



**FALL 2024**

**COACH'S  
MEETING**

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**FLAG  
FOOTBALL**

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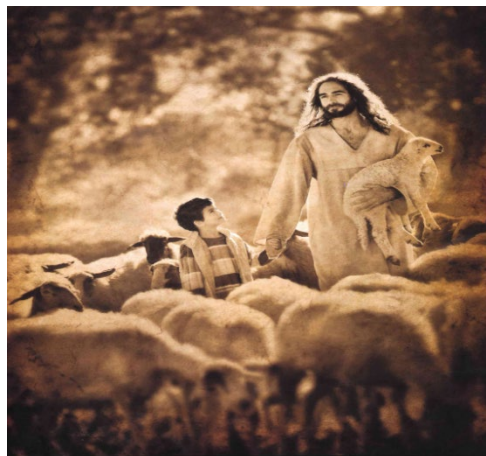
# Diocese of Cleveland CYO





## DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO FLAG FOOTBALL COACH'S MEETING

1. Introductions
2. Program Planner
3. Points of Emphasis
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**CYO inspires young people to know God, to love God, and to serve God through athletics**

July	18	In-person mandatory fall sports season coaches meetings, 6-9 p.m. Location: University of Akron
	19-21	Dick’s Sporting Goods Shop Days
	22	Fall sports season opens, practices may begin, sanctioned event season begins Fall sports season early registration closes; regular registration begins, 9:00am
	24	In-person mandatory fall sports season coaches meetings, 6-9 p.m. Location: Notre Dame Cathedral Latin High School - 13000 Auburn Rd., Chardon OH 44024
	29	Fall sports season regular registration ends, 9:00am
	30	In-person mandatory fall sports season coaches meetings, 6-9 p.m. Location: Magnificat High School – 20770 Hillard Blvd. Rocky River, OH 44116 Team fee payments and fee summary due Last day to enter teams’ blackouts
August	1	Coaches Development Program – Gesu (McAuley Room), 6:00 pm 2470 Miramar Blvd, University Heights, OH 44118
	5	Deadline to add athletes and coaches to rosters, 9:00am
	16	Fall sports season schedules available on CYO website
	17	Coaches Development Program – St. Ambrose (Hilkert Hall/Gym), 6:00 pm 929 Pearl Rd. Brunswick, 44212
	20	Coaches Development Program – St. Jude, 6:00 pm 590 Poplar Rd., Elyria, 44035
	24	Fall sports regular season competitions begin
September	14-15	Parents and VIP Weekend
	22	Team Mass Sunday
	28-29	Officials Appreciation Weekend
October	27	Fall sports season ends, sanctioned event period ends



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# DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO

## POINTS OF EMPHASIS

### OFFICIAL TEAM

- Defined as an individual or group of children from one or more Members listed on the team roster that meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the member athletic director, member administrator, and diocesan athletic office.
- A CYO team refusing to continue playing a scheduled game for any reason without the consent of the game official or CYO representative may be subject to penalties outlined in Bylaw 10. This also applies to CYO Sanctioned Events.
- An official game will consist of seven (7) players on the field.
- A game may begin or finish with five (5) players. **But in the spirit of fairness and parity, the opposing team must reduce their on-field players to 6. Best efforts should be made to maintain for full participation.**

### EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

- Ball Size:
  - **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Divisions** - Pee-wee size ball.
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Divisions** – Junior or pee wee size ball.
- Pants cannot have pockets, exposed drawstrings, or belt loops.
- Each player must wear a flag belt around the waist with a minimum of two Velcro flags. Flags must be a different color than the players' pants. Flags must be positioned on the hips of the player. Flags must be at least two (2) inches wide and a minimum of twelve inches long. Each team must provide its own flags.
- Helmets, shoulder pads and other football pads are not permitted.
- A mouthpiece must be secure in the player's mouth during the game. A mouthpiece cannot be white or clear in color.

