

At \_\_\_\_\_, we believe every child should be able to develop their human potential through sports.

That's why we recognize the rights below, which were developed by **PROJECT PLAY**, an initiative of the Aspen Institute Sports & Society Program that develops, applies and shares knowledge that helps stakeholders build healthy communities.



# CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS IN SPORTS

## ***ALL CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT:***

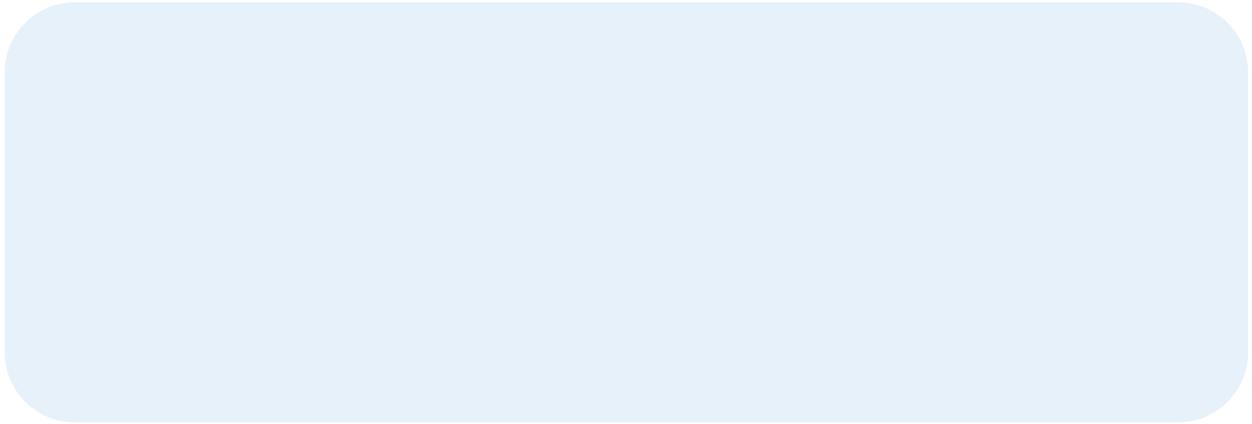
### **1. TO PLAY SPORTS**

Children have the right to have organizations make every effort to accommodate their interest to participate, and to play with peers from diverse backgrounds.

- Providers should develop policies, practices, and partnerships to include youth from underrepresented populations, and create programs that both meet and stimulate youth interest in sports.
- Non-profits and other groups that benefit from the use of public facilities have a special duty to protect the right of all children to participate.



Here's how we honor this right:

