

THE

HUDDLE

HBL's Timeout for Communication

THE CAR RIDE HOME:

A Survival Guide

WEIGHTS:

Are they safe for my
10-year-old?

JAMES' JOURNEY:

"I can do it."



SCOREBOARD

— The people and partners behind *The Huddle* —

MASTHEAD

Editor & Publisher

Michael Churn

Lead Writer

HBL Editorial Team

Design & Layout

HBL Creative Studio

Photography & Visual Production

HBL Media

Contributing Voices

HBL Coaches, Parents, and Athletes

Produced in Hampton Roads

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

COMMUNITY PARTNER

DealerGlow

Automotive Photography

Why We Support HBL

DealerGlow believes confidence is built long before performance is judged. We support HBL because development, preparation, and clear communication matter — on the court and in life.

Proudly supporting youth development in Hampton Roads.

DEALERGLOW

Interested in supporting future editions? hoops@hblbasketball.org

HAMPTON ROADS YOUTH BASKETBALL LEAGUE



HBL



HBL

DEVELOPMENT * DISCIPLINE * DIRECTION
COMING SPRING 2026



TIP-OFF

Welcome to the Process.

What's the "HBL Way"?

At HBL, we're not just a league; we're a classroom.

We believe in building young athletes from the ground up.

Here's what that means for your family:



CLASSROOM BEFORE SCOREBOARD

Every practice is a lesson, every game an opportunity to learn.

Winning matters to us, but growth matters more.



PURPOSE BEFORE OUTCOME

We coach to win, but we lead to devo.

Skill-building, effort, and decision-making are the wins we value first.



MISSIONS BEFORE MEDALS

We see a basketball court as a place to learn not just the game, but teamwork, character, and resilience that last beyond the final buzzer.

THANK YOU

Thank you for trusting us with your athlete's journey. Your support, patience, and encouragement at home make all the difference.

THE SYSTEMS (STRATEGY & SKILLS) →

Next, we'll break down HBL's approach to developing skills and strategy—phase by phase, step by step.



BIGGER THAN BASKETBALL.

WE TRAIN SKILLS.

WE STRENGTHEN CHARACTER.

WE SUPPORT PARENTS.

Because the habits kids build on
the court follow them for life.

HBL

DEVELOPING PLAYERS.
GROWING STRONG KIDS.

THE YOUTH BASKETBALL PHASES

Each phase builds on the last. Starting with the Discovery Phase.

AGES 6-9: THE DISCOVERY PHASE.



RISE



RISE KEY FOCUS



FUN



MECHANICS



MOTOR SKILLS



POSITIVE HABITS

AGES 10-12: THE TECHNICIAN PHASE.



HBL HBL CO



HBL CO



SKILL ACQUISITION



DECISION MAKING



LEARNING

COMMUNITY

Each phase builds on the last. Starting with the Discovery Phase.

Progress requires patience

TBALL ROADMAP

Skipping steps leaves gaps.

0-13:
THE
ICAL PHASE.

RE FOCUS



RE FOCUS

ACQUISITION

DECISION-MAKING

MOVING TO COMPETE

COMMUNICATION

AGES 14+:
THE PERFORMANCE PHASE.



THE ACADEMY



THE ACADEMY KEY FOCUS



STRENGTH



STRUCTURED INTENSITY

STRATEGY

RESILIENCE

Skipping steps leaves gaps.

at every stage.

THE INVISIBLE SKILL: COMMUNICATION

Basketball is more than a game of **physical skills**; it's also a game of **Emotional Intelligence (EQ)**. EQ is your ability to understand, communicate, and respond in ways that help your team. On defense, EQ means talking early and often so your teammates feel confident and connected.



EQ - Emotional Intelligence

A loud team is a confident team

- ✚ **COMMUNICATION EQUALS CONFIDENCE**
- ✚ **THE EQ ADVANTAGE**

THE QUIET DRILL:

How Coaches Teach Non-Verbal Cues

It's not always about shouting. In "The Quiet Drill," players are required to defend without talking. This challenges them, but it ~~once~~ shows how crucial communication is—with or without words.



NON-VERBAL + VERBAL

**COMMUNICATION
MATTERS**



POINT



NOD



SHIFT

It's not always about shouting. In "The Quiet Drill," players are required to defend without talking. This challenges them, but it also shows how crucial communication.

These and other non-verbal cues help teammates stay sharp, even in the noise of the game.

TIMEOUT

JAMES' JOURNEY: “THE HEAVY LIFT”

Basketball isn't just about **getting stronger** — it's about **getting ready**. As young athletes grow, they see older players lifting weights, training harder, and getting bigger. And like James, they start to wonder:

“If I do that now... will I get better faster?”

But development doesn't work that way.



STRENGTH HAS A SEQUENCE

At younger ages, the most important strength is **control** — learning how to move your body well before adding anything extra.

