



# **A “HOW-TO”** **GUIDE FOR STARTING A** **LACROSSE PROGRAM IN YOUR** **COMMUNITY**

Lacrosse has approximately 1,800 girls and boys playing in the Greater Birmingham area (Hoover, Homewood, Alabaster/Helena, Oak Mountain, Vestavia, Trussville and Mountain Brook), Auburn and Huntsville. Lacrosse is about fun, good sportsmanship, honoring the game and developing well-rounded young athletes. We recently assembled a committee of seasoned lacrosse individuals, all with a different background in the sport. The goal of the committee was to put together a “road map” for new and developing communities to use to start and grow lacrosse within their communities. On the following pages, you will find the resources needed to begin to build a successful program, including contact information to help with questions and implementation.

## I. General Overview of Launching a Lacrosse Program

1. Create a Lacrosse Committee
  - a. Identify target group of potential, engaged, interested participants
    - Identify 2 or 3 key parents. Have an introductory meeting with them and a few others they recruit.
    - Assign a Point of Contact (POC), a “wagon puller” mom or dad. One for girls and one for boys.
2. Create a Recruiting Strategy
  - a. How to find, inform and communicate with girls and boys, Grades 1 thru 8 with focus on Grades 1 thru 3.
    - Parks and Recreation
    - Elementary Schools
      - Contact and educate PE Teachers
        - GBYLA can assist in personnel for trainings
        - USA Lacrosse PE Grant Opportunities for schools
        - Make it as easy as possible for the PE teachers to test lacrosse in their sessions
3. Secure regulation sized field space
  - One full sized field for boys 12U & 14U
  - Two small-sided fields (same field but turned sideways to accommodate two fields) for boys 8U & 10U and ALL girls.
4. Create a budget
5. Marketing
  - a. Lacrosse Day
    - Free Camp and or Clinic (Summer, Fall)

- Some equipment may be available through GBYLA
- b. Social Media promotion
    - Create a community lacrosse FB/IG site and promote and cross promote
  - c. Bring a friend to practice
    - During the Fall, the community will host some pre-season clinics. Host a “bring a friend” clinic where a friend will get to try lacrosse and go through a series of “learning” stations with player. The team (players and coaches) will demonstrate the basic skills and play of the game. The friends will be given an opportunity to perform these skills with their player friend. Total time should be no more than 1 hour and 30 minutes. The purpose is to introduce the sport, not only to potential new players, but specifically to the friends of current players.
    - Announce 2 dates (in order to accommodate as many as possible).
  - d. Coach to hand out registration information to player/parent and take picture of friend and player and post on IG/FB. Have items for raffle at end.
  - e. If friend registers, could give player and friend a discount, funded by community.
6. Host a parent/player interest meeting w/GBYLA & community leadership, ideally in mid-Fall.
  7. Identify Coaches
  8. Order Equipment
    - a. Boys: Stick, Helmet, Shoulder Pads, Elbow Pads, Gloves, Mouthpiece
    - b. Girls: Stick, Goggles, Mouthpiece
    - c. Goalie: Add throat protector & chest protector
      - Consider applying for USA Lacrosse Equipment

## Grant

9. Other equipment needed
  - a. Goals, nets, uniforms, practice pennies, balls, cones, horn, scorebook, clock, field paint.
10. Identify other grant possibilities through USA Lacrosse and other possible sources.

## II. Greater Birmingham Youth Lacrosse Association

Greater Birmingham Youth Lacrosse Association (GBYLA) oversees league play during the Spring of each year as well as an abbreviated Fall session for new players. GBYLA is a not-for profit organization that has 1 paid employee, Susie Margotta. Susie is Operations Director for the GBYLA and is the primary POC for all lacrosse related questions regarding participation in the GBYLA.

Planned for the Fall, GBYLA will offer co-ed mini sticks sessions, non-contact, K thru 3rd and 4th thru 8th, for 3 Sundays in October. New players only. Players K – 3 will be provided with a stick. Players 4th–8th will need to provide their own stick.