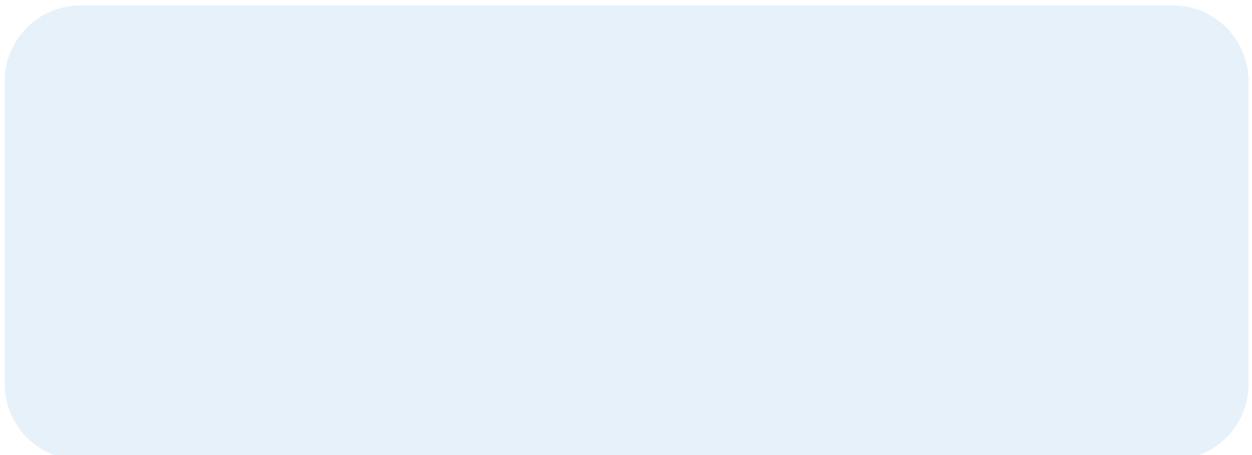


**2. TO *SAFE AND HEALTHY* ENVIRONMENTS**

Children have the right to play in settings free from all forms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), hazing, violence, and neglect.

- They must be provided safe and inclusive playing facilities and equipment.
- While the physical nature of sports means all risks cannot be eliminated, programs should take precautions to protect youth from harm and dangerous situations.
- At all times, the best interests of the child should prevail.

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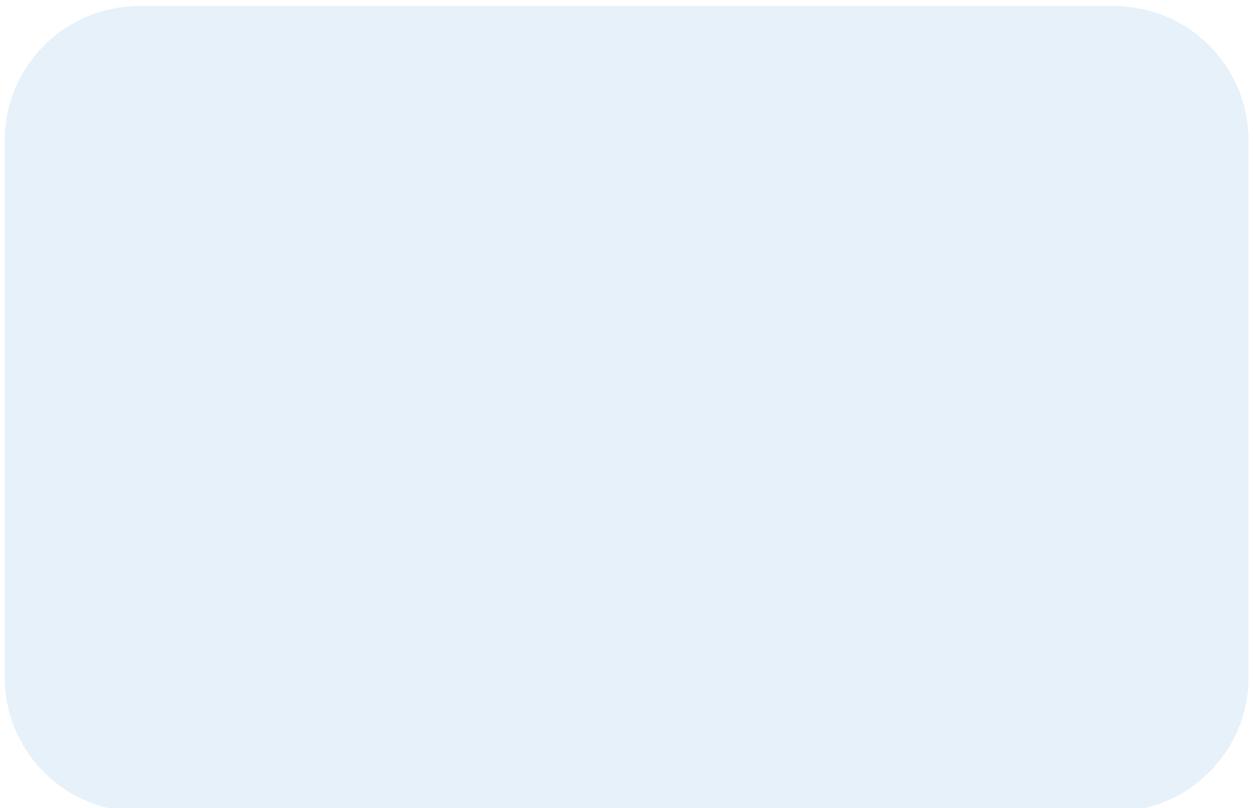


### 3. **TO QUALIFIED PROGRAM LEADERS**

Children have the right to play under the care of coaches and other adults who pass background checks.

