

Will my child be too discouraged if he is occasionally selected to be “paired out.”?

Being paired out means that because there is an odd number of people playing a particular round in a tournament, someone is left without an opponent for that round.

We recognize that being paired out can be discouraging, but it is an unavoidable situation that sometimes occurs when there is an odd number of players. All players are subject to being paired out, but the person actually paired out is usually the lowest-rated player in the lowest score group.

No one can be paired out more than once in any single tournament, but anyone who loses frequently is at greater risk for being paired out repeatedly. Sometimes we can find an opponent for players who are paired out, so they can have a game that night after all, but sometimes we can't.

Can I expect more things to be concerned about as my child improves?

As you child improves, the game will likely end later and later into the evening. This can create several additional concerns:

- They may get sleepy and lose the game. This might make them very upset. This happens all the time, even to adults. Hopefully, you can communicate the idea to your child that they are obviously improving to have played so long and so well up to that point.
- They are up much later than you may like, especially when school is in session.

May I drop off my child at the club?

Your child is your responsibility, and dropping your child off at the club is your decision.

While we supervise the activity of the event to ensure that it is well run and enjoyable for our participants, we expect everyone will behave courteously and responsibly of their own accord, including children.

What things should parents try to prepare their children to expect and deal with?

- **No food is allowed in the playing room.**
- There is **no talking** in the playing room.

- There is no running, jumping or other distracting behavior allowed.
- It may be many weeks before they win a game or they might win one or two games at first but then not win again for a very long time.
- There is **only one game scheduled each week**. If they play fast or impulsively, they will be packing up early to head home.
- **“Touch move”** rules apply. When a piece is touched, it must be moved or captured. No one is allowed to “take back” any move.
- They might get paired out from time to time, which could mean a quick return home if an extra match-up can't be found.
- They are not allowed to get advice from anyone else, and once they sit down to play, they are expected, out of respect for their opponent, to **pay attention** to their game until it is done.
- They might become tired and lose the game **because they got sleepy**. Even adults face this problem every week.
- You might decide it is too late for them to go over the game with their opponent after it is over. They may be disappointed by this.
- They must **write down their moves**. The club provides free score sheets for this.

Once we decide to play at the club, is there anything else we should know?

We have other brochures that describe what you need to know once you start playing at the club.

What other chess activities are available in the area for our children?

The Massachusetts Chess Association, (**MACA**) is the clearinghouse for all things chess in Massachusetts.

MACA runs youth tournaments throughout the year and conducts the Massachusetts Scholastic Championship series of events that determine the state champions for various categories.

A large scholastics information center, with schedules of upcoming events and advice for parents, can be found on the MACA web site at www.MassChess.org



MetroWest Chess Club

Largest Chess Club in New England

Serving the MetroWest Boston chess community since 1983

Young Players at the MCC



Arrive early!
Onsite registration ends at
7:20 PM Sharp

Call to request a bye before
7:00 PM
on Tuesdays
508 - 788 - 3641

www.MetroWestChess.org

InfoRequest@MetroWestChess.org

Can kids play at the MCC, and are they welcome?

Players of all ages are welcome to play at the MCC. A number of kids, some as young as 8 years old, play there pretty regularly. There are, however, many factors that should be considered in deciding if you want your child to play at the club. This brochure should provide you with the information you need to make the decision that is best for you and your child.

Are there other young players at the club?

Yes, we typically have several young players participating in each event. Most, but not all, are very seasoned players. In fact, several of them are on [the top 100 list in the country for their age bracket](#).

What are the requirements for playing?

MCC is affiliated with the USCF (United States Chess Federation), and all the tournaments at the club are USCF-rated events. Because of this, everyone who plays in club tournaments needs to be a member of the USCF. You can join the USCF at the club, or you can join on the USCF website. <http://www.uschess.org/>

What does “rated” mean?

A rating is a numerical indicator of a player’s strength. The USCF is the official US organization that calculates ratings for players based on the results of the games they play and the ratings of the players they play against.

Do you have to join the club?

Club membership is **not** required but is recommended. The Club has structured its membership to provide new players a way to get started at minimal cost.

The club meets on a school night. When does the game begin and how long will it take?

Each tournament runs for one month on all the Tuesday nights in that month. There is no elimination if you lose. [Games start at 7:30 pm sharp](#). If both players use all the time allotted to them, the game can last [four hours](#).

Will the game really take four hours?

Typically, the lower the players’ ratings are, the sooner the games are over. Assuming that your child does not take full advantage of the time allotted due to age and ability, and assuming that the opponent is an adult who might use half the permitted time, a reasonable guess is that the game would end around 9:30 pm. It could end even sooner if someone loses quickly. If it goes all four hours the game will end at [11:30 pm](#).

In general, even the adults who play in the lower section are frequently finished by 10 pm. However, because most adults play much more slowly than the typical scholastic player, there is another issue to consider. Your child might get bored with the pace of the game and lose interest in it or in chess generally.

By the end of the day, kids are too worn out. Why doesn’t the club play during the day?

The club, is run by volunteers who, because of their own jobs, have only their evenings and weekends free to give to the club. Moreover our facility, the Kennedy Senior Center in Natick, is actively used for other purposes during the day. For these reasons, all the club’s events are held on weekday evenings or on weekend days.

Who will my child play?

Once you have registered your child to play in the monthly event, we will arrange [one game each week](#) with someone as close to their level as we can.

[Children and Adults all play together](#). As there are usually many more adults than children, your child will likely play more adults than other children.

Is there any instruction given at the club to improve play?

The club has a “Group Class” which meets before the tournament game begins. All club members are welcome and are encouraged to attend. The material covered in the class addresses a wide range of skill levels and may be too advanced for beginners. [The Group Class meets between 6:30 and 7:15 PM on Tuesday nights](#).

Can I watch my child play?

Yes, you can watch the game [but we strongly recommend you do not](#).

You are not allowed to interfere with the game in any way or assist in the playing of the game. You also cannot behave in a manner that might be construed as assisting your child. This includes talking to your child or being in view of the players during the game.

We recommend that parents strive to help their children become accustomed to being on their own in the playing room. In almost any other venue—in particular, the many area scholastic tournaments that your child might participate in—parents will not be allowed in the playing room.

[We have space for parents to wait](#) while the games are in progress. We also have [wireless connectivity](#) to the internet that is usually working.

What other things should I take into consideration before deciding to play at the club?

Will my child be discouraged if they lose many weeks in a row?

It is common, even for adult beginners, to go many weeks without winning a tournament game. This is true even for players who have played for years casually among friends, because people who play in a club environment generally improve much more quickly than those who do not.

Because of the level of competition in our tournaments, children should expect to lose many games.

Careful study of lost games can be one of the best ways to improve, and players routinely “analyze” their games with each other immediately after it is over. You and your child will need to decide whether the improvement from playing tough competition outweighs the discouragement of losing.

The main point is to encourage kids to continue playing—no one gets better by not playing. And we at the MCC want to avoid any situation where discouragement due to losing causes anyone to stop playing chess altogether.

Playing in area scholastic tournaments may provide more opportunities for wins but may be less challenging and less discouraging.