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# The Coach's Playbook: Guiding Principles for PennVB Club

Welcome to the PennVB Club Coach's Playbook! This comprehensive guide is designed to empower you, our dedicated coaches, with the essential rules, guidelines, and best practices needed to cultivate a positive, safe, and enriching environment where every player can thrive, both on and off the court. Your commitment is key to fulfilling our mission and shaping the future of volleyball in Montgomery County, PA.

## I. Club Philosophy & Mission

- **Our Mission:** At PennVB Club, we provide a welcoming environment for teenagers new to the sport. Our primary goal is to promote active participation, teach essential skills, and foster teamwork among youth. With a variety of training sessions and events, we aim to nurture talent and build confidence in every player.
- **Our Vision:** We envision a community where every teenager, regardless of skill level, has the opportunity to learn and play volleyball. Through supportive coaching and engaging activities, we strive to create an environment that fosters personal growth and a passion for the game.
- **Our Definition of Success:** We measure our success by each player's journey, celebrating when she:
  - Significantly improves her skills and confidence on the court.
  - Progresses to the next level of play, whether in school, club, or beyond.
  - Achieves her dreams of playing at the collegiate level by earning a scholarship.
  - Chooses to return to play for another season, demonstrating her enjoyment and commitment to our club community.
- **Player-Centered Approach:** Emphasize that the well-being and development of each player (physical, emotional, social) come first, above winning. This includes specifically welcoming and supporting those new to the sport, as well as ensuring opportunities for growth at all skill levels.
- **Values:** Highlight core values like sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, perseverance, and a love for the game.
- **Developmental Focus:** Stress the importance of teaching fundamental skills, fostering confidence, and promoting continuous improvement for all players, recognizing that many may be new to volleyball or still developing foundational abilities.

## II. Ethical Conduct & Professionalism (Code of Conduct)

- **Respect for All:**
  - Treat all players, parents, officials, opposing coaches, and spectators with dignity and respect.
  - Refrain from any form of verbal abuse, sarcasm, negativity, or demeaning language.
  - Model appropriate behavior at all times, controlling emotions under pressure.
- **Safety First:**
  - Ensure a safe physical and psychological environment for all players.
  - Regularly inspect facilities and equipment for safety.
  - Have emergency contact information and a first-aid kit readily available at all practices and games.
  - Never play an injured or bleeding player.
  - Protect players from all forms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual). Adhere to **SafeSport** guidelines and reporting procedures.
- **Fair Play & Sportsmanship:**
  - Teach and enforce the rules of volleyball.
  - Emphasize fair play, ethical conduct, and respect for opponents and officials.
  - Exhibit gracious acceptance of victory or defeat.
- **Professionalism:**
  - Be punctual and prepared for all practices and games.
  - Dress appropriately.
  - Avoid drug, tobacco, or alcohol use in the presence of athletes.
  - Maintain appropriate boundaries with players.
- **Confidentiality:** Safeguard personal information about athletes, including performance reviews and personal confidences. Obtain permission before sharing videos or data with anyone outside the recognized coaching staff.

### **III. Coaching Responsibilities & Best Practices**

- **Skill Development:**

- Teach fundamental volleyball skills (serving, passing, setting, attacking, blocking) appropriate for the age and skill level, with a strong emphasis on welcoming and developing players new to the sport.
- Incorporate a variety of drills that are fun, engaging, and promote active participation for all.
- Provide constructive, positive feedback to help players improve their skills and confidence.
- Adjust coaching methods to individual player needs and learning styles, recognizing diverse starting points.

- **Practice Planning:**

- Develop structured, organized, and varied practice plans.
- Ensure maximum activity and minimize standing around.
- Include warm-ups, skill instruction, skill practice (progressing from drills to game-like situations), and cool-downs.
- Balance fun and competitiveness.

- **Team Building & Motivation:**

- Foster a positive team atmosphere, encouraging mutual support and camaraderie.
- Recognize and celebrate achievements, both big and small, particularly focusing on skill improvement and personal growth.
- Help players set achievable goals for their individual journeys.
- Provide leadership opportunities for players.
- Maintain enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

- **Communication:**

- Maintain clear, consistent, and timely communication with players and parents regarding schedules, expectations, and any important updates.
- Establish a clear communication protocol for missed practices or games.
- Address parent concerns professionally and according to club policy (e.g., "24-hour rule" for discussing playing time, no sideline coaching from parents).

- **Player Participation:**

- Ensure equal playing time and opportunities for all players, especially at the developmental level, aligning with our mission to provide opportunities for every teenager regardless of skill level.
- Recognize individual differences in physical, social, and emotional maturation.
- **Facility & Equipment Management:**
  - Know where to store equipment safely and ensure proper setup and breakdown of nets and other gear.
  - Never leave equipment unsecured.
- **Injury Management:**
  - Have a basic understanding of injury prevention and immediate care.
  - Follow club protocols for reporting and managing injuries.

## IV. Administrative & Operational Guidelines

To ensure smooth operations and compliance, this section covers the administrative and operational guidelines that support our club's activities.

- **Rosters & Eligibility:** Adhere to club and league rules regarding player registration, age eligibility, and roster management.
- **Attendance:** Maintain accurate attendance records for practices and games.
- **Reporting:** Understand and follow procedures for reporting incidents, injuries, or concerns to club leadership.
- **Financials (if applicable):** Understand any guidelines related to team budgets, reimbursements, or fundraising.
- **USA Volleyball Membership/Certifications:** Ensure all coaches maintain current USAV memberships, background checks, SafeSport training, and any required coaching certifications.

Thank you for being an integral part of the PennVB Club family. Your dedication is essential to creating a positive and transformative experience for our athletes. Together, we will continue to foster a lifelong passion for volleyball and help every player reach their full potential.