**ROBBINSVILLE WRESTLING ASSOCIATION**

 

**PARENT & WRESTLERS GUIDE**

**ROBBINSVILLE WRESTLING ASSOCIATION**

**WRESTLING SHOULD BE FUN !**

More than anything else, the youth wrestler is involved with wrestling to have a good time. Sure it’s important the wrestler learns that it’s not all “fun and games.” Hard work is required before you reach your most rewarding goals, but at a young boy’s age, these goals are not yet set. Don’t drive your child away from the sport by making it dull and un-enjoyable and more focused on winning than learning, before they start to develop the many positive qualities that can be derived from wrestling. Remember, most young children already take their play very seriously. However, parents and coaches should avoid the “must win” approach to youth sports and recognize that some of the most important lessons learned will be from the matches that they lose.

**EMPHASIZE PARTICIPATION, NOT WINNING**

If you think “winning” is the only thing that matters in sports, maybe you should be involved in something else. That may seem like a strong statement, but unfortunately over the years, an attitude that “winning is the only thing” has crept into youth sports. Sure, winning is everything in professional sports, that’s why professional athletes get those enormous salaries. After all, people won’t fill stadiums to see losers. But in a youth sports program, is it right for a coach or parent to “chew out” his player/child, simply because they didn’t win? Hardly. The purpose of a youth sports program is basically to instill in youngsters those attitudes and characteristics which will make them better adjusted adults in the years ahead. The philosophy of the Robbinsville Wrestling Association is that all parents and coaches endeavor to develop the overall wellbeing of their kids by providing equal opportunities for involvement in the sport of wrestling, regardless of the athletes’ physical or mental ability. The Robbinsville Wrestling program strives to develop a program in which winning is prized, yet losing is not condemned! As parents, we hope you will remember that your child will count on you not only for cheers and support with their victories, but also for a soft spot to land after defeat.

**BE LIBERAL WITH PRAISE**

Criticism usually follows mistakes, but it is important to remember that the process of learning involves making mistakes. Excessive criticism creates “a fear of failing’ and a wrestler’s fears may be seen in his attitude of “not caring or trying”. Be liberal with praise, it helps build confidence and confidence is one of the most important qualities a young athlete can develop from wrestling. Remember, even the best wrestlers will lose a match at some point.

**QUALITIES DEVELOPED THROUGH WRESTLING**

When provided a quality experience through a well-organized and conscientious program, the youth athlete can develop a number of positive life-long characteristics from his involvement in the sport of wrestling. Because of the “one on one” combative nature of the sport, many of the characteristics developed have **“self”** qualities. However, your child’s involvement with a team made up of young athletes of all shapes, sizes, and abilities also lends itself to the development of those social characteristics gained through social contact and an appreciation for diversity which is the fabric of our world.

**SELF-DISCIPLINE:** Learning to abide by training, practice, and match rules teaches discipline. Wrestling provides many challenges that will test the individual athlete’s ability to discipline themselves.

**SELF-CONFIDENCE:** To be able to master the basic skills of controlling your body movement and to develop strength and stamina all enhance an individual’s confidence in their physical and mental abilities.

**SELF ESTEEM**: The young wrestler will come to see them self in a positive manner as they follow in the footsteps of those who have made the effort and developed the many “inner” qualities associated with wrestling.

**SELF INITIATIVE**: Because the wrestler is on his own in a competitive situation, he learns that it is their individual effort, and theirs alone, that will determine the outcome of the matches.

**GOOD PHYSICAL CONDITION:** As a vigorous contact sport, wrestling greatly enhances the overall condition of the respiratory and circulatory systems. It provides for total muscular development, while at the same time enhancing flexibility.

**DEDICATION:** Being faithful to a team and a cause is an important lesson of athletes. A wrestler will not fail them self if they are committed to others.

**EMOTIONAL CONTROL:** Emotional blowups can hamper an individual’s success, as an athlete a wrestler soon learns this lesson. The example coaches and parents set, is the most influential in this area.

**COMRADESHIP:** Working with other young people who have the same common goals and interest provides the opportunity for making new friends. This social contact adds to the overall emotional development of each individual.

