

VA Volleyball Academy PLAYER AND PARENT HANDBOOK 2022-2023

OUR MISSION AND CLUB PHILOSOPHY

The mission of VA Volleyball Academy (VAVA) is to create a place of lifelong belonging that produces the greatest positive impact on the largest number of people in the most efficient manner.

VAVA's goal is to have players and parents find their place in the volleyball community and fuel their love of the game. At the same time, develop meaningful relationships that our players and parents can cherish for years to come.

Participating in club volleyball requires a large amount of time and financial commitment for the student-athlete and parents. By our members adhering to the policies and guidelines set forth in this handbook, we create a safe environment for our players, parents, and coaches - all of which contributes to a positive experience for all.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

While each Head Coach may set *team* rules and policies specific to their respective team, this handbook consists of *club* rules and policies that apply to ALL members of the club. Club rules are non-negotiable and failure to follow such are grounds for disciplinary actions which may include, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion from the club.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents will treat coaches, players, other parents, and officials with respect at all times. Our coaching staff has not only played, but also studied the game. We understand that each player has strengths and weaknesses. We, as coaches, will do our best to recognize the strengths in every athlete and play them in a position where their strengths will show and provide the best results for the team. Coaches are entrusted with game time decisions because they have the most context into the team.

If you feel you must discuss your child's playing time with a coach, please refrain from doing so during tournament play. If you would like to talk to the

coach regarding playing time, set up a meeting to discuss your concerns respectfully. Please remember that the coaches need to be just as focused during tournaments as the players. While we allow parents to ask questions in a respectful manner during a tournament, Coaches reserve the right to end the discussion at any time for any reason.

We believe that athletic competition should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and promote the development of good character and other important life skills. We also believe that the highest potential of sports is achieved when participants are committed to pursuing victory with honor and integrity.

- Respect – treat people with respect all the time and require the same of your children.
- Class – live and cheer with class; be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; compliment extraordinary performance; and show respect for all competitors.
- Disrespectful Conduct – do not engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks of a sexual nature, trash-talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
- Respect Officials – treat contest officials with respect; do not complain about or argue with official calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.
- Respect Coaches – treat coaches with respect at all times; recognize that they have team goals beyond those of your child. Do not shout instructions to players from the stands; let the coaches coach.
- Role-modeling – Consistently exhibit good character and conduct yourself as a role model for your children
- Self-Control – exercise self-control; do not fight or show excessive displays of anger or frustration; have the strength to overcome the temptation to demean others.

If you do not follow the parent code of conduct, VAVA has the right to exercise the following:

- 1) Parent/Parents will not longer be able to attend practices or tournaments.
- 2) Immediate dismissal of player from VAVA team for the season.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

This is one of the most important areas to emphasize. This line of communication will be strictly followed within our program. Our club truly believes that if all of us are conscientious in following this, we should not run into any problems that cannot be resolved in a smooth comfortable way. If a player is having frustrations or concerns of any kind it is very important that she speaks to the coach as soon as possible within our guidelines. If after speaking to the coach, she does not feel like the problem has been resolved, then you as parents may document the concern and send it in an email to your coach. It will be determined at that time if a meeting, with the coaches, to discuss the matter needs to be arranged, or if it can be discussed by email or over the phone. If after discussing matters with the coaches, you still have concerns, then a meeting may be arranged with the parent, athlete, coach, and the Club Director.

Please note that any meeting will **NOT** take place with just the parent; the player **MUST** be present in the discussion, and the discussion will **ONLY** be about that player and the documented concern. A Club Director will be informed of any concerns and meetings with the coaching staff so they are aware that communication is happening. Any information given to parents will be shared openly and honestly with the VAVA Club Director.

Tournaments can be an emotional time for both parents and coaches. Meetings under this setting do not promote resolution. Productive meetings require calm, rational attitudes in a private setting where concerns can be addressed and all parties are cooperating to make the meeting effective for the betterment of the athlete.

If the rules of communication are violated, the athlete will be removed from playing time for the duration of the tournament.

