

Flower Mound Youth Sports Association



Baseball / Softball Coach's HANDBOOK

rev. 12/2008



Coaches Handbook

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Coaches Handbook

Welcome

FMYSA wants to **thank you** for volunteering your time to serve the youth of Flower Mound! Our coaches (which are our most important resource), and FMYSA's programs are considered to be among the best in Texas.

FMYSA is a nonprofit group of volunteers dedicated to the ideals of creating a strong foundation of skills and fundamentals for our youth. Equally important, we believe in promoting good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, and courage that can be taught and applied through organized, competitive practices and game play. FMYSA places a secondary importance on winning games with our select and recreational teams.

For many of our players, this will be their first experience with organized sports. It is up to the coach to set the tone under which that child will compete in the future.

Any youth, without restriction as to race, creed, sex or color, that resides within the geographic limits of Lewisville Independent School District (LISD) is eligible to play with FMYSA. Geographical boundary exceptions may be granted and will **require approval** of the FMYSA Board. ASA and/or other rules may/may not exclude that player from optional tournament play.

FMYSA and Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) **require** that no player may practice or attend games until a Registration Contract has been completed. FMYSA does not allow private or individual practices to be held during which the coach and player are present without another adult present.

A Coach may not cut a player from a team during a season. The FMYSA Board can remove or suspend a member, player, coach, team mom or dad, or manager from FMYSA. Disciplinary problems **must** be in writing and submitted to the Grievance Director immediately. This does not mean that a coach is required to keep a player on their team for the next season, through protected rosters or other means.

FMYSA will not tolerate drinking alcohol or illegal drug use by any of our officials, coaching staff, or players at any FMYSA function involving youth. If you observe this conduct, notify a Board member or the Grievance Director as soon as possible. There is no alcohol allowed at any activity site, before, during or after an FMYSA activity.

We are teaching our children the fundamentals and joy of the sport. Please make it fun for them and yourself. If you find yourself frustrated with the kids, they will **NOT** have fun and you won't either. Re-evaluate your coaching style and techniques frequently to ensure optimal enjoyment and success. Be willing to make changes, when necessary.

Please read FMYSA's Coaches Handbook in detail. We hope you will find the information to be a useful tool to use as you teach and lead the youth of Flower Mound. If you would like additional information to be included in this Handbook, please convey the information to your age group director or a board member.

Again, thank you very much for volunteering your time in **DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S ATHLETES TODAY!**

Sincerely,

FMYSA Board



Coaches Handbook

Setting Up Your Team

ORGANIZING YOUR TEAM

As a coach, your first responsibility is to organize your team. Communication is one of the keys to success. Within three days **of** receiving your team roster, we recommend the following activities:

1. **Plan your first team gathering** – The most effective way of communicating the purposes and needs of your program is through a Parents' Orientation Meeting. This meeting can be used to:
 - Provide a setting for collecting and distributing important information.
 - Provide details about the season.
 - Teach parents the rules and regulations of baseball or softball so they understand the game.
 - Ask for their assistance and discuss other items that are specific to the team.

A meeting for parents and your players is also an excellent way for them to get to know you and each other. A face-to-face meeting and a few short remarks go a long way toward uniting coaches and parents in a cooperative endeavor that benefits the players. Many potential problems can be eliminated by good communication that begins before the first practice.

In your communication with the parents, you should stress the importance of the meeting and the need for each family to be represented at the meeting. Parents usually have a number of questions concerning their child's baseball or softball program. With proper preparation and an outlined agenda, you should be able to answer most questions. The following is a sample agenda:

- Introductions
- Team Roster (format follows, develop and distribute)
- Goals of the team and program (develop)
- Understanding the sport of baseball or softball
- Dangers and risk of injury
- Emergency procedures (copy forms that follow and distribute)
- Medical information and release forms (copy forms, distribute, collect, and put in team binder)
- Equipment requirements (copy and distribute)
- Players' and Parents' responsibilities
- Season practice and game schedules (develop practice schedule and distribute – upon receipt of the game schedule, copy and distribute)
- FMYSA's Rainout and Lightning procedures
- NYSCA's Code Of Ethics (copy, distribute and collect)
- Team picture information and dates (distribute)

Following you will find some recommended forms that can be used for your team binder:



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Informed Consent Form

I hereby give my permission for _____ to participate in the FMYSA Baseball/Softball Program during the athletic seasons beginning in 2009.