**WRESTLING HYGIENE**

**To avoid spreading contagious infections that could cause health problems and prevent your child from participating in practice and matches, please follow the few guidelines that are outlined below for every ones health and safety.**

* A wrestler should shower vigorously with antibacterial soap and a wash cloth **after each practice and match**. This will help stop microorganisms from spreading.
* A wrestler should have their nails short and trimmed, to avoid scratching.
* A wrestler should avoid cutting their hair to short, ie: crew cuts, but hair should be no longer than collar length.
* Wrestling shoes **should only be worn in the gym.** They should not be worn from home to the gym, and should not be worn to go to the bathroom. Wear other shoes to get to the gym, and change to wrestling shoes, once a wrestler is in the gym. This is to keep bacteria off the mat as much as possible.
* Keep wrestling shoes clean. Wash them or wipe them down often with an antibacterial cleanser, and spray them at least once a week with Lysol to kill any germs.
* Wash wrestling singlet after each match, and wear clean workout clothes to each practice.
* Wipe headgear down at least once a week with alcohol or spray with a disinfectant.
* Please report any abnormalities, rashes or skin breaks to a coach prior to allowing the wrestler to practice or participate in a match.
* Wrestlers exhibiting or believed to be showing signs of a contagious skin rash will not be allowed to practice until they have received proper treatment and clearance from a physician. (Please note, this is not just a Robbinsville rule, it is a NJ State regulation).
* If you child is sick or shows signs of a cold, do not bring them to practice or meets, let them rid themselves of the virus before infecting other kids on the mat.

The Robbinsville Wrestling Association wishes to thank you in advance for your efforts to keep the program clean.

**Match Etiquette**

1. A wrestler should report to the host team’s location on time, and immediately check in with the designated Robbinsville coach for role call, so that match-ups can be done in a timely manner.

2. A wrestler should be seated with his/her team, or his family, while waiting to be called for his/her bout.

3. Matches will typically be called as “IN THE HOLE”, “ON DECK”, and “NOW WRESTLING”. When a wrestler is called “ON DECK” for a certain mat, they should report to the scoring table for the mat he/she was called for, and wait for further instructions from the coach or referee.

4. A wrestler should be prepared to wrestle when placed “ON DECK”, ie: wrestling shoes on, sweats off, headgear on.

5. No parent or other wrestlers should be sitting, standing, or kneeling on the edge of the mat during any match!

6. At the completion of a bout, the wrestler should keep his/her headgear on, shake the hand of his/her opponent, shake the hand of the opponents’ coach and then return to your own coach for a handshake and a pat on the back and coaching instruction after the match. Please return to our team’s designated area in the stands and root for your teammates while waiting to be called for your next bout.

7. Parents are asked to keep their children in the stands. No children should be running around school halls, or outside while matches are going on. Security and vandalism has become an issue of serious concern amongst some teams in the league. We expect proper behavior from visitors to our facility and expect nothing less from our wrestlers when we are visiting an opponent’s school. Serious infractions will be cause for dismissal from the team.

8. A wrestler should not leave a match before it is completed, without notifying a head coach that he/she is leaving, just in case there is another bout scheduled that he/she is unaware of.

**Parents’ Commitments to the League**

RWA is a 100% volunteer-based non-profit organization. Money raised through various means (car-wash, golf outing, tournaments, concession stand, etc.) is used directly for the benefit of the children in this program. As coaches and administrators, we are committed to providing your children with the highest quality sports and recreation program possible and we have routinely received the praise to make us confident that we are achieving that goal. However, it is not possible to do that without the regular efforts of ALL parents with children in this program. There are tasks that need to be done in order for us to run practices, matches and tournaments and we need everyone’s help throughout the season to pull it off. We will be asking every parent to sign-up and commit to helping in variety of categories during the season. As an example, we must have parents to help set up and mop the mats for practice. We need parents to staff score tables, the concession stand, and as security monitors during matches and various other duties throughout the season. We will appoint specific volunteer staff members to supervise these various functions – please don’t shy away and better yet, just step up and volunteer when you see a need. The quality of your experience in RWA is a direct reflection of the active participation and support from all of our members. We promise you that these responsibilities are not overwhelming and both you and your child will have a better experience as active members in the program.

