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Permits (will be supplied to each manager once issued by HTSD or Haverford Twp Rec.)

Dear Hilltop Manager:

Congratulations on your selection as a Hilltop Baseball or Softball Manager this season.

Hilltop has been in existence since 1963. We have a long tradition of excellence with the addition of our Softball Program in 1987 and Challenger Division in 2001.

Since our league now holds over sixty teams this manual was designed to set formal guidelines and procedures for managers, coaches, players and parents to follow. This is an education tool on how the league is managed and how to properly develop the youth of Hilltop.

The continued success starts with the day to day interfaces of the parents and that is you the manager.

Good Luck in the upcoming season and thank you for your devotion to the youth programs at Hilltop.

Sincerely,

The Hilltop Board of Directors

**LEAGUE OPERATIONS**

Hilltop Babe Ruth Baseball League operates according to a set of formal bylaws, which are carried out by a twenty four (24) member Board of Directors elected by the general membership. A minimum of seventeen (17) directors are elected yearly at the September general membership meeting. Any member of the league in good standing is eligible to become a director and anyone seeking nomination as a director should contact the Vice President of Baseball or Softball Operations prior to the June Meeting. If desired, a copy of the bylaws can be attained from the League Secretary. All league business is conducted at the monthly board meetings, which are usually open to the general membership to attend. The league strongly encourages all managers to attend these meetings each month to stay current on league affairs; contact your Division Coordinator for the date and time of meetings. As managers your contact with the Board is through your Division Coordinator who is a direct assistant to the Vice President of Player Personnel; all correspondence must begin at this level.

The following is an outline of your responsibilities as a manager in this league.

**PLAYER PARTICIPATION**

Hilltop Cal Ripken Baseball and Babe Ruth Softball association have strict guidelines concerning the game participation of each player. Failure to comply with these rules will result in disciplinary action taken by the President and Board of Directors.

Detailed player participation rules can be found in the rules that govern each division.

**Highlight**

All Divisions

All rostered players present for the game shall bat in order, whether playing defensively or not. The batting order will be adhered to. Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the line-up.

All players must play at least three (3) defensive innings in the field. Quick ball and Peewee will be following guidelines for game activity.

**MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITES**

**GENERAL**

1. After drafting a team, managers are to notify the newly drafted players within three (3) days that they are on your team. You may begin practicing your team immediately after the draft.
2. Managers should conduct a minimum of three (3) events per week, i.e. two (2) practices and one (1) game, two (2) games and one (1) practice, etc.
3. No players are to be left unattended at any fields. The manager or an adult appointed by him/her must wait at the field until all players have left or have been picked up. There are no exceptions to this rule at any age level.
4. The batting cage and the filed gang boxes will be available for signing out at the shack. Coded locks will be supplied at each cage. Please lock the cage, place away the cord and balls, and cover machine prior to leaving if no team is coming behind you.

**PRACTICES**

1. There is a limited amount of practice space available to the league. Practice is strictly prohibited on any of the game fields at Hilltop Park without permission from the League President. Managers will be given copies of all permits held by the league for practice fields. Teams are not to interfere in any way with any school activities at Williamson Field (Manoa Field) regardless of what our permit says.
2. The batting cage is for the use of all Hilltop teams. Signup sheets will be made available three times per year (April, May and June) An adult must be present in the cage at all times, and the pitching machines are to be operated by adults only. Only one (1) player at a time shall be in the cage, and that player must wear a batting helmet. The last team in the cage is responsible to lock up all machines and balls in the gang boxes and then lock the cage. The cage is to remain locked at all times when not in use. Each team is allowed (one) 1 time slot per week, additional cage time is permitted if all teams do not use their time slot for a particular week.

**GAMES**

1. At all levels accurate scorebooks are to be kept for all games. The scorebooks can be used as player participation verification tools at all tournaments. Therefore, the last name of all players participating in the game must appear in the scorebook.
2. It is the manager’s responsibility to make sure your team’s dugout is cleaned of all trash immediately after the game.
3. The home team playing the last game on any field is responsible to put away and lock up all equipment that is not permanently mounted to the field. This includes bases, pitching machines, trashcans, etc. The visiting team is responsible for field maintenance. This includes filling the pitcher mound, home plate and raking the infield.
4. The manager of the home team playing the last game of the day on Major/Minor Field, or an adult appointed by him/her, must wait at the field until the Shack is closed and all staff has left. This rule is for the safety of the Shack Personnel who will usually be leaving at night with that day’s receipts.

**EQUIPMENT**

At the beginning of every season each team manager is issued a complete set of uniforms and equipment for that team plus practice balls and the required number of game balls. As a bare minimum each equipment bag should contain the following:

* One (1) catcher’s mask with helmet and throat guard
* One (1) set of catcher’s leg gear
* One (1) catcher’s mitt (Rookie and Cadet and Softball will not receive catcher’s mitts unless specifically requested by Manager).
* Four (4) batting helmets (Cadet Baseball, Minor and Major Baseball/Softball teams must have helmet with cages). Major Baseball can also use “C” flap helmets as of 2019 season.
* Softball (4) infield facemasks

Managers are responsible for all league issued equipment and uniforms including normal maintenance to keep the equipment in good condition.

All equipment, especially bats and helmets, shall be inspected regularly by the manager. Any bat or helmet with evident distortion or cracking must immediately be removed from use. Damaged equipment shall be reported to the division coordinator immediately for repair or replacement by contacting your division coordinator and equipment manager via email.

**TOURNAMENT POLICY**

The Hilltop Baseball and Softball League have established the following philosophies and guidelines to determine the structure of the Tournament Baseball and Babe Ruth Softball programs that we provide for our youth.

**BASEBALL**

As a Cal Ripken Baseball League, we regularly send a Tournament Team to the Cal Ripken sponsored tournaments at the end of each season. The Cal Ripken Tournaments take precedence over all other tournaments that may be available.

* Baseball – 7 and Under
* Baseball – 8 and under – District sanctioned.
* Baseball – 9 and under - District sanctioned.
* Baseball – 10 and under - District sanctioned.
* Baseball – 11 and under - District sanctioned.
* Baseball – 12 and under - District sanctioned.
1. Separate tournament teams or “B” teams may be formed for the individual age groups starting at seven (7) years old upon approval of the Board of Directors.
2. The League can approve a tournament fee adjustment for each team per year to help offset costs on an annual basis.
3. Anyone wishing to manage a tournament team must submit their name to the Division Coordinator Tournament Coordinator, Vice President or President. All Tournament Managers must be approved by the Board of Directors before any tournament team is formed.
4. Tournament will be formed in accordance with the rules and guidelines set forth by the Hilltop Baseball Softball and Challenger Board of Directors.
5. The League furnishes a full uniform. The league uniform will be universal for all district sanctioned teams. No manager can choose their own uniform.
6. Jerseys for all other Tournament Teams must be purchased by the individual players whom make the team.
7. Hilltop’s regular season activities take precedence over all tournament activities.
8. It is the responsibility of the team manager to attend pre-tournament placement draws and for reviewing the tournament policy and rules.
9. Use of volunteer independent evaluators will be used at tournament tryouts. Independent volunteer evaluations will be individuals familiar with the sport.
10. All final rosters will be the managers decision based on the input of the evaluators. Parents are to contact the manager regarding final rosters and not the volunteer evaluators.

