



**first tee**

greater charlotte

**Parent**

**Handbook**

## **Our Mission:**

To impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values, and promote healthy choices through the game of golf.

## **Our History:**

First Tee - Greater Charlotte was established in 2003 to teach children life skills through the game of golf. The First Tee program is based on First Tee Nine Core Values that are taught through the character education program: responsibility, respect, honesty, judgment, courtesy, integrity, confidence, perseverance, and sportsmanship.

Our Learning Center is adjacent to The Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park. The First Tee -Greater Charlotte through its partnership with Mecklenburg County Park and Rec, opened its Learning Center in April 2009. The facility includes newly developed practice areas including one practice putting green, two short game practice greens and a full driving range. The First Tee School Program is currently conducted in 165 elementary schools in the Greater Charlotte area including all 109 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The School Program teaches elementary school aged youth grades K-5 First Tee Nine Core Values, First Tee Healthy Habits and the game of golf. The program is taught by the physical educator at each school and helps to impact over 129,000 youth in our community.

# FAQ's

## **What is the purpose of First Tee- Greater Charlotte?**

The First Tee is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit youth development organization. Its purpose is to give young people of all backgrounds an opportunity to develop [through golf and character education], life-enhancing values such as honesty, integrity and sportsmanship.

## **At what age can a person participate in The First Tee?**

The First Tee Life Skills Experience, delivered through First Tee chapters, is designed for young people ages 5-18. Registration guidelines are based on your child's age during the programming session (i.e. spring, summer, and fall)

## **What is the Life Skills Experience?**

First Tee Life Skills Experience is used to further enhance and instill the inherent values of the game of golf, and show participants how these values transfer into other aspects of their lives. See page 5 for more details on the Life Skills Experience.

## **What happens if the weather threatens our ability to hold class?**

First Tee - Greater Charlotte will make every effort to hold programs. Classes will only be cancelled if the course is closed due to inclement weather, the weather forecast predicts weather that can put participants in danger or there is a reason to believe that the entire class will be rained out. If classes are cancelled, the First Tee - Greater Charlotte will notify parents via the email that was provided during registration. Weather updates will be given via First Tee - Greater Charlotte Facebook page, in addition to being communicated by the Site Directors.

## **How does my participant advance to the next level?**

See page 11 for information on how participants advance to the next level.

## **What does my participant need to bring and wear? Do we need to own golf clubs?**

We require all participants to wear closed toes sneakers or golf shoes. Denim is not permitted and collared shirts are encouraged at all locations and **required** at our Fort Mill and Springfield locations. Participants are welcome to bring their own equipment. If participants do not have clubs, we can provide any equipment necessary to use during the duration of a class. Participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle and wear sunscreen. Participants are also required to bring their yardage book to class which they will receive on the first day of class.

## **What is First Tee - Greater Charlotte membership card?**

Membership cards will be given to each participant at the beginning of the season, and will expire at the end of the year. Membership cards will give participants certain privileges at a variety of businesses and golf courses. Membership cards are given to all participants. Please refer to membership card guidelines for complete details.

### **What are the drop off and pick up procedures?**

We ask that all parents/guardians sign in their participant prior to the start of each class and sign your child out at the end of each class. Please be courteous and be on time dropping off and picking up. Site Directors will begin and end all classes on time as scheduled.

### **What is "Car Talk"?**

Car talk is an email that will go out at the beginning of each week of programming that will summarize the skills and topics to be covered in class in the week to come.