- Coaches also should receive training in, at a minimum:
  - general concepts in coaching youth;
  - sport-specific coaching;
  - the emotional needs of children;
  - injury prevention;
  - CPR and First Aid;
  - and abuse prevention.
- Children and parents/caregivers deserve to know program policies and procedures in these areas.

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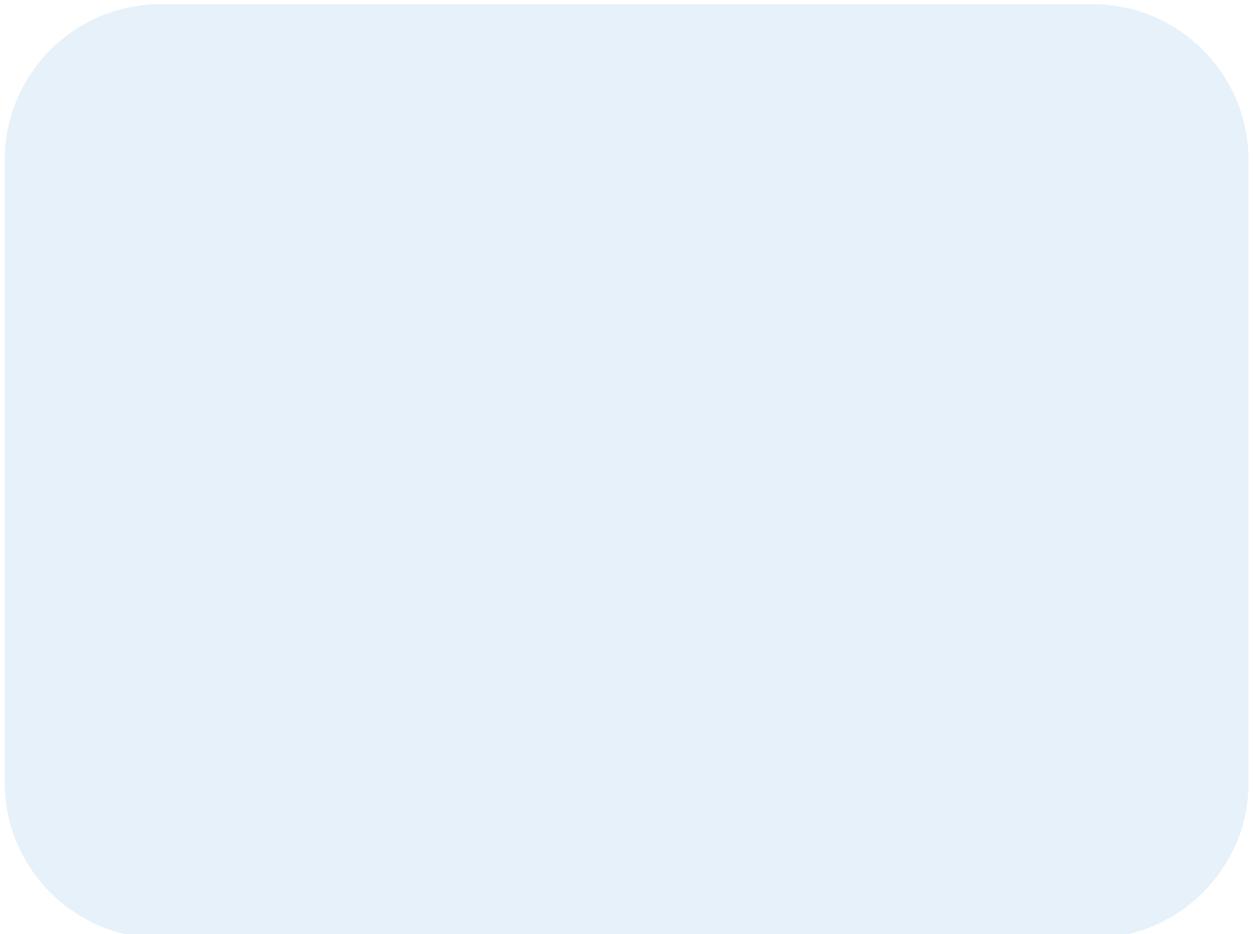