**SOFTBALL**

As a Babe Ruth Softball League, we participate in the BABE RUTH SOFTBALL League. Team Selection will take place prior to the start of the season. The teams participate in the BABE RUTH SOFTBALL league during the Hilltop regular season. Babe Ruth Softball sponsors the following Age Divisions:

* Softball – 8 and under
* Softball – 10 and under
* Softball – 12 and under
1. Separate tournament teams or “B” teams may be formed for the individual age groups starting at eight (8) years old upon approval of the Board of Directors.
2. The League can approve a tournament fee adjustment for each team per year to help offset costs on an annual basis.
3. Anyone wishing to manage a tournament team must submit their name to the Division Coordinator Tournament Coordinator, Vice President or President. All Tournament Managers must be approved by the Board of Directors before any tournament team is formed.
4. Tournament will be formed in accordance with the rules and guidelines set forth by the Hilltop Baseball Softball and Challenger Board of Directors.
5. The League furnishes a full uniform. The league uniform will be universal for all sanctioned teams. No manager can choose their own uniform.
6. Hilltop’s regular season activities take precedence over all Babe Ruth Softball / tournament activities.
7. It is the responsibility of the teams’ manager to attend pre-tournament placement draws and for reviewing the tournament policy and rules.
8. Use of volunteer independent evaluators will be at tournament tryouts. Independent volunteer evaluations will be individuals familiar with the sport.
9. All final rosters will be the managers decision based on the input of the evaluators. Parents are to contact the manager regarding final rosters and not the volunteer evaluators

**Tournament Team Policies**

**BASEBALL**

1. A tournament team will consist of a minimum of twelve (12) players and maximum of fifteen (15) players. The coaching staff will consist of one (1) manager and two (3) coaches chosen by the tournament manager who must all be listed on the Cal Ripken Roster.
2. The Cal Ripken Tournament Teams (8,9,10,11,12) are to be selected no later June 1st.
3. An email blast will be sent to the each age group by the tournament manager notifying players of the tryout dates. It will be the decision of participant to attend the try-out.
4. No child shall be denied a chance to try-out.
5. The tournament team manager will supply the players a letter informing them of the dates and locations of the try-outs in the email blast.
6. All Hilltop league personal safety related rules shall be adhered to by the tournament teams, even if those rules do not exist in the particular tournament. For example: Batting helmets with cages or “C” Flap for major’s baseball only.

**SOFTBALL**

1. A tournament team will consist of a minimum of twelve (12) players and maximum of the number required by tournament or Babe Ruth Softball Regulations
2. The coaching staff will consist of one (1) manager and two (3) coaches chosen by the tournament manager who must all be listed on the Babe Ruth Softball Roster.
3. All Hilltop girls’ softball participants will receive an email blast before the Hilltop season begins, informing them of the try-out sessions. It will be the decision of participant to attend the try-out.
4. No child shall be denied a chance to try-out.
5. All Hilltop league personal safety related rules shall be adhered to by the tournament teams, even if those rules do not exist in the tournament. i.e. – facemasks for infielders.

**TEAM SELECTION**

1. Factors to consider when selecting those players are talent, maturity and commitment to participating during and after the Hilltop season.
2. The participating players and their parents must be apprised of the time commitment required before the tryout begins. The commitment letter will be issued solely by the Tournament / Babe Ruth Softball manager.
3. The Tournament / Babe Ruth Softball manager will conduct at least two (2) tryouts before making cuts; a player is required to attend at least one tryout.
4. The manager is required to inform, either individually or as a group, to let them know why they did not make the team. Via group email or direct call.

--At the time of the team selection the Manager has one day to inform the player of their status. This rule is designed to reduce the stress level of the player anticipating the outcome.

1. Each tournament team player and parent will be required to sign a tournament commitment letter.

Hilltop has provided a sample commitment letter for Tournament / Babe Ruth Softball participants.

Please reference marked:

“Commit Form 1” contains dates, times and location of try-outs

“Commit Form 2” contains the player’s agreement to participate.

1. Players will be evaluated not only during the try-out sessions but also during the season. In house game books can be reviewed as well as attitude displayed during games by the player. The tryout process encompasses the games played to date, plus the tryouts. Players must compete in 75% of their in-house games scheduled (regular season and playoffs).
2. Players will be rated and assigned to a team per the age group they tried out for. Players do not get to select a team or manager to play for. Hilltop will offer the player a chance to participate on their assigned team, the player has the right to accept or decline.

**CONDUCTING TRY-OUTS**

Per Team Selection Guidelines, Section 3 – minimum of 2 Try-out sessions are required. Managers can split the tryouts into multiple groups if they have a large number of participants.

1. Try-out times must be selected so that each child will be able to participate for the full session.
2. Tournament and Babe Ruth Softball Managers are to work with the managers in their respected division and review the game schedule to select a time conducive for themselves and the children.
3. Every player trying out for a Tournament / Babe Ruth Softball team will be given an equal opportunity to compete for a position on the team.
4. The players will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Catching Running Speed

Throwing Game Skills

Fielding Attitude

Fly Balls Pitching

Batting

1. The Manager, as selected by the Hilltop Board of Directors, has the final decision regarding roster size and players chosen for their team.
	1. Assistant coaches cannot be selected until the final roster is provided to the VP of Baseball / Softball and/or tournament coordinator for confirmation.
2. Try-out sessions are to last longer than 1.15 hours but no more than 2.5 hours in total.
3. All participants are to attend all try-out sessions. Reasons for not attending a try-out session should be sickness and known prior to the tryout by parent to manager communication.
4. Attendance is to be taken at all Try-Outs. It will be the manager’s decision to excuse an absence. For example sickness or injury.
5. If a player who is injured during the try-out period and is willing to participate, that player is required to attend try-outs. It will be the manager’s evaluation of the players past performance that will determine if the player will make the roster.
6. Tryout Forms:
* Tryout forms we measured on a plus/minus ( +/-) scale. These are to be maintained by the manager during tryouts and submitted to the VP of Baseball/Softball operations and/or Tournament Coordinator at the conclusion of team selection.
* *Forms are not for public knowledge but notification of who attended and skill level observations****.***

**The First Practice: Kicking Off Your Season**

* Beat the players to the field. Make sure you're the first one to arrive. Greeting each player and his parents as they arrive sends a positive message that you're enthusiastic about getting started. If you pull up a few minutes before the practice is supposed to start, you give the impression that you're disorganized, too busy, and unprepared for all the responsibilities that coaching entails.
* Make everyone feel comfortable. As soon as the kids climb out of the cars and make their way to the field, welcome them with a friendly smile and hello. You don't want a child to stand off to the side, wondering whether he's at the right field or if anyone will talk to him or even say hello.
* Chitchat. You should begin establishing bonds right away. If time allows, talk briefly with each child to find out a little bit more about him. Ask him how long he's been playing baseball, what team he played for last season, and what positions he has played in the past. Taking a genuine interest in your players — which they'll recognize and appreciate — is the foundation for forging special relationships with them — one of the benefits of both playing and coaching organized baseball.
* Introducing everyone - Formally introduce yourself and any assistant coaches you have at the start of practice once everyone has arrived. The introduction helps to alleviate your players' anxiety and makes them more comfortable. You can do it in the infield or gather the kids in the dugout, whatever is most comfortable for you. During your intro, share some quick tidbits about yourself, including the following:
	+ Whether you prefer being called "Coach," "Coach Brad," or any other moniker. (Feel free to use any funny nickname you may have that will get a chuckle out of the kids.)
	+ How long you've coached and where.
	+ Details about your coaching and playing background.
	+ If you have a child on the team.
	+ Your favorite major league team or player.
* After the coach introductions, you can have each child stand up and introduce himself to the rest of the team. Ask him to relay his name, age, and favorite team. Keep the player introductions short and to the point. Some kids are going to be overly shy, and the last thing you want to do is traumatize them before the practice has even begun.
* Choosing the skills to focus on first.

