

# **DAA Minors - Rookie Coaching Guide**

**Updated: Feb 2021**





## **HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF DAA**

Doylestown Athletic Association (DAA) has been organizing youth sports programs in our community since 1968 with the help of its sponsors and volunteer coaches, umpires and officials. The total enrollment in all of DAA's sports programs is more than 3,000 boys and girls; and this number has been growing by nearly 10% per year. Only 54% of DAA's membership comes from Doylestown Borough or Township. The rest of DAA's players and volunteers comes from communities throughout central Bucks County.

Currently, DAA's programs consist of boys' & girls' basketball (winter), boys' baseball and T-ball (spring), girls' softball (spring/summer), girls' field hockey (fall) and boys' and girls' co-ed volleyball (fall, winter skills & drills and spring). Most of these programs are played at the recreational level; but DAA also features travel teams in boys' baseball and basketball, as well as girls' softball.

All sports are open to children ages 7 through 18 (and even younger in some sports); although each sport's leagues are restricted to players in specified age groups and/or school grade levels. DAA provides an equal opportunity for its members to enjoy sports participation in an environment that encourages, promotes and develops sportsmanship, citizenship and a sense of teamwork and pride in oneself. All players enrolled in the recreational programs will play at least a minimum period of time in each game, regardless of talent or experience. Financial assistance is provided when necessary to any player with a desire to participate. Please see individual sport director for a confidential discussion. All coaches, assistant coaches and board members must pass a confidential background check administered by an independent investigative agency.

For more information on DAA Baseball, our web site <http://daasports.org/boys-baseball-home/> provides a good overview of Junior and Senior leagues, travel, registration and scheduling information.



## **DAA Code of Conduct**

**AS A PLAYER,** I promise to always play with good sportsmanship and respect for my teammates and opponents. I will be courteous to all coaches, officials and other parent volunteers who are trying to help me become a better player. I will do my best in all practices and games, have patience with myself and remember that I am playing these games for fun. I will attend every practice and game I can, knowing that my team will depend on me to be there. I will play hard at every position that my coaches assign to me.

**AS A PARENT,** I promise to encourage good sportsmanship by showing support for all players, coaches and officials at every game. I will focus upon my child's efforts and performance rather than the overall outcome of the game. I will never ridicule or yell at any child, including my own, for making a mistake or losing a game. I will never use profanity or physically or verbally abuse any players, coaches, officials or spectators. I will participate in positive cheers that encourage all players and discourage any cheers that redirect that focus, including those that taunt and intimidate officials or opposing players and fans.

I will help my child enjoy the experience of playing on a team by doing whatever I can, including being a respectful fan and providing whatever help is needed by the team or league according to my skills and availability.

I will endeavor to learn, understand and respect the rules of the game, the officials who administer them and their decisions. I will remember that the coaches and league officers are all volunteers. I will not be critical unless I'm ready and willing to make the necessary effort to correct the object of my criticism; and I will bring any perceived problems to the attention of my child's coach IN PRIVATE.

I will bring my child to practices and games on time and, if I do not stay, will make sure that my child is picked up promptly afterward. I will also give advance notice to my child's coach whenever my child will be absent from a practice or game. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all DAA-sponsored events.



**AS A COACH**, I will honor all of the above promises that generally apply to parents; and I will never forget the trust that parents place in me while coaching their children. I will do my best to develop the talents of every player on my team, to treat them with respect and fairness and to help the entire team learn the principles of sportsmanship. I will also honor the principles below:

1. I will support the vision of DAA – provide an opportunity for youth to play organized sports.
2. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win
3. I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
4. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
5. I will promise to treat all injuries, minor and major, as serious and to take prompt action.
6. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
7. I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players. By this I will set an example for the parents to conduct themselves in the same manner.
8. I will provide a sports environment for my team, in conjunction with league policies, that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
9. I will be knowledgeable in the rules of baseball, as established by the league, and I will teach these rules to my players and parents.
10. I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
11. I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and NOT adults.