#### 4. **TO DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PLAY**

Children have the right to play at a level commensurate with their physical, mental, and emotional maturity, and their emerging athletic ability.

- Roster sizes, rules, and equipment should be adapted to those levels.
- They should not be subject to inappropriate pressure or exploitation.
- Reasonable efforts should be made to recruit and accommodate youth with disabilities.
- All children should be treated as young people first, athletes second.

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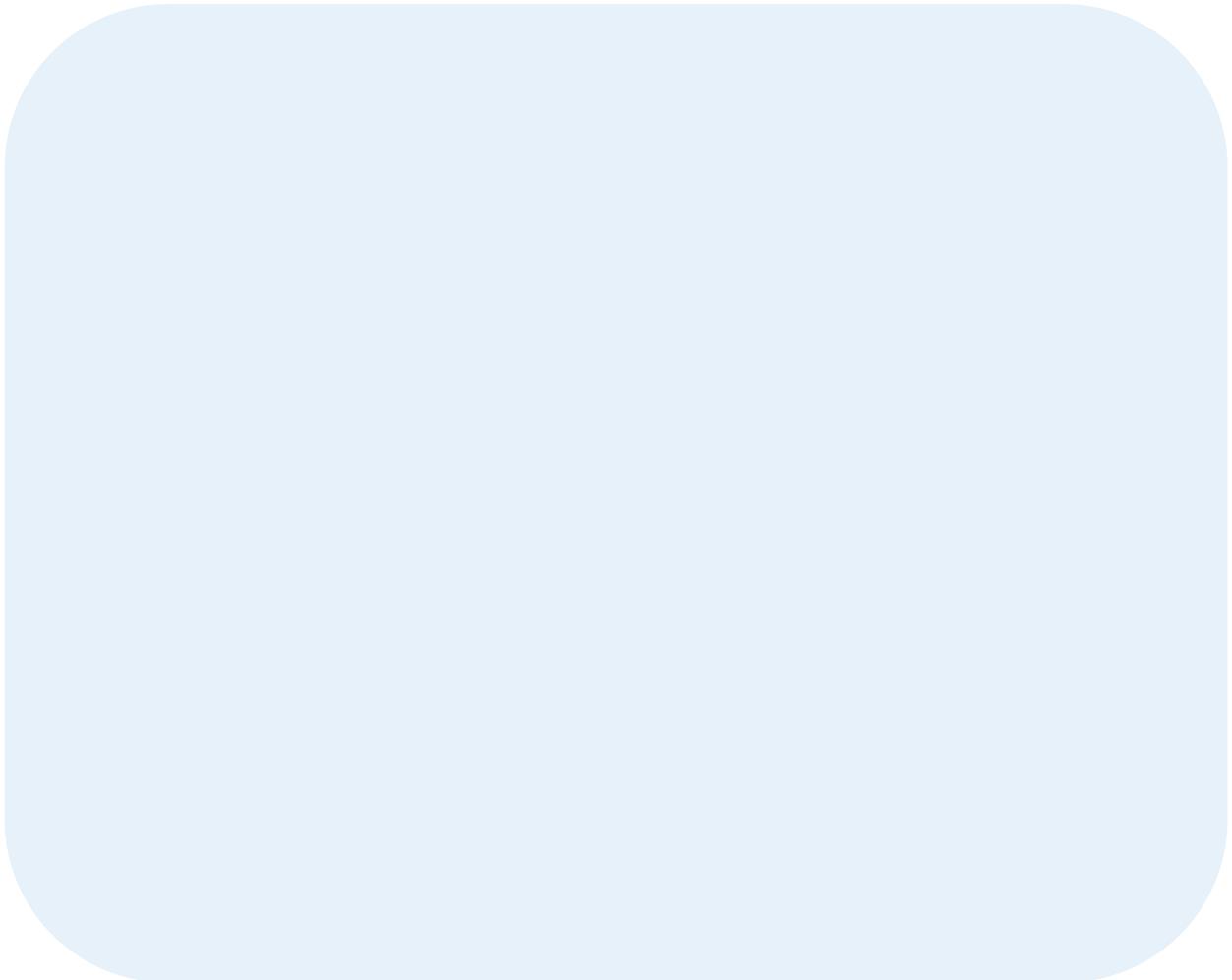