Before the first practice arrives, you should have a plan in place for which drills you want to begin with and how those drills will lead into the more intensive practices to come.

If you're coaching a beginning-level team, chances are many of your kids have never played baseball before — or any other type of organized sport for that matter. Because of the somewhat complex nature of the game — from the fundamentals of batting to the art of playing the infield and outfield — your best bet is to ease your players into the first practice by picking out some basic drills to focus on first.

* Using the first couple practices of the season to cover some of the most fundamental skills — such as batting stances and proper glove positions for grounders and pop ups — establishes a solid foundation that you can build on without overwhelming your players in the process.
* If you're coaching players with a little more experience, you can utilize the first week of practices to refresh your players on some of the basics. Use the first couple practices to really evaluate your players and your team's strengths and weaknesses. For example, you can cover the most basic elements quickly, but you should move on to more advanced techniques, such as executing bunts to move runners into scoring position, hitting the cutoff man, and turning double plays, among others, almost immediately.

**One Hour and Twenty Minute Practice**

6:00-6:15 Stretch and Run – using exercises found in the manual

6:15-6:30 Throwing Progression – Players should line up and lightly toss to a partner (same position) from about 15 to 20 feet to using good mechanics (5 minutes), move back from there to about 30 to 35 feet (2 minutes) and continue to back to about 90 or 110 feet depending on age and ability level. Then they move forward again. Key here is proper mechanics and accuracy of throws.

6:30-6:45 Defensive Specialty Group – players are separate into infield, outfield, pitching and catching groups and work on fundamentals discussed in the manual.

6:45-7:10 Batting Practice and Hitting Mechanics – separate your hitters in three previously established groups of 3 to 5 players. One group hits, another group to the side for drill works off the tees, flip toss, batting cages, or dry swings. The third group is on the field shagging balls for the hitters. Each group hits for 8 minutes on the field and then rotates to the next sections.

7:10-7:20 Team Fundamentals – try to work for at least 10 minutes at each practice on a team fundamental that includes bunting, bunting defense, cut-offs and relays, base running, 1st and 3rd defenses, run downs, signs, situational hitting, pitcher’s fielding practice with infielders covering, backing bases for all players.

**Batting Drills and Batting Practice for Youth**

Here are some ideas for batting practice. You will want to use a variety of these drills. Make sure all players get a significant amount of batting practice each week. With all drills, make sure the batter uses proper form.

**Batters Hitting To the Infield**

Have a coach pitch or use a pitching machine to pitch to players as they rotate in from field position. Have the infield and outfield players try to make a play on first base if possible and perhaps even designate a runner. Make sure you are pitching hit-able balls. They don't have to be fast balls. The advantage of this drill is that you get fielding practice and the coach can closely watch the batter to see that proper form is used. The disadvantage of this drill is that each player only gets a few at-bats and a lot of players are not doing anything. Still, it is worth doing once in a while as it reproduces the full game experience. Don't have one of your pitchers pitching as you may spend a lot of time chasing wild pitches with little actual batting or fielding.

**Live Pitching**

While other batting practice is going on, have batters individually bat against a live pitcher throwing against a fence or backstop or to a catcher. Use a pitcher that can throw the most consistent strike pitches. Have each batter hit 3-5 balls. This drill is a must since it is the only one that truly emulates a game batting situation.

**Hitting Wiffle Golf Balls**

Have your players split up in groups of 3 or 4 with a helper/coach tossing wiffle balls to a batter in each group. The coach or helper underhand tosses a wiffle golf ball to the batter and the batter takes their full stride and swing to hit the wiffle golf ball. Have the coach or helpers watch for correct form and make sure no other kids are near the batter (for the sake of safety). The advantage of this drill is that a lot of hitting takes place by all players and batters can focus on watching the ball and using good form.

**Batter "Good Eye" Drill Using Colored Dots**

Place several red dots on one ball, several blue dots on a second ball, and several green dots on a third. Have a pitcher randomly grab a ball and then call out a color as he/she is pitching, keeping the true identity secret from the batter. The batter should hit the ball if it matches the color called out by the pitcher. The pitcher should call out the true identity about half the time and a false identity half the time. If the actual dot color does not match the color called out, the batter should not swing. This drill forces the batter to closely watch the ball all the way in from pitcher to bat.

**Batter "Good Eye" Drill Using Multiple Balls Thrown**

Have a coach underhand toss two balls and call out "top" or "bottom" as the balls are released (or after being released). The batter must hit the correct ball. This drill forces the batter to watch the ball all the way in.

**Using a Pitching Machine**

At any rate, the pitching machine delivers a lot of hit-able balls and is a nice supplement to live pitching and other forms of practice. Most will advise using a pitching speed of 45-50MPH. It has been said by some that if you use overly fast speeds, bad habits may be reinforced. Speeds lower than this are also not recommended. One may very easily make these balls pitch in at slightly different locations by manually tilting the machine up or down a bit - many feel this is a good idea to keep the batter's eye on the ball and prevent swinging to a single spot. As with any batting drill, make sure the batter uses proper batting form.

**Using a Batting Tee**

Batting tees are a nice tool for developing good mechanics, follow-through, and bat speed and are used at all levels of play. You can build a bunch of these tees for your team (or for at home) for under $15 each using these batting tee plans. As the batter bats, a coach should make sure they are using proper mechanics. Vary the height of the ball to insure the batter keeps eyes on the ball.

**Hitting Mechanics – Baseball**

Start with a good stance.

The front foot should be lined up with the front of the plate and the batter should take a wide square stance with weight slightly on the back foot. The feet should be a little wider than shoulder width apart.

The bat should be held at about a 45 degree angle up from horizontal pointing straight back.

The knees should be slightly bent toward each other and flexed. Maintain a good balanced stance.

Keep the elbows down. The back elbow should be at a normal 45 degree angle.

The front shoulder should be pointed at the pitcher.

The top hand should be level with the shoulders.

Both eyes should be on the pitcher, ready to follow the ball from the pitcher into the plate.

As the ball is being pitched - The Stride

When the pitcher winds up, the batter will want to shift weight to the back foot. As the batter is ready to hit the ball take a small step forward with the front foot - this is known as the "stride". The stride is usually 3-6" but can be more if it works for you. Also tuck the front shoulder, knee, and hip in slightly. This step (the stride) will help the batter to use their entire body to add power to the swing - think of a batter as a coiled up spring. Don't overstep to the point that your eyes leave the ball - Watch the ball all the way in!

Swinging and Hitting the Ball

When you are sure you want to swing at the pitch, you will start the swing the moment the front foot heel touches back onto the ground from the stride. You should be starting your swing from the hips down in order to get the entire body into the swing - it is very important to lead with your hips! Keep eyes on the ball and follow it in as you swing - this means your head can not move with your body but has to stay in place so you can follow the ball in with your eyes! The hips and both knees should be facing the pitcher as the bat connects with the ball and your weight will be transferred to your front foot. The front hand should be facing down and the rear hand should face up as you hit the ball. Follow through with the swing completely! You don't have to be big to hit big!

In Summary:

Have a good square stance with knees slightly bent and rear elbow down.

Watch the ball at all times from the pitcher's hand until after it leaves the bat.

Take a stride and use your lower body to maximize the power, leading with your hips.

Your head should not move with your body and should be facing the pitcher as the bat hits the ball.

Follow through completely.

