



# PLAY RESPONSIBLY

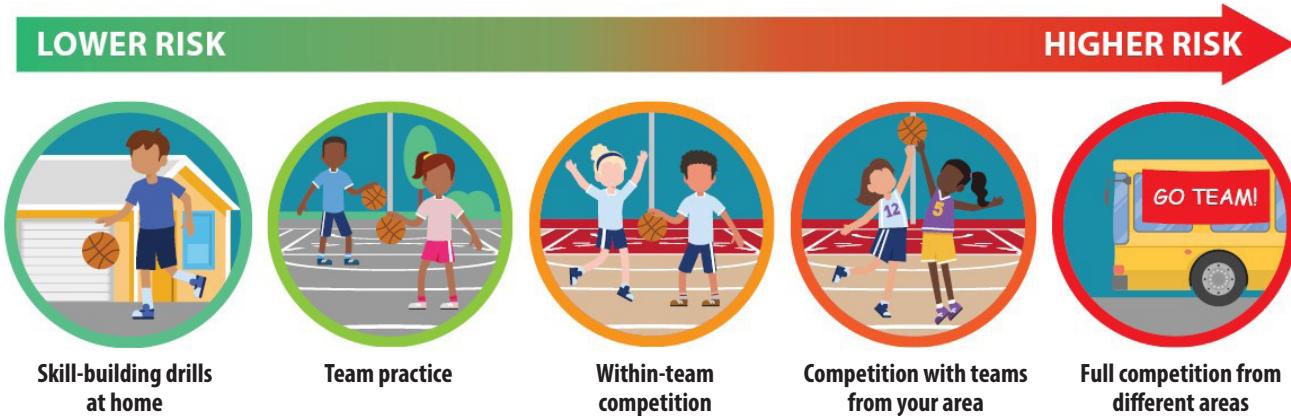
## Youth Winter Sports 2020 COVID-19 Guidance

Sports that require close interaction, are played indoors, and share equipment may pose a greater risk for COVID-19 infection or transmission. The virus spreads mainly from person-to-person among other ways. The closer the physical interaction, the more sharing of equipment there is by multiple players, and the longer the interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.

To determine which sports are safer to play during the COVID-19 pandemic, consider the following:

- Physical closeness of players during play
- Amount of necessary touching of shared equipment and gear
- Ability to engage in social distancing while not actively engaged in play, such as when on the bench or sideline
- Age of the player and their ability to comply with social distancing and other protective actions
- Size of the team and field of play
- Presence of nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers during practices or games
- Travel required outside of the local community

Sports that require frequent closeness or contact between players may make it more difficult to maintain social distancing and therefore may present increased risk for COVID-19 spread.





**PRACTICING SKILLS ON YOUR OWN OR WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD ONLY IS A LOWER-RISK ACTIVITY.**



**REMEMBER TO BRING SUPPLIES WITH YOU, SUCH AS HAND SANITIZER, MASKS, AND WATER BOTTLES.**

## ASSESSING RISK

You can take a number of steps to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and reduce the spread while playing sports.

- **Lowest Risk:** Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with members of the same household
- **Increasing Risk:** Team-based practice
- **More Risk:** Within-team competition (e.g. scrimmages)
- **Higher Risk:** Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area (e.g., city or county)
- **Highest Risk:** Full competition between teams from different geographic areas (e.g., outside region or state)

If organizations are not able to keep safety measures in place during competition, they may consider limiting participation to within-team competition only (for example, scrimmages between members of the same team) or team-based practices only.

Similarly, if organizations are unable to put in place safety measures during team-based activities, they may choose individual or at-home activities, especially if any members of the team are at an increased risk for severe illness.

## PREPARE BEFORE YOU PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS

- Bring supplies to help you and others stay healthy—for example, masks (bring extra), hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, and drinking water.
- Prioritize participating in outdoor activities over indoor activities (when feasible) and stay within your local area as much as possible.
  - If using an indoor facility, allow previous groups to leave the facility before entering with your team. If possible, allow time for cleaning and/or disinfecting.
- Check the league's COVID-19 prevention practices before you go to make sure they have steps in place to prevent the spread of the virus.
- If you are at an increased risk for severe illness or have existing health conditions, take extra precautions and preventive actions during the activity or choose individual or at-home activities.

## TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

### Stay home if sick

- If the participants or staff [have symptoms of COVID-19](#), have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for COVID-19 test results, or may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, they should stay home and not participate in any sporting events.

