



NYWAY Sanctioned Club Coaches Code of Conduct

NYWAY Wrestling Club Coach, your goal should be creating a fun and challenging atmosphere where athletes can reach their full human and athletic potential. Character development and physical fitness are by far the most important things a wrestler can take away from a wrestling season. As a NYWAY Wrestling Club Coach, I should be a positive role model to all wrestlers. I will:

- Be consistent and honest, and conduct myself in a way that is fair and just
- Never verbally or physically abuse a wrestler, coach, or official; and keep my public criticism constructive
- Be a good listener, and constantly strive to learn to become a more effective communicator and coach
- Display emotional maturity and be alert to the overall safety and well-being of wrestlers

As a NYWAY Sanctioned Wrestling Club Coach, I should organize practices that are fun and challenging. I will:

- Adjust my coaching style and methods to the personal needs and concerns of each wrestler
- Give all wrestlers the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem
- Strive to teach athletes how to compete with intensity, while acting fairly within the letter and spirit of the rules
- Structure a safe environment for the athlete during practices, matches, travel, and other team functions.

As a NYWAY Wrestling Leader, I should strive for the greater good of the wrestling community. I will:

- Know and uphold all aspects of NYWAY's Wrestling's Safe Sport Program, and encourage parents, volunteers, and athletes to become Safe Sport trained
- Strive for continuous improvement as a coach and official; and gain knowledge of the most current rules, coaching/officiating techniques, and teaching methods for the sport
- Maintain an open line of communication with all wrestlers, their parents, other coaches, and officials.
- Publish and explain the goals and objectives of the club; and consistently enforce team policies with fairness, consistency, and an appreciation for individual differences
- Be concerned with the overall athletic and human development of all wrestlers. Stress good health habits and clean living. Help parents understand the bigger role that sports plays in the development of a child
- I will strive to keep the concepts of winning and losing in proper perspective. Winning is always a goal, but it's not the most important one.
- I will remember that wrestlers are involved in wrestling for fun and enjoyment, and it is one of my responsibilities to make sure that happens. At all times and in all things when dealing with the wrestling public, other coaches, and officials I will adhere to the values

of responsibility, honesty, dedication, accountability, respect, and integrity. I understand that as a NYWAY Wrestling Club Coach, I have assumed certain responsibilities to prepare, develop, and be a role model.

The NYWAY Coaches Pledge:

As a coach, I must demonstrate and apply leadership, integrity, responsibility, self-control, knowledge of sports rules and regulations, honesty, and sportsmanship at all times on and off the mat. It is always necessary and important that I act in a responsible and professional manner because I represent NYWAY, a school, sanctioned club, community, profession, faculty, and student body leaders in New York State. I must set a good example for all participants. While everyone wants to do their best and hopefully win the contest, I must remember that interscholastic athletics is an extension of the classroom and that I am an influential person at the contest whose actions will be reflected in the behavior of others.

- Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior, and leadership, adhering to strong ethical and integrity standards.
- Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
- Set a good example for players and fans to follow—refrain from arguments in front of players and fans; do not make inappropriate gestures to officials or opponents, and do not throw objects in disgust. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coaches before and after contests in full view of the public.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote athletics and the student-athlete. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of all people at the event.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat in public and in meeting/talking with the media.
- Teach sportsmanship and reward your players that are good sports.
- Be no party to the use of profanity, obscene language, or improper actions.
- Describe and define respectful and disrespectful behavior. Stress that disrespectful behavior, especially taunting, trash-talking, and intimidation, will not be tolerated.
- Instruct participants and fans in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship the No. 1 priority.
- Treat opposing coaches, administrators, participants, and fans with respect.

I have read this Coaches Code of Conduct and agree to be bound by its terms. I clearly understand what is expected of me as a NYWAY Wrestling Club Coach, and failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct will subject me to discipline up to and including permanent suspension of membership.

Left Brain, Right Brain – Coaching the Whole Athlete

Part 1: Training Certification Overview:

Principles of Growth and Development in Wrestling

This certification offers a comprehensive exploration of principled values essential for fostering growth and development among young athletes. Our program focuses on the standards we expect from athletes, coaches, and parents as we elevate the sport of wrestling.

Key Learning Modules:

Leadership Development: Equip yourself with the tools to inspire young athletes. Learn to instill a sense of responsibility and ownership in their sporting journey.

Building Positive Culture: Understand how to create an environment where athletes thrive, coaches lead effectively, and parents feel engaged and informed.

Establishing Standards: Gain insights into the benchmarks necessary for success in wrestling, emphasizing respect, discipline, and sportsmanship.