Timing is critical! Otherwise you will swing too early or too late. Timing comes with practice and more practice!

[**Hitting Mechanics – Softball**](http://www.softball-spot.com/girls-softball-hitting-stance/1982/)

Starting with the Feet

We want to make sure that our feet are square. Very often these days we see either a stance that is too closed, that means the front foot is closer to the plate, or a stance that is too open, that means the front foot is farther away from the plate than the back foot.

What I advocate is the feet are square–even with the line of the plate. I also like to have the feet even. I don’t like them too much pigeon-toed or to open.

The Ankles and the Knees

Second, we like a little flexion in the ankles and in the knees. I like the knees squeezed together a little bit, and a slight bend in the waist.

What happens many times is that the hitter will get locked up if she bends down to much in the knees and the waist. The muscles in his legs will begin to tighten up, and there’s no way that she’s going to have a smooth, fluid swing. So I advocate only a slight break in the knees and a slight bend at the waist.

The Shoulders

We like nice level shoulders. Too often I’ll see young girls softball hitters with their shoulders at an angle or they’re trying to keep their front shoulder down too much. Well, if your front shoulder is down to begin with, the first thing your body’s going to want you to do is to level it up. And once it starts up, it’s just going to keep going up so that you’re going to have an upward slant to your swing. So we want square shoulders.

The Look

We want a good two-eyed look at the pitcher. We don’t want to be looking around, or we don’t want to have our head tilted too much so that we don’t get a good look at the ball out of the hand.

Remembering our number one responsibility is to see the ball early, to see it big, and to see it as long as we can. The only way we can do that is to get a good two-eyed look at the ball.

The Grip

The next thing is the grip. You want to hold the bat as far out in the fingers as is comfortable. I don’t advocate holding it way out in the fingers because there is no way that our hands are strong enough to propel the barrel through the ball.

On the other hand, we don’t want it way back in our thumb because this restricts the freedom of movement of our wrist.

The other thing is we don’t want to squeeze the bat too tight. Nice, loose, and relaxed.

Placement of the Hands

The placement of the hands is very important. I advocate having the hands even with the back shoulder or, at the most, the knob as far back as the back foot. The elbows are down.

I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been to girl’s softball games and hear people yelling at their kids or the coaches yelling at the players to get their back elbow up. This is one of the worst things that a young hitter can do, is hit with her back elbow up. The flight of the barrel dictates that our elbows stay down.

A key coaching point is that the front elbow will be even with the sternum, and the back elbow will be hanging down even with the back hip.

This is a good solid stance for a young hitter. There are no extremes here. We don’t have the bat straight up. We don’t have it flat. It’s not sticking back. It’s not wrapped around our head. Our hands aren’t too low or too high. They’re right in a good hitting position. This way, the adjustments that we need to make in the next part of our swing are minimal.

**Catching & Fielding**

There are some fundamental rules for catching and fielding listed below. Start with these and then practice, practice, practice! To be a really good player, you need more practice than the few hours a week at regular team practices. You should practice more at home and try to make it a fun time

Stand with knees slightly bent and feet apart a little wider than shoulder position. Your hands should both be in front of you with glove pocket facing in as if you were about to shake hands. You need to be in a slightly crouched position so that you can quickly move up, down, right, or left as needed to field the ball.

When catching a ball over the waist, the glove hand is pointed up with the top of the pocket up. When catching a ball below the waist, the glove hand is pointed down. Right at the waist may require you to crouch down a bit with the glove pointed up.

Let the glove give a little as the ball hits it. This will decrease the speed of the ball and lessen the chance of it bouncing out. This takes a bit of practice.

As the ball settles into the back of the pocket, squeeze the glove shut! This will prevent a lot of dropped balls!

If possible, use the non-glove hand to cover the ball as it enters the glove. For grounders, this is essential! Watch any professional outfielder and you will notice that they use two hands when fielding grounders. The extra hand is always ready to knock the ball down if it takes a sudden wild hop.

**To field pop-ups**, don’t stand flat-footed when the batter comes to the plate. Watch the ball closely as the pitch is made and anticipated a hit to your field.

Try to quickly judge whether you need to take steps back or forward.

Take needed steps to get under where the ball will end up.

For deep outfield hits, this is very difficult for younger players but comes with practice.

**For very young players, practice with tennis balls or padded T-balls to minimize injury if the player misses the catch.**

**To throw a long ball** from the outfield or throw a speedy accurate throw to make a play on the infield requires good form and use of the entire body.  Here are some guidelines:

Bring the glove with the ball in it toward your waist. As you pull the ball from the glove, you want to line up your body in much the same way you would when you are about to bat with knees bent, non-throwing arm shoulder facing your target, and body and feet squared off pointing perpendicular to your target.

Your weight will initially be on your back foot as you bring the ball back in a circular motion. You will step forward with the lead foot much (like the stride used in batting) and push off with your rear foot as you complete the throw.  The throwing hand should cover an elliptical (circular) path as it is makes the complete throw.  Also, your elbow should be as high as or higher than your shoulder rather than tucked in.  When you complete the throw your weight should be transferred to your front foot. This is similar to the mechanics of batting.

Your eyes should be on your target the entire time from beginning to end of throw.

**In summary:**

Square off the body as if you were getting ready to bat.

Step in to your throw with the foot opposite your throwing hand.

Use your whole body in the throw and keep your throwing elbow above the shoulder.

**Code of Conduct**

Following are codes of conduct for players and parents that are to be followed.

**Player Conduct**

Each player shall strive to develop and improve his/her individual playing skill and shall always encourage the efforts of teammates.

At no time shall a player use disrespectful, abusive or obscene language to coaches, parents, officials, teammates or players on the opposing team

Unsportsmanlike behavior in the form of gestures, taunting, throwing equipment or dramatic displays of anger will be prohibited.

Any form of fighting is strictly prohibited.

**Parent Conduct**

Positive parental participation is encouraged at all times through consistent recognition that:

Each player on a team represents a varying degree of talent and/or ability and the principal means of improvement is through enthusiastic recognition of his/her effort.

The officials are amateurs who are volunteering their time towards the success of the league. Vocal criticism of officials performance based upon hearsay, interpretation of rules, your concern for the officials’ eyesight or dismay with a particular call made against your child’s team, distract from the game.

The coach is responsible for developing individual player skills and team play. If you have concern, confide in private with the coach.

The challenge to any parent is to remember that a group of players who are totally isolated from the spectators, officials and coaches can divide up and play nay game within the situation. This can become positive with enthusiasm or negative and unsportsmanlike. As a parent you are encouraged to prevent the latter from happening.

**COACHES CODE OF ETHICS**

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of my personal desire to win.

I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

I will do my best to provide a safe playing condition for my players.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

I will ensure that I am knowledgeable of the rules of Hilltop Baseball, Softball and Challenger and that I will teach the rules of baseball/softball to my players.

I will use appropriate coaching techniques in regards to the rules.

I will remember that I am the coach, and that the game is for the children and not the adults.

**Dealing with Parents**

* Always listen to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children that are involved. Encourage parental involvement.
* Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
* No coach can please everyone. Do not try.
* Know what your objectives are and do what you believe to be of value to the team and not the parents
* Make certain all parents know your ground rules. Introduction letter to the parents at the beginning of the season is a perfect way to introduce yourself, goals, objectives and team rules.
* Resist unfair pressure. You are the coach and it is your responsibility to make the final decisions.
* Most important, be fair. If you treat your players equally you will gain their respect.
* Be Consistent! If you change an objective or team rule during the season, you may be causing yourself trouble. If you do make a change please communicate it directly to the parents via e-mail letter.
* Handle confrontations one on one and not in a crowd situation. Do not argue. Tell them you can call them at home later to discuss.
* Remind parents not to be critical of the team, umpire or coach during the game.
* Do not blame children for their parent’s behavior. Try to maintain a fair attitude.
* Parents must accept the fact that umpires, coaches and other league officials are volunteers and should be treated fairly at all times.

