



Coaches Manual

Welcome to Wayland Little League.

THANK YOU for volunteering your time to serve as a coach with Wayland Little League promoting the game of baseball to our young people in this community. It is through your efforts and the dedication of people like you that we can thrive in our mission of providing players a positive experience on the baseball and softball field -- and to help them reach their goals as a player.

The Purpose of this coaches Manual

The purpose of this coaches manual is to provide you with an easy-to-read guide to assist you throughout your season. It contains information that may prove useful and valuable throughout the season.

Mission of Little League

Through proper guidance and exemplary leadership, the Little League program assists children in developing the qualities of citizenship, discipline, teamwork and physical well-being. By espousing the virtues of character, courage and loyalty, the Little League Baseball and Softball program is designed to develop superior citizens rather than superior athletes.

Appointment of Coaches

The Wayland Little League President is responsible for the nomination of all manager, coach and umpire candidates; and it is the Board of Directors that votes to approve (or deny) these nominees. The League President is responsible for confirming that all background checks are completed before any manager, coach or umpire may assume his/her duties with the league.

The nominations of the League President are done so after he/she has diligently reviewed the volunteer applications completed during registration, and discussed the candidates with the nominating committee.

If a decision is made to not approve and appoint a volunteer to a position that he/she held previously, the League President is responsible for speaking to the subject on behalf of the Board.

Your Mission as a coach

Coaching Little League can be a very rewarding experience. It is very important however, that you keep a proper perspective of what your priorities and mission should be at this level of competition. Your primary responsibility is NOT to win! The pressure of winning will come soon enough for these young athletes. Your primary mission as a Little League coach is to teach and develop.

The Coach's Role

The heart of Little League is what happens between the adult coach and the players. It is the coach more than any other individual who controls how the players are benefited from participation. The Little League coaches must be leaders. All coaches must recognize that they hold a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a sensitive and formative period of a child's development. It is important to remember that parents, are entrusting their children to us. Not just their physical beings, but their emotional ones as well. The safety and well-being of our children is of the highest importance and priority and is the responsibility of each coach.

While our central focus is making the season as enjoyable as possible for the players, we also want to make it enjoyable for each coach who graciously volunteers his or her time and energy. If you enjoy this season...your players will too! Similar to a great teacher who inspires his or her students, a coach will arguably play the biggest role in determining how much satisfaction and enjoyment a player gets out of the season. As a coach, you will have a direct influence on your entire team and each individual. It isn't a question of whether or not you're a role model; the question is, what type of role model will you be?"

As a coach and representative of Wayland Little League we expect you to work toward the betterment of the entire league - and not simply your own team or child. We ask that you possess strong communication skills and display a passion for teaching the game and spending time with kids. Our coaches understand that coaching is challenging and rewarding, and we realize that while winning is important winning at all costs is not acceptable or applauded. Successful coaches understand that success isn't measured in wins or losses but rather in how many players advance in their development and want to continue to play for years to come. We ask our coaches to challenge each player while providing him or her with a positive experience and life lessons that they can apply to other areas of their life .

As a coach, one way of providing a player with a great season and subsequently improving the level of play for the entire league is by giving him or her the skills needed to achieve on-field success. This binder will provide you with suggestions and the tools needed to develop the skills of each player, your team, and as a result the overall quality of the league. Not included in this binder is the support system that you should get from other coaches in the league as well. All of our coaches come from different playing and/or coaching backgrounds, and while each coach heads-up a respective team the collective good of the entire league and its players is key. Coaches should be willing and open to assist a fellow coach and his players.

As a coach, it is our responsibility to provide players with the instruction necessary to play the game with confidence and to develop each time they take the field. To do this, you must be able to conduct a strong practice, which (outside of keeping your players safe) is your biggest responsibility as a coach. We hope the material in this binder can assist you in your practice management and serve as a valuable resource in helping to provide you, your team, and the entire league a great season!

Each coach must have the understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children. The manager coach should be able to inspire respect. Above all else, managers and coaches must realize that they are helping to shape the physical, mental and emotional development of young people. The Little League manager must be something more than just a teacher. Children of Little League age are strongly influenced by adults whose ideals and aspirations are similar to their own. The coach and player share a common interest in the game, a desire to excel, and determination to win. Children often idolize their managers and coaches, not because the adult is the most successful coach or mentor, but because the manager and coach are sources of inspiration.

Your Responsibilities as a coach

It is important to remember that your players look up to you. You set the example and accordingly you should always act like a coach when on the field and be aware of your actions when you are off the field.

Coaches may recruit as many assistant coaches as are willing to participate. Coaches should follow the rules and guidelines outlined in this manual and adhere to the spirit of the league. Among the coaching staff's responsibilities are the following:

Your responsibilities while coaching include:

- The safety and well being of all little league players regardless of which team they play on.
- Abide by the Code of Conduct.
- Adhere to the Wayland Little League Coaching philosophy.
- Attend the coaches' clinic.
- Obtain the necessary equipment from the commissioner.
- Attend the Major League coaches meeting, to be held prior to the beginning of the season.
- Contact all parents/players to inform them which team they are on, the coaches names and phone numbers, and to remind them of the following events:
- Disseminate any and all information to the players and their parents for all events during the season that do not appear on the schedule.
- Ensure one coach is always present at the field on game nights 30 mins prior to game time with the equipment bag.
- Keeping score of games and winning team should report the final score of each game to the designated league commissioner.
- Understanding and learning the game appropriate to the level you are coaching at.
- Being polite, kind and approachable to all players and their families.
- Being fair by providing ALL players the opportunity to learn.
- Making every player feel they are a part of the team regardless of their talent level.
- Dressing like, and looking like and acting in an acceptable manner which is that of a coach.
- Setting reasonable goals and expectations.
- Teaching the fundamentals of the game.
- Being positive no matter what the outcome.
- Knowing and supporting Little League Baseball and Softball rules and programs.
- Being honest and not afraid of admitting your own mistakes.
- Being open-minded.
- Being a role model for the children.
- Understanding that growth and progress come one small step at a time.
- NEVER yelling at a child.
- Setting appropriate rules and following them.
- Communicate any problems, issues or suggestions to the league commissioner as soon as necessary.
- Return all equipment to the league commissioners when the season is over
- Remembering the game is for the children.

Successful Coaching

Determining whether or not you were successful at the end of the season is not measured by your team's win / loss record. Evaluating your success at the youth level can be determined by asking yourself the following questions:

- Did they have fun and enjoy themselves?
- Did they feel comfortable being an active member of the team?
- Was I able to get the absolute best out of the athletes?
- Did I leave players feeling more confident about themselves and more confident in their abilities as athletes?
- Did they excel in the concept of good sportsmanship and treating opponents, teammates, fans and officials politely?
- Did they understand the drills and learn the skills we taught them?
- Did I leave them a little more prepared for life's challenges?
- DO THEY WANT TO RETURN NEXT SEASON / NEXT YEAR?

Establishing Your Team Philosophy

Every coach is different and therefore his or her philosophies will vary. There are however, basic expectations that should be required from the players. Establishing how you are going to run the team and informing the players and parents on the first day is important for a successful season. Your team philosophy should include:

- Safety comes first above all else - follow the rules established to keep everyone safe.
- When the coaches are talking to the team all players should pay attention.
- Be the absolute best you can be at every practice and game.
- Improve in your skills through practice.
- Work hard at becoming physically fit.
- Learn as much as you can about the game.
- Always support the team and your teammates.
- Always conduct yourself in a respectful manner and represent the town and your team with pride.

Team Rules

Team rules allows the team effectively and efficiently. They ensure every participant gets the most they can from the Little League experience by preventing the waste of the team's most precious resource; time. The following items should be reviewed with both players and parents at the beginning of each season:

- Act with safety in mind, and above all else.
- Always act in a manner as to bring credit to the team, league, and yourself.
- When the coach speaks everyone listens.
- No one starts practice until the coach arrives.

- When the coach says stop, everyone stops.
- When you do not understand something, ask questions.
- Stay focused,
- Learn the game.
- Follow instructions.
- Always work hard and give your best effort with a good attitude.
- Follow the playing rules and practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- No horseplay.
- When not involved in a drill or a game - always encourage, never criticize or shout instructions.
- Refrain from foul language, obscene gestures, or any form of verbal or physical abuse.
- Maintain self-control, and refrain from unnecessary demonstrations including the throwing of helmets, bats, or any other equipment.
- Refrain from arguing, teasing, or taunting with the umpires, coaches, players, or spectators.
- Wear the uniform properly and with pride.
- Win graciously - lose graciously.

Aims and Goals

Children participating (depending on the league / level) will learn a number of key skills which provide a solid foundation for participating in baseball including:

- Safety / Safe Play
- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Catching
- Throwing
- Hitting
- Running the bases (and learning their names)
- Introduction to baseball rules.
- Learning about positions and how to play the positions.
- How to play as a team.

The emphasis is on fun, learning and keeping each player active and involved. Instruction is based fun games and lots of repetition. Fun games and drills will be repeated and each player will get a lot of turns to ensure maximum participation and enjoyment. Coaches will be provided with a framework of goals and skills for their appropriate level along with drills and games for each practice session.

Winning Versus Developing

Your ability to teach baseball skills in a safe, fun manner is going to be a major factor on how fast your players learn. Development of players during their time in Little League is crucial to their immediate and future success in the sport. Wins and Losses will soon be forgotten but having fun with their friends and enjoying learning the fundamentals of the game and playing baseball will endure. This is one of the most essential to being a successful coach.

Coaching Your Own Child

The reason for you volunteering your time and energy this season is largely (or exclusively) related to your desire to coach your child. It is an awesome experience being able to coach your child and to spend time with him on the field. However, it can also be difficult. It is certainly a dynamic for different than the other 10-12 players on your team. Many parent-coaches are either too tough on their own kids or not tough at all and allow their favoritism to outwardly show. You want your child to feel as if they are being treated the same as their teammates, no more and no less. Here are some suggestions that could help you if you are involved in this unique coaching situation:

- Have your child refer to you as ""coach in team settings. This tells the team that when you and your child are at the ball field, your child is just another member of the team.
- Avoid having him bat 3rd and play SS....all the time. They, like everyone on your team, should get experience at all of the positions.
- Make sure your child is experiencing character development as the rest of his teammates. The game of baseball will provide many teachable moments.
- Make sure your child knows that he or she is your son first and an athlete second. When managed correctly, many life-long relationships between parent-coaches and their children are strengthened by the common bond of baseball.

Most importantly, make sure your child wants you to coach, or is it making it difficult on him? Is your relationship growing because of your coaching responsibilities or deteriorating?

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that one day, you will no longer be their coach, but you will always be your child's parent.