Further, I authorize Coach _____ or one of his Assistant Coaches to provide emergency treatment of an injury to or illness of my child if qualified medical personnel consider treatment necessary and perform the treatment. This authorization is granted only if I cannot be reached and a reasonable effort has been made to do so.

My child and I are aware that participating in FMYSA Baseball/Softball Program is a potentially hazardous activity. I assume all risks associated with participation in this sport, including but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, traffic, and other reasonable risk conditions associated with the sport. All such risks to my child are known and understood by me.

I understand this Informed Consent Form and agree to its conditions on behalf of my child.

Parent or Guardian _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone (____) _____

Business Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

Family Physician _____ Phone (____) _____

Pre-existing medical conditions, e.g., allergies or chronic illnesses _____

Other(s) to contact in case of emergency _____

Relationship to Child _____ Phone (____) _____



Coaches Handbook

➤ Medical Release Form

I hereby give permission for any and all medical attention necessary to be administered to my child in the event of an accident, injury, sickness, etc., under the direction of the people listed below until such time as I may be contacted. My child's name is:

_____.

This release is effective for the time during which my child is participating in Flower Mound Youth Sports Association (FMYSA) Baseball/Softball Programs and any tournaments for the 2009 season, including traveling to or from such tournaments. I also hereby assume the responsibility for payment of any such treatment.

Parents' of Guardians' Names: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number: _____

Physician: _____

Physician's Telephone Number: _____

In case I cannot be reached, either of the following people is designated:

Coach's Name: _____

Assistant Coach's Name: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____



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Coach's Code of Ethics

National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as a NYSCA Coach by following the NYSCA Coaches' Code of Ethics.

- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of 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 be knowledgeable in the rules of baseball, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

Coach's signature

Date



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Parents' Code of Ethics

National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

PARENTS' CODE OF ETHICS

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge.

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth--not for adults.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.
- I will read the NYSCA National Standards For Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.

Parent Signature

Date



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Players' Code of Ethics

National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

PLAYERS' CODE OF ETHICS

I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participating by following this Players' Code of Ethics Pledge.

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
- I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.
- I will do my very best in school.
- I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Player's Signature

Date



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Make the Most of Your Coaching Experience

Quoted from: *Youth Sports and Ways To Promote Self-Esteem* by Darrell J. Burnett, Ph.D.

Make a Commitment: Like most things, you will get out of it what you put into it.

Emphasize the Positive: Help children see themselves as winners, regardless of their athletic abilities. Encourage participation, and comment on any and all progress.

Have Fun: A 1990 survey by the Athletic Footwear Association asked 20,000 kids why they participated in sports. The number one answer was to have fun.

Strategies: Watch blooper videos of pro athletes with your players to show them that even famous athletes make mistakes and don't always take themselves seriously. You may find that the relaxation that comes with humor also helps kid's performances.

Build Team Spirit: Get to know all the players on your team. It makes them feel great to be recognized and complimented. Form a "positive" Parents Cheering Section. Never complain about weak players. Have an organized pre-season parents/player meeting. Keep team continuity, morale and spirit as an active priority throughout the entire season.

Empathize: Imagine how it would feel to be a player on a team you coach. Listen to kids when they talk about what they like or dislike about practice and games.

Praise Specifics: This enhances your instruction. "Mark, I like the way you handled that ground ball and got the force out at second base" tells a child more than "Good game."

Set Reasonable Expectations: Keep in mind that physical coordination, attention span, motivation, and dedication vary greatly depending on the ages of the children on your team. It is almost impossible for a five or six-year-old to stand still, whether or not the ball is coming in their direction. Sometimes it's more fun for a child to dig a hole, play in the water, etc., than to worry about whom is winning the game.



Coaches Handbook

Role of the Coach

For young people participating in any program, the quality and subsequent benefits of their experience is determined largely by their coach. **Strong leadership** during practices, games and special events encourages each young person to nurture and develop individual strengths physically, psychologically, and socially. Poor or weak leadership not only inhibits such growth; it may actually undermine a youth's existing strengths in these areas.

