

Dear Parent(s):

I wanted to take this opportunity to put in writing the Girls Minors coaching philosophy and goals for your child. Youth softball can be an exciting and fun opportunity for your child to learn new skills, make new friends, and have fun. As fun as it can be for your child, different expectations from the coach, parent(s), and players can take away from that positive experience in a number of ways. As you read through this letter please make sure that this philosophy fits with your expectations of what you want for your child.

Coaching Philosophy

- We believe that kids gain confidence and a love for the game through positive feedback from parents, coaches, and other players. Skill level develops at different rates for kids, but effort and having fun can always be achieved. We try to always provide positive feedback for effort.

- We think it's important that a coach takes more than a casual interest in the players. We strive to talk with all the players 1 on 1 at some point during the practices and games. We may not be successful getting to every player each day, but we want them to know that we're interested in what they have to say and more importantly, we want them to know that their coach likes them as a person.

- We believe in trying to make practices as fun and entertaining for the kids as possible, while providing the practice and instruction that they need to improve. We have found that kids expect and respond to well structured and organized practices. Attention span is often limited with this age group, so we will strive to keep them moving and active.

- Teamwork and developing friendships is an important part of any team sport. We always try to tell the kids how important it is for them to support each other and to always be positive towards their teammates.

- Competition is an important element of any sport and as kids grow they naturally become more competitive. We don't talk to the kids about "needing to win a game" or "how important it is that we win". We feel our role and that of the parents is helping the kids develop the ability to deal with competition in a healthy way. Effort and attitude is our focus. If we can achieve that, then chances are we'll win the number of games that we are capable of winning.

We will work on teaching fundamentals and skills during practice and apply those skills during the game. We will give instruction during the game if we feel it will help with their performance during the game, but in general we will try to let them enjoy the game. We don't think any of the kids want to be told what they did wrong during the game. We hope as parents you will do the same. At this age, one missed ground ball can ruin the game for some kids. If your child misses a ground ball, tell them how proud you were of the effort they made to get in front of it. Strive to make them feel good about their contribution. My goal is to have every child feel that they played a great game that day.

Objectives

With this age group, we have 5 primary coaching objectives which we believe are equally important.

1. Help your child develop the skills necessary to be successful at this level and to prepare your child for next season.
2. To have fun and have the kids develop a love for the game.
3. Learn about the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
4. Give positive reinforcement based on effort rather than results.
5. Provide a safe and healthy environment for all the kids on the team.

Playing Time and Positions

For this age group there is a drastic difference in skill level among the kids. We want to give the kids an opportunity to play a number of different positions and will make sure each player gets a chance each game to play in the infield for a couple of innings. We will not have a player pitch or catch that we don't feel has the ability to play the position at this time. This really is a safety issue as much as anything. Plus, we want to put kids in positions where we feel they have the best chance of being successful. That doesn't mean they won't have the ability by the end of the season and we will always work with the kids at those positions during practice if they are interested.

Team Rules and Discipline

We will have a few general team rules that we will make at the first practice. Rules may be added during the season if necessary.

Player Expectations

1. Have fun and always give your best effort.
2. We expect players to always show respect for the coaches, parents, and other players on the team.
3. Spend time outside of practice playing softball.

Parent Expectations

1. Please try to get your child to practice and games on time. We know this can be difficult at times and impossible at other times, but it's really hard to conduct practice or get ready for a game when players continually show up late. If you know your child will be late or won't be able to make it to a practice or game, please let your coach know in advance if possible.
2. Help out with team volunteer opportunities. We have a number of items that require parent help.
3. Get involved in playing softball with your child. This may be helping out with at practice or playing catch in the yard on days we don't practice. Kids love it when their parents get involved. Repetition is also crucial for skill improvement. There simply isn't enough organized practice time for the kids. They need to work on the skills they learn at practice at home also.
4. Please encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game and practice. Please cheer for your child during games, but try to keep from yelling instructions to them. Remember this is their opportunity to enjoy playing in the game. Much of the fun is lost if their Mom or Dad is always yelling instructions.
5. Please let your coach know if you have a problem with them or with something that is happening. Same holds true if your child isn't happy about something. We want to know if there is a problem right away. With this age group, very small things can cause a child to be upset. These problems can be fixed very easily if we know about them.
6. Safety is a primary concern for us. Unfortunately, we can't watch every child every second. If you see any situation that you believe is a safety concern, please step in and help. Make sure you follow up with your coach so they know what has happened.

We are looking forward to a fun and rewarding season. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me or your child's coach.

Sincerely,

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