



THE PRINCIPLES OF COACHING HAMEL BASEBALL

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Remember that the role of youth sports is to satisfy the needs of kids, not the needs of adults! Starting before teams are even selected, too often adults want to compete through their kids. Kids want to “have fun,” “run around,” “wear cool uniforms,” make friends and be part of a team. It’s all about the kids, not adults.

MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY:

Be familiar with the Hamel Baseball Safety Plan.

5 TO 1

A 5 to 1 ratio that stresses five positive reinforcements compared to one criticism/correction is what makes sports an enjoyable and positive experience for kids.

RESPECT THE GAME

Teach kids to respect the equipment, rules, opponents, officials, teammates and self. “Attitude reflects leadership.” Kids are watching and listening to you.

FOCUS ON THINGS KIDS (AND PARENTS) CONTROL

Showing up on time, hustling on and off the diamond, running hard on the basepaths, taking care of their equipment and respecting the game. Ultimately, kids cannot control who they play or if the other team makes a good play. They cannot control the score, only their effort. “Winning” doesn’t make the top reasons why kids play sports. Only one team wins its last game. Focusing on the scoreboard is one of the main reasons why kids quit.

EARLY BLOOMERS VS. LATE BLOOMERS

Studies show that about half of the kids on HS teams come from the B and C pools as youth. The athletic ability of a child pre-puberty is a meaningless indicator of that same child’s athletic ability post-puberty. 70% of kids quit youth sports by age 13. Don’t make the late bloomers into the “early exitors.”

FAIR PARTICIPATION

Adhere to Hamel playing-time policies. One of the main reasons kids quit sports is the perception that coaches play “favorites.”

COMMUNICATE

Communicate the expectations/goals of the team to kids and parents. Make positive contact with parents early and often. Send a preseason email and have a preseason meeting with parents. Update them frequently, even if it’s about “nothing.”

PLAN AND ORGANIZE

Have a plan for practices and games. Check the website for tons of resources. Keep it fun (football toss, Fat Albert bat, tennis racquet ball, whiffleball on the grass, etc.) Remember to have age-appropriate drills and expectations. One size doesn’t fit all.

PROMOTE GOOD HABITS

Promote kids getting to practice on time, being prepared, giving maximum effort, and maintaining positive attitudes. Playing catch the right way is the single most important aspect of sound, fundamental baseball. Make other teams remember us for our sound fundamentals.

DON'T OVERCOACH

Kids make 2 decisions every second. That’s 20 decisions every ten seconds. Kids aren’t going to be able to process things at that moment. Lead the parents on this as well. Teach parents the meaning of “non-directional” cheering or coaching.