

Principle of Meaningful Involvement

Fundamentally, the principle of meaningful involvement ensures that every player is given an opportunity to contribute to the success of his or her team through their unique skills and qualities. This means that **every** teammate: (a) demonstrates sufficient sport specific skills and game understanding; (b) plays a valued role on the team that emphasizes his or her personal talents; and (c) has an opportunity to play without a heightened risk of injury.

The goal is that every teammate should play a meaningful role and have the opportunity to contribute his or her strengths to their Unified Sports team. There should be a quality of social interaction and communication among teammates that allows everyone to participate fully and enjoy a positive experience. [When talking about this concept, note it is a guiding principle and not a RULE]

Meaningful Involvement achieved when:

- Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates participate according to the rules of competition.
- Teammates have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team. (This means that every team member can shoot)
- Teammates adjust their skills according to those of other players, resulting in improved performance by team members with lesser ability.

Meaningful Involvement NOT achieved when team members:

- Display superior sports skills without involving their teammates.
- Serve predominantly as on-field coaches rather than teammates or mentors.
- Control most aspects of the game, especially during the most critical periods.
- Do not train or practice regularly and only show up on the day of competition.
- Lower their level of ability dramatically so that they do not hurt others or control the entire game. [Make sure to stress the difference between being a mentor to improve performance vs just being on the court and not engaged]