## 5. TO **SHARE** IN THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES

Children have the right to share their viewpoints with coaches and program administrators, and for their insights to be incorporated into activities.

- They have the right to identify sport options of their own interest and, especially with younger participants, consideration should be given to how much they want to train.
- Youth should be provided ample space for free play and to enjoy other sport, cultural and family activities.

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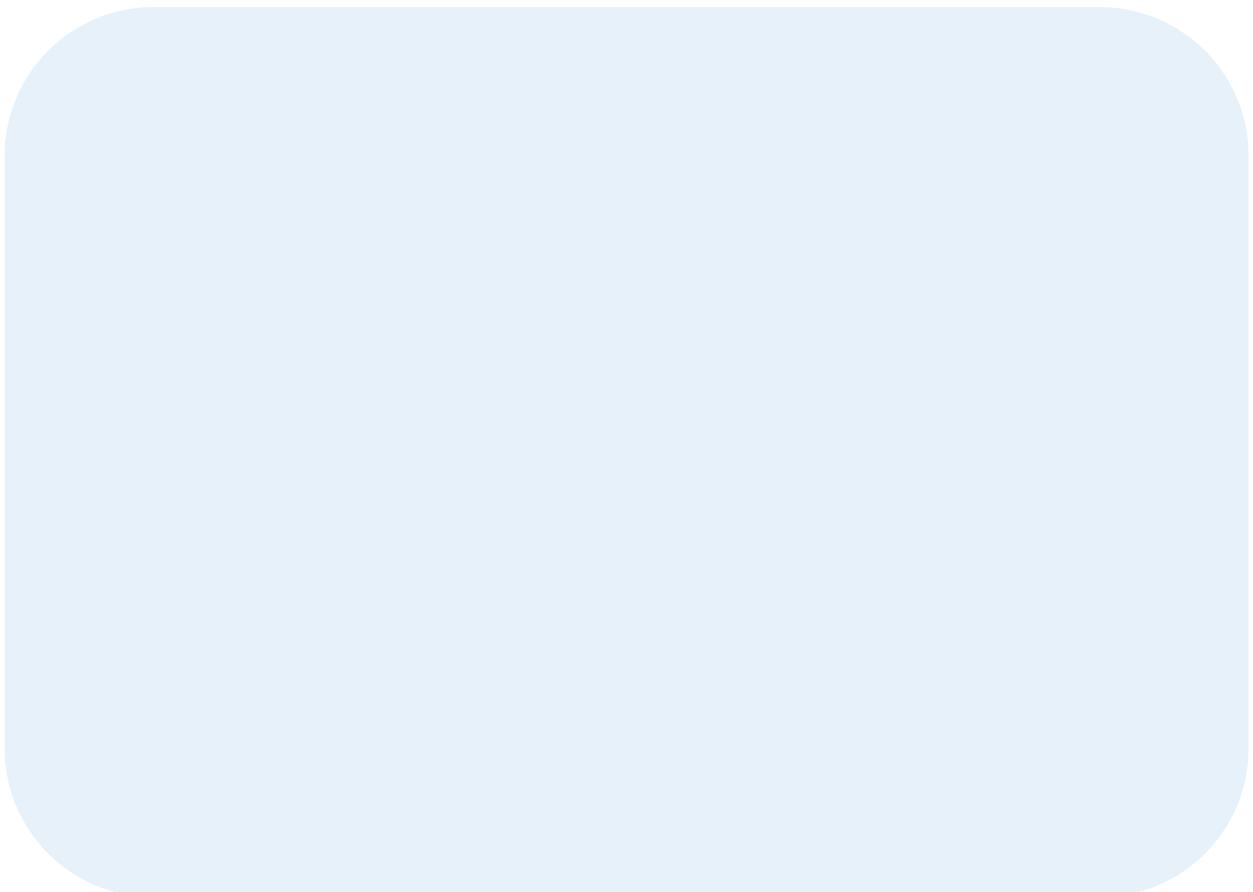