**WHO'S ELIGIBLE:** Grades 1-4 Boys & Girls; **Kindergartners are not eligible.**

### **WHAT DO I DO WITH MY ATHLETES WHEN I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TO FIELD MY OWN TEAM?**

If you do not have enough to field your own team, you must first see if a member in YOUR section and your zone has availability for your athletes. If members in your own section and your zone does not have any availability, contact members in YOUR section in another zone. If your entire section does not have any availability, email the Athletic Administrator for placement. Remember your athletes cannot be placed in a school member or a No Zone member.

### **PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

- All coaches must be CYO certified.
- If a coach does not bring credentials the game, the game is subject to forfeit if the coach has not been certified. This will be looked up after the game by the CYO Staff or site director.
- CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.
- Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before and after the game.
- Each coach must submit their official participation form to the site director before the game.

### **Bench personnel are limited to:**

- Three credentialed coaches.
- Players listed on the eligibility roster, two (2) water personnel under the age of 16 and six (6) non-players (coaches).
- Non-players 16 years of age or older must be CYO certified.

- Non-players under the age of 9 are not allowed in the bench area.
- The bench area will be from the twenty (20) yard line to the opposite twenty (20) yard line.

### OFFICIALS

- **There will be one official assigned per game.**
- If an official does not show up at your game, each team should provide one adult to officiate the game.

### PARTICIPATION

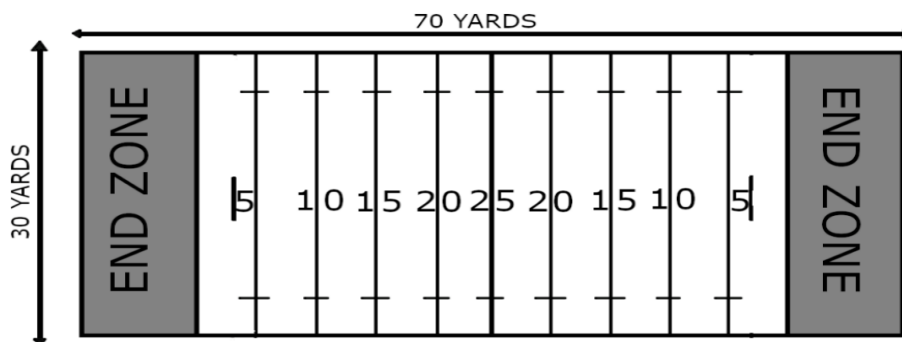
- All Divisions: Each member of the team must play a minimum of half of the game; twelve minutes in the first half and twelve minutes in the second half.
- In order to promote position rotation, quarterbacks must be rotated every quarter. Players cannot play quarterback for more than one quarter per game.
- If a quarterback is injured during their quarter of play and can return to the game in the same quarter, they are allowed to do so.
- Substitutes can enter the match when beckoned by the official while maintain 6' between the substitute. Substitutions are encouraged to occur closer to the center line.

### GUEST PLAYER RULE

- Guest Player Rule: If a team has less than 8 athletes, a guest player may be moved from the member's other CYO football team(s) to fill the positions at the start of a game under the following restrictions:
- The athlete meets the age/grade restrictions of the team the athlete will assist.
- BEFORE THE GAME, the guest player must be reported by means of Guest Player on the CYO Website.
- Guest player must be reported on the participation form before the competition begins by listing the guest player's name after all the original team's athletes are listed and place "GP" next to their name.
- Guest players cannot be used if the team has more than 9 players available.
- The same individual may be moved as a guest player for no more than two (2) games during the season.
- The athlete complies with the number of 2 game per day competition limits as outlined in the rule book.
- The guest player(s) must meet the minimum participation requirement.
- All guest players must wear matching uniforms tops with the rest of the team.
- Teams using guest players cannot have duplicated numbers.
- Guest players **are not allowed** for sanctioned events.

### FIELD SIZE AND LAYOUT

- The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a hash mark every five yards from the end zone with hash marks on both sides of the field and a midfield line-to-gain.
- Hash marks are located 10 yards from each sideline.
- Running plays can occur but the ball must be taking outside of the hash marks. Once the ball is taken outside the zone, cutbacks are permitted up the middle.