### Consider smaller team sizes

- Sports with a large number of players on a team may increase the likelihood of spread compared to sports with fewer team members.
- Teams may consider limiting participants, by restricting non-team players from joining when your team is short players and not adding new members during the season.

### Reduce physical closeness between players when possible

- Maintain at least 6 feet between teammates, sports staff, other competitors, and officials while actively participating in the sport.
- Focus on building individual skills conditioning, and strength training.
- Avoid high fives, handshakes, fist bumps or hugs.
- Keep space between players in the practice areas, including on the sideline or bench.
- Wait in car or away from the playing area until just before the warm-up period or the beginning of the game.
- Avoid congregating in the parking lot or near the sporting facility before or after games.
  - If it is not possible to avoid congregating, practice social distancing by ensuring there is at least 6 feet between participants.
  - Wear a [mask](#) whenever possible to reduce risk of virus transmission.
- Limit close or full contact (such as checking or guarding) to competitions or game-like situations (such as scrimmages) or limit the number of participants involved in close or full contact situations.
- For indoor sports, teams may limit the number of players or athletes in the facility at one time so they can space out by at least 6 feet, or conduct modified practices outdoors.

### Space out spectators by 6 feet

- Limit non-essential visitors, spectators, and volunteers at practices or events. Ensure they wear masks and [maintain social distancing](#) if in attendance.

### Wear a mask if possible

- Wear a [mask if feasible](#), especially when it is difficult to stay less than 6 feet apart from other people or indoors, for example in close contact sports such as basketball.
- **Lower intensity sports:** Encourage wearing masks and practicing social distancing for lower intensity sports.
- **Higher intensity sports:** People who are engaged in high intensity activities, like running, may not be able to wear a mask if it causes difficulty breathing.
  - If unable to wear a mask, consider conducting the activity in a location with greater ventilation and air exchange (for instance, outdoors versus indoors) and where it is possible to maintain physical distance from others.
- In situations where individuals might raise their voices, such as shouting or chanting, we strongly encourage wearing masks.
- Parents, coaches, and sports administrators should decide if the kids need to wear a mask.
  - It is not known if [face shields](#) provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for masks.

### **Minimize sharing of equipment or gear**

- Encourage players to bring their own equipment, if possible. (e.g., balls)
- Limit the use of frequently touched surfaces within the sports complex or on play surfaces.
- Bring your own water to minimize use and touching of drinking fountains.
- Clean and disinfect shared items between uses.
- Don't share towels, clothing, or any items used to wipe your face or hands.
- Avoid sharing food, drink containers (e.g., coolers), and utensils.

### **Minimize spitting and cover your coughs and sneezes**

- When coughing or sneezing, use a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Used tissues should be thrown away and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used.

### **Wash hands**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol.
  - Before and after you play.
  - Before adjusting your mask—review information about [proper use, removal](#), and [washing of masks](#).

### **Consider limiting travel outside of your area**

- Consider competing against teams that are within your local area (community, county, or neighboring counties).
- Leagues may also consider decreasing the number of competitions during the season.



**LIMIT CLOSE CONTACT BETWEEN TEAM PLAYERS. ENCOURAGE THEM TO FOCUS ON BUILDING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS.**

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES**

- Send a welcome email, letter or call to parents or guardians and/or players to inform them about actions that the sports program will take to protect players. Remind them to stay home if sick or if they have been around someone who is sick.
- Be a role model. Wear a mask and encourage family members, fans, officials, and sports staff to wear one during practices and games.
- Provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to players before and after practice/game and encourage them to wash their hands with soap and water.
- Educate players about covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow. Discourage spitting.

- Remind players about social distancing and identify markers (such as signage or tape on floor).
- Encourage your players to focus on building their individual skills and cardiovascular conditioning, so they can limit close contact with other players.
- Check with your sports administrator to make sure they are following cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on field, court, or play surface (such as drinking fountains) at least daily or between use.
  - Clean and disinfect shared equipment.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[IHSAA Basketball COVID-19 Guidance](#)  
[IHSAA Wrestling COVID-19 Guidance](#)  
[IHSAA Swimming COVID-19 Guidance](#)  
[IHSAA Bowling COVID-19 Guidance](#)  
[Keep Youth Athletes Safe Poster](#)  
[Checklist for Coaches](#)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Considerations for Youth Sports](#)  
[Youth Sports Program FAQs](#)



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