

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are glad your child is joining us for the Summer Youth Tennis Program. The program is a collaborative effort between the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) and the Houston Tennis Association (HTA) and is a chapter of the National Junior Tennis & Learning network or NJTL. Founded in 1969 by the late Arthur Ashe, NJTL uses tennis to reach out to the community and provide for the healthy development of young people on and off the court. The Houston chapter originated in 1990, so we are celebrating 31 years! We want this summer to be a positive experience and have composed this parent letter in an effort to make sure you are aware of what to expect.

New for Summer 2021: What a year it has been! In order to accommodate more students this summer and avoid waiting lists, the program is expanding to many more neighborhood park sites and offering sessions that last one, two or three weeks, Monday through Thursday each week. The goal is to capitalize on renewed interest in tennis as a safe sport to play during COVID while introducing families to more tennis courts in the neighborhood. Not all courts are in good condition, but usable and creating more use may create chances for more tennis advocacy.

Registration: Each student must register online at www.houstonyouthtennis.org. Registration will remain open until classes are filled or May 31 whichever comes first. Enrollment will be limited to no more than 8 per court. There will be no waiting list, so it is important that you sign up only for sessions your child may attend in entirety. Each child may enroll in a total of two sessions no matter what duration and must be signed up for the applicable age group. Enrolling in more than two sessions or the wrong age group will result in cancellation. Instructors may require proof of age. Please be sure to list the student's name and not the parent's name in the first line of the registration.

Safety: The safety of students and coaches is of utmost priority. Students should not attend class if they are sick or may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. If a positive case is reported at a site, parents will be notified of the situation and class canceled. Coaches and students are encouraged to get vaccinated as a preventive measure or take all precautions deemed appropriate. Students must bring their own racquets and water. Should you have concerns about safety, please express them to the coach or Youth Tennis Office.

For Class: Students must wear tennis shoes and comfortable clothes for tennis class. Sunscreen, hats, and water brought from home help deal with the heat. Using the restroom prior to class time is advised as restrooms will most likely not be available. Please label racquets and any other personal items with student's name.

Rain Policy: In case of rain that makes the tennis courts wet and therefore unplayable, class will not be held. Classes resume regular schedule as soon as possible and classes cancelled due to weather are not made up. Instructors will discuss notification plans, but if in doubt, use your best judgment.

Pick-Up Policy: Children must be picked up at the end of their designated class time. The tennis instructors supervise students during tennis class only, and cannot be responsible for students outside of class. Late pick-ups will result in a child being dismissed from the program. Parents may watch classes from outside of the court area, but should not interfere with the class. Only HPARD cleared volunteers are allowed on the tennis court.

Behavior Policy: Maintaining a safe and positive environment is a priority. If a student becomes a consistent problem in class, the parent or guardian will be notified and child may be dismissed.

Art, Writing & Reading: Under the handouts section on the home page of www.houstonyouthtennis.org, you will see educational and creative activities included in NJTL. Please take time to review these opportunities and encourage your child to participate in art, writing and reading while enjoying tennis.

Program T-Shirt: Students attending tennis classes receive a program t-shirt but only one shirt for the summer.

Supporting the Program: Financial support helps us continue offering free youth programs and opportunities. Please consider joining the Houston Youth Tennis Association where \$25 gets an age-appropriate racquet and ball for your child or make a tax-deductible donation to HTA NJTL, 3535 Briarpark Drive, Suite 215, Houston TX 77042.

If you have any questions, complaints, or comments, please contact us at the Youth Tennis Office, c/o Memorial Park Tennis Center, 1500 Memorial Loop Dr., Houston TX 77007, Phone: (832) 395-7561, Fax: (832) 395-7158.

Emily Schaefer
Director of Tennis
Houston Parks and Recreation Department