Always remember that you are dealing with all types of children and parents of different backgrounds. Take the emotion out of the situation by dealing with the issue later that night via a phone call or one on one meeting. E-mail war will not resolve the situation and often you place into writing something you will later regret.

**How to Deal With Critical Parents When Coaching**

Having to deal with critical parents is one of the biggest problems with coaching. Some parents overestimate their child's athletic abilities, and sometimes those parents let their frustrations get the best of them and become critical of the coaches, umpires or other players. Follow a few guidelines to deal with critical parents when coaching.

* Host a team meeting with the parents if you're coaching a team. Explain to them what you will and will not accept and that you expect your rules to be followed.
* Tell the parents that if they have a problem with their child, the umpire or the way you are coaching to please talk about it in private and not during the game or in front of other parents and children. It is embarrassing to everyone involved but most importantly, to the children.
* Address issues with critical parents when you are calm. You don't want your emotions getting out of control, especially in front of your players. Walk away and address it later
* Remind the critical parents that their child is learning a lot more than just the sport. They are learning about teamwork and friendships.
* Do not use technology to solve an issue. Facebook, Twitter, E-mail place all your words and feelings onto paper. One on one meetings and phone calls are the best approach.

**Dos and don'ts for Little League parents (by Tom Jones, Tampa Bay Times)**

* **Don't take it so seriously**
What happened to the days of playing a game and going out for snow cones? Now it's all about winning tournaments, going to state, going to nationals. They're kids, for crying out loud. They go swimming, play baseball, go home and ride skateboards and play video games. Baseball is just one thing they do. Win or lose, there are a lot more important things going on in the world. Wins and losses fade quickly, but the lessons learned last forever.
* **Don't argue with the umpire**
Give these people a break. It's hot. The umpire's gear is heavy, sweaty and smelly. These guys are calling two, three, four games in a day. Most are volunteers. Those who are getting paid barely make enough to cover the gas to drive to the game and hot dog and a soda when it's over. Yes, they will miss calls and it's frustrating. A strike one inning is a ball the next. But, trust us, these umpires don't go out there intentionally trying to put the screws to anyone. They really are doing the best they can. And if you think you can do better then grab a mask and a chest protector and start calling games.
* **Be supportive of your kids**
That means two things: Go to the game. And give him or her a hug afterward and say, "Good game'' even if it wasn't a good game. Don't get angry if your child makes an error or strikes out. If he makes an error, don't say something stupid like, "Hey, you gotta make that play!'' He knows. He tried to make the play. He made an error. Just like major-leaguers do every night. A kid feels bad enough when he makes a mistake. He doesn't need you -- the person he is closest to in the entire world -- making him feel even worse by pointing out his mistake for everyone to hear. The only time a parent should discipline his child is if he or she is being disrespectful to an umpire, coach, teammate or opponent. But don't you dare yell at him because he's not Derek Jeter.
* **Watch your language**Just because you think it's okay to swear in front of your kids doesn't mean its okay to swear in front of other people's kids. Remember where you are. This isn't an R-rated movie. It's a ball park with kids and grandparents.
* **If you have a problem, talk to the coach privately, not in front of the kids**Getting into an argument with a coach in front of the players does one thing: embarrasses your child. Even if you have a legitimate complaint, airing it in public is a recipe for disaster. Do it in private and don't do it during or right after a game. Emotions are high. If it's after a loss, everyone -- coaches, players and parents -- is frustrated, and that is not the tone you want when you're trying to solve a problem. And don't bad-mouth the coach or one of your kids' teammates in front of your child.
* **Remember there is crying in baseball**Regardless of what Tom Hanks said, there is crying in baseball. They're kids. Kids cry. They cry when they get hurt. They cry when they make a mistake. They cry when they're embarrassed. But, being kids, they'll stop crying in a minute, and they'll move on. Telling them to "grow up'' or "shake it off'' isn't going to help at that moment. It will only make matters worse. Just give them a second and they'll bounce back. Kids are resilient.
* **Let the coach coach**When you start giving your child instructions and secret signs, he is suddenly put in the impossible position of having to decide between what his coach is telling him to do and what his parent is telling him. If you notice something, mention it to the coach. But don't go behind his back and undermine him. In this category: If you don't know what you're talking about, be quiet. And if you don't know baseball, just say the generic stuff like, "Let's get a rally going'' or "Let's play some defense.''’
* **Respect your team**Don't get frustrated with a kid on your son's or daughter's team because they are not as good as your son or daughter. Hey, those kids are trying, too. And don't complain to other parents about that kid either. And while we're at it, let's bring up something to all those parents out there who think little Johnny is destined for the majors. At this very moment, there are 750 men in the majors. That's 750 from the entire planet! You have a better chance of being struck by lightning than making the majors.
* **Respect your opponent**Anyone who has ever had a child play youth sports has run into the Jerk Team. The other coach is a jerk. The players are jerks. The parents are jerks. Don't you become a jerk by sinking to their level. Don't let them engage you. Don't cheer for your team by putting down the other team. Don't say things like, "You can hit this kid.'' Or, "He throws it nice and slow.'' Or, "He doesn't even want to swing. Just throw it in there. He can't hit it.” Look, there will always be a Jerk Team. Don't let your team be it.
* **Watch your behavior**This is for the coaches. You have a greater influence on these children than you realize. Everything you say is taken as gospel. When you criticize them, it stings more than you know. You can coach without being insulting. Plus, he or she wants to do well more than you want them to do well. In addition, they follow your example. If you cry about umpires, so will they. If you're a poor sport, your team will be full of poor sports. And remember this: 20 years from now, the players you coach won't remember which games you won and lost, but they will remember if you were a man with good character or not.
* **Remember, it's just a game**Kids seem to understand this, but parents don't. Five minutes after a tough loss, the parents are in the parking lot griping about the coaches, criticizing the lineup and blaming the umpires. Meanwhile, the kids are eating candy, playing Wall Ball and trying to figure out the best all-time episode of SpongeBob SquarePants. Take a cue from your kids and realize that when it's over, life goes on.

**PLAYER INJURIES**

Haverford Township Hilltop position on injuries during a game is to **call \*911** from the “Shack” or Cell phone when a player is seriously injured.

Many people are involved in a recreational sport of some kind or participate in daily exercise that keeps them active and healthy. Yet in the quest for fun, injuries can occur. The good news is, as Benjamin Franklin once said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” and the risk of injury can be significantly decreased with the use of proper equipment, an appropriate weight-training program, an adequate warm up and not overdoing it. Here are some ways to avoid the most common sports injuries, and what to do if they happen to you:

**Breathing Techniques for all Sports**

For all sports, it is important to breathe deeply rather than take shallow breaths. To breathe deeply, you should feel the breath originate in your low abdomen; your diaphragm lift and your lungs expand. Breathing deeply oxygenates your muscles so they can work harder, build strength and move faster. After you learn to breathe deeply, the challenge is to feel comfortable with the breathing rhythm that is optimal for the sport you are doing, whether it's running, swimming, yoga, or any other physical activity.

**Common Sports Injuries**

**Managing a Freak-Out**

**Relate.** Reassure your child that her injury is the kind of thing that happens to everybody. Tell her that it has even happened to you (if that’s true).