This program is designed to serve as a blueprint for success, empowering coaches and representatives to build a solid foundation of leadership and foster a positive, inclusive culture in the sport. Join us in making a meaningful impact on the lives of young athletes.

Every athlete learns differently. Some kids are “left brain” dominant — they thrive on structure, logic, repetition, and order. They want to know the “why” behind everything. Others are “right brain” dominant — they’re more creative, emotional, and intuitive. They respond to inspiration, energy, and big-picture vision.

As coaches and leaders, our job is to meet them where they are:

- Left-brain athletes need clear drills, step-by-step instruction, and measurable goals.
- Right-brain athletes need encouragement, creativity, and space to feel connected to the sport.

Neither way is better. Both are necessary. And the best teams are built when we honor both sides blending structure and creativity, discipline and inspiration.

Overcoming Fear and Doubt

Every wrestler has heard that voice of doubt before stepping on the mat. “What if I lose? What if I let my team down? What if I’m not good enough?” The truth is that doubt doesn’t mean you’re weak. It means you’re human. The key is to not let doubt control your choices. We teach athletes to face their fears head-on, because fear loses its power when you stare it down. The mat teaches you that it’s okay to fail if you get back up. It teaches you that pain doesn’t define you; perseverance does.

Real Winning Starts with Growth

When you commit to growth, winning takes on a new meaning. A kid who pushes through self-doubt and wrestles his heart out, that’s winning. A young woman who stands up to a bully at school because she’s learned her worth in the wrestling room — that’s winning. A coach who admits mistakes, adapts, and becomes better for his athletes, that’s winning.

Growth is the foundation; Without it, the wins don’t last. With it, the lessons never leave.

Part 2: Principles Over Victories

Wrestling is one of the hardest sports in the world because it strips away excuses. When you step on the mat, it’s just you and your opponent. No one else to blame, no teammates to lean on. It’s raw, it’s honest, and it’s humbling. And that’s why wrestling teaches principles better than almost anything else. The scoreboard might say win or lose, but the real victory lies in the character you carry with you.

The Difference Between Scoreboard Wins and Life Wins

I’ve seen wrestlers who walk off the mat with their hand raised but carry themselves with arrogance, and I’ve seen athletes who lost the match but left with more dignity and growth than

the so-called “winner.” Scoreboard wins are temporary. They’re numbers that fade. Life wins are permanent. They are the lessons that shape who you are:

- Showing up on time.
- Giving effort when you don’t feel like it.
- Respecting your opponent, your coach, and yourself.
- Bouncing back after failure.

These are the victories that matter. The mat is just the test. The real prize is who you become in the process.

Wrestling as a Classroom of Principles

Every drill, every practice, every match is taught, something beyond technique. **It’s teaching:**

- Discipline – Doing what needs to be done, especially when you don’t feel like it.
- Perseverance – Fighting through fatigue, doubt, and pain.
- Humility – Knowing there’s always more to learn, no matter how good you get.
- Respect – Shaking hands with your opponent because iron sharpens iron.

When wrestlers understand that the mat is a classroom, they stop seeing practice as punishment and start seeing it as preparation. Every rep is building the person they’re becoming.

Bullying, Ego, and Respect

Wrestling is unique because it humbles bullies. No matter how tough you act, the mat will show the truth. A bully might talk big in the hallway, but on the mat, words mean nothing. Work, effort, and preparation mean everything. That’s why one of the greatest principles we can teach is respect. Wrestlers who carry respect into their communities’ become leaders who stand against bullying. They know what real strength is and it isn’t in tearing others down; it’s in building others up.

Bouncing Back from Loss

Loss is guaranteed in this sport. Nobody goes undefeated forever. But the power of wrestling is in how it teaches you to respond.

When you lose, you’ve got two choices:

1. Let it define you.
2. Let it refine you.

The wrestler who chooses the second path learns resilience. They don’t run from mistakes, they study them. They don’t quit after failure; they grow from it. And that lesson carries into every part of life — from careers to relationships to leadership.

Principles Create Legacy

The medals you win might be forgotten, but the principles you live by will echo for generations. When a young athlete watches you handle victory with humility and loss with grace, they’ll carry that lesson into their own lives. That’s how wrestling doesn’t just build champions — it builds communities. It creates young men and women who know that real winning is found in character, not just in competition.

Part 3: Standing Against Bullying

Wrestling has always been about more than one person. Sure, it’s an individual sport when you step on the mat, but you carry the name of your team, your school, and your community on your back. That means how you act off the mat is just as important as how you wrestle on it. And

here's the truth: wrestlers have the power to stand against bullying. Not because they're tougher or stronger than everyone else — but because they know what it takes to respect themselves and others.