As a coach, it is your responsibility to **ensure that the benefits gained by each youth far outweigh the detriments.**

Benefits for Participants:

The numerous benefits for youth include:

- Developing appropriate fundamental skills
- Developing physical fitness
- Learning appropriate conditioning techniques that affect health and performance
- Developing a realistic and positive self-image
- Developing a lifetime pattern of regular physical activity
- Developing a respect for rules as facilitators of safe and fair play
- Obtaining enjoyment and recreation
- Developing positive personal, social and psychological skills, e.g., self-worth, self-discipline, teamwork, goal setting, and self-control.

Many significant benefits can be gained in youth baseball and softball. When young athletes learn incorrect techniques and negative behaviors, the next coach must perform the difficult and time-consuming task of extinguishing these behaviors. To maximize the benefits and minimize the detriments, a coach **must** understand their role and provide **quality leadership**.

Goals for the Coach

As a coach, it is **important** to:

1. Effectively teach the individual fundamental skills, rules and strategies of the game in an orderly and enjoyable environment.
2. Appropriately challenge the cardiovascular and muscular systems of your players through active practice sessions and games.
3. Teach and model desirable personal, social and psychological skills.



Coaches Handbook

Organization and Administration

Effective coaching relies heavily on good organization and administration. Organization involves clearly identifying the goals and objectives that **must be attained** if you are going to create a beneficial experience for the participants. Steps necessary to organize the season so it can be efficiently administered include:

- Identifying your primary purposes as a coach.
- Identifying goals for the season.
- Selecting and organizing the season's objectives.
- Selecting and implementing the activities in practices and games that lead to achievement of the objectives.
- Evaluating the effects of your actions.

Teaching and Leading

Teaching and **leading** are the core of coaching activity.

Because of the influence you have as "**Coach**," your **players will model** the behaviors you exhibit. If you respond to competition (successes and failures), fair play, umpires' calls, and/or spectators' comments with a positive and constructive attitude, your players are likely to imitate that positive behavior. When what you say differs from what you do, your players will be most strongly affected by what you do. In essence, "actions speak louder than words" and you **must** "practice what you preach" if you hope to positively influence your players' behavior.

Protecting and Caring

Although coaches often eliminate the potential for injury from their minds, it is **important** for them to:

1. Plan for injury prevention
2. Effectively deal with injuries when they occur
3. Meet their legal responsibilities to act prudently.

Summary

Your primary purpose as a youth coach is to maximize the benefits of participation in baseball or softball while minimizing the detriments. To achieve this, you must organize, teach, model, and evaluate effectively. Your players learn not only from what you teach but also from what you consciously or unconsciously do. You're a very significant person in the eyes of your players. They notice when you're organized and fair, are a good instructor, know the rules, are interested in them or in the win/loss record, know how to control your emotions, know how to present yourself, and treat others with respect. The choices and actions you make determine how beneficial the experience is for the members of your team.



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Practice – Make It Simple, Keep It Fun

The best way to keep the attention of all your players is to keep practice simple yet still work on the fundamental skills. Practices can turn into boring repetition if you do not vary the routine. The first step to take is to solicit the help of several team dads or moms to help with practice.

Before commencing any scheduled practice and before games, it is highly recommended the players come together as a team for some type of warm-up exercises. These can be any types of stretching, throwing or flexibility movements. Talk with the team about the practice as they are warming up. A warm-up period:

- Increases the breathing rate, heart rate and muscle temperature to exercise levels.
- Reduces the risks of muscle pulls and strains.
- Increases the shock-absorbing capabilities of the joints.
- Prepares players mentally for practices and games.

Next, break down your fundamental skill drills into several stations on the field. Working on fundamentals in small groups helps keep the players' attention. To keep the pace of practice moving, rotate the drills every 10 to 15 minutes.

NOTE: DRILLS SHOULD BE SELECTED AND DESIGNED WITH SAFETY AS A PRIMARY FEATURE.

After rotating through all stations, come together as a team for infield or game-like situation drills. This will get the players ready for game day. Involve everyone in the situation drills by asking the question "What will you do when the ball is hit?" Muscle memory (repetition) is the key to teaching players. Rotate the players amongst the various positions so they all learn what do at each position. The most satisfying times of coaching will come during a game when one of your players makes a play that you worked on in practice.



