice. This can be an emotional time for all parties. Meetings in this setting usually do not promote a resolution.

3. Wait a minimum of 24hrs from the end of any game or practice from which you are inspired to discuss a concern or issue with your head coach.

**The Next Step**

What can a parent do if the meeting with the Head Coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Director of Coaches.

2. At this meeting, further appropriate steps can be discussed and determined.

3. If the Director of Coaches still did not provide a satisfactory resolution, please contact the SMFA Board.

Research shows us that participation in youth sporting activities gives the student-athlete a greater chance of success during adulthood. We are confident that our program will aid in the preparation of those student-athletes who choose to participate. We are also hopeful that the information provided in this guide will enhance both youth and parent participation in our athletic program. Our door is always open; please contact us at anytime with your constructive criticism or concerns.