Match Etiquette – As an organization we pride our self in upholding the highest level of sportsmanship and respect for others and will not tolerate behavior either on the part of parents or their children that is considered to be antagonistic or unsportsmanlike in any way. Anyone exhibiting such behavior will be asked to leave a match. Continuous violations of this policy may result in removal from the team. If a problem arises with a parent or coach from another team, please bring it to the attention of one of the Directors.

Facilities and Vandalism – One of the biggest challenges we face is the security of our facility. We will enlist a number of parents as Security personnel at our home matches. You will be responsible for watching over a particular area of the school (Gym hallway, restrooms, commons area, etc.) to deter any acts of vandalism or misbehavior. Similarly, when we visit other facilities we expect parents to maintain a watchful eye on their children while they are not wrestling so they do not wonder into restricted areas or find themselves in a situation where they could be accused of causing damage to a facility. Property damage or acts of vandalism will result in expulsion from the team.

Sickness Policy – A child who is thought to be contagious or exhibiting signs of illness should NOT come to practice. While many kids could “tough it out” and wrestle even when they don’t feel well, it can do more harm to the team than good. Please exercise sound judgment regarding an illness.

On behalf of the Directors and coaches we thank you in advance for your support and volunteer participation as we embark on another outstanding season.

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES & EXPECTATIONS FOR DIVISION I, DIVISION II, AND COMPETITIVE TEAM**.

The Robbinsville Wrestling Association is comprised of children in Kindergarten through 8th grade. As such, it is an extremely diverse division of athletes. We provide the following guidelines to you as parents and wrestlers so that you will have a basic understanding of some of the fundamental principles that govern the leagues that we join, but we must also make it clear that as coaches, we reserve the right to make adjustments to suit specific situations. Should you ever feel that a situation arises needing attention or that something has been handled in a manner that you do not understand or agree with, please speak to one of the program directors. We are all here to make Robbinsville Wrestling the best experience for ALL of the children in the program.

RWA has made a concerted effort to make sure there is a place within the program for all of our wrestlers to learn, grow, and have fun. RWA has joined two leagues at this time. One league (DVWL) is devoted to your recreational wrestlers so they can get mat time and continue to learn and grow with the sport. This league endeavors to have your child finish with an equal number of wins and losses. The other league is the Junior Shore Junior Wrestling League (JSJWL) and this is a competitive duals league that has certain residency restrictions that RWA has no control over.

ALL wrestlers that participate in the Delaware Valley Wrestling League (DVWL) will be paired up for matches using a software program that uses the wrestlers AGE, WEIGHT, and SKILL RATING. **All** of these factors are taken into account when setting up pairings or bouts at the matches.

**DIVISION I PRACTICES AND MATCHES**

DIVISION I will consist of wrestlers ages 8 and under (and in some cases age 9 depending on weight and skill level). We will generally like to have DI as (K-2 or K-3 depending on the numbers in the program for that particular year. Practices will be held two evenings per week at RHS from ~6pm to 7:15pm. Matches for the DVWL will begin in January and continue through the first or second week in March. Matches will be every Saturday or Sunday (depending on the gym availability for the hosting team) and on a few occasions there may be mid-week matches in the evening. We ask that you respond to notifications regarding attendance at up-coming matches so bout pairings can be made efficiently.

**DIVISION I GOALS**

DIVISION I wrestlers will learn the basics of wrestling such as proper stance, how to take an opponent down to the mat, pinning moves, bottom wrestling and how to escape their opponent. Skills will be learned by drills and live wrestling in a structured, yet fun, environment that will also include conditioning exercises. More advanced 2nd year wrestlers will be grouped together to learn more advanced moves.

**DIVISION I EXPECTATIONS**

We expect wrestlers and parents to make a commitment to coming to all practices and matches but we also fully understand that will not always be possible and in some cases a wrestler may benefit from taking an evening off now and then. We expect the children to show respect for the coaches and each other and to do their best. As coaches we will do our best to see that we balance the serious with the fun and that we treat all the children with equal caring and commitment.