**Distract.** Have her close her eyes and think of something happy—like kittens. Ask her to describe them. Are they fluffy? Stripy? Fluffy *and* stripy?

**Head Bump**

**What to do first:** Assuming your child is conscious and responsive (if not, call 911), apply an ice pack or a bag of frozen vegetables for 20 minutes to reduce any swelling.

**What to do next:** Watch him carefully. Get medical help if there’s a change in his pupils (one is larger than the other, or they don’t react to light); he’s vomiting often or won’t eat; or he feels dizzy, has a worsening headache, or seems unlike himself. Otherwise, for the next 24 hours, check him every few hours to see if he’s still feeling well.

**What** ***not*** **to do:** He can sleep, but wake him every four hours to check in. And don’t let him play sports. Even if he’s feeling better, he needs to sit out the day.

**Cut or Scrape**

**What to do first:** If there’s active bleeding, apply direct pressure with a clean cloth. The bleeding should stop in 5 to 10 minutes. If it doesn’t, see a doctor.

**What to do next:** If there’s a small foreign object in the cut (like a piece of glass), it’s OK to remove it with tweezers sterilized in alcohol. Clean the wound with soap and warm water, pat it dry, and apply an antibiotic ointment. Cover it with a sterile bandage, and change the bandage daily.

**What** ***not*** **to do:** Don’t swab the wound with an antiseptic, such as hydrogen peroxide or alcohol. It isn’t necessary and will sting, compounding the trauma.

**Nosebleed**

**What to do first:** If your child is vomiting or seems unusually pale or sweaty, get medical help. Otherwise have her tilt her head slightly forward. Pinch her nostrils and hold firmly for 10 minutes.

**What to do next:** If the bleeding hasn’t stopped, repeat for 10 minutes. If the blood is still coming after that, get medical help.

**What** ***not*** **to do:** Don’t have your child lie down or tilt her head back, as she could swallow blood. And don’t put dry tissues in her nose; removing them could reopen scabs. Instead, you can insert gauze wetted with decongestant nose drops to shrink blood vessels.

**Burn**

**What to do first:** Run cool water over the area for several minutes, and then pat dry with a clean towel.

**What to do next:** To ease the initial pain, apply a cold compress (not an ice cube, which can cause a cold burn on top of a heat burn). Then cover the burn with a sterile bandage. You can also give your child some pediatric ibuprofen. If the burn has blistered or oozes, or if redness or pain persists for more than a few hours, seek medical help.

**What** ***not*** **to do:** Don’t apply Neosporin or any other greasy ointment; it can trap heat and make the burn worse. And don’t apply butter; this old-school “remedy” can introduce bacteria and cause an infection.

**Muscle Cramps**

Caused by overstretching muscles, or by abnormal muscle contraction. They may also be associated with loss of fluid due to excessive sweating. Characterized by pain, tenderness, loss of power and stiffening or spasms of the muscles.

**What to do first:**:Muscles respond to rest, application of an ice pack, then subsequent gentle stretching.

**What** ***not*** **to do:** Massage the affected area. .

**Major Sports Injuries**

1. **Strains and Sprains**

A muscle strain occurs when a tendon, which connects muscle to bone, is injured. Tendons are made up of fibrous strands of tissue that withstand tension on a daily basis. A sprain is when a ligament becomes stretched, torn or ruptures, weakening the ligament. Ligaments connect bones to other bones to form a joint and are made up of fibrous strands of tissue, much like a rope. A sprain can be the result of a fall, an unusual twisting of a joint or a movement that forces the body to move out of its natural alignment. Although the ankle is the most common joint injured, it certainly isn’t the only one. Swelling, tenderness, pain and bruising are symptoms that you have a sprain or strain and should first be treated with RICE (rest, ice, compression and elevation). For severe strains and sprains, treatment might require a cast or surgery, followed by rehabilitation.

1. **Knee**

The knee is the most-used joint in the body by virtue of routine daily movement. Ligaments and tendons along with the femur bone, patella and tibia all make up the knee joint to provide proper alignment and stability to the knee. Among the myriad of ligaments and tendons associated with the knee, the most common injuries occur to the ACL (anterior cruciate ligament), LCL (lateral collateral ligament) and the MCL (medial collateral ligament). Most injuries are sports-related but injury can also occur from overuse or work-related tasks. Inflammation, irritation, sprains, strains, tears, fracture and dislocation are common injuries and treatment ranges from rest for minor irritations to surgery for more severe injuries. Stay one step ahead with a good weight-training program to strengthen the quadriceps and hamstrings. Mix in sport-specific training, functional training, and polymeric exercises for a complete program that will support the complex knee joint and decrease the risk for injury.

1. **Shin Splints**

Shin splints are the common term used to describe pain on the front part of the leg below the knee. The medical term for this condition is Medial Tibial Syndrome and occurs due to an overload on the tibialis anterior muscle, which is the muscle that attaches to the front of the tibia. Injury often occurs from high-impact movements such as jumping, running, sprinting and agility training but can also occur from muscle imbalances in the lower leg. A good weight-training program and progressive sport-specific training will decrease the risk of shin splints but if you find yourself suffering from shin splints, rest, ice, anti-inflammatory options and stretching should help you recover quickly. One of the main causes of shin splits for regular exercisers is improper shoe support. If you engage in daily exercise or activity, be sure to replace your sneakers every four to six months. Your shoes may appear to be in good shape but the structure inside breaks down with time and activity. Putting off a trip to the shoe store to replace your sneakers may result in not only shin splints but serious foot issues as well.

1. **Achilles Tendon**

The Achilles tendon extends from the calf muscle to the calcaneus (heel bone) and is the strongest tendon in the body. However, due to high tension and sudden stresses, this is a common site for injury in sports-related activities. Proper stretching before strenuous exercise can help reduce the risk of injury, but even then, the Achilles tendon can become inflamed and cause mild tenderness, which is treated with RICE (rest, ice, compression, elevation) therapy. Micro-tears in the tendon will cause swelling, pain and limited movement, but can also be treated with RICE and sometimes a special boot depending on the severity of the tear. It’s critical to avoid activity at this point to prevent a [rupture](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/achilles_tendon_rupture/article_em.htm), which is when the tendon completely tears. A popping sound is usually the sound you’ll hear immediately before a rupture, followed by severe swelling and pain. Surgery is required to reattach the tendon.

1. **Rotator Cuff**

A rotator-cuff injury can be caused by a shoulder dislocation, a violent jerking of the arm, general wear and tear, or most notably, to baseball pitchers due to the forceful, repetitive, circular movement of the arm. Rotator cuff is a term used for tendons from four scapular (upper back) muscles that encapsulate the shoulder joint. These muscles are part of the scapula that sits on the back below the clavicle and under the posterior deltoid. The tendons from these muscles form a partial sleeve around the humerus, which allows a wide range of motion within that joint. Injuries to the rotator cuff are impingements, inflammation, strains, tendinitis or bursitis. For swimmers, baseball pitchers, tennis players and other athletes in sports where [rotator cuff injuries](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/rotator-cuff-injury/DS00192/DSECTION%3Dtreatments-and-drugs) are more common, consult a coach to make sure you’re using the proper form, as bad technique is responsible for many shoulder injuries. Pain or swelling is the first warning that an injury has occurred and a physical exam, MRI, X-ray or ultra-sound is needed to diagnose the type of injury to determine treatment. Treatment for rotator cuff injuries ranges from physical therapy to surgery, depending on the severity of the injury.

