

FALL 2025 YOUTH PROGRAM LEADER WORKSHOP

RECRUITING NEW PLAYERS, PARENTS, COACHES + OFFICIALS

A. What is Lacrosse?

- a. Importance of educating new families on origins and the game
 - i. Lacrosse 101 video: <https://vimeo.com/587938009>
 - ii. Native Origins video: <https://vimeo.com/708181870>

B. Growing youth participation: being inclusive (all abilities), lowering the barrier to entry.

- a. Introduce via the schools in your community: PE (and other resources) on other handout.
- b. Flex6 play (after school + intro programming): www.usalacrosse.com/flex6-lacrosse
- c. Intro/Try it (Pick Up & Play) clinic options
- d. [National Celebrate Lacrosse Week](#) – working with other programs in region (boys, etc)

C. Growing volunteers: Getting parents involved – early and often!

- a. Volunteer job descriptions – need defined roles that people can “see” themselves in.
- b. Breaking down larger roles.
- c. Recruiting individuals vs asking for “volunteers”

D. Growing coaches: Certification and resources available.

- a. Inclusivity, recruiting more female coaches.
- b. Importance of education/certification.
- c. Using HS players

E. Growing officials: Adult and junior – all are needed!

- a. Keys to success – identifying the ideal candidate (personality + fitness)
- b. <https://www.loa.org/season-ready-checklist>

Mercer Island Girls: How They Build It

Youth recruitment: Lyndsey Gillis and boys' side coaching director Ian O'Hearn have built relationships with each of the four elementary schools in their community; they're invited each year (Fall/Winter) to "guest teach" each PE class 1x (note that both are school district employees who have already been screened to be with kids).

- They send each kid home with a QR code that directs families to their websites
 - *Lyn's note:* Stickers/ bracelets work well
- Each side does summer camps in their community
- Lyndsey is a big supporter of multisport athletes and constantly looks to invite players out to try the sport during summer camps, fall ball program (1x per week clinic style / small-sided game play) and regular season
- They utilize the "non-member" event coverage to allow anyone to attend during the first two weeks of practices so that they can try it out prior to committing for the season.
- If funds permit, they offer a free stick giveaway to new K-2 players that come out to join them for the first time in the Spring.
- They use "A-frame" signs at strategic intersections in the community to advertise clinic/camp/season registration as well as HS games.
- They do a couple of "youth" nights each season inviting current youth players (and their friends or other prospects!) to attend a Varsity (HS) game. Youth get to come down to field after the game to meet the players – they bring candy and "silly cheap" giveaways for all in attendance.
- **The "youth adult coaches are typically a mix of college graduates and HS coaches in our program.**
 - We have youth practice for 1.5 hours prior to HS practices 2x per week, which allows folks to pull double duty.
- **Program Director creates 10-12 practice plans at the start of the season**, complete with live links to drills and videos so that greener coaches have resources to coach
 - *Lyn's note:* Don't forget to use [Mobile Coach](#) as a resource

Specifics by age/division:

K-2/8U

- Form teams of 10-12
- We separate Ks out for the season and have them scrimmage each other 1x per week in addition to practices. We typically have 8-14 Ks and they play 3v3 or 4v4 for their 'games.' We mix up teams and really focus on teaching them how to hold the stick properly, pick up ground balls, how to pass, shoot and we start to work on catching.
- Use swax lax balls
- Each team is coached by 1 adult (parent volunteer or adult coach) and 1-2 HS player coaches

3/4/ 10U

- Form teams of 12-16
- We separated by elementary school to keep friends together (we usually try to honor 1 buddy request)
- We typically have more than 1 team at this age group, so we hire an adult coach to oversee this age group and assign 1-2 HS player coaches to each team.
- We have a parent coordinator (volunteer) for each team to be the acting adult on site for games etc.
- We introduce goalie play at this level and ask our HS goalies to support and goalie coach giving everyone wanting a turn to try. We make a goalie schedule to ensure goalies are practicing in goal the 2 practices prior to weekend game

5/6/ U12

- Form teams of 14-18
- We build evenly skilled teams and try to keep players together based on elementary school allocation
- We typically have more than 1 team at this age group, so we hire an adult coach to oversee this age group and assign 1-2 HS player coaches (upperclassmen) to each team.
- We have a parent coordinator (volunteer) for each team
- We aim to identify specific players that gravitate towards goalie play

7/8/ 14U

- Form a full team(s) of approximately 18 players
- We build evenly skilled teams and try to keep players together based on elementary school allocation (assuming we have more than 1 team)
- We hire adult coaches at this level to help prepare them for full field play and as a steppingstone to high school
- We have a parent coordinator (volunteer) for each team
- We aim to identify specific players that gravitate towards goalie play

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