

NEWTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
POP WARNER FOOTBALL AND CHEERLEADING PROGRAM
“Building Character Through Athletics”

Welcome to the official Newton Pop Warner Web Site and Program. We are very proud of our organization. Since 1969 the N.A.A. has provided a wonderful youth football and cheerleading program for the children of our community. The programs' Board of Directors has prepared this website to provide a better understanding of the organization. A member of the board or coaching staff will gladly assist you with any concerns or questions. We try to make this a positive experience for your entire family. We invite you to assist us by volunteering some of your time to the program. No other youth sport will give you the exciting atmosphere that you will find on game day.

MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of Newton Pop Warner Program is to develop and promote responsibility, teamwork, and fellowship for the children within the City of Newton. This program will provide an opportunity for training and play, and shall be designed to develop individual skills, fitness, teamwork, and fair play. We also want everyone to have fun and win enough games to feel good about the team and the season.

FAMILY CODE OF CONDUCT

In light of the rash of violent attacks at youth sporting events, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has developed the following code of conduct that the Board has adopted:

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and the six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship. The highest potential of sport is achieved when competition reflects the “six pillars of character”.

I therefore agree:

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
2. I will remember that children participate for fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or others.
4. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
5. I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at all games and practices.
6. I (and my guests) will not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing, taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language.
7. I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of others.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.
9. I will demand that my child treat all players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
10. I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning so that my child will not feel defeated by the outcome of the game or his/her performance.
11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard.
12. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
13. I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning. I will also de-emphasize games and competition in lower age groups.
14. I will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any desire I may have for my child to win.
15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.

16. I will demand a sport environment for my child that is free from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco and I will refrain from their use at all sporting events.
17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am an official coach.

I also agree that if I fail to by the aforementioned rules and regulations, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or head of league organization
2. Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file by organizations involve.
3. Written warning.
4. Game forfeit through the official or coach.
5. Parental season suspension.

PRACTICES TIMES, GAME TIMES AND TEAM INFORMATION

FOOTBALL PRACTICE TIMES: The football season begins on the first of August and continues through October. Teams, which qualify for playoffs, will have their season extended. Starting August 1, all practices will be held at the Newton Highlands Playground, which is located at the intersection of Route 9, Centre Street and Winchester Street (near the Needham Street retail area in Newton Highlands) from 5:30 – 7:30PM. After the first season game, all practices will be held Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday nights 5:30 – 7:30PM.

It is of the utmost importance that children are picked up promptly. The club is not responsible for their supervision after 7:30PM. In the event of a thunderstorm the coaches will clear the field and the children will stand in the parking garage. If the storm ceases, they will finish practice. If the storm persists, please pick your child up as soon as possible

The first 10 hours of practice is considered to be conditioning and there will not be any contact, tackling etc. Only after the child has taken part in these conditions sessions will we fit him/her for equipment. This applies even if the child joins the team later in the season. During the first 10 hours of practice, you child should wear: shorts, t-shirt, sneakers or cleats (NO METAL CLEATS EVER), and bring a water bottle. We will have plenty of water for all of the players. After your child receives his/her equipment they will begin contact practices.

Although we recognize that some absences may be unavoidable in August, we urge you to try to plan vacations around practice. Football, more than any other sport, requires numerous repetitions to learn the plays and function as a team. Injuries are much less when players are well conditioned. Additionally coaches need the practice time to assign children to their various positions. If a player is absent for the majority of the August practice, this will affect playing time during the season.

CHEERLEADING PRACTICE TIMES: Practice will begin August 1. Cheerleaders practice Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5:00 – 7:00PM at Albemarle club house's facility preseason so the cheerleaders can try on different articles of clothing. In September, practice is held inside Newton North High School two nights a week (yet to be determined by coaches, cheerleaders, and parents).

The cheerleaders participate in at least two competitions. If they do will, they can go onto other competitions.

CHEERLEADING UNIFORMS: The uniforms are provided by the organization and must be return at the end of the season. The girls must purchase body suits, lollies, socks and sneakers. The cost of these items is approximately \$65.00. Sometimes these items can be used for more than a year.

MANDATORY CERTIFICATION WEIGH-IN

All rostered players **MUST ATTEND** this weigh-in or they will not be eligible to play in the first two games of the season. Usually on the last Saturday in August, we take all the children on school buses to

a location, where the children are weighed, photographed and paperwork is checked. Date, time and location will be announced later. Parents are not allowed to accompany the children, only coaches. The weigh-in is necessary to ensure uniformity and safety throughout the league.