- **Balance** before barbells
- **Technique** before intensity
- **Stability** before plates
- **Confidence** through mastery

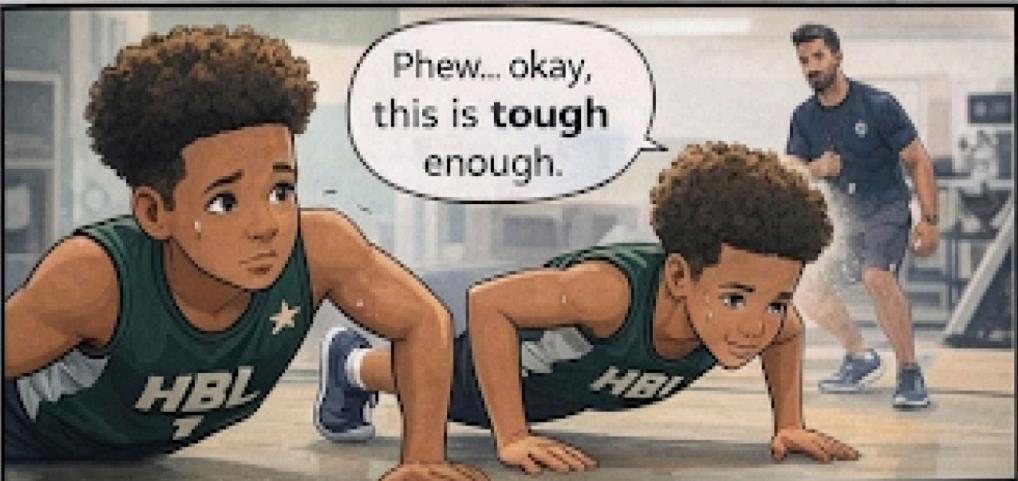
WHY BODYWEIGHT MATTERS FIRST

Pushups, squats, lunges, **planks**, and movement drills do more than build muscles — they teach:

- Proper joint alignment
- **Core stability**
- Coordination and body awareness
- **Confidence** through mastery

LESSON:

Master your bodyweight before adding external weight.



THE CAR RIDE HOME

The most critical 20 minutes in a youth athlete's

When the whistle blows, the next play is yours.

After the game ends, young athletes don't remember points or mistakes; they remember how it felt to get in the car. And they can hear postgame stress in our voices from three feet away.

When the whistle blows, the next play is yours.

1

THE 24-HOUR RULE

WAIT 24 HOURS BEFORE CRITIQUING A PERFORMANCE

Your child needs time to process before they can improve. They can't hear you when they're in the emotions of the game.

2

THE ONE SENTENCE RULE

“I loved watching you play today.”

Letting them know you valued their effort is the most important thing you can say.



life.

CE

ne.



“The drive home can elevate players or deflate them.” It’s normal to want to fill the silence -- but it’s ok to just let it breathe.

VALIDATION: Being quiet is hard.

- ✓ **RIGHT NOW, THEY FEEL RAW AND “FULL OF” SWINGING EMOTIONS. (“Can I even play?”)**
- ✓ **24 HOURS LETS YOU BOTH CALM DOWN AND PERSPECTIVE RETURN.**
- ✓ **IT SHOWS YOU VALUE THEIR EFFORT OVER SCORES, MISTAKES, OR EVEN VICTORIES.**

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

Answering the Big Questions on Intensity & Weights.

A THE WEIGHT ROOM QUESTION

THE VERDICT

Strength training is **safe** – when it's age-appropriate and supervised.

Young athletes don't need heavy weights to get stronger. They need **control**, **coordination**, and consistency.

THE PROGRESSION

Strength is built in stages – not rushed.

A BODYWEIGHT (Ages 7-10)

- Pushups, planks, squats
- Learning posture and balance
- Building tendon and joint readiness



B RESISTANCE BANDS & LIGHT MED BALLS (Ages 11-13)

- Controlled resistance
- Core stability
- Movement patterns under light load



Key Principle: Master your body before you add weight to it.

✓ **HBL Philosophy:** We train the brain first – the body follows.

C FUELING UP

THE PRE-GAME PLATE



Master your body before you add weight to it.

B THE INTENSITY SWITCH

Fuel supports learning, recovery, and energy — not just performance.

CARBS & HYDRATION

- Whole grains
- Fruit
- Lean protein



CARBS & HYDRATION



QUICK TIP: Hydration starts the night before — not the hour before.

SUGAR & FAT

- Fast food
- Sugary drinks



SUGAR & FAT

BASKETBALL IS THE VEHICLE DEVELOPMENT IS THE FUEL GROWTH IS THE GOAL



UPCOMING KEY DATES

-  Registration begins Feb 1st
-  Spring Season begins Mar 23rd



Join the Huddle
Digital Magazine