



## Hanover Upward Basketball Challenger Division Player/Volunteer Fact Sheet

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The Hanover Upward Basketball Challenger Division is a program for mentally and physically challenged youth from ages 6-13, helping them to enjoy the game of basketball with neighbors and friends – while experiencing the full benefits of Upward sports in a Christian athletic environment structured to their abilities. More than the skills of basketball, the value of Upward sports is found in the proven therapeutic and socialization benefits of participating in sports, the strengthening of participants' self-esteem, the opportunities to mainstream into other divisions of play, and the disciplines of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play. Playing within the same guidelines as traditional Upward Basketball players, Challenger Division participants have the opportunity to pull together as a team, being cheered, earning awards for their achievements – all in an environment that displays the love of Jesus Christ.

### ***Questions and Answers About the Upward Basketball Challenger Division***

**What is the Challenger program?** The Challenger Division offers boys and girls with physical and mental challenges, ages 6 to 13, the opportunity to participate in an organized game of basketball. The most fundamental goal of the Challenger Division is to give everyone a chance to play. Upward, the world's largest Christian sports program for children was created with a vision to provide the best sports experience possible for every child. Each year some 1 million people around the world play, coach, referee, or volunteer in Upward sports leagues and camps hosted by more than 2,600 churches.

**Are Challenger games played on a special Court?** No, a special court is not necessary to operate a Challenger program. All Challenger games will be played on the basketball courts at Cool Spring Baptist Church. Cool Spring's basketball courts are wheelchair-friendly to rubberized tires.

**Who Plays?** Teams will be set up according to abilities, rather than age, and can include as many as 10 players on a team. The Challenger players will wear basketball uniforms the same as all other Upward players.

**When do they play?** Games will be played on each Friday evening January 29 – March 5 at Cool Spring Baptist Church. The league will also host an end of the season celebration. Games will be played from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Volunteers will be asked to arrive 30 minutes prior to the game. There are no in-season practices.

**Cost?** \$70 registration fee, which includes uniform, t-shirt and Upward devotional materials. Financial scholarships are available.

**Need for Volunteers?** Hanover Upward Basketball is hoping to solidify 20 volunteers for each game. This will allow each player to have a “basketball buddy”, whether on the court or on the bench and will provide cheering groups. This will also allow the parents of the players to sit back and enjoy all the action of the game. Volunteers can sign up as a group or as individuals.

**What is a basketball buddy?** Basketball Buddies are volunteers that help their challenged partners by acting as guides for blind children, by pushing wheelchair-bound children around the court and interacting and cheering on their players. While it is perceived that the “basketball buddies” are there to assist the players, it is widely-known that it is usually the players’ interaction that enriches the lives of the volunteer.

**Please visit the Upward Hanover website at [www.upwardhanover.org](http://www.upwardhanover.org) for more information regarding registration and volunteer opportunities or contact the Upward hotline at 746-8974, option #1**