Appropriate Issues to Discuss with Coaches

- Treatment of your child
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

- Playing time
- Coaching decisions
- Other athletes

Playing Time

Playing time will be determined by the level of team and competition, each player's individual skills and attitude, and their ability to consistently contribute to the team's performance and chemistry. These are based on the coach's assessment of the team and players. It is solely at the discretion of the Coaching Staff. Playing time may not be equal throughout the season. Please be sure to address any playing time concerns with the Head Coach prior to accepting any club offers.

Practice Protocol

We want practice conditions to mimic game conditions. All players are expected to be at all practices. If you must miss a practice, you need to call, email or text the coach prior to the practice. Please notify coaches early if you have to miss.

Players should arrive at the gym 10 minutes prior to the practice start time. This will give the players time to put down their things, say hello to teammates and be ready to start on time. Players must be dressed in practice attire, have shoes on, water bottles ready and training needs addressed before the start of practice.

Practice is team time, the focus should be team practice nothing else. No foul language or disruptive attitudes during practice. Players should wear proper outdoor attire when coming/leaving practices. Water breaks need to be at the bench. Please bring a water bottle or water container.

Players are responsible for picking up trash and water bottles from the court area after practice. Players are responsible for taking care of equipment used to facilitate the practice plan.

PARENT PRACTICE PROTOCOL

- Be supportive and cheer for all players
- Respect and support the coaches
- If you have concerns or questions for any of the coaches, we ask that you speak with them privately about it and follow communication guidelines.
- Do not discuss players who are not your children with other players or other adults.
- No profanity or disruptive behavior.
- Do not yell out instructions. Support but do not coach or interfere with players and/or coaches during practice or games.
- In order to maintain our programs responsibly and with the professionalism that is required we ask that you follow our rules regarding parents and/or siblings and any other person NOT registered as an athlete or a coach.
- **NO PARENTS or CHILDREN ARE ALLOWED ON THE COURTS, COURT CHAIRS, REF STANDS, COURT NETS, HITTING BOXES AND TRAINING APPARATUS AT ANY TIME.**
 - This means no 'warming up' with kids before, during, or after practices on the courts. There should be no parents or persons on the courts at any time other than coaches and athletes for the program/practice taking place. This includes Coaches' children as well. This is not only a liability per insurance regulations etc. but it also detracts from the actual program or practices taking place on the courts. This is not a playground - it is a business and for our coaches to do their jobs to the best of their ability they need to have their athletes concentrating on the task at hand. We ask that parents PLEASE keep your children with you and supervised AT ALL TIMES while you are in our facility. We also ask that they do NOT enter any storage room, coaches lounge, and office without specific permission. We do allow you to bring items to keep your children entertained and even have space in the lobby for you to have room for this purpose.

Absence from Team Practices and Activities

An absence is excused if the player notifies the head coach in advance and the head coach approves the absence.

Injury/Illness

Please let the coaches know if your child is injured or ill before practice starts. If your child has an injury that does not allow them to practice, they will need a doctor's note clearing them to participate again. We expect players who are injured to still attend practices, within reason, as players will still receive valuable instructions/information on the sidelines.

Cellular Phones and Social Media

Cell phones and other forms of technology used during restriction times that cause an interruption or separation from the team, or team activities will result in a player losing the privilege of using these items while with the team during the season. If cell phones are used during team bonding activities it must be to enjoy positive benefits to uplift the entire team unit, and not used to separate one or more players from other players on the team.

Because this is becoming an issue that detracts from the life lesson goals that this program strives to create, please be advised that players, parents of players, and coaches using social media (twitter, Facebook, snap chat, and similar media) to voice unsolicited comments/pictures or the like, pertaining to team strategies or personal attacks on the VAVA club, other players or parents, and members of the coaching staff or their families may result in the related player and/or coach being dismissed from the team, and all team activities associated with the team.

