



# First Dink 2023 Participant/Parent Handbook

[www.firstdink.org](http://www.firstdink.org)

# What is the First Dink Foundation?

## The First Dink Mission

To impact the lives of young people in a way that builds better character, develops life skills, and promotes healthy choices. By combining learning the game of Pickleball with Coaching and Mentoring, based on the Positive Youth Development Methodology (PYD), we instill in our young people Helpful Life Skills, and The First Dink Foundation's Core Values.

## About the First Dink Foundation

The First Dink Foundation was created in 2022 to introduce young people of all ages and backgrounds to the game of pickleball and teach life long lessons through our curriculum. Teaching character education through specific life skills, children and teenagers discover how the skills essential for success on the pickleball court can also help them flourish in life.

## The First Dink Nine Core Values

Pickleball is an ideal context for acquiring The First Dink Nine Core Values, because it is a voluntary activity that provides challenges, requires commitment and effort over time, and has clear rules. The First Dink aims to create a youth-centered, mastery driven climate in which young people are empowered to explore options and make decisions, two elements that are critical to our children's development.

### The Nine Core Values:

1. **Fairness** - without showing favor and without allowing an advantage for one side over another
2. **Integrity** - Having strong moral values and doing the right thing
3. **Responsibility** - doing the things we are supposed to do, and accepting the outcomes of our own actions
4. **Sportsmanship** - Respectful behavior to others and following rules regardless of the outcome
5. **Tolerance** - Accepting differences
6. **Determination** - Never Giving Up
7. **Inspire** - Be a driving force for action
8. **Nurture** - Encourage a Healthy Mind and Body
9. **Knowledge** - Facts and Skills that are Learned, Understood, and Implemented

## **The First Dink Code of Conduct**

### **Respect for Myself**

- I will dress appropriately and always wear Pickleball or athletic shoes.
- I will always try my best when I play or practice.
- I will keep a positive attitude and catch myself doing something right regardless of the outcome.
- I will be physically active, eat well, get enough sleep, and be safe so I can stay healthy.
- I will be honest with myself, including when I keep score and if I break a rule.
- I will use proper etiquette and maintain my composure even when others may not be watching.

### **Respect for Others**

- I will follow all instructions and safety rules.
- I will keep up with the pace of play on the Pickleball Court.
- I will be friendly, courteous and helpful.
- I will remain quiet while others are playing and have fun without being loud and rowdy.
- I will be a good sport toward others whether I win or lose.
- I will encourage others to be safe and physically active.

### **Respect for my Surroundings**

- I will keep the pickleball courts clean as well as the surrounding areas.
- I will clean and take care of my and others' pickleball equipment.
- I will be careful not to damage anything that belongs to others.

## **Our Expectations**

All students are expected to:

- Abide by The First Dink Code of Conduct
- Follow all safety and course rules
- Be on time
- Listen carefully to Coaches and Volunteers
- Be friendly, helpful and meet new friends
- Wear pickleball or athletic shoes
- Label your personal equipment
- Come prepared with a good attitude and equipment (if you have it)
- Respect each other's differences and abilities
- Practice! Practice! Practice! Attending class once a week is not enough to master pickleball or life skills
- Properly check in each class
- Return any area you use to a clean and tidy condition

## **Registration**

REGISTRATION IS ONLINE at [www.firstdink.org](http://www.firstdink.org) Classes are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration will not be accepted via telephone or fax. Payment must be made at time of registration.

## **Membership**

All participants registered for Core Curriculum for the current calendar year will receive a temporary membership card. This card is used to encourage responsibility, and must be presented to receive any First Dink pickleball benefits. Lost or badly damaged cards will be replaced for a fee of \$5.00. Membership privileges may be suspended at any time due to lack of student attendance (drop-outs), participation or disciplinary reasons.

## **Level Certification**

Upon registration in The First Dink Program, participants will begin their pickleball and life skills training at the FIRST SERVE Level (Ages 7+). Once a student has successfully completed the certification requirements for their current level, they will move to more advanced program levels: FIRST SERVE, SECOND SERVE, VOLLEY, DINK, & DRIVE. The length of time needed to advance from one level to the next will vary from student to student. It is not a race, but a journey that assures each participant receives the necessary tools to have a fun and rewarding life on and off the pickleball court. Successful completion of certification requirements will be tracked in our First Dink Participant Tracking database.

## **Dress Code**

The required dress code is: athletic wear and appropriate closed toe shoes. We always recommend bringing hats, water bottles, face towels, and sweatbands but do not require them.