## Coaching Responsibilities

### Enjoyment

This should be obvious – but coaches should remember they have the most impact on determining if a player has a positive experience throughout the season – and wants to return the next season. Plan your practices to keep all kids active (in smaller groups if needed). Motivate and teach with a positive attitude! Remember -- the tone you set as a coach will really impact the experience of all the kids.

### Education

The following pages of this guide provide a few tips for teaching proper baseball techniques. Our goal should be ensuring each boy learns some fundamental skills appropriate to his age group. Coaches should also search for advice on details for which they may not be experts. Improving our own coaching acumen should be a goal of each of us each season!

### Field Care

Before each game (HOME team is responsible)

- Show up 45 minutes before any game. Field prep will take 15 minutes, and we want to allow time for infield practices to start 30 minutes prior to game time.
- The coaches may need to make a game-time call on a rainout (see below too). If there is standing water on much of the infield that cannot be removed by raking or 1-2 bags of STAY DRY, the game may need to be cancelled. Never use more than 2 bags of STAY DRY, and never use for practices (just games).
- If the field is not in proper condition from previous usage, contact the league director. We need to follow up on coaches not doing proper after-game/practice cleanup.
- Line the fields using the bags of lime in the field bin. If you need to replace lime from the shed, use the golf cart and re-supply with several bags for the coming weeks.

After each game or practice (AWAY team is responsible if game)

- **Home Plate Area / Batters Boxes:** Hand rake these areas back to level. If you can get the cart to drag or sweep that area great, but be sure not to run over home plate. Keep in mind that with the rakes we're trying to smooth out the field, not dig up the dirt.
- **Pitchers Mound:** Hand rake areas back to level - especially focusing on the landing areas and the shelf in front of the pitchers rubber. Smooth out the mound.
- **Base Paths:** Hand rake up and down along the path. Do not rake across the path as it encourages dirt to build up on the edges. Some base paths might be wide enough to have the cart drag; however, be sure to stay 6 inches away from the grass to prevent lips from building up. Again, we're trying to smooth out the field with the rake, not dig up the dirt.
- **Infield Area:** Use the carts to drag or sweep the infield areas. Be sure to stay 6 inches away from the grass to prevent lips from building up. We will have (maybe not today, but soon) infield drag mats that can be used to hand drag at Turk 5 and 6 and at Maplewood 1 and 2.
- **Trash:** Dispose of trash in and around the field and bench areas



## Safety

Pitch Counts – NA for this league

### Child Abuse Clearance

Effective 8/1/2015, Pennsylvania has a new background check policy in place. All volunteer coaches must have been cleared through the DAA background Check process, summarized at <http://daasports.org/background-check>

### Accidents / injuries

Each coach has received registration information for each player that includes emergency contacts and other relevant medical info (eg, allergies) pertinent in case an ambulance needs to be called. Make sure you have the spreadsheet with all that information available at any game or practice.

If a player is injured to the extent an insurance claim might want to later be made, the coach must report the event to the league director. DAA carries insurance for such cases, but the insurance claim can be at risk if the event is not reported promptly.

## Rain Outs

All coaches MUST sign up for text alerts of field closings and game cancellations. Simply text DOYLESTOWNBASEBALL to 84483 to receive alerts from DAA Baseball.

Rain-out Policy (also posted at <http://daasports.org/boys-baseball-home/schedules>):

- Both Coaches have to agree that the field is unplayable. If there is a disagreement, the Home Team's Coach or a Paid League Umpire (Majors, AAA, & AA) makes the final call.
- If it is questionable prior to game time, have the players go to the field and decide at the game site. Weather can be isolated, so please check your field before making your final decision. Rain-outs will not be rescheduled.
- If there is inclement weather in the area for most of the day, please check the DAA website (either Home or Schedules pages) to inquire if the fields are open or closed. When there is severe weather, DAA Baseball may close all the fields.
- IF there is time, an email will be sent out stating that the fields are closed.
- Majors, AAA, & AA Managers: As soon as you cancel your game, contact Susan Schwartz (267-337-1210) so she can inform the umpires that the game is canceled.
- If a game is in progress and a clap of thunder is heard in the area, please clear the field and take shelter immediately. The game will be suspended until 30 minutes have passed since the last clap of thunder was heard. If the game continues after a weather delay and is stopped again due to more thunder and lightning in the area, the game is canceled.