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Teaching Individual Techniques

Fundamentals of Catching:

In general, there are three fundamental rules of catching:

- (1) The **rule of the eyes** is the eyes must follow the center of the ball directly into the glove.
- (2) The **rule of the hands** is the ball should be caught with "two hands," in front and near the center of the body, whenever possible. When the ball cannot be caught near the center of the body, two options are available. First, is to move the feet so that the ball lines up with the center of the body. If there is not enough time to move the feet, a second option is to extend the glove to the ball and keep the throwing hand as close to the glove as possible.
- (3) The **rule of the glove** dictates the direction the fingers should point when making a catch. In general, the fingers point in the direction the glove has to move to make the catch. If the glove starts at the waist, a ball caught above the waist would require the glove to move up, in which case the fingers of the glove would point up. Using two hands, all fingers point up with the thumbs together. A ball below the waist requires the fingers to point down with the little fingers together.

Catching Drills: Player practices catching a large soft ball without a glove. Player progresses to a smaller soft ball without a glove. Player practices catching the smaller ball with a mitten on the glove hand. Player advances to a regular glove and practices catching: (1) a Ping-Pong ball or a plastic golf ball, (2) a baseball-size Incredible or tennis ball and (3) a regular game ball.

Fundamentals of Throwing:

Throwing variations include: (1) the snap throw, (2) the side arm throw and (3) the underhand toss. Break the throw down into several separate phases: the grip, the pivot, the throwing arm, the glove side, hip and trunk rotation, shoulder action, arm and wrist action, release, and the follow-through. Have your players practice the movements individually and then combine them until you have one fluid motion.

Throwing Drills: Play lots of catch, work on hitting a target (the partner's glove at chest level).

Fundamentals of Fielding:

As with catching and throwing, there are four basic components common to most fielding techniques that should be understood before attempting to learn about specific techniques. These components are: (1) the fielder's ready position, (2) the approach to the ball, (3) the catch of the ball, and (4) the throw to complete the play. Ready position – The feet are approximately shoulder-width apart, the glove-side foot is even with or slightly in front of the throwing-side foot, and the weight is evenly distributed over the balls of the feet. The knees are bent and the backside (bottom) is down to keep the center of gravity fairly low to the ground and centered over the base of support. The shoulders are square to the batter with trunk forward of vertical.

The arms are relaxed and in front of the body with both hands low and facing the batter. The elbows are slightly bent. The head is up and eyes are focused first on the pitcher and then as the pitch is delivered on the hitter's strike zone. The ready position is assumed sometime between the pitcher's step on the pitching plate and the start of the pitching delivery. Approach – In general, the ball should be approached so that it can be fielded on the centerline of the body whenever possible. The movement of the body should be toward the ball.



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Efficient movement to the ball requires the weight to be shifted from one foot to another in such a way that balance is always maintained. The catch – After successfully completing the approach, the glove is open to the ball with the fingers pointing in the appropriate direction and the eyes are focused on the center of the ball until the ball has been secured. The approach is timed so that the glove-side foot steps to the ball as it is being fielded. If the ball is fielded along the centerline of the body, the throwing hand immediately covers the ball as it enters the glove and both arms give to absorb the force of the ball. As the arms give, the ball is transferred to the throwing hand and cradled with the glove hand, and both hands continue to the throwing side of the body. When fielding a short hop, the fielder should catch the ball as close to the ground as possible. This will reduce the various angles the ball might take coming off the ground and help avoid possible injuries. The head must stay down in order to: (1) allow the eyes to continue to follow the ball until it is secured, and (2) keep the glove from pulling up too early. The throw – As the ball is brought to the throwing side of the body, the weight completely transfers onto the glove-side foot. The throwing-side foot then steps in a forward direction (crow hop), behind the glove-side foot and perpendicular to the target. The weight completely transfers onto the throwing foot, the hands separate, and the throwing arm begins its preparatory motion. The glove-side foot strides to the target and the throw is completed.

Fielding Drills: Stationary ball and slowly rolled ball. Ground balls direct and indirect. Base runners on base. Ground balls to the forehand and backhand. Crossover steps.