GAME TIMES: All games are played on Sundays. Home games are played at the Newton Highlands Playground field. The following game times are approximate:

E Team	Mitey Mites	8:00 – 9:00AM
D Team	Junior Pee Wees	9:00 – 10:50AM
C Team	Pee Wees	11:00AM – 12:20PM
B Team	Junior Midgets	12:30PM – 1:50PM
A Team	Midgets	2:00PM – 4:00PM

The Newton Mustangs play in the Greater Boston League (GBL). Other teams in the league are as follows:

Arlington Spy Ponders	Malden Cyclones
Cambridge Warriors	Medford Colts
Chelsea Panthers	Revere Jr. Patriots
East Boston Saints	Somerville Packers
Everett Huskies	

MANDATORY PLAY RULE

Pop Warner established a Mandatory Play Rule (MPR) to ensure each child plays a minimum amount of time every game regardless of ability. This rule does not provide equal playing time. Some players will play more than others based on athletic skills, experience, game situations and attendance at practice. The MPR guarantees that every child will play to some extent. Our coaching staff has always tried to go beyond the minimums required. The right to mandatory playing time may be denied to a player if he/she is chronically absent from practice or displays disruptive behavior during practice or games.

The MPR is determined by the number of eligible players at the start of the game. These plays must come from the line of scrimmage and DO NOT include: kickoffs, extra points, and free kicks. Plays that result in a penalty shall not be included in the MPR. All plays must be completed by the beginning of the fourth quarter.

MANDATORY PLAY RULE

31 – 35 players = 6 plays

26 – 30 players = 8 plays

16 – 25 players = 10 plays

MITEY-MITE MANDATORY PLAY RULE

16 – 25 players = 16 plays (8 per half)

26 – 35 players = 10 plays (5 per half)

DIVISIONS:

In 2001 Pop Warner National instituted two-division system to ensure more teams go to playoffs and have a chance at the Super Bowl. Therefore each year there will be two Super Bowls, one for Division I and one for Division II. Division status is determined by a program's overall record for the prior three years. Newton's A-D squad record over the past three years has warranted our inclusion in Division I. It is important for all teams in the program to be successful to ensure our continued Division I status.

All teams in a particular division must play each other once during the season. This means that each Division I team will not play one Division II team. It is the record within the division that determines eligibility for the playoffs. For example, if Newton's D Squad went 4/4, but all for wins were against Division I teams, the D Squad would be GBL Squad champion. Division status will be noted on the schedule.

SEASON SCHEDULE:

The schedule for the season will be provided in August. Post-season playoff games are played in November. The initial playoff games are in the Eastern Massachusetts Conference. The winning teams progress to New England Regionals and potentially to the Super Bowl at Disney World Orlando, Florida.

COACHES:

All coaches are VOLUNTEERS and commit numerous hours to Pop Warner on and off the field. Please value them. The Board of Directors selects Head coaches. The head coaches with the approval of the Board select assistant coaches. The coaches meet to plan practices, program training and coaching philosophy. The goal is to coordinate a unified approach to teaching football and cheerleading skills. The program builds upon skill developed throughout the squads.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Since a volunteer staff organizes the program, it is critical that all parents understand the importance of everyone sharing the responsibility. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in any manner. Our child will respond positively if you get involved in the program. This has been the foundation for the success of this program. If there is an area that needs improvement, please feel free to present your suggestion in writing to a board member. During the next board meeting, your suggestions will be reviewed.

TEAM PARENTS:

FOOTBALL: Each team needs one Team Parent. Team Parents are responsible for: communicating activities to other parents/guardians, assisting with fundraising, coordinating the 50/50 raffle, and finding volunteers to hold field markers during games.

CHEERLEADING: We need five parents to assist during each cheering competition. The money earned during competitions supports all of the teams regardless of whether or not they go to the playoffs. These competitions are lucrative. Please lend a hand.

FUND RAISING

The Pop Warner Program relies on the success of its fund raising activities in order to pay for its program costs. Fund raising is the primary source of revenue for the program. Money is raised through the following activities.

Canning: On designated days, cheerleaders and football players are strongly encouraged to stand at pre-determined locations (such as B.C. on a game day) and collect donation for an hour or two. Adult supervision is always provided. Kids usually have lots of fun and get a Mustangs windbreaker in exchange for helping.

Concession stand: The money raised at the concession stand is critical in defraying program costs. Concession duty includes selling drinks and food at all home games. A sign up sheet will be available in the trailer for concession duty.

Raffles: During each home game there will be five 50/50 raffles. Volunteers are needed to help sell tickets.

Ad book: Anyone may solicit ads from friends, relatives or businesses to show their support to the children. This is an opportunity for the community to support the program.

Post season: If a team advances in the playoffs, additional fund raising efforts will be required to pay for travel and meal expenses. Otherwise each family is responsible for their football player's or cheerleader's share of the costs.

Business contributions: If a business wishes to support Newton Pop Warner with a minimum donation of \$250 a 3'X 5' banner with the sponsor's name will be displayed at the field on game days on the web site.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The cost to equip each player is approximately \$350. The program supplies all equipment except: rubber cleats, mouthpiece, and cup/jock strap. Remember METAL CLEATS are not allowed. Similarly uniforms are also supplied to cheerleaders except: a tee shirt, socks and white sneakers. The football and cheerleading coaches will provide additional information.

