

## WHAT WE WILL TEACH YOUR CHILD

We want your child to have a wonderful sports experience, so we will be focusing on age appropriate skills and drills, as well as game play to promote their growth in the sport.

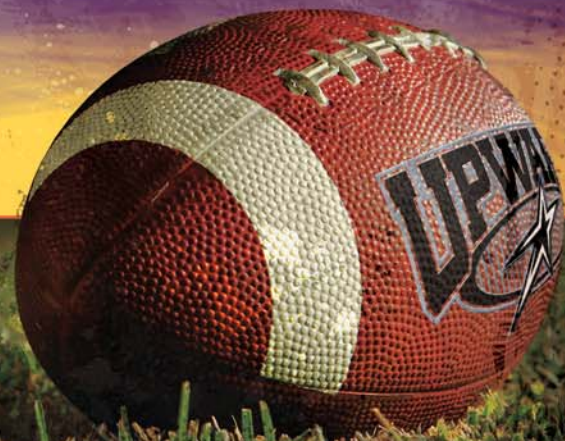
Additionally, we want to deliver life lessons on and off the field. Therefore, at each practice, we will have a half time break, where the coach will share life lessons and biblical principles – information that will be valuable to the players beyond the sport.

## BE A WINNING PARENT!

As a parent, you play a very important role in building the self-esteem and character of your child and every child in this league. Players look to their parents, coaches, and referees as models for sportsmanship, respect for authority, and positive attitudes. Through your positive participation in this league, you can provide a lasting effect in these children that will live well beyond the end of the season.

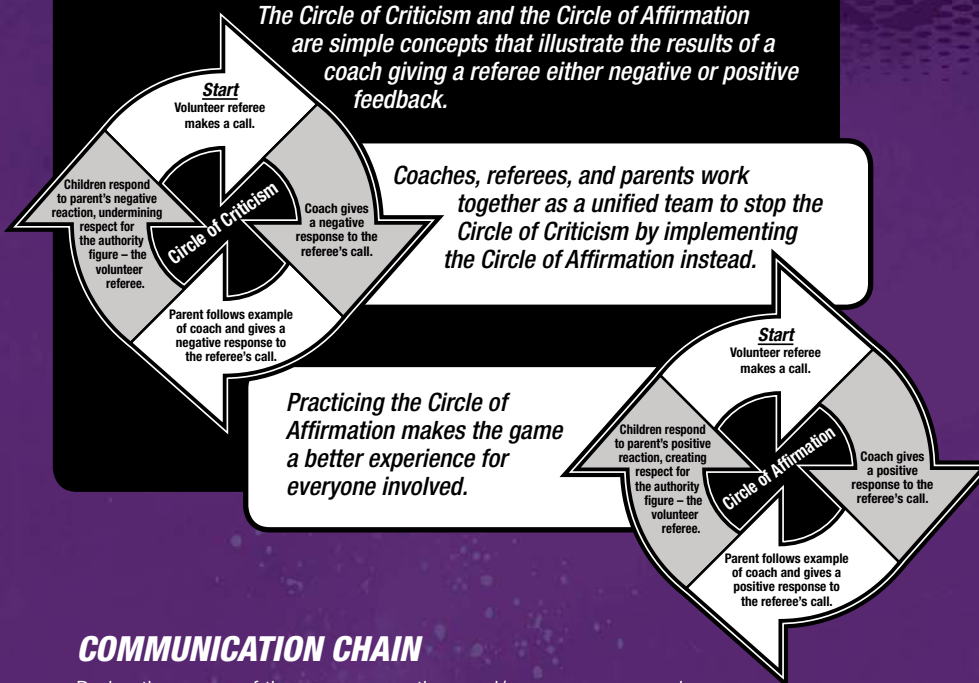
## YOUR ROLE AS A WINNING PARENT

- Make sure your child arrives on time to practices and games.
- Ask your child about the practice devotion each week.
- Spend time with your child reviewing each week's Scripture learning verse.
- Look for positive actions during practices and games that you can praise your child for.
- Support the coach by allowing him or her to give any instruction or feedback to the team. Directions from multiple sources can cause confusion to the players.
- Cheer for both teams. This helps create an environment in which every child is supported.
- Join your child's team and cheer for each player as stars are distributed after each game.
- Support the volunteer referee with positive comments only. They are giving their time to your child.