## 6. TO AN **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY** FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

Children have the right to have programs invest equally in them, free of discrimination based on any personal or family characteristic.

- Policies on minimum playing time in games should be established in recognition of the evolving capacities of youth, with a bias, especially at the younger ages, toward roughly equal playing time over the course of a season.
- Programs should create balanced teams where possible and be judicious in creating competition formats that favor early bloomers to the exclusion of others.

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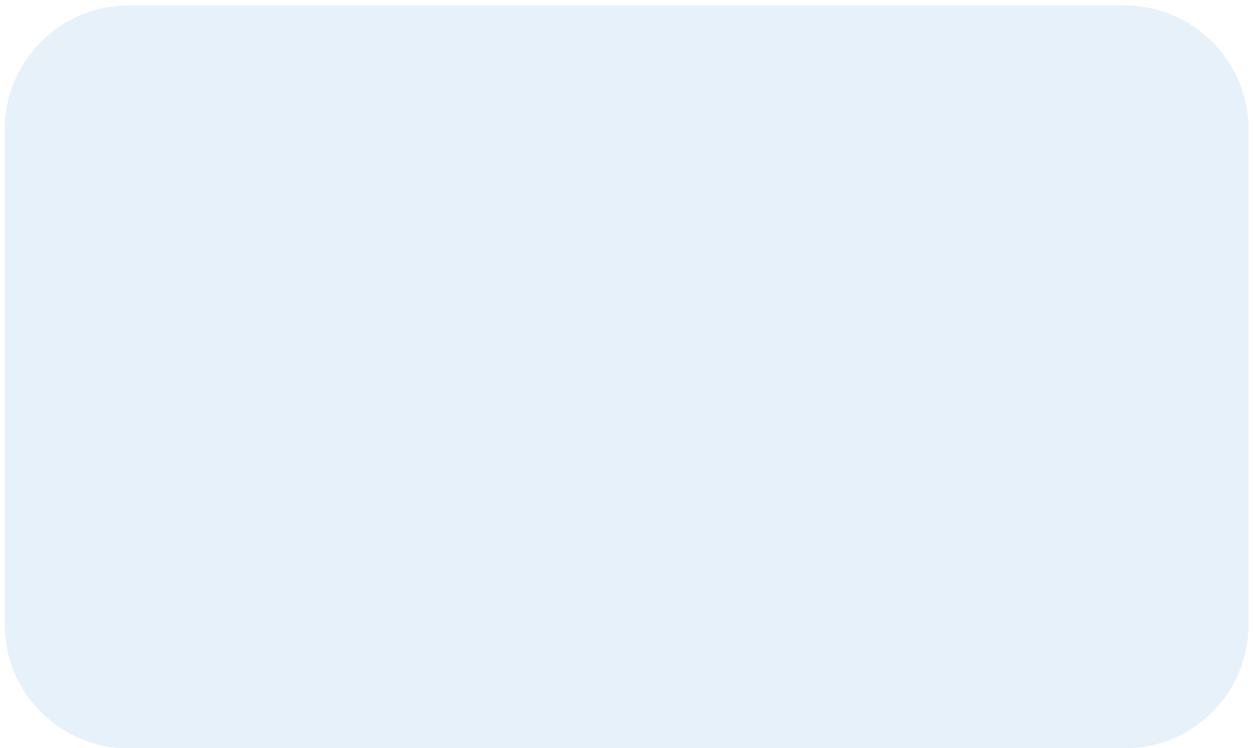


**7. TO BE TREATED WITH *DIGNITY***

Children have the right to participate in environments that promote the values of sportsmanship, of respect for opponents, officials, and the game.