The Wrestler's Role in the Community

Whether they realize it or not, wrestlers are leaders. Younger kids look up to them. Classmates notice them. Teammates depend on them. And when people look up to you, you have a choice:

- Use your voice to tear others down, or
- Use your voice to build others up.

Leaders don't stand by in silence when someone is being pushed around. They step in. They make it clear that bullying isn't strength — its weakness disguised as power.

Why Wrestling Crushes Bullying

Wrestling humbles the ego. The mat is a great equalizer. You can't hide behind popularity, money, or words. You either put in the work, or you don't. You either step out and face the challenge, or you don't.

That's why wrestlers know the difference between fake toughness and real toughness.

- Fake toughness = putting others down to feel big.
- Real toughness = lifting others up while staying strong yourself.

When wrestlers carry that lesson into their schools and communities, they strip bullying of its power.

Athletes as Role Models

Every time a wrestler shakes an opponent's hand, every time they battle hard and still show respect, they are modeling something the world needs more of.

Imagine if that same attitude carried into the hallways at school:

- The wrestler who sits next to the quiet kid at lunch.
- The athlete who speaks up when someone's being mocked.
- The leader who includes instead of excludes.

That's real winning. That's leadership in action.

The Psychology of Belonging

Bullying at its core is about making someone feel like they don't belong. Wrestling, when taught right, creates the opposite — it builds belonging.

Psychology tells us that kids thrive when they feel part of something bigger than themselves.

Wrestlers know what that feels like: the team huddle, the grind of practice, the pride of wearing the same singlet. When wrestlers extend that same sense of belonging to others, especially those who feel left out, they change lives. They remind people: "You matter. You're part of this."

Wrestling's Voice Against Bullying

As athletes, as coaches, as leaders, we cannot stay silent. Our voices carry weight. If we're serious about shaping future generations, then we use those voices to build cultures of respect.

Because when we stand against bullying, we aren't just protecting others — we're teaching what true strength looks like. And that lesson is one every community needs.

Part 4: Expectations and Accountability

Great athletes don't just happen — they are built through expectation and accountability. A wrestler who knows what's expected of them has direction. A coach who holds athletes accountable builds discipline. And when both sides commit, growth is inevitable.

The Power of Expectations

Expectations are like the guardrails on a highway. They don't restrict you to you, they keep you from crashing. When athletes know the standard, they rise to it.

- Show up on time.
- Give full effort.
- Respect yourself and others.
- Learn from mistakes.

When those are the expectations, kids begin to live them not just in practice, but in life.

Accountability with Compassion

Accountability doesn't mean tearing an athlete down. It means holding them to the standard while showing them they're capable of reaching it.

- "You're better than this — let's get back on track."
- "I know this isn't your best — I believe you can do more."

When accountability is paired with belief, athletes don't feel punished — they feel pushed toward their potential.

Growth Plans for Mind, Body, and Spirit

Each wrestler should have their own plan. Not just about weight classes or technique, but about growing as a whole person:

- Mind – Developing confidence, mental toughness, and focus.
- Body – Building strength, endurance, and health.
- Spirit – Understanding character, humility, and leadership.

That's how we develop athletes who are not only competitors, but leaders who carry balance into the world.

Part 5: Confidence and Leadership

Wrestling builds confidence like nothing else — because it forces you to face yourself. When you prepare, when you push past fear, when you wrestle hard, confidence follows.

Confidence Through Preparation

True confidence doesn't come from bravado. It comes from knowing you've done the work. Every drill, every extra rep, every weight lifted — that's where confidence is born.

Leading On and Off the Mat

A wrestler who leads isn't just the one scoring the most points. Leadership shows up in effort, attitude, and consistency.

- Picking a teammate up after a tough loss.
- Going first in drills to set the pace.
- Living with integrity outside of the wrestling room.

Leadership is about making others better — not just yourself.

The Inner Voice

Every wrestler carries an inner voice. Coaches and leaders shape that voice. When we speak with belief, encouragement, and challenge, we plant words that become the athlete's self-talk for years. That's why our responsibility as coaches is so heavy; we are literally shaping the voice that echoes in our athletes' heads.

Part 6: Evaluating Ourselves as Coaches and Leaders

Wrestlers aren't the only ones who need accountability — coaches and leaders do, too. If we expect athletes to grow, we must grow ourselves.

The Coach's Mirror

The mat reflects the coach just as much as the wrestler. Are we modeling the discipline we demand? Are we speaking with respect while teaching respect? Are we humbling enough to admit when we're wrong?

Continuous Growth

Great leaders don't pretend they've arrived. They learn, they adapt, they improve. Just like wrestlers drilling moves again, coaches must refine their craft daily.