All equipment and uniforms must be returned at the end of the season. Otherwise the parent/guardian will be responsible for the total cost of the unreturned equipment. The parent/guardian will also be responsible for replacement cost due to excessive damage or loss. If the equipment is not returned, the child will not be allowed to participate the following season nor will he/she be permitted to attend awards night when trophies are given.

Program costs for each year total approximately \$40,000 - \$50,000. Equipment costs represent more than half of the total program costs. There are numerous other costs associated with the program. Some of the other costs are the annual awards dinner, trophies, officials for home games, insurance, footballs, maintenance of the trailer etc.

The registration fee is considered dues to participate in the program. In an effort to keep dues stable, we encourage everyone to participate in fund raising efforts during the year. If there is a financial hardship, please contact a Board member. It is not the Board's intent to turn away a child from the program due to financial problems. All matters will be held in the strictest confidence.

TEAM AGE AND WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS

<u>TEAM</u>	<u>AGES</u>	<u>WEIGHT RANGE</u>
E Squad	7-8-9	45 – 85 pounds
D Squad (Older/lighter)	8-9-10 11*	55 – 95 pounds 55 – 75 pounds
C Squad 9-10-11 (Older/lighter)	9-10-11 12*	70 – 110 pounds 70 – 90 pounds
B Squad 10-11-12 (Older/lighter)	10-11-12 13*	80 – 125 pounds 80 – 105 pounds
A Squad (Older/lighter)	11-12-13-14 15*	95 – 145 pounds 95 – 125 pounds

*Provisions in each division allow so-called “older but lighter” player to also qualify. The fourth year of eligibility falls under more stringent weight restrictions per above.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Birth certificate – must be the original
2. Health Form – no child can practice without this form specifically stating he/she can play football. It must be dated after January 1 of the current year.
3. Payment of registration dues
4. Academic form
5. Copy of the June report card
6. Signed Parent Code Conduct
7. Signed player Rights/Responsibilities form

No one will be issued uniforms without meeting all of these requirements.

EQUIPMENT RETURN: Immediately after the season is completed, equipment return dates will be designated. When all equipment is returned and financial obligations are satisfied, the player's/cheerleader's birth certificates will be returned.

ACADEMIC POLICY

1. Pop Warner's philosophy is: academics and athletics go hand in hand.
2. Each football player/cheerleader must demonstrate scholastic fitness in order to participate in the program.
3. A copy of the June report card is required at the time of registration to certify scholastic fitness.
4. Coaches may ask for a scholastic progress report in the fall.
5. Failure to provide proof of academic fitness will be cause for disqualification from the program.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. All coaches and players must meet to establish team rules and sanctions in conjunction with the discipline policy.
2. All players must arrive and leave the field on time. Parents must arrive a half an hour prior to the end of practice to ensure safety and timely departure of all players.
3. Unexcused tardiness and absence will be dealt with by the coach in a uniform manner and could affect playing time.
4. No taunting, swearing or abusive language will be tolerated by anyone associated with the program. Any player, parent, guardian, or coach acting in an abusive or detrimental manner to referees, coaches, game officials or other players will be subject to review and action by the Board of Directors. Any repeated offenses will subject the person to be removed from the program.
5. All teams must leave the field completely free of debris.
6. The coaches are responsible for the enforcement of the rules. If the enforcement issue(s) is/are not observed by the player, disciplinary actions will be taken by the Board of Directors, up to and including suspension from the program.
7. Any game suspensions mandated by the league will result in additional action by the Board of Directors. It is the position of this organization that poor behavior will be met with severe action by the Board of Directors.
8. Any participant found to be damaging or defacing any property of facility will be subject to review and action by the Board of Directors.

It is important to understand that as a member of the Newton Pop Warner Program you represent not only yourself but also your team and your city. The Board of Directors has resolved to take a firm approach with those people who do not respect others. Our goal is to teach football, cheerleading and have fun!

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PLAYERS/CHEERLEADERS

RIGHTS:

1. To learn about football/cheerleading.
2. To have fun.
3. To be able to try out for different positions. However, please do remember that there are 34 other players on the team. You may not get to play *the* position you want. Coaches must consider everyone's skills and the team as a whole when assigning positions. Please speak to your coach *before or after* practice regarding trying a new spot.
4. To get only positive comments from coaches and team members.
5. Winning is often more fun than losing, but even during a losing season you should be having fun. If you aren't, try to figure out what might be wrong and ask for help to fix the problem.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To attend practices regularly so you get to know the other players well, learn plays/routines thoroughly, and be a full member of the team.

2. To be at practices and games on time. If you have any schedule problems, please speak to your coach before or after practice.
3. If you must miss a game or arrive late, tell your coach as soon as possible so that your coach can make the appropriate changes to lineups/stunting routines.
4. To cheer for your team and to say only positive things about other players and the referees. Rarely is a game one sided. If you have a problem with how the game is being officiated, speak to the head coach. He and *only* he will speak to the referee if deemed necessary.

PLAY HARD

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR EFFORTS

ALWAYS SHOW RESPECT

BE A TEAM PLAYER