The Spring Season is the main season for the GBYLA running mid-January through late April for all youth teams and early January through mid-May for Varsity teams and is when league games are played. Below is an overview of what it costs in Spring 2023 to play with the GBYLA. Rates depend on age level. Varsity and Junior Varsity are a flat team fee. Youth (14U,12U,10U,8U) are a per player fee. Every registrant is required to be a current member of USA Lacrosse for a \$35 annual fee (includes a monthly magazine and secondary insurance).

GBYLA Varsity Team Fee:                 \$3,000 (JV is  
\$1,675)

GBYLA Youth per Player fee:         Approximately  
\$125.00 + a Community Add On fee. All community  
lacrosse programs have local field fees and other  
lacrosse related costs associated with participating in  
the Spring Season (Goals, Nets, Field Paint,  
Marketing etc). The Community Add On Fee helps  
cover those costs.

The team and per player fees paid to GBYLA include:

- Game Referees
- Athletic Trainer (Varsity and JV only)
  
- Registration
- Operations
- Scheduling
- Year End Jamboree
- Championship (Varsity)
- All Star Showcase (Varsity)

### **III.    CAMP CURRICULUM**

Below is a template to use when hosting a clinic/camp. The clinic,  
especially for younger age groups, should last no more than 2 hours. If  
during summer, it is best to host in late afternoon when it is cooler and  
the parent(s) are home from work and can provide transport.

Sample waiver forms are included at the end of this document.

There are 6 required skills to teach. All of the below games/drills are  
available, in detail, on the USA Lacrosse mobile app(on the play store or  
apple store as USAL Mobile Coach).

1. **Cradle**-Moving the stick back and forth (cradling) in order to help keep the ball in the stick.
  - a. Cradling Station: Create an obstacle course using cones, agility ladders, and/or small hurdles. Guide players through proper cradling techniques to maintain control of the ball while navigating the course.
  - b. Sharks & Minnows: (cradling while running). Use pennies. All in 1 group. Without stick. Then w/ stick but no ball. Then w/ stick and ball. Teaches movement, timing, spacing.
  - c. Thunderdome (cradling, designated area)(pinnie tag). Establish a large square and all are in it with a penni. Last person with a penni wins. Teaches movement, footwork, “shoulder-shoulder-stick”. Relay races (cradling while running, around cone and back).

## 2. **Passing/Catching**

- a. Have one Need one. All in a large group. Only every 3<sup>rd</sup> person (or so) has a ball. If you have a ball, you say “have one” and if you need a ball, you say “need one.”
- b. Ultimate with a tennis ball. Play the game of ultimate, but use a tennis ball. Teaches movement without the ball, hand/eye coordination, spacing, defense.
- c. Pass it Down the Line. Form a zig zag line and each player catches and then passes until it gets to the person at end who then shoots the ball into a goal. Teaches passing, catching, cradling and shooting.

## 3. **Ground Balls**

- a. Hamster. 3 players lined up in a straight line, about 15 yards apart from each other. Player in the middle has the ball and throws it to the outside player, who throws it back to them and they catch and turn and then throw it to the other

outside player. You use the 2 players not in the middle as “human backboards”. Teaches passing, catching, cradling, movement with the ball.

- b. Hungry Hippo: Put a bunch of balls in between 2 teams. On whistle, teams run out to pick up groundball and return it to homebase (shoot/throw into own goal). Team with the most balls in their own net “wins”. Teaches running, ground balls, cradling and shooting.
- c. Relay Race: Run out, pick up GB, run it back, touch teammate stick, then put ball back out and run back. Teaches running, ground balls and cradling.
- d. Musical Ground Balls: 6 players 5 balls; 5 players 4 balls etc.

#### **4. Dodging**

- a. Cross the pond. Need to go to the USAL Mobile Coach for a good description of this drill as well as for other dodging drills/games.

#### **5. Individual Defense**

- a. Cat, Grandpa, Mouse (grandpa protects the mouse). Need to go to the USAL Mobile Coach for a good description of this drill as well as for other good dodging drills/games.
- b.