Charging. Fly balls – pop-ups. Fly balls – In Front and over a fielder's head, in the sun and near a fence.

Fundamentals of Hitting:

Swinging a bat effectively may be broken down as follows: The grip – In general, gripping the bat in the area where the fingers meet the palms allows maximum flexibility and control. Also, lining up the second knuckles (doorknockers) of both hands places the top hand in a good position to transfer maximum power to the ball at the point of contact. A firm but relaxed grip, which tightens at contact. The ready position – Feet are approximately shoulder width apart and parallel. Weight evenly distributed over the balls of the feet. The knees and trunk are slightly flexed. A balanced and relaxed ready position. Hands holding the bat at the top of the strike zone, with the bat angle at or between 0 and 45 degrees from horizontal. Eye focus and head position – The head is level and facing the pitcher, with the eyes initially focused on the pitcher's release point. The eyes pick up the center of the ball as it travels through the release point and the eyes continue to follow the ball until it: (1) contacts the bat or (2) enters the catcher's glove.

Swing Initiation – Initiation of the swing depends on the average speed of the pitcher and speed of the batter's swing. In general, if the pitcher is slow, the swing begins after the pitcher releases the ball. If the pitcher is extremely fast, the swing may begin as the pitcher releases the ball. Weight shift – The swing is initiated by shifting the weight to the back foot and taking a short stride toward the pitcher with the front foot. The stride – The stride is fairly short, about 4 to 6 inches, allowing the midline of the body and the position of the head to remain constant. Stride foot is planted at an angle approximately 45 degrees from its original position.

Rotation – As the weight is transferred to the front foot, the hips begin to rotate forcefully, with the back hip rotating forward. Shoulder rotation follows trunk rotation. When the shoulders and hips are approximately parallel, the arms, held back until now, begin to bring the hands and the bat forward. Arm and wrist action – The front elbow leads the swing as the elbows begin to extend to the ball, bringing the bat forward, knob first. As the elbows near complete extension, the wrists, which until now have been cocked as a result of rotation, snap the bat into the ball. Front knee extension – Just as the arms near complete extension, immediately prior to the bat contacting the



Coaches Handbook

ball, the front knee forcefully extends. This forceful extension acts to send the front side back. The toes of the back foot are pointing down with the laces of the shoe facing the pitcher (squish the bug), and back knee is bent as a result of weight transfer and rotation. Bat path – A level swing is desirable. It is the most efficient path for the bat. It also increases the chances of hitting a line drive. Area of contact – The ideal swing involves the center of the bat contacting the center of the ball. If the ball is pitched to the inside of the plate, the bat must contact the ball well in front of the plate. The hips must rotate further on an inside pitch for ideal contact to occur. If the ball is pitched down the center of the plate, the bat must contact the ball just in front of the plate. If the ball is pitched to the outside of the plate, the bat must contact the ball over the outside corner of the plate. Follow-through – In general, the wrist of the top hand rolls over the top of the bat, the arms and shoulders continue around and the trunk and hips square to the pitcher.

Hitting Drills: Eye focus and hitting from a hitting tee. Soft toss is an excellent drill. Practice hitting inside corner, down the center and outside corner pitches.

Fundamentals of Base Running:

There are five base running situations that need to be taught:

(1) Running through first base: with the weight on the front foot as a result of the swing, the initial step toward first base is taken with the back foot. As the back foot strides to first base, the bat is dropped behind the runner, and the eyes are focused on the base. The runner runs to first base on the outside of the foul line and, on about the third step, glances to see if the ball has been fielded by the infielder or if it has gone through to the outfield. If the ball has been fielded by the infielder, the runner continues to run straight and hard through first base. First base is contacted on the front, outside edge preferably with the front part of the left foot. A forward lean with the upper body just before contacting the base is desirable. Do not slow down until two or three steps beyond the base.