Culture Over Control

A coach doesn't just control practice — they create culture. And culture lasts longer than any single season. A positive, disciplined, encouraging culture builds athletes who will carry the lessons long after they stop wrestling.

Part 7: The Future of Wrestling and Community

Wrestling doesn't end when the whistle blows. Its lessons ripple out into families, schools, and communities.

Passing the Torch

Every generation of wrestlers leaves a legacy. The question is: what kind of legacy are we leaving? Are we building athletes who only care about medals, or are we building leaders who will carry principles into the world?

Wrestling as a Metaphor for Life

Life will knock you down. Life will put you in tough positions. Life will demand you fight through fatigue and doubt. Wrestling prepares you for all of it. The mat becomes practice for life itself.

Ambassadors of Respect and Resilience

The wrestlers we train today will become tomorrow's coaches, teachers, parents, and leaders. If we've done our job right, they will be ambassadors of respect, resilience, and responsibility. They will be the ones who stand against bullying, who build communities, who carry the torch forward.

Part 8: Breaking the Cycle

Mental Health, Differences, and Bullying

Bullying doesn't just happen out of nowhere. It grows out of misunderstanding, fear, and ignorance. And many times, it targets those who are seen as "different." For athletes who struggle with emotional regulation, learning differences, or mental health challenges, those differences can make them easy targets. But when wrestling teaches acceptance and respect, those same differences can become sources of strength — and the cycle of bullying can be broken.

Why Differences Attract Bullying

Kids who don't fit the "expected mold" are often the ones most at risk.

- The wrestler with ADHD who has trouble sitting still.
- The athlete with Autism struggles with eye contact or routines.
- The teammate with anxiety who hesitates before stepping up.
- The one battling depression, who seems withdrawn or "lazy."

In a world that doesn't understand these struggles, they can be mislabeled as weak, lazy, or weird. That misunderstanding often becomes fuel for bullying. But here's the truth: these challenges don't make athletes weaker, they simply mean they fight a different battle, one that's often invisible. And the courage it takes to keep showing up despite those battles is greater than any scoreboard victory.

The Role of Ignorance in Bullying

Most bullying doesn't start from true strength; it starts from insecurity. Kids pick on what they don't understand. A lack of awareness becomes cruelty. When athletes and teams learn the psychology behind differences, bullying begins to lose its power. You can't shame someone for something you understand and respect. That's why education is a weapon against bullying, not lectures, but conversations that open eyes.

How Wrestling Can Break the Cycle

Wrestling rooms are powerful because they level the field. On the mat, it doesn't matter if you have ADHD, dyslexia, anxiety, or autism; what matters is effort, heart, and resilience.

- The wrestler who struggles with focus learns structure through drills.
- The athlete with anxiety builds confidence one rep at a time.
- The teammate battling depression finds belonging in the huddle.

In this way, wrestling doesn't just stop bullying, it transforms it. The differences that once made someone a target become the very things that shape them into leaders.

Changing Perspective: From Target to Teacher

Athletes who have struggled mentally or emotionally often develop a deeper sense of empathy. They know what it feels like to be left out, to be misunderstood, to feel alone. And when they rise through wrestling, they carry that perspective into leadership.

A former target of bullying can become the strongest voice against it.

- They teach teammates that words matter.
- They model patience and compassion.
- They remind others that respect is non-negotiable.

Ending the Cycle Through Leadership

Bullying ends when leaders stand up. And the best leaders are often the ones who've felt the sting of being underestimated.

When coaches teach their athletes about neurodiversity and mental health, they create teams that see differences as strengths, not weaknesses. That perspective doesn't just stop bullying — it prevents it. It builds a culture where every athlete belongs, no matter what battles they're fighting.

Final Thought of the Chapter

Bullying often begins when understanding ends. Wrestling, when taught with awareness and compassion, can be the bridge that changes that. It turns the mat into more than a place to wrestle, it turns it into a training ground for empathy, leadership, and unity. Because when wrestlers learn to respect every difference, they don't just end bullying — they build communities where everyone is valued. And that is the kind of winning that lasts for generations.

Conclusion – Real Winning

At the end of the day, the question isn't "How many matches did you win?" but "Who did you become through the matches you wrestled?" The real winning isn't the medal around your neck. It's the confidence to walk with your head high. It's the strength to stand up for someone else. It's the discipline to do what's right, even when no one is watching. As wrestlers, coaches, and leaders, we have a responsibility. To grow. To reflect. To lead. To use our voices against bullying. To shape future generations who know that wrestling isn't just about takedowns and pins, it's about character, confidence, and community.

The mat is just the beginning. The real match is life. And when we build athletes who are strong in body, balanced in mind, and grounded in principles, that's when we truly win.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

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