## **Safety Rules**

- Pay attention at all times
- Only swing a paddle if someone is not in your safety zone
- Only swing a paddle or hit balls toward others when instructed
- Bad language, or horseplay will not be tolerated
- Head indoors immediately in the event of inclement weather
- Stay together on the pickleball courts at all times
- Check in with registration before participating. In the event of an emergency, we'll know who's here.

Repeated violations of safety rules, code of conduct and program policies will result in disciplinary action or suspension.

## **Consequences for Misbehavior**

- 1st Time - Verbal Warning
- 2nd Time - 5 minutes of "time out"
- 3rd Time - Time-out for the remainder of class and possible contact with parent/guardian
- 4th Time - Parent/guardian contact and possible suspension from the program

\*All consequences are at the discretion of The First Dink Foundation staff and will be based on the level of misbehavior.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to get involved in the following ways:

- Reinforcing core values and life skills at home
- Encouraging students to practice
- Becoming a trained Volunteer

## **Parents Attending Class**

Parents sometimes get over enthusiastic and want to become involved with their own children during the class. Although well intentioned, this may disrupt the class and makes many students feel uncomfortable, which can detract from the learning process. Parents are asked to observe at a distance, approved by Coach, and not distract or be involved with the student during class time.

## **Make-Up Classes.**

Missed class cannot be made up at this time.

## **Permission to Leave the Premises**

ALL participants are expected to remain on pickleball court and with coaches or volunteers at all times. If parents would like to give participants' permission to leave with other parents, please speak directly to lead coach to arrange.

## **Inclement Weather**

Classes are not cancelled for light rain. If possible, we will move indoors and continue the class. Parents and participants will be contacted an hour prior to classes starting if extenuating circumstances present (lightning in the area, thunderstorms, hurricanes, etc. )

## **Program Levels**

For many of our participants, The First Dink program will be a new experience. In addition to meeting other young people from different backgrounds, they will be exposed to pickleball in a fun environment that emphasizes courtesy & respect.

### **LITTLE DINKERS Ages 5+**

The focus of Little Dinkers is to Create Curiosity and Excitement by introducing the basics of Pickleball and being physically active. Participants will learn Life Skills: Showing Kindness to Others, The Importance of Sharing, & Taking turns. Pickleball Skills include: Stance on the Court, Holding a paddle, & Making contact with ball.

### **FIRST SERVE Ages 7+**

The Focus of First Serve is to introduce participants to the basics of pickleball and learn The First Dink Foundation's Code of Conduct & Core Values - Fairness, Integrity, Responsibility, Sportsmanship, Tolerance, Determination, Inspire, Nurture, Knowledge. Participants will also learn basic Pickleball Skills: Serving the ball, Ball contact, Direction control, & Getting over the net.

### **SECOND SERVE Ages 9+**

The focus of Second Serve is to maximize fun through games and exercises that reinforce the First Dink Core Values (Fairness, Integrity, Responsibility, Sportsmanship, Tolerance, Determination, Inspire, Nurture, Knowledge) and the additional Life Skills: Interpersonal Skills, Self-Management, Communication, Teamwork, Responsibility, & Patience. Pickleball Skills include: Serves, Returns, 3<sup>rd</sup> Shot, Volley, Dinks, & Court Etiquette

### **VOLLEY Ages 11+**

The focus of VOLLEY is to understand how to set goals and accomplish them. Volley also addresses more advanced Pickleball techniques and Fundamentals of Practicing

### **DINK Ages 13+**

The focus of Dink is on situational scenarios to learn resilience, how to resolve conflict, and continue planning for the future. Pickleball training continues with increased practice by playing in tournament style sessions.

### **DRIVE Ages 15+**

The Focus of Drive is putting all the Core Values and Life Skills Learned to the test on the court and in real life. Conversations are held about education, careers and how to give back to the community we live in.

### **Pickleball Equipment**

During classes, participants may borrow paddles and balls from The First Dink Foundation as needed. The First Dink may also provide free or discounted equipment to students based on need. These items are made available from our supply of donated items; therefore, we may not be able to fill each request immediately. The First Dink accepts all donations and contributions to be able to better provide opportunities for our youth.

### **Tournaments and Special Events**

The First Dink Foundation hosts tournaments and special events to give participants opportunities to experience competition and meet new friends in a fun environment. Watch for information regarding special events in email and social media updates and reminders!

### **Communication**

We will make every effort to keep students and parents informed of club activities. Please check the following regularly for important information:

- Email is our primary method of communication.
- Please provide us with a current email address on your registration form.
- [www.firstdink.org](http://www.firstdink.org)
- Social Media outlets- Facebook, Instagram, Etc..