- * I will not post any negative comments about VAVA, coaches, or teammates
- * I will not have any inappropriate pictures posted of myself or teammates
- * I will not encourage peer mistreatment through social media or any aspect of life

Tournaments

- All players must arrive at the tournament site at the time specified by their coach (10 minutes early would be even better!)
- Players must bring their bag with ALL UNIFORMS (you never know when an unexpected event could cause a need to change jerseys)
- The team will stay together at tournaments without the company of significant others. If you are leaving the tournament site, you must notify the coach.
- Scorekeeping: Each team should have a schedule, so the responsibility is shared equally among ALL players.
- At the conclusion of play every team member must stay, even if they are not working until the team's work responsibilities are completed.
- Before the tournament site is left, the team's area will be cleared of any and all trash. The area must be left as it was found, if not better.

Come to the tournament ready to play, both mentally and physically. Every team needs every player to be successful!

Playing Time

- * I understand that making the team, I am not guaranteed any playing time in a game.
- * I understand that playing time for each athlete is based on skill level, work ethic, and attitude, but ultimately it is the coach's decision.

The Importance of academics

As an athlete, you will be expected to give priority to your schoolwork. Your schoolwork can be enhanced by athletic participation. However, your schoolwork should never be used as an excuse to miss a team event. If you are a true student-athlete, then you will take care of schoolwork in a timely manner to be sure neither your school nor your athletics suffers.

Parents must notify the coaches if the athlete is failing any classes or having major difficulties in school.

VAVA CLUB SEASON PAYMENTS

Initial payment of \$1700 is due at each team's respective team orientation November 18-20. Remaining payments are due 1st of the month, January - May. If a payment is late (after 7 day grace period) starting the 8th of the month, the athlete will not be able to participate in any sanctioned events or

practices until a payment is made. A \$25.00 transaction fee will be assessed for each returned check, and if the problem occurs two times, parents must pay by cash or a cashier's check.

Payments can be made one of three ways:

- 1) Online via the invoice sent to the parents
- 2) Check payable to "VAVA"
- 3) Cash

DO NOT MAIL CHECKS TO THE GYM ADDRESS!!!

Please know, once you commit to a team we incur several expenses whether you continue your season with the club or not. It is your responsibility to make sure these payments are made.

All monies that are paid are non-refundable. If payment is not made, VAVA has the right to release you from your contract or enforce "no pay, no play".

What makes a successful athlete?

Motivation is the key to success, and self-motivation is the basis of all motivation. Every successful volleyball player has to be a self-starter. The coaching staff will help you to find your hot button and help you learn how to use it. If the coaches have to motivate you every day in practice, every game, then we are in serious trouble.

What are the ingredients for becoming a self-motivated person and athlete?

First, you must have a strong belief. You must believe not only in yourself, but also in the program, the people in the program, your teammates, and the coaches. Belief is the key to motivation. Belief in what you are doing and who you are doing it with is as important as believing in yourself. If you do not believe in yourself, your team and your program, we cannot be successful.

What it takes to be a great athlete

"No one can cheat you out of ultimate success but yourself."

Being an athlete does not merely mean being a member of the team. There are many phases to think about if you want to be a winner in volleyball and in life as well. The following are a few qualities that are absolutely necessary in becoming a great athlete.

Are you coachable?

The worst thing that can be said about a player is that she is not coachable. A player must be able to take coaching and listen to instruction. Are you a

"know it all"? Will you always do your best and strive to improve? Do you accept constructive criticism well? Do you try to compare yourself to other players? Do you make excuses for your performance? We strive for excellence, not perfection.

"The outcome lies with you it always has."

Are you willing to practice?

Not just reporting to practice and putting in the necessary time, but working everyday with the same enthusiasm and determination you use in a volleyball match. Great athletes have one speed, and it should be the same every day, full speed, every practice, and every match. Do not just work on the things that you are good at or come easy to you. Spend the majority of your practice time on the things that are difficult for you. If you quit during a drill or during practice, you will quit when it counts most – it becomes habit. We don't want players who quit we want 100% out of every individual. We must establish a "never quit" attitude in everything that we do.

"Winning isn't everything, the effort to win is."

Are you willing to make sacrifices?