#### **6. Shooting**

- a. Set up a goal with target zones marked by colored tape or removable stickers.
  - i. Teach different shooting techniques, including standing shots, running shots, and bounce shots. Encourage players to aim for specific target zones.

#### **7. Skill-Based Contests**

- a. Fastest Shot Contest: Set up a radar gun or speed-tracking device near the goal. Have participants line up and take turns shooting at the goal, with their speed recorded by a volunteer. Track and announce the top three fastest shots

for each age group.

- b. Most Accurate Shot Contest: Use the shooting station's goal with target zones marked by colored tape or removable stickers. Assign point values to each target zone, with higher points for more challenging targets. Allow each participant to take a set number of shots, tallying their points after each attempt. Determine and announce the winners for each age group based on their total points.
  
- c. Closest to the Bucket Challenge: Place a bucket or container at a designated distance from a starting line. Instruct participants to stand at the starting line and attempt to toss a lacrosse ball as close to the bucket as possible. Measure the distance between the ball and the bucket for each player. Award the winners in each age group based on the shortest distance from the bucket.

#### **IV. Media Strategy Plan**

Currently, the following exists in the arena of girls' lacrosse media in Alabama:

- GBYLA Facebook page – 1,300 likes and 1,400 followers. About 1 post per week – big games, college signings, events, sponsor recognition, etc. Mostly followed by parents, coaches, alumni.
- GBYLA Instagram – 1,000 followers. Posts identical to Facebook (common). Not a lot of engagement – reposts, hashtags, likes, etc, which means it doesn't show up on a lot of folks' feeds.

Recruit, retain and build a sustainable pipeline of players within each participating community using common Social Media platforms (Facebook and Instagram).

- Each community should utilize two identities on each platform – one for girls and one for boys. They should be completely vertical from 8U to High School Varsity. This will consolidate followers



and put more eyes on the breadth and vibrancy of the local lacrosse community.

- The content of these sites should treat HS and youth with same level of significance, cementing the vision of a true pipeline of players progressing through a unified program.
- The content should include:  
“billboards” for big games:

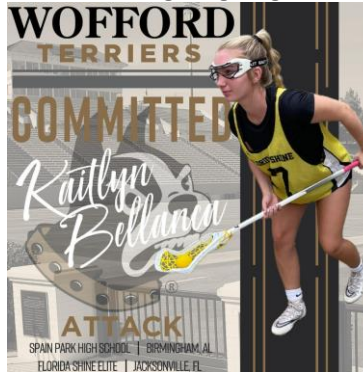
Action Shots:



Multi-age images:

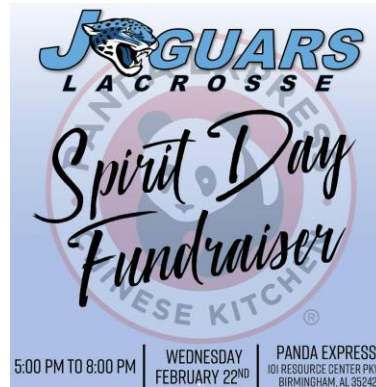


College Signings:



Fun Posts:

Announcements:



- High school girls in established communities can help run an event or a practice or top hand out flyers at carpool etc.
- Creation of a local flyer. The actors in this effort should be High School students/players, if your community has a high school lacrosse program. They are the ones who know how to use all the features and effects that will generate more engagement within the community. There should also be a parent volunteer to coordinate/approve of content.
- The key is to tie the high school players to engage with the younger aged groups. Here are some ideas:
  - 1) Give 3-4 Junior or Senior girls access to the Instagram account and incentivize them to produce content.
  - 2) Have a calendar and a rhythm to postings. In the off-season showcase fun practices, countdown to registration, etc. Once the season starts, a billboard for every HS game, stop by and post a photo with youth teams 1x/week, billboard for all youth team home games, 2 reels each month.
  - 3) Develop hashtags that are memorable and have staying power.