## **PRACTICE AND COACHING GUIDELINE**

- Practice sessions shall be limited to one (1) session per day not to exceed 90 minutes in duration

## **TIMING & OVERTIME**

- Play Clock – Each team will have 30 seconds to call their play and snap the ball. The clock starts once the official marks the ball ready for play.
- Game Clock-The length of the game will be two (24) minute halves. 48 minutes total with a continuous clock and will stop for: time-outs, Player injury,
- Half time will be five (5) minutes in length.
- There are no overtime periods. EXCEPT SANCTIONED EVENTS. See Rulebook pg. 6.

## **SCORING/BALL PLACEMENT/FIRST DOWNS**

### **Scoring**

- Touchdown will award 6 points.
- PAT-Run will award 1 point from the 5-yard line.
- PAT-Pass will award 2 points from the 5-yard line.
- Safety will award 2 points.
- A turnover on an attempted extra point immediately ends the play.

### **PLACEMENT OF THE BALL**

- At the start of the game or half the ball will be put in play on the 5-yard line.
- After a touchdown the ball will be put in play on the 5-yard line for extra point.
- After a safety the ball will be put in play at the 5-yard line.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers feet is when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is. 5. After each play, the ball will be placed in the middle of the field.

### **FIRST DOWN**

- The offensive team takes possession at the 5 yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crossed midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5 yard line.
- Special teams are NOT permitted. NO Punting.

### **FORMATIONS**

- A. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- B. Teams may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least 1 second before the ball is snapped.
- C. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- D. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs or sideways to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.
- E. A Quarterback sneak must be around the hash marks (not up the middle).
- F. The Center may not sneak the ball.

### **RUNNING**

- Offensive players in close proximity of the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.

### **PASSING**

- If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

### **SCREENING (REPLACES SHIELDING)**

- No intentional contact is not permitted at any age level.
- ***The screen blocker is able to place their hands in front while blocking only to cushion the possible contact by the defense – not delivering a blow with the hands. Moving hands forward and initiating contact to the defense are illegal.***
- A screen block shall take place with minimal contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during a screen block is illegal.
- At no time may a player, while screening, extend their arms or elbows away from their body or use their hands.
- Double-teaming and wedge blocking are also prohibited.
- Contact is not permitted.

### **DEFENSIVE RUSH**

- The defense may not rush on a pass play until the count of three (3) Mississippi by the official.
- The defense may rush on any handoff, lateral, toss, sweep or reverse.
- On a lateral, the defense may rush when the ball leaves the quarterback's hands.

**CODE OF CONDUCT** - There will be a zero tolerance shown towards any inappropriate or abusive behavior from any participants, coaches and/or spectators.

- Any participant, coach or spectator who feels the necessity to:
  - Persistently or willfully question or challenge the rulings of officials
  - Berate or abuse officials
  - Berate or abuse players & coaches
  - Berate or abuse other parents or spectators
  - Display conduct which is inappropriate in a sporting environment
  - Breach any applicable CYO Charter/Bylaws laws
- Breach any existing CYO, codes of conduct, policies or guidelines will be asked to leave the venue immediately.

#### **Bylaw 9-1-5**

- A. Athletes, coaches, parents, or fans will be asked to leave by CYO Personnel. Persons asked to leave must depart immediately. There will be additional consequences and disciplinary actions for those individuals.
- B. Athletes or coaches who are removed from an athletic event are automatically barred from attending any practices or games for a one week period. They may not attend the next scheduled competition for that team. The individual must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions.
- C. Parents or fans who are removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or games for a two week period. They may not attend the **next two scheduled games** for that team. The individual must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions.



