

Thank you so much for your interest in Upward Sports! Below are some of the most frequently asked questions we receive every season.

**1. Can my child be on the same team as another child?**

- a. We cannot guarantee that children will be placed on the same team unless they are siblings/live in the same household and are in the same league division.

**2. Can my child be on a team with a specific coach?**

- a. The only coach requests we honor are for coaches who are the parent/guardian of a child.
- b. Coaches do not make their own teams, the league director and the basketball commissioner create the teams.

**3. What are evaluations? Do I have to attend every evaluation?**

- a. Evaluations are a pre-season event that serves multiple purposes to help your family be as prepared as possible for the upcoming season. **They are NECESSARY for participation in our program.**
  - i. For basketball players, we measure their basketball skills in several key areas - dribbling, shooting, and passing. With this information we use it to help form our basketball teams. Our goal is to make each team in our divisions as equally balanced as possible to create an equitable and fun play experience for all players. This is not a try-out, rather an opportunity for us to understand your child's basketball skill level and place them on a team that will be the best fit for them.
  - ii. For cheerleaders, we let them try on a sample uniform over their clothes to ensure that the correct size uniform is ordered for them. Oftentimes, cheer sizing works differently than standard clothing sizes.
  - iii. For all players:
    1. We ensure that the player's information is correct.
    2. We can take payments as necessary.
    3. We have a pre-season informational meeting that covers basic need-to-know information.
    4. Your family can ask questions about the program that you need answered.
    5. Your family gets to meet our team (and we get to meet you!)
    6. Your family gets to meet other families in the program.
    7. Your family gets to see our facility.

**4. Can my child(ren) all play on the same night/time?**

- a. We try our best to honor every family's busy schedules. When you register your child(ren), you can include a practice night exclusion of one night of the week that does not work for your family. Please be aware that, while we try our best, we are working with family schedules for an average of 175-250 children every season and so we cannot always guarantee the same night and same time.
  - i. There will be a team in each division that practices each night, but there is no guarantee that every division will have a team practicing at each time. Typically we try to schedule teams for our younger divisions in the 6 PM time slot as much as possible and teams for our older divisions in the 7 PM time slot as much as possible. There are exceptions to this

#### **5. When are practices?**

- a. Practices begin the week of Tuesday, January 7, 2025 and will be Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings from 6-8 PM and conclude the week
- b. Your child's team will be assigned one, 1-hour practice each week and this will be announced on December 5, 2024.
- c. Most practice times will have four simultaneous basketball practices with the gym split into four sections. Court 1 is the closest to the gym entrance.

Court 4 (Diagonally opposite from the gym entrance)	Court 3 (Straight back from the gym entrance)
Half-Court Line	
Court 2 (Straight to the left of the gym entrance)	Court 1 (Closest to Gym Entrance)

#### **6. What if the assigned practice date and/or time doesn't work for my family?**

- a. We will have a form that is available for you to put in a team change request that must be completed by December 12, 2024. We ask that you let us know what practice night won't work for your family when you register. And if you need to make changes to your practice night availability, we ask that you do this by November 15, 2024.

#### **7. Do you have financial assistance available?**

- a. We have very limited financial assistance funds available. For families who have participated in previous seasons, we have revised our financial assistance program to accommodate a greater number of families requesting financial assistance.

#### **8. When do games start?**

- a. Games start on Saturday, January 18, 2025. Game schedules will be announced in mid-December. Games will be played every Saturday through March 1, 2025. A make-up game day has been tentatively scheduled for March 8, 2025 in case we need to cancel any game days throughout the season.

**9. What time will my child(ren)'s games be?**

- a. Depending on league sizes, basketball players' games will be the same time or the same two times every single week. Typically we try to schedule older divisions earlier in the day and our youngest division at the end of the day. This allows us to be a bit more gracious and flexible with our younger players without getting behind on our schedule
- b. For cheer teams, their game time will change every week. We do this to ensure that every basketball team will get to experience a cheer team cheering for them at least once throughout the season.
- c. We play two games at the same time, with the gym split at the half-court line.
  - i. Back-Court - The side of the gym furthest away from the gym entrance.
  - ii. Front-Court - The side of the gym closest to the gym entrance.

Cheer Sidelines, Referee/Staff Seating, and Scorekeeper Table	Back Court (Furthest from the gym entrance)	Stage
	Half-court line (Where player seats will be)	
	Front Court (Closest to the gym entrance)	

**10. What does game day look like?**

- a. Expect your child's game day experience to last about an hour and a half with total game time around 50 minutes to 1 hour.
- b. Pre-Game
  - i. Before the game, your child's team will meet in a pre-assigned warm-up room. Families and coaches are encouraged to arrive 15-20 minutes before their team's assigned game time.
  - ii. Teams will not return to these rooms, so any personal belongings must be taken with players/their families when leaving the room.
  - iii. Around 10 minutes before the game, teams will be lined up in the hallway behind the gym.
- c. Game Time

- i. At the start of each game, we will announce each team - team name, player names, and coach names. Spectators are strongly encouraged to cheer loudly, proudly, and kindly for every team, including teams that they do not have children on, to help set the tone for a positive and exciting game day experience for each child.
  - ii. Teams will get their starting players together and give each a wristband. Our basketball games are man-to-man defense only based on skill and height.
  - iii. Once starting players are assigned, every player and coach will meet in the center court of their assigned side for a prayer led by one of our referees.
  - iv. Games are composed of 6, 6-minute periods with a running clock.
  - v. After 3 periods, we will pause for half-time. During Half-time we'll have:
    - 1. A cheer performance (if there is a cheer squad during this game)
    - 2. A half-time devotion
  - vi. After half-time, we'll play our remaining 3 periods.
- d. Post-Game
- i. After the game, teams will line up for high fives.
  - ii. After the lineup, teams will exit to the Fellowship Hall for a post-game mini-celebration where their coaches will recognize them with color-coded star stickers that they can put on their posters (basketball) or their megaphone (cheer). Expect this to take 15-20 minutes after the game.

If you still have questions after reading the list above, please contact Pastor Bri at [upward@firstbaptisttopeka.org](mailto:upward@firstbaptisttopeka.org) or (785)267-0380.