This is a very basic outline that is meant to just provide communities with a starting point and suggestions for starting and continuing a vibrant social media strategy. Each community will need to hash out their own details and make it work within their community.

## V. LACROSSE U.

WHAT: A short 25 minute live ZOOM info session to give newcomers to lacrosse an opportunity to learn more about the sport, where and when it is played and a little bit about the rules. Shorter versions will also be offered via Instagram Live.

When: Dates will be announced. Will be offered to all parents and players(new and returning). The class will last approximately 25 minutes and will be divided into boys and girls (i.e. 1 will be for the boy's game and another will be for the girls' game). The class will be offered on 3 different dates in order to give each parent an opportunity to attend, based on their respective schedule.

1 class of each will be recorded and made available on the GBYLA website.

- I. Brief History of the Sport
- II. Where it is played
  - a. Locally
  - b. Regionally
  - c. Nationally
  - d. International
    - i. World Lacrosse
    - ii. World Games
    - iii. Olympics 2028 possibility
- III. GBYLA

- a. Who
- b. Role
  - i. Community Based
- IV. Divisions
  - a. 8,10,12,14,JV,V
    - i. By grade, with some exception
- V. Play of the Game
  - a. Girls
    - i. Youth = small field
    - ii. Varsity= full field
  - b. Boys
    - i. Youth(8,10)= small field
    - ii. Youth (12,14), JV and Varsity= full field
- VI. Play of the Game
  - a. Girls
    - i. Rules Review
  - b. Boys
    - i. Rules Review
- VII. Q & A

# SAMPLE

**“Name of Organization” YOUTH LACROSSE**

**DATE (ex: Fall 2023)**

## **WAIVER & RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

**For Clinic**

### **SIGNATURE IS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE**

In consideration for being allowed to participate in any and all competitive, clinic, and instructional play, traveling or local, during the Winter and Spring of \_\_YEAR\_\_, with the XYZ **Youth Lacrosse Club** (“Club” or “Association”) to include, but not be limited to the Association, it’s officers and directors and agents, the City of XYZ, all agents thereof, all parents and volunteers associated with the program, all coaches, assistants, referees and all other agents assisting with the program, formally or informally --- all of said individuals referred to herein as "**Releasees**"), in the City of XYZ or in any other location, inside or outside the State of Alabama, at practice or in competition play and/or play in and around completion, the undersigned acknowledges, understands, appreciates and agrees, for himself, herself, his or her heirs, assigns, and minor children, that:

1. The risk of injury from the activities involved in this program is significant, including the potential for catastrophic injury, permanent paralysis and death, as well as other damages and losses, associated with participation in a lacrosse event and related sports conditioning activities and while particular rules, equipment and discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious injury does exist; and,
2. I knowingly and freely assume ALL such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of the "Releasees" or others, and assume full responsibility for my minor child’s participation; and
3. I willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation. If however, I observe any unusual, significant hazards during my presence of my minor child’s participation, I will remove my minor child from participating and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately; and,

4. I as parent/guardian with legal responsibility for this participant, do consent and agree to RELEASE and HOLD HARMLESS the Releasees, with respect TO ANY AND ALL INJURY, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE; and,

5. For myself, my heirs, assigns, and next of kin, I release and agree to indemnify the Releasees from any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's involvement or participation in these programs as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THEIR NEGLIGENCE; and,

6. I agree to hold each of the Releasees harmless from and against any and all damages, costs, claims or demands, including reasonable attorneys' fees, made by any third party due to or arising from or relating to my intentional or negligent actions, omissions or conduct.

7. **Medical Attention:** I hereby give my consent to the City of XYZ Parks and Rec and/or the XYZ Youth Lacrosse Club, including its designated coaches, to provide, through a medical staff of its choice, customary medical/athletic training attention, transportation and emergency medical services as warranted in the course of my/our child's participation in **XYZ Youth Lacrosse Club's** sponsored or sanctioned events: and,

8. **Readiness to Compete:** I will only allow my/our child to participate in those competitions or activities in which I believe he/she is physically and psychologically prepared to participate. I/we understand that if my/our child is not physically and psychologically prepared to participate in practices, my/our child player is not cleared to play in games until note received by physician and approved by the coaches of XYZ.

