

Laramie Youth Football (LYF)

Laramie Youth Football Grit & Grind Player Handbook

Player & Parent Handbook

Player Name: _____

Coaching Staff - One Town One Team

(Insert current LYF coaches by grade/team)



LYF Program Philosophy

Commitment to the Team

Our program is built on the belief that the **team is bigger than any one player**. Football is the ultimate team sport. Success requires unselfishness, trust, and accountability.

“A team is not a group of people who play together. A team is a group of people who trust each other.”

Players are expected to put the team first in attitude, effort, and actions.

Team Attitude

We are committed to competing and improving every day. While winning matters, **success is not measured by wins alone**. We evaluate ourselves on:

- Effort
- Growth
- Toughness
- Coachability

We never quit, and we are always looking for ways to get better.

Believe in the System

- Commit to the LYF philosophy and style of play
 - Be a sponge—listen, learn, and apply
 - Learn your role, accept your role, and perform it to the best of your ability
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Believe in Yourself

- Play with confidence
 - Think positive
 - Learn from mistakes and move on
 - Lead by example through effort and attitude
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Believe in Your Teammates

- Communicate clearly and positively
- Encourage and support one another
- Respect differences and build unity

Great teams are unified. Teams without unity fall apart under pressure.

Believe in Your Coaches

Your coaches are here to help you grow as both a **player and a young man/young woman**.

- Ask questions
- Accept feedback
- Do not whine or complain

Trust that coaches are making decisions in the best interest of the team.

Standards & Expectations

Mental Toughness

- Compete every snap
- Play hard in difficult situations
- Control emotions and body language

Academics Matter

Student-athletes are students first.

- Give your best effort in the classroom
- Communicate with teachers if problems arise

Class & Character

- Treat teachers, officials, opponents, and teammates with respect
- Represent LYF with pride
- Who you are as a person matters more than who you are as a football player

Being Coachable

- Great players eagerly accept coaching
- Good players accept coaching
- Average players resist coaching

Which one are you choosing to be?

Hard Work

Our program believes that **hard work pays off**.

- We will outwork our opponents
- We prepare physically and mentally
- We do the little things right

Football IQ

Smart players make great teams.

- Listen when coaches are speaking
- Watch, learn, and apply
- Make good decisions on and off the field
- Play with poise

Player Commitments

Be On Time

Be on time for:

- Practices
- Games
- Meetings
- Team events

Being late shows disrespect to the team.

Be at Practice

- Practices are mandatory unless excused for illness or family emergency
- Players must notify coaches **before** practice if absent
- Injured players are still expected to attend practice unless excused

Rest & Nutrition

- Get adequate sleep
- Eat nutritious foods
- Limit junk food, soda, and candy—especially on game days

Dress & Appearance

- Dress appropriately for weather conditions
- No clothing meant to draw negative attention

You represent LYF at all times.

Sportsmanship & Self-Control

- Respect officials, opponents, and teammates
- High fives, fist bumps are required all the time for all teams
- No taunting, trash talk, or unsportsmanlike conduct
- Penalties for poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated and may result in reduced playing time

Facilities

- Take pride in our fields, locker rooms, and equipment
- Leave opponent facilities better than we found them

Playing Time & Communication

At Laramie Youth Football, every player who attends practice and shows up for games gets to play. Playing time is about effort, attendance, and participation, not competition for roster spots.

- Coaches will focus on ensuring all players are involved and developing skills during games.
- Players are encouraged to talk with coaches directly first, fostering communication and responsibility.

This structure helps develop confidence, teamwork, and accountability while keeping the focus on learning, growth, and fun.

LYF Player Attitude Standards

1. Compete—no excuses
2. Play through officiating calls
3. Sprint on and off the field
4. Hustle to huddles and sidelines
5. No profanity
6. No poor body language
7. Never quit on a play
8. Support teammates at all times
9. Be accountable
10. Be humble in victory and respectful in defeat

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Athlete Signature: _____

Date: _____

Hold the Rope

Being part of LYF means committing to your teammates even when it's hard.

