

2016
JCC MACCABI GAMES

Team Greater Washington

St Louis, Mo: July 31 – August 5
Stamford, CT: August 7 – 12



JCC MACCABI GAMES: THE BASICS

The Games are a unique experience for Jewish teens, and we can assure you that, whatever the results are on the field, pool, court or stage, your teen will make new friends from across the country and around the world and be filled with positive Jewish memories!

The purpose of this handbook is to help parents understand what happens both before and during the Games, what their role is, and to offer a few helpful hints to maximize the experience for their athletes. Whether you are sitting on the sidelines cheering for the athletes or standing proud at the Opening Ceremonies Celebration, we consider you part of our team! Parents of athletes play a major role in the success of the JCC Maccabi Games experience.

JCC MACCABI GAMES 101

The JCC Maccabi Games is an Olympic-style sporting competition held each summer in North America and is the largest organized sports program for Jewish teenagers in the world. The first North American JCC Maccabi Games were held in 1982 with 300 athletes. Today, over 5,000 teens, ranging from 13 to 16 years of age, participate in the JCC Maccabi Games each summer. The Games are co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Center Association of North America, Maccabi World Union, Maccabi Canada, and Maccabi USA/Sports for Israel.

GETTING READY FOR THE GAMES

The Games are a product of a year of hard work. The amount of information needed on each athlete is extensive. Parents can ease the burden on the and JCCGW staff by submitting the materials by the deadlines specified as well as understanding the commitment involved in participating in the Games. Please note that the JCCGW is charged late fees by JCC Association if information is not turned in on time. This fee will be charged back to the individual.

Eligibility Requirements

The mission of the JCC Maccabi Games states that the program is a Jewish event for Jewish teenagers with the intent to foster long-lasting memories and identification with organized Jewish community groups as well as identification with Israel. The JCC Maccabi Games aim to foster a strong Jewish identity among all of its participants.

All athletes must be Jewish, which is defined as follows: One of the athlete's parents is Jewish and the athlete is being raised Jewish or is a Jew by choice and is being raised Jewish. In the spirit of the Games, if the parent or child does not believe that they are Jewish on a year round basis then the child should not participate in the JCC Maccabi Games. Athletes must be 13 and cannot be 17 as of July 31, 2016.

TEAM SELECTION AND PRACTICES

Team Greater Washington will be comprised of teams and individual sports:

U16 & U14 Boys Basketball	Ice Hockey
U16 Girls Basketball	Boys Lacrosse
Baseball	
Dance	
U14 Boys Soccer	
U16 Girls Soccer	
Swimming	
Tennis	
Track & Field	

It is encouraged that athletes tryout for more than one sport although they can only compete in **one** sport at the Games. The Tryout fee is \$20 and pre-registration online is encouraged. JCCGW is limited by the number of athletes allowed on team rosters and in some sports the tryout process is quite competitive.

Tryouts will be scheduled January through the middle of March. As schedules are confirmed they will be posted on the JCCGWs website (www.jccgw.org/maccabi) and emailed in our monthly Games Newsletter. Once the teams have been selected you will be notified by the coach for that sport. Once contact has been made with each family of that team registration forms will then be emailed out.

Coaches will schedule practices at their own discretion throughout the spring and summer. Athletes are encouraged to attend as many practices as their schedule affords them. All athletes participating in team sports **must** attend the practices scheduled the week before the Games.

Athlete Fees

Within two weeks of receiving the registration form a \$1,000 deposit along with the registration paperwork is required to secure your athletes spot.

The participation fee for the 2016 JCC Maccabi Games includes:

- JCCA registration fees, all tournament fees, meals and travel during the week
- Airfare/travel to and from the Games
- Team Greater Washington Uniforms
- Team jacket, bag and trading pins

Fundraising

Every member of Team Greater Washington is expected to participate in fundraising opportunities to help defray the cost of the Games for our athletes.

Parents who need financial assistance should speak directly to Amy Gantz, agantz@jccgw.org about the delegations scholarship policy and fundraising opportunities.

GAMES WEEK

Home hospitality is an integral part of the JCC Maccabi Games experience, creating bonds between teens and local Jewish families. More than just providing a bed, host families make visiting athletes feel at home.

During the week of the Games, host families:

- Provide sleeping arrangements for at least two JCCGW athletes
- Provide breakfast every day and dinner when not provided by the host community
- Drop off and pick up participants daily
- Entertain participants on the Host Family Night
- Get involved in the experience – attend Opening Ceremonies and cheer on your athletes at their events

Sample Schedule

Sunday – Delegation Travel and Opening Ceremonies

Monday – Athletic competition, Evening Activity

Tuesday – Athletic competition, Evening activity

Wednesday – Athletic competition, JCC Cares and Host Family Night

Thursday – Athletic competition, Closing Celebration

Friday – Delegation Travel

JCC CARES

Since 1982, the JCC Maccabi Games have always been more than an athletic competition. The JCC Cares program is an opportunity for athletes to enhance their experience at the Games by taking a few hours out of their competition schedule to participate in a community service project with their teammates. The basic American concept of community service is closely tied to the basic Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), which urges us to make a difference in the lives of others who may be less fortunate than ourselves.

Examples of past projects are:

- Packing school supply kits for Family Centers and Israeli children
- Visiting sick kids and teens at local hospitals
- Spending time with older adults in nursing homes
- Improving neighborhoods or local facilities. (i.e. Habitat for Humanity)
- Making Surgi-Dolls for pediatric patients at Medial Centers and Hospitals.

RACHMANUS RULE

What distinguishes the JCC Maccabi Games from all other athletic competitions? Is it simply the fact that the Games are made up of Jewish athletes or is there something *Jewish* about the Games themselves? If we begin to infuse the Games with Jewish values then we can make them a more meaningful experience for our athletes and their families.

Sometimes, Jewish values conflict with other values though. We want our athletes to strive for excellence yet we also want them to have compassion for their teammates and their opponents. What takes precedence? How should they act?

Judaism has always viewed compassion, or **RACHMANUS**, as a definitive value. The Talmud goes so far as to say that one can identify a Jew by observing whether they are compassionate or not! As Jews we seek to emulate G-d. As one of G-d's defining characteristics is compassion, so too must we be compassionate.

RACHMANUS plays a key role in athletics and the JCC Maccabi Games. The level of competition at the Games varies considerably due to delegations from varying city, size and delegations fielding teams with younger players. Although several sports have mercy rules, blowing out a much weaker team for the sake of scoring points or getting runs across the plate is contrary to the spirit of the Games and shows a lack of **RACHMANUS**.

Athletes and spectators are not exempt from the **RACHMANUS RULE**. Lashon Harah, (slander, gossip, trash talk), putting down opposing players, making fun of a weaker team or athlete shows a lack of **RACHMANUS**.

The atmosphere of the JCC Maccabi Games, and their significance as truly *Jewish* events, can be enhanced if participants and spectators have an understanding and commitment to following the **RACHMANUS RULE**. Let's win one for the Jewish people!

Who To Contact?

2016 Team Greater Washington
games@jccgw.org

Susan Fischer
301-348-3892

**To view tryout schedules and general information on
the JCC Maccabi Program go to www.jccgw.org**

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER the Games, a parent's first line of contact regarding his or her teen's participation in the JCC Maccabi Games is the JCC Delegation Heads.

To view general information about the 2016 JCC Maccabi Games go to the following websites:

- **St Louis, MO:** <https://maccabistlouis.org/>
- **Stamford, CT:** <http://jccmaccabistamford.org/>