- They have the right to make mistakes and fail without fear.
- Policies should be established and enforced to prevent bullying behavior by coaches, parents, spectators, and teammates. Education on these matters should be provided to them, in a variety of formats and languages.

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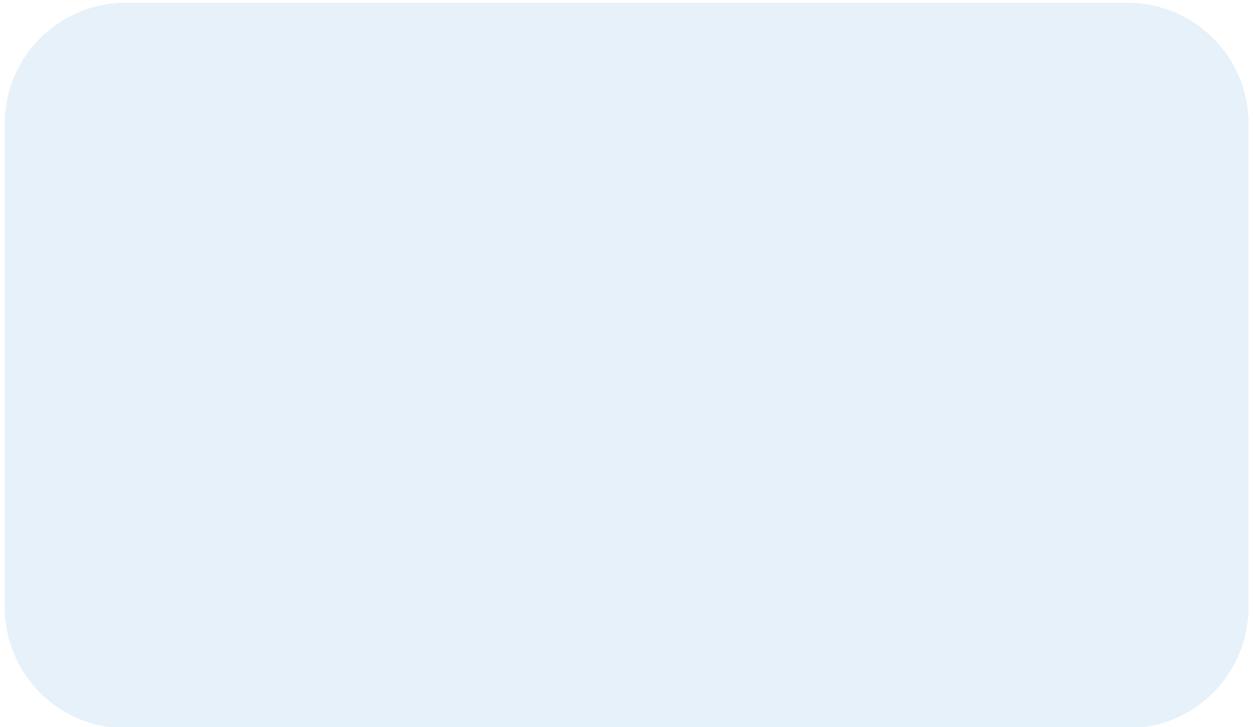
**8. TO *ENJOY THEMSELVES***

Children have the right to participate in activities they consider fun and which foster the development of friendships, the prime motivations for many to participate.



- Coaches and administrators should create the conditions to help them find comfort and happiness, and which in turn can facilitate a love of sport, self-learning, mastery, and sustained engagement.

**Here's how we honor this right:**



**With the rights of youth as a foundation, we can  
build a better house for all of sports.**

**LEARN MORE:  
[AS.PN/CHILDRENSRIGHTS](https://as.pn/childrensrights)**