

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS WITH JUNIOR LEAGUES

Case Study & Ideas

WHY OFFER JUNIORS?

Bottom line, Junior players are the future of your business.

By encouraging a love for darts early on, players are more likely to transition into adult leagues and continue to play the game throughout life.

Darts teaches kids coordination, social skills, math skills, sportsmanship and gives them a safe and fun environment.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

We asked three NDA operators and league coordinators to share about their junior programs.

Marcia Petersen, Vend Alaska

Start with advertising to your existing players, that is where your biggest source of juniors is going to come from. You will need help and parents are a great source and their involvement really is a must.

Fall/winter is the best time for Junior leagues.

We started running the leagues at a laser tag fun center with clinics taught by some of our top darters. We have also run them in a couple of bars during off hours, bowling alleys, private clubs and pizza parlors. It's important to check with the alcoholic beverage control board first.

Once you get going, the kids are what grows the leagues. We encourage players to bring in new players.

We make sure pins are on location to instantly recognize feats. We also try to get all of the youth their own set of darts. They are so proud of them. Shutterfly is also a great resource for taking league photos and creating photo books for the league.

Once a month youth tournaments can help recharge the leagues. I'm very excited about the NDA Junior Tournament that has been started. I'm hopeful that one day in the near future we will find a way to send players from Alaska. Maybe someday we will even see junior players from other countries participate.

Traci Noteboom, Rushmore Amusement, Inc.

To get started find that core group of adult dart players who want an activity to do with their kids. Get their feedback on schedules, and be flexible. It can be a challenge accomodating all of the youth player's busy lives.

We started with a simple doubles format (one adult, one youth player) and same scores. Since then each league has changed to accomdate the players' desires. Currently we are offering youth only doubles in the fall in addition to our adult/youth league.

Our games are played on Saturdays at 1 p.m. in our normal bar locations, and most leagues are scheduled 8-10 weeks. We require adult supervision during all matches.

We offer "End of the League Tournaments" for the youth league players only and during other tournaments we also offer a "Youth Luck of the Draw" tournament that is open to any youth player. We hope this encourages new players and friends to participate and learn the game.

Nate Knuth, Great Amusement

Word of mouth is the biggest way the leagues have grown. Kids tell their friends who come to see what the "fuss" is all about. We print flyers for the kids to hand out at school, church, etc. that tell about the leagues and give them a starting point, and announce it at our league banquet.

Find a passionate location that will open early and players to donate equipment.

This year we had a "bounty system". If you brought a new thrower, who played enough to qualify for the NDA Junior Tournament or our State Junior Tournament, and they participated in one or the other, the league paid 1 entry fee into the tournament of their choice for each referral.

We play 6-8 games a session and with the league fees it is still only \$6 per kid to throw. Always have an extra \$6 bucks in your pocket to cover that kid who showed up but doesn't have the funds.

We offer as many tournaments as we can and bring in local top throwers 1-2 times a year to coach and answer questions. We encourage parents to get involved and give the kids advice.

As a parent and a league coordinator it is rewarding to see them learning and enjoying themselves and the sport, cheering each other on, and learning how to be a gracious winner and loser when needed.

RESULTS

Vend Alaska:

Leagues have rotated from small (6 players) to Large (40 players) - don't give up when this happens. Years later I have few players that I watched grow up in darts that still participate in my league. It creates an amazing bond.

Rushmore Amusement:

Started with 16 players and are now up to 22. Their enthusiasm is contagious and they have a love for the game that at times adults forget about and a willingness to learn.

Great Amusement:

Started with 10 kids 8 years ago and now over 60 throw at least once a week.

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT THE NDA FOR MORE

INFORMATION AT INFO@NDADARTS.COM