## **Some Notes for Coach-Parent Meeting**

1. Introductions
  - a. introduce all coaches
  - b. all players introduce themselves
2. Philosophy
  - a. enjoyment, positive coaching, not win at all costs
  - b. education of the game / equal playtime for all
  - c. respect for coaches and each other
3. Information flow
  - a. Email – verify if any parent wants to keep their email private (BCC)
4. Rain out policy (parent may want to text DOYLESTOWNBASEBALL to 84483 to receive alerts)
5. Parents responsibilities
  - a. Code of Conduct
  - b. Zero Tolerance Policy
  - c. Proper practice equipment needed (long pants, hat, glove, no metal cleats)
  - d. Not baby sitter – parent or responsible adult should be present
  - e. Email the coach if will miss event
  - f. Arrive early for games as coach specifies
  - g. Younger leagues – snack policy (beware allergies if so)
6. Upcoming dates
  - a. Opening Day / Picture Day
  - b. Home Run Derby for age 7+



## **DAA Minors – Rookie – League Rules**

### **1. Fielding / Defensive Rules**

- a) Ten (10) players will play the field every inning. Two coaches may be in the outfield to assist players with proper defensive positioning and play. Each player will rotate positions every inning to learn how to play every position in the field. Teams will have a maximum of 12 to 13 players, so two to three players will be out of the game when playing the field. Players should be rotated out of the game every inning when playing in the field. Every player on your roster should take a turn of being out of the game. No player should sit-out a second inning during a game until after each player on the team has been out for one defensive inning. A Bench Coach should work with the players that are sitting out of the game. The ten (10) players in the field will play the following positions:

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Pitcher     | 6. Third Base         |
| 2. Catcher     | 7. Left Field         |
| 3. First Base  | 8. Left Center Field  |
| 4. Second Base | 9. Right Center Field |
| 5. Shortstop   | 10. Right Field       |

### **2. Batting Rules**

- a) During **Phase 1** (first half of the season), every player will bat every inning regardless of how many outs are made. Thus, each team will bat around once per half inning and then the teams switch sides and the other team will bat around in their half inning. Coaches will pitch to their own team during the Phase 1.
- b) During **Phase 2** (second half of the season) of the season, every player will bat during the inning for the first two innings of the game, and then the following innings will be played by either the defensive team getting three outs on the team that is batting or the half innings will end once every player on the team bats once.
- c) Batters will be thrown a maximum of 6 pitches per at bat (from the coach). If a batter fails to hit the ball after these 6 pitches, they will have the option to hit the ball off of the tee, or take first base on a “walk”. This will provide the player with an opportunity to learn how to run the bases and will also boost the player’s self-confidence and self-esteem levels.

### **3. Base Running Rules**

- a) A base runner may not advance to the next base on any over throws





- b) When a batter hits the ball to the outfield, they can advance to as many bases as they can until the ball is in the infield. The base coach will instruct the runner to advance or to stop.
- c) Stealing bases is not permitted
- d) During **Phase 1** of the season a base runner will remain on base to practice the skill even though they were called out on a fielding play. In **Phases 2** a called out runner will leave the field and will return to their dugout.
- e) If there is a play at home plate, the runner **MUST SLIDE**.

#### 4. **Game Rules**

- a) All players must wear the appropriate equipment at all times, which includes: batting helmets while batting and in the “on-deck” circle; catchers gear while catching; and baseball hat and glove while in the field on defense.
- b) Each game will last either 6 innings or 1 hour and 30 minutes whichever is SHORTER.
- c) The home team for each game will get the field ready for playing and make sure all bases are securely in place.
- d) Each team will provide their own baseballs for the game.
- e) After each game, players from both teams will line up and shake hands and congratulate each other on a good game. This will display the good sportsmanship we are promoting in DAA.
- f) The last inning shall not start after 1 hour 15 minutes. The home team shall bat in the last inning.
- g) There shall be no scoring recording and no team will be identified as the winning team

#### 5. **Team Rules**

- a) Each team will designate a team and/or snack parent who will be in charge of developing and communicating a snack schedule. This snack schedule should consist of a list of each game and who is in charge of bringing a healthy snack and drink for each child on the team following each game. Coaches should request parents to identify allergies and communicate to the snack parent.



