

## JOINT YOUTH SPORTS PARENT LETTER – FINAL

Dear North Andover Families,

On behalf of the North Andover Fields Committee, which includes representatives from North Andover Youth Baseball (NAYB), North Andover Booster Club (NABC), North Andover Lacrosse (NALAX), and North Andover Youth Soccer (NASA) **Together** we present this joint statement to help facilitate and encourage maximum participation of our children in all of our programs. As a group, we pledge to continue and enhance our efforts for our young athletes to experience as many of our programs as they desire, in light of the changing dynamics of youth sports in Massachusetts and throughout the country. Our goal is promoting participation in multiple sports but not at the expense of one another.

The following paragraph is from the website [www.ilovetowatchyouplay.com](http://www.ilovetowatchyouplay.com) that helps us illustrate the point:

*The term multi-sport athlete gets thrown around A LOT these days. But unfortunately, its meaning has changed. Multi-sport used to mean an athlete would play various sports when they were in season, but seasons no longer exist in youth sports for most of us anyway. The multi-sport athlete has given way to the simultaneous sport athlete. We should note, this isn't recommended by Ilovetowatchyouplay.com, doctors, pediatricians, or by athletic trainers. But because it's become so widespread, there is a need to understand the best practices for this new trend and educate your child and yourself to keep your athlete as healthy and safe as possible.*

As a group, we strongly believe children should be able to try as many different activities as they are interested in, to provide a foundation and to discover what they enjoy and what they do not. We recognize that sport “seasons” as we grew up understanding them, no longer apply. All sports offer year-round options, indoor and outdoor, often creating conflicts. Private “club” programs only exacerbate this situation. As community-based youth sports organizations, the best we can offer is to cooperate with each other to facilitate as much flexibility as possible. Ultimately you, as parents, must decide what course of action is best for your child and your family.

To that end, we pledge:

1. All NA Youth sports organizations signing this letter believe player health, safety and welfare – including the opportunity to participate in as much as possible at their appropriate level – is paramount, and that we collectively will do whatever we can to make that possible.
2. To create the most opportunity at the appropriate competitive levels, we will always work together towards that goal, both internally to our organizations and collectively.
3. In terms of ability to participate in a select program: Each organization will work to minimize an absolute commitment to a select/travel team, to avoid making participation in another sport impossible. Each organization will adopt a flexibility policy to that effect, such that individual conflict cases can be worked out as much as possible. As a general guideline, our organizations shall NOT require attendance at more than 2 “events” (games or practices) per week in order to participate in a select/travel program.
4. As a Fields Committee, we continue working together to make the most efficient use of our town’s facilities, having created a mechanism to make each other aware of our scheduling plans

## JOINT YOUTH SPORTS PARENT LETTER – FINAL

to minimize cross-sport conflicts to the extent possible. We pledge a renewed emphasis on this going forward.

Below are links to each organization's website. On these websites you should be able to find further information regarding participation requirements for both recreational and tryout-based levels of play. You can also find contact information for the officers of each organization, should you need further specific information.

**North Andover Youth Baseball:** [www.northandoveryouthbaseball.com](http://www.northandoveryouthbaseball.com)

**North Andover Soccer Association:** [www.northandoversoccer.com](http://www.northandoversoccer.com)

**North Andover Booster Club:** [www.northandoverboosterclub.com](http://www.northandoverboosterclub.com)

**North Andover Lacrosse:** [www.nalax.net](http://www.nalax.net)

While we can't make the problem go away, we can be as flexible and adaptable as possible for the benefit of all North Andover children.

Sincerely,

The North Andover Fields Committee

At Large Members: David Brown, Derek Wessel, Rick Green, Terence Holland

North Andover Youth Baseball: Kyle Geiselman

North Andover Booster Club (Basketball, Field Hockey, Softball, Volleyball, Cheer, Golf, Football, Flag Football): Sean Daley

North Andover Lacrosse: Chris Downer

North Andover Soccer: Scott D'entremont

Chair: Rick Gorman, Director, North Andover Youth Services