

## **Coaches Drills**

### **T-Ball through 8 years**

#### **Skills**

- How to grip a ball 4 seam (throw properly, hand up high)
- How to make an “out”
- What is a “walk”
- Grounders and pop flies
- How to run bases
- Responsibilities of each base or position (footwork, form)
- How to hold a bat (line up knuckles, grip, stance, load, swing, )
- Proper pitching form.

#### **Stations**

- T-work with 2 kids at a time
- Infield work (grounders, covering/back up bases)
- Outfield work (pops, alignment, gaps and cutoffs)
- Soft toss
- Pitching/catching station
- Relay drills
- Keep kids busy...break into stations...utilize dads/moms willing to help!!!

#### **Scenarios**

- Three runners, everyone else in field positions, coach yells out “How many outs?” “Where’s the play?” Coach hits the ball to various spots and teaches kids about proper coverage. Rotate positions and get fresh base runners after 3 outs.

#### **Teach**

- How to “tag up” and how to bunt.
- How to spin out of the way of a wild pitch while pulling the bat down.
- Explain a double play.
- How and why to get back to your base if the ball is caught in the air.
- Batting counts...balls and strikes.
- Break down a few positions each practice and explain their responsibilities in detail while doing plays unique to that position. IE: First baseman chases down a weak dribbler and the 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman covers his base. Or ball is hit to RF so 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman goes out to cutoff leaving SS to cover the base.
- Every position has more than one responsibility...teach them in detail and be visual.

## Fun

- Kids love simple contests.
- Who can throw the ball from shallow outfield and hit a bucket?
- Who can be the sole survivor of a grounder and throw to 1<sup>st</sup> contest?
- Do a lazy toss over their shoulder and have them track it down.
- 3 or 4 man scrimmages. They hit 'til they get 3 outs.
- And to mix it up...throw 10 pitches to hit then send them "live" and they get BP in and have fun trying to get their teammates out.

## Warm-ups

- Stretches...light base running to warm-up.
- Throw as a team. Make perfect lines and keep them in close. Coach asks both lines to take 1 or 2 steps back as they get their arms warmed up
- If a kid misses a catch, he runs it back to the line before throwing back to his partner (avoids chaos)

## Tips

- Keep the kids moving. They get bored easily. They love to run.
- Use a Training ball if a player is skittish until they get enough skill and confidence to use a hard leather ball.
- Plan your practices ahead of time. And stick to a schedule.
- Use all the help you can get and break up into stations.
- Pay attention to bat sizes and gloves that are not properly broke in. Offer tips to parents who are not up to speed in the proper equipment areas.
- Hot Glove or oil products.
- Boys should be wearing a protection cup and everyone should wear cleats if possible.
- Teach every player every position - regardless of their skill. It's all about development.
- Kids love to play with the older ball players. Invite special guests to practice like older brothers of players and especially high school players.
- FYI: Youtube is a great resource for baseball drills. If you want to visually check something out – this is a great tool to use!
- Kids love when they have nick names and they love praise! Lay it on thick.