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES & EXPECTATIONS (CON’T)**

**DIVISION II PRACTICES AND MATCHES**

DIVISION II will consist of wrestlers’ ages 9 (depending on skill proficiency) through 14 (generally grade 3 through 8 depending on the number of participants in the program for that particular year). Practices will be held two evenings per week at RHS from ~7:30 till 9:00pm. Matches will begin in January and continue through the first or second week in March. Matches will be every Saturday or Sunday (depending on the host team gym availability) in the Delaware Valley Wrestling League. DIVISION II wrestlers reaching a level of proficiency and desire to wrestle at a highly competitive level may be invited to participate in the competitive duals teams. We ask that you respond to notifications regarding attendance at up-coming competitive matches so bout pairings can be made efficiently.

**DIVISION II GOALS**

DIVISION II wrestlers will have mastered the basic moves and will work on developing their own wrestling style and appropriate advanced moves. In cases where a wrestler is in DIVISION II based on age and weight but is only a Novice, some extra drilling may be necessary to try and rapidly master the basics. The practices will be at a higher intensity level then DIVISION I and will consist of physical conditioning drills and more live wrestling. Wrestlers from DIVISION II with a rating of 4 or higher may be invited to challenge (wrestle off) for a spot on the competitive team.

**DIVISION II EXPECTATIONS**

We expect wrestlers and parents to make a commitment to coming to all practices and matches. We understand that it may not always be possible and ask that you inform the coaches when you know in advance that you will not be in attendance. We expect the wrestlers to focus on what is being done at practice and refrain from needless horseplay as this leads to more injuries than the actual wrestling. We expect the children to show respect for the coaches and each other and to do their best. As coaches we will do our best to see that we balance the serious with the fun and that we treat all the children with equal caring and commitment.

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES & EXPECTATIONS (CON’T)**

**COMPETITIVE TEAM PRACTICES AND MATCHES.**

The Competitive Team will be limited to the best wrestler at a certain weight (regardless of age) and who have demonstrated the mental and emotional ability and desire to compete in this setting. These individuals will specifically be invited by the coaching staff to have an opportunity to wrestle off for a spot on the Competitive team. It will often be the case that there will be more than one wrestler competing for a spot (weight class) on the team. At certain points in the season the coaches will conduct wrestle-offs to determine which wrestler will actually be in a competitive team meet or tournament. These wrestle offs will be at the Coaches discretion after consulting with the Executive Committee to ensure fair and balanced treatment to all wrestlers. Members of the competitive team must commit to regularly attending all competitive matches (more on that later in this book). Currently, the competitive team participates in the Jersey Shore Junior Wrestling League dual team, although there may be opportunities to have different competitive dual teams throughout the wrestling season. Please note – the JSJWL has certain residency restrictions that RWA has no control over their rules. RWA is a participant in their league and we must adhere to the rules of that league, just like any other league we are involved in.

**COMPETITIVE TEAM GOALS**

Competitive team wrestlers will tend to be the most focused and serious wrestlers in our program. They will not only have mastered basic and some advanced moves but are very self- motivated. The main goal for the wrestlers on this team is to improve their level of wrestling to match that of the best regional and state level programs we will face. This team requires a serious commitment so please read the JERSEY SHORE JUNIOR WRESTLING LEAGUE (JSJWL) COMPETITIVE TEAM RULES AND ACKNOWLEDMENT / CONSENT AGREEMENT if you are interested.

**COMPETETIVE TEAM EXPECTATIONS**

To strive to become the best. To challenge yourself to the point of failure so you can see what it takes to become even better. To show respect for your coaches and fellow wrestlers and to demonstrate the highest level of sportsmanship in victory or defeat. To take this positive attitude with you in everything you do including schoolwork and your family life.

**JERSEY SHORE JUNIOR WRESTLING LEAGUE (JSJWL) COMPETITIVE TEAM RULES AND ACKNOWLEDMENT / CONSENT AGREEMENT**

Congratulations! You have earned a spot on the JSJWL competitive team. This team will wrestle competitive matches in the JSJWL throughout the year. In order to secure your spot on the team both the wrestler and the parent must read and acknowledge the following rules to participate.

