

# Franklin Youth Basketball

## Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Basketball – 2023-2024 Season

The Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Basketball Leagues are part of the Franklin Recreation Departments (Instructional level), which is designed to introduce the game of basketball to boys and girls in a non-competitive, team-oriented manner. This season, each grade will play in their own 3 v 3 half court game based on grade/skill level. Our goal is to encourage friendly participation at a young age, while teaching the fundamentals of basketball: Passing, Dribbling, Shooting and “proper” defense.

### Rules

- Each team has ½ court for 1 hour and 15 minutes during practices (first three weeks). Practices are scheduled for 1 hour and 15 minutes of gym time, but an extra 15 min. will be reserved in case a coach needs a little extra time. Do not run over time (75 min) as you will be cutting into other team’s time. This year the boys & girls 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade program will practice at Oak Street Gym (blue gym at Horace Mann Complex), and Kindergarten coed league will practice at JF Kennedy School.
- Coaches should allow first pass without stealing. No stealing during the dribble. This includes after kids reach half court.
- No reaching in, swatting or poking at the ball. Children should practice hands up defense and learn to stay low and cover an opponent **without** “hugging.” Coaches need to make sure that “your” players follow the rules. It isn’t up to the other teams coach to enforce this.
- No fast breaks. Allow the defense to setup on a possession change. Of course, that won’t be a problem if you are playing 3 v 3 half-court as we encourage.
- If “excessive” double dribbling & traveling occurs, coaches should stop play and remind ALL children what they should be doing but do not turnover possession. Try not to single individual players out, but address the entire group so that they all learn. Coaches should feel free to stop play and explain to the kids on the court what has happened and how to correct it. This is a learning experience for all of them. Coaches should not feel embarrassed to stop the game and explain what is going on, but do it in a positive manner. Then, give the ball back to the player and resume play.
- Scrimmages/Games will be 3 vs.3 half-court with 2 players from each team standing on the sidelines (one on either sideline) as an outlet passer. These two players on sidelines cannot shoot, dribble, or steal. They can only serve as an outlet pass and then they must return the pass back in-bounds to one of the other 3 on-court players. Once the on-court player scores a basket, they will tag in one of the sideline passers. 5-minute periods then break for water. Teams should get 6-8 periods if scrimmages/games if they start on time. If your time is up, the game is over. Please stop the game with 5 minutes left, so that your team can collect all the balls, water bottles, sweatshirts/jackets, etc. and allow the next team to set up for their game. 1.25 hours of 3 v 3 half court and EVERYONE will be exhausted. The 3 on 3 format allows for every player to be involved in the game. 5 v 5 does not!
- During the scrimmage, teams should be playing a **man-to-man defense**. However, if possible, try to discourage 3 kids standing under the net, clogging the lane. **NO ZONE defense.**
- First 3 weeks are individual team practices. Week 4-10 will be 15 min practice, 1 hour scrimmage/game. Coaches can mutually decide to start scrimmage sooner or later. “Try to resist throwing on the pinnies, and scrimmaging until the kids are ready!”
- There is no scorekeeping for the scrimmages/games
- There are no standings or playoffs
- Coaches should use their best judgment calling out of bounds and fouls. Don’t let rough play escalate!

### Expectations of parents:

- There must be at least one responsible party (parent/guardian/older sibling) for each child during the entire session. No dropping off, coaches babysitting.
- First aid should be administered by the responsible party only. Band aids and ice packs are about the extent of our first aid. If a serious injury occurs, 911 will be called to assist. Coaches are not responsible for stitching cuts, administering medications, etc. However, if a bump occurs and an ice pack is needed, they are available in the first aid kits which are in the rolling carts.
- Please refrain from coaching your child from the sideline. It is confusing for the children and unfair to the coaches. “Johnny, steal the ball, steal the ball!”

For more information regarding the Franklin Youth Basketball through the Recreation Department, please visit our website at:  
<http://www.franklinma.gov/recreation-department/pages/basketball>

### **Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd Grade Concept by Bob Bigelow (youth basketball expert)**

1. 5 on 5 full court at the K or 1st -2nd grade level invariably means 1-2 kids (usually the least worst gross motor skilled) dribble and handle the ball the whole time. You're other less gross motor skilled (6-8 players) end up as wallflowers on the periphery with much fewer ball-handling opportunities. Watch any 1st & 2nd grade game and you'll see that as well.
2. 3 on 3 half court puts 10 kids on a "full" court (2 times 3 vs. 3) at once, two more than 5 on 5, 20% more kids play in the same space in the same amount of time.
3. Touches, touches, touches. One ball for 3 kids on offense, not five kids.
4. Since the ball doesn't have to be continuously "advanced" from back to front court (only "taken back" to top of key or foul line), the ball will spend more time being passed to multiple players. Not to mention, we're taking the "track meet" (fast break) out of the game, which doesn't help any player develop skills.
5. A less congested basket area; 6 bodies can spread out, instead of 10 "crammed" close to the hoop; allows for freer movement to open spaces when "moving without the ball". Also, make a rule that every player on offense must touch the ball once before a shot is taken. Even better, the player who scores must tap out one of your sideline players. Players just might think that passing is important, after all it keeps them on the court; an intriguing "dilemma" (do I shoot, score and "leave", or pass and "stay"?)
6. Use extra players as sideline receivers on the half court sidelines, they can receive passes from their teammates but the only thing they can then do is pass it back to one of the 3 on the court. Since the defense is always more "skilled"(less unskilled!) at these ages(they don't have a ball to hold to make them more uncoordinated and off-balance), this gives a much-needed boost to offensive players who have given up their dribbles and can't pass to his/her other two teammates cause they're overplayed or nowhere nearby. Plus, players who aren't in the game now have something to keep them occupied (somewhat akin to letting kids coach the base paths in baseball).
7. Ask your basketball people if their kids play soccer. Thank heavens 25 years ago our top youth soccer people in the USA went to Germany, Holland and South America to observe how they "trained" kids in soccer. They soon came back with (drum roll, please!) SMALL-SIDED Games on smaller fields. They still start 11 v. 11 on 110 X 70 yd field way to soon in this country (10 years old-YIKES!), but most communities play 4 v 4, 6 v 6, etc at the elementary school levels. Guess what, more touches and much less aimless running around. Gee, think "small-sided" basketball might have the same relevance?
- 8 Better yet, why do we play youth baseball until 12 years old on 60 ft Base paths and 45 ft pitching distance, instead of the 90 ft base paths and 60 ft distance, the way the Red Sox play? Want to try one of your local 10 year olds throwing from shortstop to first on a 90 ft diamond? Think he could get the throw there in less than 5 hops?
9. The youth sports rule of thumb is this: always adapt the games to the kids, never adapt the kids to the games. 5 on 5 basketball is a fine game for any Boston middle or high school, BC and the Boston Celtics. Any one in Franklin want to tell me how many of your 4th graders are currently studying algebra, trigonometry, calculus, quantum mechanics or doctoral level physics? Not too many, I surmise. So why do they need to play the same basketball game as the players at those higher levels? If your compadres still aren't convinced, have them ask any local elementary school, physical education teacher to verify the validity of this e-mail. These folks do this stuff for a living and I've consulted with hundreds of them. Be very wary of the 40 year old former HS hoops player who watches too much ESPN. Their PE, cognitive and child development may be a bit lacking and BC vs. Florida State has no relevance whatsoever.