## **Our Staff:**

**Executive Director**, Daniel Fogarty  
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**Program Director**, Brittnay Cross  
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**Program Coach & Volunteer Coordinator**, Maurice Crowe  
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# Site Directors:

**Dr. Charles L. Sifford GC Site Director**, Ian Bollinger  
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**Charles T. Myers GC Site Director**, Christian Fleetwood/Maurice Crowe  
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**Fort Mill GC Site Director**, Kell Graham  
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**Stonebridge Site Director**, Sheila Molino  
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## Program Locations

**First Tee - Greater Charlotte Learning Center at  
Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park**

2661 Barringer Drive  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28208

**Charles T. Myers Golf Club**  
7817 Harrisburg Rd, Charlotte, NC 28215

**Emerald Lake Golf Club**  
9750 Tournament Drive, Matthews, NC 28104

**Springfield Golf Club**  
639 Hambley House Ln, Fort Mill, SC 29715

**Fort Mill Golf Club**  
101 Country Club Dr., Fort Mill, SC 29715

**Stonebridge Golf Club**  
2721 Swilcan Burns Drive, Monroe, NC 28112

**Sunset Hills Golf Course**  
800 Radio Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216

# First Tee Life Skills Experience

First Tee Life Skills Experience is divided into certification levels, starting with PLAYer for new participants and progressing through Par, Birdie, Eagle, and on to Ace. First Tee – Greater Charlotte also offers Teeny Tee and PLAYer 7&8 as an introduction to the Life Skills Experience. Each level of the LSE is taught seamlessly through game-based golf activities.

## Overview of First Tee Life Skills Experience

<b>Teeny Tees &amp; PLAYer 7&amp;8</b>	<b>Certification levels</b>
Introduction to First Tee Life Skills Experience; provides a fun and safe environment that creates curiosity about the game of golf.	<p><b>PLAYer</b>-Introduces playing the game of golf with special emphasis on learning golf and First Tee Code of Conduct, appreciating the rules and etiquette of the game, and developing your game in golf and in life.</p> <p><b>Par</b>- Focuses on interpersonal communication and self-management skills.</p> <p><b>Birdie</b>- Emphasizes goal-setting.</p> <p><b>Eagle</b>- Builds on PLAYer, Par, and Birdie levels and emphasizes resilience skills, conflict resolution, and planning for the future.</p> <p><b>Ace</b>- The advanced level of First Tee Life Skills Experience; focuses on personal planning for golf, career, volunteerism, and certification.</p>

# Teeny Tees/ PLAYer 7&8/ PLAYer levels

Coach to player ratio: 7:1

**What's covered:** Teeny Tees, PLAYer 7&8, and PLAYer are the introductory levels of First Tee Life Skills Experience designed for participant's who are new to First Tee. These levels teach participants **how** to play the game with special emphasis on learning golf, First Tee Code of Conduct, First Tee Nine Core Values™, and Nine Healthy Habits. These interpersonal skills will help participants develop much more than just their golf game.

## **Teeny Tees age requirements:**

Minimum Teeny Tee age- 5

Maximum Teeny Tee age- 6

## **PLAYer 7 & 8 age requirements:**

Minimum PLAYer 7 & 8 age- 7

Maximum PLAYer 7 & 8 age- 8

## **PLAYer 9 & up age requirements:**

Minimum PLAYer age- 9

## Par

Coach to player ratio: 7:1

**What's covered:** The Par Level builds on the PLAYer level by introducing participants to life skills that will help them both on and off the golf course. The main focus of the Par Level is to assist participants in acquiring several self-management techniques and interpersonal skills that will help them in managing their thoughts, emotions, and behavior in order to perform well both on and off the golf course.

## **Age requirements:**

Minimum Par age- 9

Maximum Par age- 18

**Prerequisites:** To enroll in a Par level class participants must complete all certification requirements at the PLAYer level (completed yardage book, passed both written tests, and passed their golf skills putting assessment).

# Birdie

Coach to player ratio: 7:1

**What's covered:** The Birdie Level focuses primarily on goal setting. The Birdie Level curriculum teaches developing goals, goal ladders (plans/steps to achieving goals) and how to deal with challenges when faced with adversity. The golf skills focus on advanced putting and short game skills, course management and more intensive instruction in the rules of golf. Students will develop goals for their golf game and work to achieve them.