Members of the Robbinsville Wrestling competitive team are expected to dedicate themselves to their team and their sport. You will be expected to attend practices, matches and other team functions. We will expect you to know where you are required to be, and when you are required to be there. We will expect you to be on time, and to be able to stay for the entire event. As coaches, we are willing to dedicate our time to give you the very best opportunity to excel in this sport and we ask that if you choose to compete at this level, you give us your dedicated effort as well.

We will expect you, as a member of a competitive team, to strive to become the best wrestler you can be by working to improve your wrestling skills and physical conditioning. Being a member of the competitive team will require an investment of your time, however, your schoolwork must come first. You must not decrease the time you spend on your schoolwork or allow your grades to slip below what you and your parents know you can do. You must decide if you are willing to rearrange your schedule, eliminating wasted time and other leisure activity to allow for the time wrestling will consume.

Your spot on the team requires you to participate in a particular weight class. We do not expect nor encourage ANY CHILD to lose or gain any significant amount of weight to try to fit into a particular weight class. The best way to attain your ideal weight is through a combination of a healthy diet and physical activity. Should you find it difficult to maintain your weight class, please notify your coach immediately! You may be allowed to challenge for a spot at a different weight, however you acknowledge that that decision is entirely up to the coaching staff after consultation with the RWA Executive Board. When expected to make a weight as part of a team, a wrestler who fails to make weight fails to live up to his commitment to the team. When you fail to make weight you have denied an opportunity to another wrestler who might otherwise have competed. And you have hurt the team. It will be at the coaches’ discretion to move a wrestler to a higher weight class if he is unable to consistently make a lighter weight class. A wrestler desiring to challenge for a particular weight class must demonstrate by an advanced weight check that they can reasonable make the weight class they are challenging for. Wrestle offs will be determined solely by the Coach after consultation with the Executive Board. The decision will be made in the best interest of the child wrestler and the Program.

You must also attempt to attend at least one DIVISION II practice per week to participate on the team. Note – for those that are in middle school wrestling every day after school, grades come first! So if this requirement is going to be difficult to achieve, please reach out to one of the coaches to discuss with the Executive Board for a waiver for this requirement.

You must commit that the JSJWL will take priority over every other wrestling event. To be clear, if you commit to this team, you will not enter any other open events that conflict with the JSJWL. Note that this is part of the JSJWL By-Laws that we agreed to adhere to as part of members of the league.

As members of our competitive team your actions both on and off the mat will be a reflection of yourself and on Robbinsville Wrestling Association as a group. The younger and less experienced members of our program will look up to you. You are expected to lead by example by showing a dedication to your sport, respect for your fellow athletes, coaches and officials and demonstrating a level of sportsmanship of a true champion, regardless of the outcomes on the mat. We are continuing a tradition here at Robbinsville that will give you a solid foundation not just in wrestling but in being an upstanding person.

We welcome you to this team and look forward to a great experience together.

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After reviewing the policy with your child (children), sign where indicated below and return this portion of the form to the Secretary.

My child (children) and I have reviewed and understand the behavior and discipline policy and agree to abide by these rules of the league and the rules conduct. We understand that if we do not abide by the rules as stated above, we may not be able to participate in the year end tournament or whatever discipline is deemed appropriate by the Executive Board of RWA.

Parent’s signature

Wrestler 1 signature

Wrestler 2 signature

Wrestler 3 signature

**Robbinsville Wrestling Association**

**Behavior and Discipline Policy**

**Consent and Acknowledgement Letter**

As coaches and parents, we understand that we are conducting a league with members ranging from 5 to 14 years of age. As such, we recognize that we have a huge spread in physical, mental and emotional maturity to take into consideration each and every time we meet. We also understand that some of the children will be very competitive by nature while others will be a bit more carefree and docile.