Conditioning to play is not fun. It is not easy. Training is exacting; the responsibility is heavy because in volleyball each one must do it individually on her own in the off-season. It is rough, and includes personal denials in order to remain in good condition, but it does have its reward. You will have the inner confidence to execute a good pass or dig, a good serve, a good set, a good attack or block, and winning a match. When you are fatigued, you rationalize. You make decisions poorly, and you make excuses in your mind. You say to yourself, "I'm too tired, I can't do this, I'll quit, I'll loaf, hopefully no one will notice." When you don't use your ability to the fullest, you're cheating yourself and your teammates. The only way to remain in good shape is to never get out of it. The importance of hydration, nutrition, and rest are important variables throughout the season and year.

"Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

Do you have the ability to think under fire?

Can you concentrate on the work to be accomplished at the moment? Can you shut out of your mind a previous failure, success, or personal insult in order to give your undivided attention to the here and now? Can you check your personal baggage at the door? Matches are won by what is happening

now at this moment. Good athletes play every phase of the game at 100%, in the moment. Good athletes play in the moment and play with poise. Learn from mistakes and move on.

Rules of Conduct

We don't expect nor need a lot of rules, but coaches expect you to conduct yourself on knowing how to look and act. The coaches will help and develop you to look and act like ladies, to have good manners, to be punctual, and to be humble. We want you to play, behave, and act like athletes. The word "class" will become an important part of your life during the season.

Maturity

Some players who are not quite capable of sustained playing time on varsity should not get discouraged as they may develop into a regular some day. We as coaches have an obligation to develop all players with the expectations that they will develop. You must continue to work toward your maturity as a person and player, while maintaining a positive attitude towards the team. If you cannot commit to this going into the season, then you should reconsider trying out for the team. The coaches will try to communicate with you in identifying what role you will play and the skills you need to work on. If you have questions about your role, ask your coach.

School

School should be the highest priority in your life besides your family. If you fail in school, it is certain that you will fail in volleyball as well. Being successful in school does not only mean passing your classes, but should mean passing with above average grades.

There should be absolutely no behavior problems in or out of school. Always treat others with respect. Be respectful to authority figures. Rules are made for reasons and should be followed.

Being part of a team

Being a member of the VA VOLLEYBALL ACADEMY is a privilege, not a right. As a member of the club, there is inherent responsibility. You have chosen to make a commitment to the program, your team, your teammates, and your coaches. You have chosen to put the welfare of the team before your own

welfare. You have chosen to put the goals of the team before your individual goals.

Team Performance Principles

Team Unity

is a group of diverse individuals who have become one in mind, vision, and feeling, working together towards a common goal. Unity enables a team to rise above obstacles and reach or exceed its potential.

Competitiveness

is a state of mind that leads the body to action. Competitive players have passion, grit, mental toughness, and an utmost desire to win. Competitive players play with intensity, they take risks, and play with authority.

Passion

Passion causes a player to have motivation, dedication, persistence, and a strong work ethic on and off the field.

Self-Sacrifice

Sacrificing the self is when a player totally and completely dedicates herself to her team and her sport with utmost integrity and respect.

Trust

A player must trust in her ability, the coaches, and in her teammates, to perform under any circumstances.

Knowledge

Players must give priority to the process and not just the outcome. This involves focusing on performance of the current action, instead of focusing on the results of those actions.

Initiative

Doing things without being asked; includes helping set up and take down equipment during practices and games.

Resilience

The ability to let go of errors.

Six Things to Keep in Mind for Parents with Children in Athletics

1. Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, their competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach them on the way to or from the gym or at breakfast, and so on. It's tough not to, but it's a lot tougher for the child to be inundated with advice, pep talks, and often-critical instruction.
4. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to always be giving 100%, to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them to develop the feel for competing, giving a maximum effort, for having fun.
5. Try not to relive your athletic life through your children in a way that creates pressure; you dropped the ball too; you lost as well as won. You were frightened, you backed off at times, and you were not always heroic. Don't pressure them because of your lost pride.
6. Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your children with other members of the team, at least within hearing.