(2) Rounding bases – If the ball has gone into the outfield, the runner begins an arc 10 to 20 feet prior to first base. The arc is approximately 4 to 7 feet wide and allows the runner to run in a straight line to second base. First base is contacted on the inside front corner preferably with left foot. On the next stride, the right leg crosses over and the right foot plants directly in line with second base. A slight lean and dip of the left shoulder throughout the arc will help the runner make the turn toward second base at full speed. Once the base has been rounded, the runner attends to the field action, listens for coaching directions and decides to (1) continue to run straight to second base, or (2) stop, pivot, and return to first base. Extra base hits – The runner begins an arc before all but the last base. Runner contacts the inside corner of each base with the left foot and crosses the right foot over to stride directly to the next base. As first base is rounded, the runner listens for coaching directions and momentarily looks for the ball. As second base is rounded, the runner looks to the third-base coach to help evaluate the play – especially if the ball is not in the runner's field of vision. As third base is approached, the runner pays close attention to the third-base coach and reacts accordingly. In general, the last base to be reached is run as hard and straight and unless otherwise informed, the runner should expect to slide.

(3) Leading off – The runner should take a leadoff that is aggressive, yet not so far that the pitcher could easily pick the runner off the base. In general, three to four steps is an appropriate leadoff. The knees and trunk are slightly flexed, the weight is evenly distributed over the toes of both feet and the arms are ready to help propel the body either back to the base or on to the next base. From the leadoff ready position, the runner never takes their eyes off the pitcher until the pitcher is in the delivery and committed to throwing home.



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(4) Stealing – Straight Steal: As the pitcher begins the delivery by lifting their front foot and directing it toward the plate, the runner twists right and drives their left foot forward (crossover step), running toward the next base. The runner should run as hard as possible and, after going a few steps, glance toward home to make sure the hitter doesn't hit a pop up (if there are less than two out), and prepare to slide 10 to 15 feet from the base.

Delayed Steal – The delayed steal is dependent upon a lack of readiness on the part of the defense. For the delayed steal, the runner takes a few steps toward the next base as the pitch is delivered, hesitates, then advances to the next base on the return throw from the catcher to the pitcher. The runner runs as hard as possible and prepares to slide 10 to 15 feet from the base.

(5) Sliding – Slide is initiated 8 to 12 feet prior to the base. Takeoff leg bends under as the lead leg extends to the base. The extended leg is 6 to 10 inches above the ground to prevent catching the cleats or the bottom of the shoe on the ground. The arms are thrown upward to help gain horizontal position. The arms, hands and head are off the ground with the arms relaxed and overhead and the chin tucked to the chest. The body is laid back and low to the ground through the slide. The base is contacted with the foot of the extended leg – the extended leg then gives to absorb the momentum of the slide. To avoid a tag, slide to the opposite side of the base and grab the base with the hand.

Sportsmanship

Each coach should teach and set an example of good sportsmanship. This involves more than just shaking hands and saying "good game" at the end of a game. Sportsmanship is being a gracious winner as well as a good loser.

Your example and behavior towards the other team and umpires should reflect the respect that you would ask of them.

FMYSA rules are very clear about this and will be enforced. "Players or adult volunteers who engage in unsportsmanship like conduct, such as fighting, abusive language or similarly derogatory activity, may be suspended for one or more games.

Remember, although the games are important to us, they are after all, only games.

"A HUNDERED YEARS FROM NOW IT WILL NOT MATTER WHAT MY BANK ACCOUNT WAS, THE SORT OF HOUSE I LIVED IN, OR THE KIND OF CAR I DROVE...BUT THE WORLD MAY BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE I WAS IMPORTANT IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD."



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Handling Parents

It is amazing that some otherwise practical and sane individuals totally lose control over a game involving children. What causes this to happen? If we knew that answer, every league in the country would want to talk to us. Unfortunately, we don't. However, we can try to avoid any problems with communications. Early in the season, this should be in the form of a Parents' Orientation Meeting or letter to the parents of the players on your team.

As the coach, you are often the only contact with the league that the parents will have. We are counting on you to make those calls or write those letters. You should welcome them to the team, invite them to participate (parents are always needed to help with practice, running the dugout, concession stands, scorekeeping, etc.) and thank them for allowing you to coach their child.

Make sure you get a copy of the practice and game schedules to all the parents while emphasizing the need to attend all the practices and games on a timely basis. It is uncomfortable to have 7 players, 5 minutes before game time. Similarly, player development will happen faster and the game will be more fun for those who attend practice regularly. Stress the positives of involvement and watch the enthusiasm catch.