# COACHING

**“Behind every fearless player is a fearless coach who refused to let them be anything but the best they can be.”**

*A transformational coach views winning as an outcome, not a priority, and puts the focus on helping athletes grow and reach their full potential, beyond just sports. On the opposite side, a transactional coach is someone who makes winning the ultimate goal and is less concerned about the overall experience.*

**CHANGE YOUR WORDS,  
CHANGE YOUR  
MINDSET**

INSTEAD OF SAYING THAT	SAY THIS!
IT'S TOO HARD.	I'LL KEEP TRYING.
I CAN'T DO THAT.	HOW CAN I GET BETTER AT THAT?
I GIVE UP.	I WILL KEEP WORKING!
I'M AFRAID I'LL MAKE A MISTAKE.	MISTAKES ARE HOW WE LEARN BEST.
THEY'RE SMARTER THAN ME.	WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THEM?
THIS IS HARD.	THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME AND EFFORT.
I'M A FAILURE.	I CAN LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES.
I DON'T GET IT.	WHAT AM I MISSING?
I HATE TO BE WRONG.	IS THIS REALLY MY BEST WORK?
I DON'T LIKE OTHERS TO DO BETTER THAN ME.	I'M GOING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY DO AND TRY IT!

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**MINDSET MATTERS**

WHEN YOU HAVE A GROWTH MINDSET, YOU KNOW YOU CAN GET SMARTER AND BETTER AT ANYTHING WITH EFFORT AND PRACTICE.

**SUCCESS BEGINS WITH BELIEVING YOU CAN.**

IT'S OK TO NOT KNOW, BUT IT'S NOT OK TO NOT TRY.

**You can learn anything, know anything, BE anything!**

IF IT DOESN'T CHALLENGE YOU IT WON'T CHANGE YOU

**YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF YOUR CHOICES!**



## Top 12 Traits of Youth Flag Football Coaches

Coaching kids is a pretty big deal. After all, you'll be teaching them not only football, but teamwork, success, failure and life lessons all at the same time. We polled youth flag football parents on the top 12 traits they felt all youth football coaches should possess. Let us know what you think in the comments below!

**Make it Fun** - Most children play sports to either be with their friends, have fun, or because they enjoy the sport. If a kid is at practice for any of those reasons – they're having fun, right? Focus on fun! Scores, results and the outcome aren't as important at a younger age. The important thing is the kids are having fun and will want to return time after time after time to stay active and get better.

**Kids First** - As a youth football coach, it's your job to ensure kids are priority. You shouldn't be coaching so you can tell your friends you coached the league winners, it should be because you're passionate about what you do. Making it a fun, friendly and healthy environment for kids should be a top priority.

**Patience** - You may quickly forget they're just kids. Shouting at them like a drill-sergeant won't do anything but make them unhappy. Patience is key, because they're still learning life...let alone football. Youth football should be fun and they shouldn't feel pressured.

**Involve Everyone** - Discrimination is never ok. Never. Regardless of one's race, gender, religion, ability level, disability, etc – everyone, EVERYONE is entitled to play. If you're a true coach, you care more about ensuring every kid has a chance on the field than sticking to "the A team", at a younger age especially. It's important that everyone's rotated throughout the game so everyone gets an equal opportunity to play. Remember, it's about fun – not all about winning.

**Bring Energy** - Dealing with kids, especially when it's an active sport –like youth football– can be tiresome. It's important you're energetic, fit and proactive – but not just physically; but mentally, too!

**By the Book** - You need to be able to train, teach and coach youth football in a manner which is right. If you're very competitive with a tendency to "cut corners" or anything else that can be deemed as misconduct – then coaching may not be for you.

**Show that you Care** - You need to be able to care for the squad, but not just as athletes – as people and friends, too. You should be able to speak to each parent and tell them any concerns you have; concerns you have simply because you know enough and care enough about them.

**Trust and Confidence** - Parents and kids should place a lot of confidence and trust in the coach. The parents need to trust you're a good role model for the kids, and their kids need to trust you have their best interest at heart.

**Safety First** - A child's safety is paramount and will always be the youth flag football coach's main priority. Every injury should be evaluated, especially head injuries, so make sure and don't push the envelope just to get another victory if a child's safety is of concern.

**Good Sportsmanship** - As youth flag football coaches begin working with the kids, they'll understand it's not all about the game and winning, but it's also about shaping the kids to be better people. This is done by ensuring the kids know what it takes to be a good sport, why winning isn't important and why it should be fun. They'll be looking up to you and have a tendency to mirror your every action and reaction, so a good example is important for any youth flag football coach!