## Age requirements:

Minimum Birdie age- 12

Maximum Birdie age- 18

**Prerequisites:** To enroll in a Birdie level class, participants must complete all certification requirements at the Par level (completed yardage book, passed both written tests, golf skills assessment, and have met the playing requirement)

# Eagle

Coach to player ratio: 7:1

**What's covered:** The Eagle Level focuses on health and wellness, building a support team, dealing with conflicts, appreciating diversity, and planning for the future. Students will focus on getting the most out of their practice sessions, learning to self-check their swings, improving accuracy and course management.

## Age requirements:

Minimum Eagle age- 12 (must be 14 to enroll in Ace)

Maximum Eagle age- 18

**Prerequisites:** To enroll in an Eagle level class, participants must complete all certification requirements at the Birdie level (completed yardage book, passed both written tests, golf skills assessment, and have met the playing requirement)



# Ace

Coach to player ratio: 6:1

**What's covered:** The Ace Level focuses on personal planning and reinforces interpersonal communication, self-management, goal setting, self-coaching, and resilience skills that were applied in the earlier levels of The First Tee Life Skills Experience. Ace Level participants are given several projects to work on throughout their sessions regarding planning for the future and giving back to the community.

## **Age requirements:**

Minimum Ace age- 14

Maximum Ace age- 18

**Prerequisites:** To enroll in an Ace level class, participants must complete all certification requirements at the Eagle level (completed yardage book, passed both written tests, golf skills assessment, and have met the playing requirement)

## **Ace level certification requirements:**

Ace participants engage in four projects that center on activities designed to help them further develop as individuals and assets to their communities. The four projects are:

1. Enjoy Golf for Life. Participants examine their golf skills, create an improvement plan, and consider the role they would like golf to play in their lives.
2. Investigate Career Possibilities. Participants match talents and interests with career possibilities; they also investigate elements of the employment process, including informational interviews, resumes, and job interviews.
3. Give Back: Serve as a Volunteer or Junior Coach. Participants learn the value of "giving back" by volunteering for activities at The First Tee, in the community, or by helping with golf and life skills coaching.
4. Explore Educational Opportunities. Participants explore issues related to college selection and other educational and vocational preparation alternatives.

# Certification

First Tee – Greater Charlotte wants everyone who completes the First Tee program to have acquired basic golf skills and to be able to demonstrate certain fundamental life skill concepts – such as interpersonal communication and the importance of rules and etiquette. At the end of each level of the program – PLAYer, Par, Birdie, Eagle, and Ace – *participants will go through a **Certification Process** testing and evaluating participants' understanding of and ability to apply what was taught.* Upon successful completion of the certification process, participants will be promoted to the next level of the program.

## First Tee Nine Core Values

First Tee has established Nine Core Values that represent some of the many inherently positive values connected with the game of golf. By participating in First Tee, young people are introduced to these core values which are incorporated throughout the program. Parents are encouraged to reinforce these behaviors by talking about them, what they mean and what these behaviors can look like at home.

**Honesty**- the quality or state of being truthful; not deceptive

"Golf is unique from other sports in that players regularly call penalties on themselves and report their own score."

**Integrity**- strict adherence to a standard of value or conduct; personal honesty and independence Golf is a game of etiquette and composure. Players are responsible for their actions and personal conduct on the golf course even at times when others may not be looking.

**Sportsmanship**- observing the rules of play and winning or losing with grace

Players must know and abide by the rules of golf and be able to conduct themselves in a kind and respectful manner towards others even in a competitive game.

**Respect**- to feel or show deferential regard for; esteem

In golf it is important to show respect for oneself, playing partners, fellow competitors, the golf course, and for the honor and traditions of the game.

**Confidence**- reliance or trust. A feeling of self-assurance

Confidence plays a key role in the level of play that one achieves. Players can increase confidence in their abilities by being positive and focusing on something they are doing well regardless of the outcome.

**Responsibility-** accounting for one's actions; dependable

Players are responsible for their actions on the golf course. It is up to them to keep score, repair divots, rake bunkers, repair ball marks on the green, and keep up with the pace of play.

**Perseverance-** to persist in an idea, purpose or task despite obstacles

To succeed in golf, players must continue through bad breaks and their own mistakes, while learning from past experiences.