## **DAA Minors – Rookie – Coaching Objectives**

### **1. Overall Coaching Objectives**

- a) To provide everyone an equal opportunity to participate.
- b) To provide an environment that encourages, promotes, and develops sportsmanship, citizenship, and a sense of teamwork & pride in oneself.
- c) To use POSITIVE coaching techniques with your team:
- d) TEACH honor and respect for the Game.
- e) REWARD and REINFORCE effort. Not just winning.
- f) PROVIDE positive reinforcement and encouragement as your primary method of motivating your players. Give “Kid-Friendly Criticism” in private when you have the player’s attention and they can hear you. Avoid giving criticism in non-teachable moments and sandwich each criticism (one positive before and after each criticism). Keep those EMOTIONAL TANKS FULL!
- g) Remember to keep it fun so players will enjoy baseball and their DAA Sports experience.

### **2. Skills Objectives**

- a) Fielding Grounders
  - Balanced “Ready” Positions / Hands out in front of body
  - Receive “grounders” with two hands
  - Exhibit “Sound” throwing skills
  - Takes the ball from glove to power “t” positions smoothly. Turns body to target and throws to the target using good “foot work”.
  - Knuckles face the head in the power “t” -- ELBOW is “high” and “away” from side of body
  - SNAP and follow-through with the throw.
- b) Catching Fly Balls
  - Glove and hand in proper position to approach and CATCH the baseball using two hands. When the ball is above the fielders waist the fingers of the glove are up. When the ball is below the fielders waist the fingers of the glove are below the waist.
  - Use sound foot work after catching the ball to get the body turned to the target.
  - On long throws a player will use the crow-hop technique.



## **b) Hitting**

- GRIP – Knocked Knuckles
- STANCE – Good Balance, knees slightly bent, legs are slightly wider than shoulders. Back Elbow is down and relaxed.
- LOAD – Push bat back evenly with both hands when the pitcher has ball at top of power “t”. Weight is now on the back leg.
- SLIDE – Shift weight to front side by sliding front foot slightly forward towards the pitcher.
- HIPS & HANDS – Release hips and hands. The Knob of bat should be pointing at the pitcher when the hands and hips release.
- IMPACT – Bottom arm is fully extended. Top arm is bent at the elbow.
- EXTENSION – Arms are fully extended and the bat is pointed to center field.
- FINISH – Follow-through!

## **c) Base Running**

- TEACH basic mechanics of running (pumping, arms, leg drive, and eyes focused on the base instead of the ball.)
- Drop or lay the bat down when running to first base.
- RUNNING THROUGH first base
- ROUNDING second base and third base
- USE ARM to push-off the base to start crossover step to get a good start off the base
- SOLID BASE RUNNING Fundamentals by knowing situations (Fly Ball if caught or dropped / Open base / two outs).
- Good Listening Skills. Listens to base coaches’ instructions

## **d) Basic Defensive Fundamentals**

- Knowing situations when there is a runner at first
- Knowing situations when there is a runner at second
- Knowing situations when there is a runner at third
- Knowing Force Outs versus the need to tag a runner for an out.
- Knowing base and field responsibilities depending on ball location
- CUT-OFF and RELAY responsibilities. The Cut-Off Player should provide a two-hand target for the thrower. After the cut-off person catches the ball they should turn to their glove hand side to continue the relay.



e) Basic Catching Skills

- Balance Stance on feet.
- Make a Target for the pitcher over the plate in the batters strike zone.
- Keep your body in front of the pitch. Move the body to the ball not just the glove. Use the body to block the ball.
- Get rid of the helmet and mask to field pop-ups.
- Know when they have base responsibilities.
- Block home plate when there is a play at home.
- Communicate to all the field players the number of outs in the current inning.

**Remember to have FUN and be POSITIVE!!!**