**Everyone's a Winner** - Every kid needs to feel like a winner. Whether they lost by a little or lost by a lot, whether they made the big plays or dropped every pass – it doesn't matter. A kid's morale – especially in regards to youth flag football – is very precious. It's important that you keep their morale high by making them aware everyone's a winner regardless of the results!

**Positive** - Negative comments are remembered easier than positive comments. Youth flag football coaches need to understand that while you may need to correct a kid's mistake, this can still be done in a positive manner. Never use bullying tactics.





# FLAG FOOTBALL GAME ROSTER PARTICIPATION FORM



List First & Last Names. No Initials or nicknames please.

**TEAM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIVISION:**                      1st Grade          2nd Grade          3rd Grade          4th Grade

**HEAD COACH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ASST COACHES:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please list in numerical order. All Guest Players will be listed with "GP" before their name.

NUMBER	NAME	Participation			
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
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		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4

**Players Available:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Coach's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

- The coach must submit their official game day roster before the game to the referee.

## FAQ's about Sanctioned Events

Sanctioned Events (SE) are tournaments or competitions hosted by CYO members to provide additional opportunities for competition. Refer to the "Sanctioned Events" tab on the CYO website.

1. When can I register for a sanctioned event?

**Whenever the event is listed on the CYO website.**

2. Is it okay to register a team for a tournament under the assistant coach's name, since the head coach will not be at most of the games?

**No, to register for a tournament, the official CYO Sports Pilot roster needs to be provided, which lists the head coach's name. However, an assistant coach can certainly be in charge at the games.**

3. May I write a personal check for a Sanctioned Event entry?

**No - team entry fees must be paid with an official check from the member's account.**

4. The Sanctioned Event Director asked me to provide an official CYO roster. Can I use an excel spreadsheet that lists all the athletes from my team?

**No - only the official CYO Sports Pilot Team Eligibility Roster that your Athletic Director registered with CYO can be submitted. At the start of the season, your AD must provide each coach with a copy of their roster.**

5. We have (3) 6<sup>th</sup> gr. CYO teams. Can we combine players from the teams to enter a Sanctioned Event?

**No - each athlete can only play for the CYO team for which he/she is officially rostered.**

6. How many Guest Players may I use during Sanctioned Event Tournaments?

**ZERO! The Guest Player Ruler cannot be used in sanctioned events. Bylaw 5-3-2-C-1**

7. Can we enter a community-sponsored event if we use our nickname rather than the parish name?

**No - CYO teams are only eligible to participate in CYO sanctioned events. Bylaw 4-3-1-G**

8. In how many sanctioned tournaments can my team play?

**Game and tournament limit rules are published in the CYO sport specific rules and vary according to grade level.**

9. If an athlete or coach is ejected from a sanctioned event, do they **sit out** the next scheduled CYO game **or** the next SE game?

**The athlete(s) or coach must sit out the next scheduled game whether it is a SE game or a CYO game. Bylaw 9-1-5-B**

10. A Sanctioned Event Tournament shows it has 'A' and 'B' levels for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Which one do I enter?

**The format of the tournament is at the option of the Sanctioned Event Director, We encourage you to enter tournament that best fit your level of competitive balance.**

11. We are scheduled for an 8:15 pm game. I thought we couldn't play after 8 pm. What should I do?

**Contact the Event Director and your AD Director immediately. Inform the CYO Administration as well. Please refer to Bylaw 4-3-1 and sports specific rules for clarification/exception.**

12. Due to bad weather, our SE games got postponed. Can a SE be extended after the CYO season closes?

**No, events need to be concluded by the published CYO end of the season date for that sport.**

13. Does CYO supply scoresheets for Sanctioned Events?

**No, due to high printing costs, CYO is unable to provide score sheets for SE. A template is included in the Sanctioned Event approval packet to make copies. Consider purchasing a scorebook, along with other tournament supplies from Dick's, one of our partners.**

# RESOURCES

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bacsx\\_7\\_EWg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bacsx_7_EWg)

## Conducting and Effective Flag Football Practice

This video is great for coaches, especially first year coaches for how to conduct affective practices. This video goes over the basics from how to prepare a practice plan, equipment you should bring to practice, drills you should run, and even keeping activities age appropriate. For a coach who does not have the experience that some others may have, this can be a vital tool when it comes to managing the children and time in an effective way at each practice. It talks about allotting an adequate amount of time for each activity at practice, which is a great skill to have, especially when looking to keep the younger players focused and engaged. This coach has a plethora of knowledge and when it comes to flag football and his videos will be great assets for our coaches.