Imagine that you are hanging from the edge of a cliff with a drop of twenty thousand feet. The only thing between you and a fall to your death is a rope, with the person of your choice on the other end. Who do you know that has the guts to pull you to safety? Who will hold the rope? Who do you know that is going to let that rope burn their hand and not let go? How many people that you know are going to withstand the burning pain and watch the blood drip from their hands for you?

If you can name two people, that's not good enough, because those two people might not be around. The next time your team is together, look around and ask yourself, "Who could I trust to hold the rope? Who is going to let their hands bleed for me?" When you can look at every member on your team and say to yourself that they all would hold the rope, you are destined to win a lot of ball games. You see, the team that holds the rope when the going gets tough are winners. When you are down by four points with thirty seconds to go, don't give up. Yell at your teammates to "hold the rope -- let it burn but don't let go!"

Every year there are winners and losers in all sports. Every year the winners hold the rope. You don't have to have the best team on the field to win the game. If you play with poise and do what your coaches ask of you, and most of all -- hold the rope -- you will be successful. No matter what sport you play, in order to win, you have to have a commitment to your team. If you are supposed to run three times per week, do it. If you have to lift weights three times per week, don't miss. Once you start letting up at practice or start missing your workouts, you've killed the team because you didn't hold the rope! Don't let your team down! You've got to hold the rope!

When adversity hits, ask yourself:

- Can my teammates trust me?
- Will I hold the rope when it burns?

Teams that hold the rope together win—not just games, but life lessons.

Football Toughness – What It Really Means

The word *toughness* is used a lot in football. Too often, it gets confused with trash talk, chest pounding, or trying to intimidate an opponent. That is **fake toughness**. Real toughness shows up snap after snap, when no one is watching, and when the game gets hard.

Toughness is a skill. It can be learned, trained, and improved. It has nothing to do with size, strength, or how loud you are. Tough players make the game harder for their opponent and easier for their teammates.

Here is what **real football toughness** looks like:

Do Your Job

Tough players execute their assignment every play. They don't freelance. They trust the system and trust their teammates to do the same.

Play With Effort Every Snap

Tough players sprint off the ball, pursue until the whistle, and finish plays. Jogging, loafing, or assuming someone else will make the play is not toughness.

Block With Purpose

Blocking is toughness. Finishing blocks, staying engaged, and working your feet to stay between your man and the ball makes you tough—whether you ever touch the football or not.

Tackle the Right Way

Tough defenders don't throw their bodies around out of control. They break down, keep their head up, wrap up, and drive their feet. Technique plus effort is toughness.

Communicate

Tough players talk. They call out alignments, shifts, motions, and adjustments. Silence creates confusion. Communication creates confidence.

Play Through Mistakes

Everyone makes mistakes. Tough players respond the right way. No hanging heads. No blaming teammates. Fix it and play the next snap.

Get to the Ball

Loose balls, tipped passes, broken plays—tough players react first. The first player to the football usually wins.

Be Physically and Mentally Ready

Tough players are in a stance, locked in, and alert before the snap. They don't need to be reminded to focus.

Finish

Tough players finish runs, finish blocks, finish tackles, and finish games. The whistle doesn't mean stop—it means the job is done.

Be Coachable

Tough players accept coaching without excuses. They want to be challenged. They understand correction is part of getting better.

Put the Team First

Tough players celebrate teammates, pick each other up, and hold each other accountable. They care more about *we* than *me*.

Control Body Language

Tough players project confidence. No eye rolling, no slumped shoulders, no complaining to officials. Your body language affects the entire team.

Be Hard to Play Against and Easy to Play With

That is the ultimate definition of toughness.

Final Thoughts

“We don't have to be superstars or champions. We just have to give our best effort and make those around us better.”

Success is knowing you gave everything you had to become the best version of yourself.