1. **Concussion**

Hilltop adopts the Babe Ruth Baseball / Softball National policy in 2019

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a blow or jolt to the head and can change the way the brain normally works. Any concussion is serious whether mild or severe. They can also be caused by a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth and causes the brain to strike the surrounding skull. Concussions most often do NOT result in loss of consciousness - only 10% involve loss of consciousness.

Some concussion laws are only applicable to school-sponsored athletics or to activities taking place on school-owned property. Some laws are applicable to all youth sports organizations, whether affiliated or not with a school district. It is strongly recommended that local leagues consult with legal counsel in its jurisdiction to determine the applicability of state laws regarding concussions to its program.

Babe Ruth League, Inc. strongly encourages all leagues and teams to comply with any applicable laws and to review the information and training materials on concussions which are available free of charge on the Centers For Disease Control website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

Note – if for any reason a manager or coach suspects a concussion the player should be removed from the activity and parent notified. Parents will then decide the child’s medical care. For any server injury managers and coaches should call 911 immediately.

**Background check policy**

In 2019 the Hilltop Board of Directors overhauled the league background check policy to follow the newly created background screening and abuse prevention training.



## Sports Engine Safety Solutions

### [Please click here to begin your Babe Ruth League required background screening and abuse prevention training.](https://baberuthsafety.sportngin.com/register/form/277089265)

### Frequently Asked Questions for Coaches and Volunteers

### What is Sports Engine Background Screening by NCSI?

In January of 2018, SportsEngine acquired Sports Illustrated Play and continues to serve the Sports Illustrated Play customers, providing the same commitment to service that you have come to expect.

**SportsEngine also acquired the two leading providers of background screening services, NCSI and SSCI. While NSCI and SSCI services are fully-integrated with the SportsEngine platform, they remain as an independently-operated company to ensure data privacy and security.**

### How does Background Screening by NCSI differ from a discount background check?

Background Screening by NCSI is the Gold Standard in youth and amateur sports because of the quality of service provided by NCSI and the depth of the background check. Unlike most discount screens, NCSI will do an in-depth identify verification, search over 800 million records from the national multi-jurisdictional databases, and sex offender registry, and then go to the local state and county searches. This is a key component missing from many discount searches, as many localities do not consistently report up to the national database providers. NCSI will then always do a thorough quality control review on the report before sending results back to the customer.

### How do I start the background screening process?

The background screening registration is now available [HERE](https://baberuthsafety.sportngin.com/register/form/277089265) and on the individual league websites. An email with this link will also be forwarded to coaches and volunteers from your League President.

In order to complete your background screening, you will need to create a SportsEngine account, and submit your personal information, including your SSN.

### What happens once I've submitted my background screen?

Once you have submitted your background screen, SportsEngine sends this information to NCSI | SSCI. NCSI begins the background screening report by validating your personal data through a social security address trace. If they are unable to do so from the information you submitted, a member of the NCSI | SSCI team will reach out to you directly from the email address verifications@ssci2000.com.

After your personal data is validated, NCSI | SSCI will search two national criminal databases and national sex offender registries. NCSI | SSCI will then also perform a county level criminal record check in the county or counties associated with your address history found on the social security address trace.

In order to ensure accuracy of the report, the NCSI | SSCI quality assurance team reviews all information before sending the results of the report to the SportsEngine platform.

Once the report is delivered to the SportsEngine platform, your organization administrator will be notified and will have access to review the results of the report. Your organization administrator will make the final determination of your eligibility to participate.

### How long does it take NCSI | SSCI to complete the background screening?

The background screening process is typically completed in five business days from the date of submission. Be aware that the turnaround time can vary for a variety of reasons including: applicant needs to verify their personal data with the NCSI | SSCI team; or courthouses are experiencing delays either due to heavy volume or other circumstances.

If your screening is delayed, please check your inbox for emails from verifications@ssci2000.com, as NCSI | SSCI may have reached out to you to verify your personal data.

**Please Note:** providing inaccurate personal data during registration may delay the background screening process.

### It’s been longer than five business days, and I haven’t received an email or confirmation that my background screening has been completed - what do I do?

After five business days, please contact NCSI | SSCI directly at verifications@ssci2000.com for a status update. Depending on the status, the NCSI | SSCI team may be able to expedite the process to complete and deliver the report.

### Who do I reach out to if I have questions about the results of my background screening?

For questions, please contact the NCSI | SSCI Quality Control Department at (866) 996-7412 and select option #5. You may also submit an inquiry via email to: qualitycontrol@ssci2000.com

### What if I don't want to provide my personally identifiable information (PII)?

The background screening application requires the submission of full legal name, address, date of birth and social security number. All of the required fields are marked with an asterisk. We are unable to complete the background screening if any of the required information is not provided.

SportsEngine and NCSI | SSCI have policies and processes in place designed to protect our customers’ and users’ best interests. Access to data is only given to those with a true need for such access. Both organizations are PCI-compliant, and do not share any personal information with third-parties.

**Please Note:** providing inaccurate personal data during registration may delay the background screening process.

### Can I get a copy of my report?

Yes, you can receive a copy of your report, either by clicking the box at the end of your background screening registration on SportsEngine, or emailing qualitycontrol@ssci2000.com if you have already submitted your registration.

### How do I complete my APS Abuse Prevention Training?

Once you submit your personal information for your background screening, you will be sent to a page that has a link to the APS training. Click through the link to continue on to the training. You will also receive an email, in case you need to retrieve the URL at a later.

### I never received an email from APS to complete my training. What do I do?

If you have completed your background check and have yet to receive your APS training link, first check your SPAM/JUNK mail for 'abuse prevention'. If you still haven't received it, please email support@sportsengine.com

### I’ve completed my background screening and training, how do I ensure I’m cleared to participate?

You can call Phone: 800-880-3142 or email info@baberuthleague.org

### What is the process for international screens?

For individuals who are international citizens, but have applied for a work visa, there is an FBI fingerprint and name check, as well as a security and background portion of the visa application process that must be completed and passed in order to obtain the visa.

Therefore, NCSI | SSCI will only run a domestic check for the time that the applicant has resided in the U.S., as a supplement to the visa process.

For those applicants who are not able to provide a proof of visa, an international background screen will be required. The cost of the international background screen will be $150.00 at the expense of the applicant. Registration for the international screen can be completed [here](https://baberuthsafety.sportngin.com/register/form/953213639)

NCSI | SSCI will contact the applicant to obtain any additional documentation that may be necessary to initiate the international screening (ex. passport image, country-specific consent, etc.).

### What is the process for Pennsylvania background screens?

In addition to the Gold Standard background check, SportsEngine provides additional document management services to help organizations remain compliant with Pennsylvania Act 153 of 2014. This Act requires that any adults who come into contact with children while serving in Pennsylvania, either as paid employees or unpaid volunteers, provide the following clearances before participating:

* + Criminal History Record Search from the PA State Police (PATCH) system.
	+ Child Abuse Clearance obtained through the PA Department of Human Services.
	+ One of the following:
		1. FBI Fingerprint screening submitted through the PA State Police
		2. Signed Volunteer Affidavit (volunteers with continuous residence in PA for the past ten years)

Those coaches and volunteers that live in PA and are completing a background screen, will be required to upload the three required documents onto SportsEngine, and NCSI | SSCI will validate these documents. Please refer to the following link for complete instructions on how to obtain these clearances: [www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov](http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/)

## LEAGUE ADMINISTRATORS - Frequently Asked Questions

### Where do I register to become a League Admin?

[CLICK HERE](https://baberuthsafety.sportngin.com/register/form/824059059) to register as a League Admin

### Where do I view the Coaches and Volunteers that have passed the Background Screen?

You can view those at [THIS LINK](https://baberuthsafety.sportngin.com/page/show/4579431-background-screen) and selecting your region after you have registered for the League Admin Registration. Make sure you’re logged in to the same account you used when you registered for the League Admin Registration. You will also be emailed the direct link following completion of the League Admin Registration.