## Flag Football Drills

This video is also great for flag football as it focuses on a number of drills for flag football players. This can be a great tool for any of our coaches as they can take these drills and incorporate them into their own practices. Many of these coaches are coaching for the first time, so they may not have a plethora of practice plans and drills, so a video such as this can be a great resource for all of our coaches.

<https://flagfootballacademy.com/youth-flag-football-drills/>

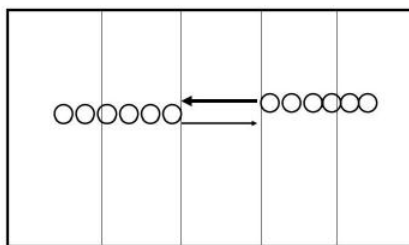
<https://www.stack.com/a/10-fun-flag-football-passing-drills/>

<https://gwrymca.org/blog/playing-flag-football>

## Team Hand-off Exchange

With this drill, you can have a number of players work on the proper way to give and receive a hand-off. Divide your players into 2 lines, approximately 20 yards away from each other. A player from one line starts with the ball. On the coach's whistle, the player with the ball races down field (maintaining the proper grip on the football). Once the player reaches the 1st player in the other line, the player with the ball hands the ball off to that 1st player. That player is now the ball carrier and races down field towards the other line. Emphasize holding the ball properly when running, good hand-off exchange (hand-off acceptance target, and good hand-offs into target). This is a great drill to use if you are employing reverse, double, or triple reverse plays that rely on a smooth hand-off to be effective.

Team Hand-Off Relay



**Flag Sweep Drill-** It's great to get your running backs running close to full speed when they take the handoff from the QB, making it much easier for them to begin eluding defenders from the start. In this drill, have a centre, a QB, and a line of running backs, wide left or wide right. On the snap, the running back takes off toward the QB and accepts the hand-off using proper technique and sweeps wide then turns it upfield. Add cones for the RB to get through and a defender or two to simulate game play. Rotate positions on every play.

**Swarm Drill-** For young players, it's a good idea to use language that they can relate to. Explain to your team that a good defense is like a swarm of Bees around a Hive. Instead of Bees around a Hive, you want your Defense swarming around the Ball Carrier. This drill can be done with the entire defense vs. the entire offense, or you can use a skeleton offense vs. your entire defense. At the coach's command, the offense starts the play. When a defender grabs the ball carriers flag, instruct all your players to **FREEZE!** Go around and count how many players are around the ball carrier. You want to avoid 1 on 1 play (only 1 player making the tackle is around the ball). There should be a number of players surrounding the ball carrier.

<https://www.mojo.sport/coachs-corner/10-best-u8-flag-football-drills>

### Flag Pulling Drill

You should practice flag pulling at every practice. Besides catching a football, this is one of the most important skills your team should master. For a pure focus on just flag pulling (plus a little work on elusiveness for the kid with the ball), the "snake drill" is a great one.

Set up four cones in a rectangular shape, with a cone at each corner. The long sides are about 7 yards apart, the shorter side about 4 yards apart. Have your kids split into two lines, lining up at opposite corners. The kids in one line are the "offense" and should have footballs in their hands. The kids at the other corner are defenders. On your whistle, the first offensive players and first defender should run down the long side and around the cone, into the rectangle. From there, the offensive player wants to try to run through the cones to get to the two at the other side. The defender's job is to try to pull the offensive player's flag.

[https://youtu.be/t\\_f4zhcKKXg](https://youtu.be/t_f4zhcKKXg)

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