## CIRCLE OF CRITICISM AND CIRCLE OF AFFIRMATION

The Circle of Criticism and the Circle of Affirmation are simple concepts that illustrate the results of a coach giving a referee either negative or positive feedback.



## COMMUNICATION CHAIN

During the course of the season, questions and/or concerns may arise that need to be addressed. Whom do I seek out for answers? The coach of your child's team should address these questions and/or concerns and will be the spokesperson to the league for the parents of children on his/her team. The coach will direct any unresolved questions or problems to his or her commissioner and then on to the league director as needed.

## KID'S WEBSITE

The Upward kid's website is designed for every Upward player. This website will entertain your child(ren), teach biblical truths and give sport related skills and drills clinics. Your child will be able to:

- Create their own account
- Play games
- Watch videos
- Learn Scripture
- Much, much more

To learn more, please see the information card that is included in your child's player kit.



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## PARENT'S GUIDE TO UPWARD FLAG FOOTBALL

### WHAT UPWARD IS ALL ABOUT

Upward is all about your child. Our desire is to provide a program that builds the self-esteem and character of your child and every child in this league. Every coach and referee has been trained to deliver the Upward Experience to your child, so that they have fun learning and playing the game of Flag Football. The purpose of this PARENT GUIDE is to familiarize you with the Upward Experience, so that you can come alongside the referees and coaches to support your child and every other child in the program.

Players look to their parents, coaches and referees as models for sportsmanship, respect for authority and positive attitude. By being a positive participant in this league, you can provide a lasting effect in these children that will live well beyond the end of the season.

### WHAT THE LEAGUE INCLUDES

This player kit includes items designed to provide your child with a great sports experience.

- The **Reversible Jersey** is designed to allow teams to have home and away colors – you never will forget the appropriate jersey, and the two teams playing will look distinctive and different.
- The **Play-Calling Wristband** is designed for the player to easily keep track of and understand the plays that are called on offense. Each play will be on a card the coach provides to slide into this comfortable wrist band.
- The **Flag-Belt and Flags** are easily worn and fit all ages. The **Flags** are easily replaced in the belt, and give a distinctive popping sound when pulled. The **Flags** give the player the perfect place for placing the **Sticker Stars** they receive each week, to remember the praise received from the coach as well as lessons learned. You will be able to reinforce their accomplishments with the **Stars** as a guide.
- The **Car Magnet** gives you the ability to show your neighbors and friends that your child is participating in Upward, and perhaps motivate them to join their children to play with your child.
- The **Scripture card holder** is designed to look cool on your refrigerator. It will hold the **scripture/ skill learning cards** distributed by the coaches throughout the season, then afterward can act as a picture frame for your child's football photo.
- The coach will also distribute different items during the season, such as **cards, magnets and silicon bracelets**. At the Upward Award Celebration, your child will receive a distinctive **end of season award**.



## UPWARD STARS

Your child will receive a green star after each practice and a multi-colored star after each game. Below is a list of the stars and what they represent:

- The green star represents *Scripture Learning*
- The blue star represents *Effort*
- The orange star represents *Leadership*
- The gold star represents *Sportsmanship*
- The gray star represents *Offense*
- The red star represents *Defense*
- The white star represents *Christlikeness*



## TEAM HUDDLE & SCRIPTURE LEARNING

During practice, coaches will spend 5-8 minutes sharing a devotion with his/her players. These devotions will focus on verses from the bible. The verses for this season are:

- *Acts 17:24(a) – He is the God who made the whole world and everything in it.*
- *Ephesians 5:1 – You are God’s children whom he loves.*
- *1 Timothy 2:4 – God wants all people to be saved. And he wants everyone to know the truth.*
- *Colossians 2:14 (a,b) – We owed a debt because we broke God’s laws. That debt listed all the rules we failed to follow.*
- *Colossians 1:22 (a) – But now Christ has made you God’s friends again.*
- *Philippians 3:9 (a) – Now that I belong to Christ, I am right with God.*
- *Philippians 1:9 – This is my prayer for you: that your love will grow more and more; that you will have knowledge and understanding with your love.*
- *Philippians 4:13 – I can do all things through Christ because he gives me strength.*
- *Philippians 1:27(c) – I will hear that you continue strong with one purpose and that you work together as a team.*
- *Colossians 1:25(b) – My work is to tell fully the teaching of God.*

During this time, coaches have a chance to get their players thinking and talking about God and how they can be in a relationship with Him.

Along with the devotion, your child’s team will take part in Scripture learning with the verses listed above. The weekly Scripture learning verses are found on the Scripture Learning Cards that the coach will hand out to the players each week. Take time to familiarize yourself with the Scripture verses so you and your child can talk about them together.

## RULES UNIQUE TO UPWARD FLAG FOOTBALL

The rules unique to Upward Flag Football are designed to recognize that *Every Child Is A Winner* by promoting character and self-esteem for the players. Here is a look at some of the specifics.

### Down Format

#### K5 and 1st-2nd Grade

- The offensive team has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown.
- If the team is unable to cross midfield in four downs or score a touchdown, the other team takes possession on its own five-yard line.

#### 3rd-6th Grade

- The offensive team has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown.
- On 4th down, a team has two options.
  1. A team may attempt to gain a first down or a touchdown. If a team is unable to convert on 4th down, either by scoring or picking up a first down, the ball changes possession at the no-run zone going into the first down.
  2. A team may “punt” as its fourth-down play by notifying the referee. In this case, the ball will be placed on the opposing team’s five-yard line, and there will be a change of possession.

### Clock Format

- Games consist of four nine-minute quarters with an eight-minute halftime.

### Game Format

Upward Flag Football leagues feature a unique game format.

- Score will not be kept in K5 or 1st-2nd grade divisions.
- Standings are not kept in any division. Such standings add unnecessary pressure and intensity.
- Each team will have six players on the field at a time.
- Teams will use a set substitution rotation.

### Substitutions

Upward’s substitution system is designed to provide each player equal opportunity for improvement. The system ensures that:

- No child sits out more than one possession at a time.
- Every child plays offense and defense in every game.
- Every child will start on either offense or defense in each game.
- Playing time for all players is virtually even over the course of the season.

### Offense

- The offensive team is awarded a first down when it crosses the midfield line.
- A minimum of three players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- The quarterback cannot run the ball across the line of scrimmage. *This is in place to include others in each offensive play. Without this rule, a quarterback could dominate each play by advancing the football.*
- The five yards leading toward the goal line and the five yards leading to the midfield first-down line are no running zones. These zones are designed to prevent short-yardage, power-running plays. The no-run zones do not apply to the K5 division.
- All players are eligible to receive passes

### Defense

- Interceptions may not be returned. Change of possession will be awarded at the point of the interception. *This rule will force a substitution so players will not sit out more than one possession at a time.*
- All players who are rushing the quarterback must begin seven yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- Players who are not rushing the quarterback may defend along the line of scrimmage or line up off the line of scrimmage. In K5 divisions, three defenders must line up seven yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage. *This allows the defense to react quickly to a play behind the line of scrimmage.*

## UPWARD AWARDS CELEBRATION

The Upward Awards Celebration is designed to celebrate your season. As mentioned before, this is when your child will receive their *end of season award*. This award will serve as a reminder of the flag football experience as well as the life lessons that were taught. Your child’s coach will give you more information about this special event during the season.