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## One Way to Connect with the Community

By Jeff Erdman

In 1999 Rosemount High School football began a program that we call the Irish Way as a tool for setting expectations for player behavior within the football program. This program was originally based off lessons from the Coaching to Change Lives curriculum that became well known to football coaches in Minnesota after Woodbury's Royal Pride program led them to a state title. We refer to our program as the Irish Way. Our Irish Way Creed embodies the expectations we have for our participants.

We like to make emphasize that the Irish Way of doing things is to be a hard worker, to be unselfish, etc.

Three years into the execution of the Irish Way program, we looked at trying to expand our program to include more sports and the elementary schools that feed into RHS. One of the best things about Rosemount is that we still have a small town feel and closeness within the community. We thought that promoting this program to the elementary schools would be a great way of providing

### The Irish Way Creed

I am Honest.  
I am Kind.  
I am Unselfish.  
I am a Hard Worker.  
I am Responsible.  
I am a bulldog. (reference to a story from Coaching to Change Lives)  
I am Proud.  
I am Strong.  
I am a man.

Rosemount  
Football

quality growth opportunities for our participants while introducing character traits that we would like future Irish athletes to develop. What we came up with is called the Irish Way Kid's Club. This program has been in effect for 5 years and has been extremely well received by the elementary schools, RHS student-athletes and the community.



## “FOOTBALL IS MINNESOTA’S GAME”

Below are descriptions of the various components of the Kid’s Club.

### Irish Way Kid’s Club

This program was created to use the positive concepts of the Irish Way to create a strong tie between the elementary schools and our athletic programs.

**KICK-OFFS** We begin the year at each school (Rosemount Elementary, Shannon Park, Red Pine, & Parkview) with a 20 minute presentation that explains the program. We take athletes from our football, volleyball, soccer and swimming teams to lead this presentation.

**WEEKLY WORKSHEETS** Each week the students receive an Irish Way Kid’s Club Worksheet in their Friday folder that highlights the creed concept of the week. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the WS items into lessons or discussions. This worksheet also includes a badge to get into home volleyball, soccer and football games for free with an adult. It also allows them to participate in a pre-game fan tunnel and to receive a free pop later in the night

**LUNCHROOM VISITS** On Thursdays our athletes visit the recesses of each school and hand out Irish Way Kid’s Club Bookmarks or pencil bags to students for sharing a story of how they demonstrated one of the creed items. Our athletes often end up playing soccer, basketball or participating in other activities as well.

**CLASSROOM VISITS** There have also been times where classroom teachers requested our athletes to come in and work with specific lessons they had prepared regarding the creed concept of the week.

### Kid’s Club Reading Contest

We also sponsor a reading contest to promote reading in the fall. Each school sets criteria for students to achieve to work at becoming better readers. All students that reach that criteria have their names entered for a drawing to win an Irish Football Jersey, Volleyball t-shirt, Soccer Shirts and Girls Swimming Shirts. The winners receive their

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- I am Honest.
  - I am Kind.
  - I am Unselfish.
  - I am a Hard Worker.
  - I am Responsible.
  - I am Proud.
  - I am Strong.
  - I am a Good Kid.
- Rosemount Athletics

**IRISH PRIDE**

THE IRISH WAY KIDS CLUB

“ I AM Kind ”

See you at the game!

Kindness

To act in good will towards another.

Senior Captains  
Branden Dungy & Joel Graham

“ Being kind to others is very important. When you are kind you are making a Winning decision. Make a Winning decision by being kind every day of your life.”

Are you being kind when you...

- ♣ help a new student?
- ♣ use please, thank you & you’re welcome?
- ♣ say words that hurt someone’s feelings?
- ♣ cut in front of people in line?
- ♣ take turns?

Irish Way Kids Club

Sept. 20-24

Tuesday, September 21  
Volleyball vs Eagan - 7:00pm

Thursday, September 23  
Football vs Kennedy - 7:00pm

I AM Kind.

prize at half-time of our last home game in front of several thousand people.

I would welcome any specific questions coaches might have about this program and the implementation of it. My email is jeff.erdmann@district196.org. We believe that the more our participants can demonstrate the Irish Way traits, the more successful we will be as an athletic program, school, community, and nation.