

# The 20-Minute Parent Meeting

A ready-to-run script for youth basketball coaches (ages 8-14)

Grassroots Hoops Coach

Run this at your first practice or a preseason parents' night. It takes about 20 to 25 minutes. Read it as-is or put it in your own words. Hand out the one-page Team Policy at the end.

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## 1. Welcome (2 min)

"Thanks for coming. I'm [name], and I'll be coaching [team] this season. Quick background: [one sentence, e.g. 'I played in high school and this is my third year coaching']. I'm a volunteer, I care about your kids, and I'll make mistakes. The goal tonight is simple: no surprises this season. Everything we agree on tonight, you'll get on one page."

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## 2. What this season is about (2 min)

"At this age my job is three things, in this order:

1. Every kid gets better at basketball.
2. Every kid wants to play again next year.
3. We compete hard and try to win.

Winning matters. It's just number three. If I ever have to choose, I'll choose development."

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## 3. Playing time (5 min, the most important part)

"Let's talk about playing time now, so we don't have to talk about it in the parking lot later."

Start with your league's rule: "Our league rule is: [e.g. 'every player plays at least half of every game']. I follow it every game."

Then pick the option that fits your team and say it plainly:

- **Rec / equal time:** "Every player who comes to practice gets roughly equal minutes. Not exactly equal every game, but it evens out over the season. I track it."
- **Competitive / earned time:** "Minutes are earned at practice: effort, listening, and doing what we work on. Every player will play every game, but minutes won't be equal. If your child wants more minutes, they can ask me what to work on, and I'll give them a real answer."

Then say:

- "Missing practice without telling me can mean fewer minutes, always within our league's minimum-play rules. Tell me ahead of time and it's fine."
- "Positions rotate. Your child may play guard one game and post the next. That's on purpose."
- "I will never discuss another player's minutes with you. Only your own child's."

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## 4. How we communicate (3 min)

- "Team updates come through [TeamSnap / group text / email]. Check it before every practice."
- **The 24-hour rule:** if something upsets you after a game, wait 24 hours, then contact me. I promise I'll listen. I won't talk about it right after a game, in the gym, or in the parking lot."
- "Questions about your own child are always welcome. Ask by message to set a time."
- "I never message a player privately. Any message I send to a player always copies a parent. That's a youth-protection rule, and I keep it every time."

## 5. Game day (2 min)

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"During games, I need three things from you:

1. **Cheer for effort, not just baskets.** Every kid, both teams.
2. **Let me coach.** Please don't shout instructions. Two voices telling a 10-year-old what to do means they hear neither.
3. **Leave the refs alone.** Many are teenagers. If we lose them, we lose the league."

"After games, the best thing you can say is: 'Did you have fun? I love watching you play.' Save the analysis for me."

## 6. Safety, injuries, and pickup (3 min)

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- **Injuries and concussions:** "If a player might be hurt, especially a hit to the head, my rule is: when in doubt, sit them out. A player with a possible concussion only comes back with clearance, following our league and state rules. No exceptions, even in a big game."
- **Emergency info:** "Please fill out the emergency contact and medical info form tonight: two contacts, allergies, asthma, medications, anything I should know. I keep it with me at every practice and game."
- **Pickup:** "Please be on time. I'll wait with the players until every kid is picked up. I'm never alone with one player, so if you're late, another adult or I will wait together. Text me if you're running behind."

## 7. How you can help (1 min)

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"This team runs on parents. I need volunteers for:

- **Scorebook**
- **Clock**
- **Snacks** (a sign-up rotation)
- **Team parent** (helps me with schedules, reminders, and the end-of-season party)

The sign-up sheet is going around now."

## 8. If the policy gets broken (1 min)

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"If a parent breaks what we agree on tonight, here's what happens. First, I'll ask for a quiet, private conversation, never in front of the kids. If it keeps happening, I'll bring in the league director. I'd much rather it never gets that far, and I'm sure it won't."

## 9. What you can expect from me (1 min)

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- "I'll be on time and prepared."
- "I'll tell you the playing time plan and stick to it."
- "I'll treat every kid fairly and never embarrass a player."
- "I'll answer your messages within [48 hours]."

## 10. Questions + one-page handout (2 min)

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"What questions do you have?" Then hand out the Team Policy below, or text it to parents that night.

# Team Policy

Please read, fill in, and return a signed copy to the coach.

**Team:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Our priorities:** 1) every player improves, 2) every player wants to come back, 3) we compete to win.

**League rule (playing time):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Playing time:** ☐ Roughly equal for everyone who attends practice ☐ Earned at practice; everyone plays every game

**Missed practice:** Tell the coach ahead of time. Unexcused absences may mean fewer minutes, within league minimum-play rules.

**Positions:** Players rotate positions on purpose.

**Concerns:** Wait 24 hours after a game, then message the coach to set a time. Never in the gym or parking lot. We only discuss your own child.

**Coach-player messages:** The coach never messages a player privately. Every message to a player copies a parent.

**Game day:** Cheer effort, let the coach coach, respect the refs.

**Injuries:** When in doubt, sit them out. A player returns from a possible concussion only with clearance under league and state rules.

**Emergency info:** ☐ Emergency contact and medical form returned to the coach

**Pickup:** Be on time. The coach waits until every player is picked up and is never alone with one player.

**I can help with:** ☐ Scorebook ☐ Clock ☐ Snacks ☐ Team parent

**If the policy is broken:** A private conversation with the coach first, then the league director.

**Coach's promise:** On time, prepared, fair, and replies within \_\_\_\_\_ hours.

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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