9. **Refund Policy for Post-season Play:** I/We agree that should my/our child decide to quit the program at any time that refunds will be in accordance with XYZ patterns and practice on a case-by-case basis.

10. **United States Lacrosse:** By signature below, I affirm that my child is a member of United States Lacrosse and is covered by liability and medical insurance by virtue of his or her association with such entity.

11. **Payment:** I hereby agree to pay and/or reimburse all expenses related to my child's participation in post-season play with XYZ. I further agree to pay and/or reimburse any and all Releasees, for expenses incurred on behalf of my child, including but not limited to medical expenses, travel expenses, and any and all post-season expenses.

I understand that I shall be responsible for the understandings and agreements contained herein and hereby consent to all such terms and agreements knowingly and deliberately.

**PLEASE SIGN SEPARATE FORMS IF YOU HAVE MORE  
THAN ONE CHILD PARTICIPATING**

*AGREED:*

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

[PRINT]

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MEDICAL INSURANCE PROVIDER \_\_\_\_\_ POLICY NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE**

**Camp Waiver Template**

**XYZ GIRLS LACROSSE CAMP**

**Release, Waiver, Assumption of Risk, Hold Harmless Agreement and Medical Authorization**

<b>Athlete's Information (Preferred Name)</b>	
<b>Athlete Legal Name (First, Last)</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>Emergency Contact 1</b>	
<b>Name (please print)</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<b>Emergency Contact 2</b>	
<b>Name (please print)</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	

**PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY. THIS IS A LEGALLY BINDING DOCUMENT AND MUST BE COMPLETED FULLY AND SUBMITTED BEFORE ANY ATHLETE WILL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN AYLK VARSITY GIRLS LACROSSE CAMP. IT IS FURTHER WARRANTED THAT IF THIS CONSENT FORM IS SIGNED BY ONE OF TWO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS, IT IS WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE OTHER.**

I, (please print parent name) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant

permission for my child (print legal name) \_\_\_\_\_ to attend the XYZ Girls Lacrosse Camp at XYZ. In granting this permission, I hereby expressly waive my claim against XYZ, it's officers, coaches, support staff, and XYZ, including its employees and representatives, and release them from any and all liability in connection with this trip.

Furthermore, I assume full responsibility for any damage to persons or property caused either intentionally or due to the negligence of my child or ward. I further



expressly agree that in the event disciplinary action may be necessary, my child or ward may be forthwith returned home at my expense.

In case of injury or emergency to my child or ward, I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_, or another adult member of the support staff running the XYZ Girls Lacrosse Camp to act in the best interest of my child or ward. I further consent to and will be responsible for any medical or dental treatment that may be advisable at the discretion of any physician or dentist. I understand that I will be personally notified if it becomes necessary for my child or ward to be returned home and / or receive any type of medical / dental treatment.

Should treatment be necessary, medical insurance coverage for my child/ward is provided by:

<b>Medical Insurance Provider</b>			
<b>Policy #</b>		<b>Group #</b>	
<b>Dental Insurance Provider</b>			
<b>Policy #</b>		<b>Group #</b>	
<b>Know Medical / Allergy Issues to make staff aware</b>			

I have read this document and I understand and agree to all of its terms and conditions. I release, indemnify, and hold harmless XYZ, the coaches and support staff conducting this camp against any liability, actions, debts, claims, rights of action (including lawsuits) for any losses, injuries, or damages to my child or ward as a result of attendance at camp. I acknowledge that I sign this document freely and voluntarily, and that my signature provides a complete release of liability to the greatest extent allowed by law on behalf of myself, my child/ward, successors, heirs, representatives, administrators and assigns.

<b>Parent/Guardian Print</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	