As a very physically and emotionally demanding sport, the level of intensity can, at times get high and tempers can flare. While we recognize these aspects of the sport we must also make it clear to all parents and wrestlers that disruptive behavior, abusive or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated in practices or in matches. Be advised that even a single offense can lead to disqualification (by the referee) and removal from the match (by the host organization).

As an example of the guidelines we will follow, below is an outline of minor and major offenses and the associated disciplinary procedures we will implement. It is our goal as coaches to teach our wrestlers to be successful and we measure that not simply by victories on the mat, but also in terms of how much the sport of wrestling helps them grow and mature and deal with demanding, even difficult situations.

It is not possible to put in writing every possible scenario. The offenses listed and the penalty scales described are a guideline. Any offenses and the resulting consequences will be dealt with in an appropriate manner taking into consideration the child's age. Disciplinary action will be implemented based on careful consideration of the coaching staff and directors of the league.

**Minor Offenses** –

Examples of typical offenses to be considered in this category are;

• Talking or disruptive silliness when the coaches are talking or providing instruction.

• Not listening to the coaches directions when instructed during drills.

Horseplay is another example but also carries the following penalty;

• If a child is injured by another child's horseplay, the child at fault will sit out with the injured child during that practice until the sooner of either the end of that practice or when the injured wrestler feels well to participate again.

Continuous misbehavior of this sort (minor offenses) will result in a meeting with the parents and a determination by the Executive Committee and Lead Coaching staff of an appropriate remedy which could include suspension from practice and the team's matches for one week.

**Behavior and Discipline Policy (cont.)**

**Major offenses** –

* Unsportsmanlike behavior directed at a wrestler, coach, or parent volunteer.
	+ First offense - sitting out of practice (partial or complete depending on severity of situation).
	+ Second offense - suspension for a week of practice (and matches). Coaches meeting with parents.
	+ Continuous offender - Meeting with parents, wrestler's expulsion from the program.
* Fighting, aggressive or directed verbal or physical disrespect directed at another wrestler, coach or parent volunteer.
	+ First offense - suspension from practice and matches for one week. Coaches meeting with parents. Wrestler must submit a written apology for their action before being admitted back to practices or matches.
	+ Second offense - Coaches meeting with parents and wrestlers expulsion from the program.

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After reviewing the policy with your child (children), sign where indicated below and return this portion of the form to the RWA Secretary.

My child (children) and I have reviewed and understand the behavior and discipline policy and agree to abide by these rules of the league and the rules conduct. We understand that if we do not abide by the rules as stated above, we may not be able to participate in practice or tournaments or whatever discipline is deemed appropriate by the Executive Board of RWA.

Parent’s signature

Wrestler 1 signature

Wrestler 2 signature

Wrestler 3 signature

**RWA contact information**

The Executive Committee of RWA are Paul Bilgrav – President, Scott Messenger – Vice President, Tony Torrington – Treasurer, and Alicia Case – Secretary. We strive to have a very open environment of communication with all of our members. Please don’t hesitate to approach us about any concerns or suggestions; we are all in this to make it the best program it can be for the children.

Our primary means of communication throughout the season is via email, postings to our web- site ([www.robbinsville-wrestling.com](http://www.robbinsville-wrestling.com)), and our facebook page.

**Email:**

You can send emails to robbinsville.wrestling@gmail.com and you should expect to get MANY emails from us during the season. Please notify us with any changes in email addresses. Typically during the match season we will ask you to REPLY to a message to let us know of your intentions for attending a match. Please reply to these messages as requested since it helps us run preliminary pairings and to see if there are any wrestlers for whom we will not be able to find a suitable bout (and save you from an unnecessary trip). We understand that illnesses and other last minute things may change your plans, but we ask that you honor your commitment to the best that you are able.

**Web-site:**

Please get in the habit of regularly monitoring our web-site for information about the weekly practice and match schedule as well as other news and information about our program that could be important to you.

[www.robbinsville-wrestling.com](http://www.robbinsville-wrestling.com/)

**Phone chain:**

We will ask for volunteers to serve as age DIVISION coordinator for each age DIVISION (Tots, Bantams, Midgets, Juniors, and Intermediates) and to take the responsibility for making actual phone calls to their DIVISION on the occasions when such a need arises.