### What if a Coach or Volunteer says they have completed the Background Screen, but they don’t appear on the region report that was emailed to me?

Please wait 7 business days from the time the Background Screen is completed by the Coach or Volunteer and check the region report again. If they are still not on this report and have confirmed SSCI has not reached out to them to provide additional information and they have an email receipt of the Background Screen session, reach out to Babe Ruth Baseball at info@baberuthleague.org to check the status.

### What if APS status box is blank?

This means the Coach or Volunteer hasn’t completed the Abuse Prevention Training yet. Please reach out to that Coach or Volunteer to complete the training.

### What if a Coach or Volunteer is unable to find the APS Training Email?

Please reach out to info@baberuthleague.org to resend the training link.

## Background Checks Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is Babe Ruth League requiring leagues to conduct background checks and Abuse Prevention Training?

It has become the standard among youth organizations to require volunteers working with children to complete a background check. The purpose of the required background check is to deter individuals who should not be working with young athletes from applying to volunteer. Additionally, it serves to identify any unsuitable criminal history of those individuals who do apply as a volunteer. Babe Ruth League, Inc. cares about the protection of your players and feels confident that through your leadership as League President, as well as that of your local league's Board of Directors, we can achieve our goal of making Babe Ruth League, Inc. the safest program in which our youth can enjoy the great games of baseball and softball. In addition, in February 2018, a Federal law “Safe Sports Act” was sign into law requiring volunteers to take abuse prevention training. With the help of Sports Engine we have worked to incorporate the training pieces into the background check program they offer to streamline the process for the volunteer and our leagues.

### Who is required to complete the background check and abuse prevention training?

All managers and coaches, as well as any other persons and volunteers, who provide regular service to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams are required to complete the background check and abuse prevention training.

### Should the local league wait until the background screening process and/or abuse prevention training has been completed before they submit their charter/insurance application?

No. The appropriate League Officer must sign the statement on the charter/insurance application agreeing to adhere to the regulation requiring volunteer background checks and abuse prevention training.

### What type of offenses should the local league screen for when conducting a background check?

Local leagues are conducting a nationwide search that contains the applicable government sex offender registry data. An individual who has been convicted or plead guilty to charges involving or against a minor, no matter when the offense occurred, must not permitted to work or volunteer. Effective with the 2019 season the background check is valid for 2 years. The same applies for the those taking the abuse prevention training. The training is good for 2 years, and can be completed right after the volunteer signs up for the background check if using the Sports Engine Platform.

### Who in the local league should be responsible for processing the background check information?

Babe Ruth League, Inc. recommends the local league's Board of Directors appoint the League President and two other individuals to handle background checks. These individuals may or may not be members of the local league's Board. For example, the Board of Directors may choose to appoint individuals who have professional experience with conducting and processing background checks, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background. For Leagues using the Sports Engine Platform for Background check screening, the Sports Engine verified check will notify the league if a coach has passed the check and should be permitted to be involved in the program. Persons who fail the background check will be notified through the Sports Engine Platform of a failure, so local leagues will not have to have handle this process.

### What if an individual has already been background checked and/or abuse training?

The league will be required to conduct their own background check on all volunteers associated with their league, even if they already have been background checked. All leagues will be required to conduct annual background checks on all volunteers associated with their league. (Note – that remember the term “annual” is to review that background checks and abuse prevention training meets the requirement of being done in within the last two years. For volunteers that have a completed a background check however now need to do just do Abuse prevention training can do so in the Sports Engine platform if they desire. Sports Engine offers 2 programs for Babe Ruth League volunteers. 1. Background Check and Abuse Prevention Training together 2. Just abuse prevention training.

### What offenses will cause the termination of a current volunteer or rejection of a potential volunteer?

Any background check that reveals a conviction of any crime involving or against, a minor would result in immediate termination from the league or eliminated from consideration for any position. Please note that if you are using the Sports Engine Platform that local league volunteers will not have to review results in detail of a background check. The determinations are not through the Sports Engine Platform where any type of crime that would warrant a volunteer not being permitted to coach in youth sports is flagged and that person is notified directly of the result. The local league will only have see passing results of volunteers. This process is to help the local league make management of the screen process is easier.

### What if the league discovers that an individual has offenses against minors that are pending after, appointment to the local league?

Babe Ruth League would suggest the individual not be appointed or be suspended from his/her current position, pending the outcome of the charge. (Again, this is for leagues that are using some type of service that is not the Sports Engine platform. Sports Engine platforms handles this through the verified check process).This is why Babe Ruth League recommends for the local league to use Sports Engine.)

### What if an individual has convictions or other offenses that do not involve minors?

Even though such convictions/offenses do not involve minors, the local league Board of Directors may still deem these individuals as inappropriate and may prohibit them from working as a volunteer within the league. (Again, this is for leagues that are using some type of service that is not the Sports Engine platform. Sports Engine platforms handles this through the verified check process. This is why Babe Ruth League recommends for the local league to use Sports Engine.)

### Who should have access to the information found as a result of the background checks if you are not using another service besides Sports Engine?

The local league President should keep each background check data obtained on file for the current yea and shall only share personal information contained in the background check with other members of their board of directors in order to make personnel decisions. With the exception of retaining records for volunteers for the 2 year period to confirm, if needed, a check was done within 2 year period the local league should dispose of records of any volunteer that is no longer with the program or checks that are older than 2 years unless the local league has taken action or the individual is no longer active in the league (active in the league for two years or made a decision based upon the information contained in the records subject to local and state laws).

### What is the time table for completing the background screening and/or abuse prevention training process for each volunteer?

The local league must complete the background screening process prior to any individual assuming their duties for the current season.

### When should leagues begin to conduct background checks and abuse prevention training on their volunteers?

Local leagues should conduct background checks and abuse prevention training on all volunteers prior to the applicant assuming their duties for the season. Background checks and abuse prevention training must be completed on all individuals who have access to, or contact with, players and teams. This includes, but is not limited to, managers, coaches and local league Board Members.

### Who can coach a team if a screened manager or coach is no longer able to fulfill their duties?

The local league may temporarily assign a Board Member or another screened individual to fill the vacancy until an appointment has been made. Any permanent replacement cannot assume their duty until they have completed a background check. If the replacement manager/coach is only needed for one day, then a background check is not necessary. If the replacement manager/coach is needed for two days or longer, then the person must go through the background check and abuse prevention training process.

### As local League President, how do I justify the need for background checks?

The safety, protection and the well-being of our young players should always be our top priority. We have a responsibility to recruit the most qualified adults to serve as managers, coaches, and other types of volunteers, to ensure our players are able to enjoy a fun and educational experience. In addition, parents trust their children will be safe while participating in your league and your league cannot be successful without the confidence of the parents. We also have a responsibility to protect individuals and the local league from possible loss of league assets or financial hardships that result from litigation. Advancements in technology and the accessibility of information have made screening and background checks the norm and a much-needed resource to determine the competency and safety of prospective volunteers. Babe Ruth League is an organization serious about protecting children. Together, we can make Babe Ruth League, Inc. one of the safest programs in which our youth can enjoy the games of baseball and softball