

Youth NIL Age & Stages Guide

DSF & YNS Parent + Athlete Resource Guide

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Important: This document is educational and operational guidance for DSF & YNS families. It is not legal, tax, or financial advice. Always check your school/league rules and, when needed, consult qualified professionals.

This guide is built for real families. The goal is to match expectations to maturity, time, and safety.

Ages 8–11: Foundation Phase (Not “Earnings” Yet)

- Focus: identity, confidence, sportsmanship, and safe habits.
- Parent-run accounts only; athlete appears but doesn't manage DMs.
- Activities: photos, highlight clips, gratitude posts, community shoutouts.
- Brand: nickname, simple logo, 1–2 colors, one clear message.
- Goal: learn consistency (1–2 posts/week) without pressure.

Ages 12–14: Training Phase (Small Wins)

- Focus: routine + responsible promotion.
- Athlete can help create content; parent still approves before posting.
- Activities: product shoutouts, game-day posts, short reels, community spotlights.
- Introduce basics: disclosure tags for sponsored/paid relationships.
- Goal: first sales from friends/family; learn customer service and thank-yous.

Ages 15–18: Growth Phase (Real Earnings Possible)

- Focus: consistent publishing + local partnerships + leadership.
- Athlete can manage more directly (with agreed rules).
- Activities: personal appearances (where allowed), brand collabs, advanced content routines.
- Build a sponsor deck: who they are, audience, what they offer, rates.
- Goal: meaningful seasonal revenue and real portfolio of work.

Weekly Routine Templates

Option A: 20 minutes/day (simple)

- Mon: Post (game/workout/gratitude).
- Wed: Product post (1 item + why you like it).
- Fri: Story + link reminder.
- Sun: Thank-you + “what’s next week” preview.

Option B: 3-day routine (busy families)

- Tue: Post + link.
- Thu: Post + link.
- Sat: Thank-you + highlight reel.

Content Ideas That Work

- Behind-the-scenes: packing orders (without addresses), new designs, first-time customer shoutout.
- Milestones: “first varsity start,” “first tournament,” “season opener,” “playoffs.”
- Community: “Thanks Coach,” “Shoutout to our sponsor,” “Local business feature.”
- Values: discipline, gratitude, teamwork, faith/family (as appropriate).

Safety Rules (Non-Negotiables)

- No personal addresses, school schedules, or real-time location posting.
- No arguing online; no trash talk; no controversial brand alignment.
- Keep messages professional; if in doubt, do not respond—ask a parent.
- Decline offers that include: secrecy, pressure, or recruiting language.