**Courtesy-** considerate behavior toward others; a polite remark or gesture

A round of golf should begin and end with a handshake between fellow competitors. Players also should be still and quiet while others are preparing and performing a shot.

**Judgment-** the ability to make a decision or form an opinion; a decision reached after consideration Using good judgment is very important in golf. It comes into play when deciding on strategy, club selection, when to play safe and when to take a chance, the type of shot players consider executing, as well as making healthy choices on and off the golf course.

## First Tee Nine Healthy Habits

First Tee Nine Healthy Habits were created through a collaboration among First Tee, ANNIKA Foundation and Florida Hospital for Children to promote healthy, active lifestyles for young people.

### Physical

#### Energy

It is important to understand and make healthy choices about when to eat, how much to eat, and the types of food and drinks to provide the body with the most useful energy.

#### Play

A variety of energizing play can help the body stay strong, lean and fit, and be fun in the process. Sleep and other forms of "re-charging" allow one to engage in play on a daily basis.

#### Safety

Physical safety includes playing in a safe environment and by the rules, protecting the body with proper equipment, warm-up and cool-down and wearing sun protection.

# Emotional

## **Vision**

In order to make the most of one's unique gifts—talents, characteristics and abilities— an individual needs to learn from the past, value the present, create their vision and future to ultimately “leave a footprint.”

## **Mind**

The mind is a powerful tool for health. One's mind influences his/her emotions and behaviors and can be utilized for self-improvement, building confidence and maintaining perspective.

## **Family**

When family members participate in activities together – share meals, communicate and establish roles and responsibilities – they are more likely to be successful in achieving their health-related goals.

# Social

## **Friends**

Maintaining healthy relationships includes surrounding one's self with friends and supportive people, while effectively handling challenging situations, including bullying and navigating the digital age with social media.

## **School**

Success in school – learning, building relationships and contributing to the school environment – leads to success in other areas of life.

## **Community**

Like the health of one's body, it is important to also explore the health of one's community and discover how one can give back and care for its environment and safety.

# First Tee Code of Conduct

## Respect for Myself

I will dress neatly and wear golf or athletic shoes.

I will always try my best when I play or practice.

I will keep a positive attitude and catch myself doing something right regardless of the outcome.

I will be physically active, eat well, get enough sleep, and be safe so I can stay healthy.

I will be honest with myself, including when I keep score and if I break a rule.

I will use proper etiquette and maintain my composure even when others may not be watching.

## Respect for Others

I will follow all instructions and safety rules.

I will keep up with the pace of play on the golf course.

I will be friendly, courteous and helpful.

I will remain still and quiet while others are playing and have fun without being loud and rowdy.

I will be a good sport toward others whether I win or lose.

I will encourage others to be safe and physically active.

# Respect for my Surroundings

I will keep the golf course and practice areas clean and in as good or better shape than I found them.

I will clean and take care of my and others' golf equipment.

I will be careful not to damage anything that belongs to others.

## Get Involved!

Your involvement can directly affect not only the success of our programs, but the success of our young people. Get involved today and make a difference. Volunteers act as assistant coaches teaching life skills, core values, and golf skills. Golf knowledge is not required to work with beginning levels! Complete a volunteer application today at [www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org](http://www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org), click on "Volunteer."

## Participate!

Youth ages 5-18 may register online for after-school programs and summer camps. We believe that the game of golf provides a platform to encourage core values and healthy choices. First Tee Life Skills Experience is one of the unique features that differentiates First Tee from other youth enrichment and junior golf programs. It helps young people develop character by focusing on Nine Core Values. Register online at [www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org](http://www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org), click on "Register."

## Donate!

Your gift is an investment in young people who represent 100% of the future. First Tee - Greater Charlotte Annual Fund helps bridge the gap between the cost to deliver programs and to attend Life Skills Experience classes. Scholarship assistance is available to families who qualify.

- Consider making an individual gift
- Double your gift through your company's matching gift program
- Donate new or used golf equipment

Go online to [www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org](http://www.firstteegreatercharlotte.org), click on "Donate"