An assistant coach or team mom/dad is a big help in getting the reminders out about practices, games and/or rainouts, etc. Do not try to do it all yourself.

Please ask parents to patronize our sponsors. Remind them of concession stand and trash removal responsibilities. The Head Coach is the only spokesman during discussions with the umpire.

Another suggestion is to give each parent a roster so they will know the other children's names and be able to call each other if a need arises. Clear this with each parent first to see if they mind having their phone numbers published.

Again, thank you for your participation and good luck this season.



Coaches Handbook

Inclement Weather Guidelines and Procedures

(Effective January 1, 2004)

➤ **Purpose**

To provide safe sports fields for the use and enjoyment of the residents of Flower Mound as well as establish guidelines and procedures for inclement weather. This policy informs field users of the Town's decision making process that occurs during periods of inclement weather. It also describes guidelines to utilize when thunderstorms approach.

➤ **General Information**

Experience has shown that most of the turf damage to sports fields occurs with overuse and/or use during inclement weather, especially in early spring and late fall. Periods of wet weather, prolonged rain, or heavy downpours combined with field use will cause damage to the turf and skinned infield areas. In order to keep this damage to a minimum and ensure sports fields are safe, the Park Services Division makes a decision regarding opening or closing a sports field based on the following criteria:

- Presence of standing water on the field.
- Amount of precipitation that has fallen and is expected to fall.
- Drainage conditions on the sports field.
- Time of year and the cumulative amount of stress on the sports field.
- Type and amount of damage that could occur if the fields were to remain open.
- Number of recent field closures.
- Special games or tournaments that cannot be rescheduled.

Once a visual assessment has been made of the various sports fields, the Sports Field Crew Leaders share information with the Park Services Supervisor and Manager. Based on the above criteria, a decision is made on whether to open or close the sports fields. After the Park Services Division has made a decision, it is passed on to the Recreation and Leisure Services Division for dissemination to scheduled sports field users. Notifications are normally disseminated by 3:00 p.m. on weekdays and 7:00 a.m. on weekends. If the sports fields are publicized as closed and damage occurs as a result of a user's decision to play, the user may be held accountable for repair costs and possibly have future sports field reservation privileges revoked.



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Sports Field Conditions/Rainout Information

- Youth baseball & softball: 972.738.9898 or www.fmysa.com
- Youth soccer: 972.738.9700 or www.glasasoccer.org

➤ Delay the Game when Thunderstorms Approach

The Division of Emergency Management of the Texas Department of Public Safety warns the public that sports fields are dangerous during thunderstorms. Countless lightning tragedies have occurred on sport fields in Texas through the years. Lightning storms are the second most common cause of weather-related deaths in the state after flooding.

People on open sport fields are at higher risk for lightning strikes. Sports fields are dangerous because they are large open areas where people are often the tallest objects. Sports fields also have metal bleachers, fences, light poles and goal posts that attract lightning. When lightning hits these objects, its charge travels along the object shocking anyone who is touching it. Lightning can bounce off any of these objects and strike people nearby. Lightning can also travel through moist soils for dozens of feet.

"Schools, athletic programs, day care centers, and summer camps, as well as coaches, referees, and parents participating in field events need to understand the danger of lightning and be prepared to take immediate action. Activity policies should clearly state that if thunder is heard, games and activities should be suspended until the threat passes and thunder is no longer heard," says Division of Emergency Management Coordinator, Tom Millwee. "No sporting event is worth risking the lives of the people and children on or around fields." Millwee says, "When a game or practice is delayed due to a thunderstorm, move everyone indoors, or into cars, or buses until the storm passes."

The Division of Emergency Management offers the following lightning safety tips:

- Stay tuned to local weather forecasts.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning.
- Move into a sturdy building and stay away from windows and doors.
- If you are outside, the interior of a car, truck, or bus is relatively safe from lightning. To be safe, do not touch metal on the inside of the vehicle. The outside bed of a truck is a deadly location. Do not lean against a car or truck; get inside the vehicle quickly.
- If you are outdoors with no shelter available, find a low spot away from trees, bleachers, goal posts, and other structures. Make sure the area is not prone to flooding.
- Move away from hills and high places, and avoid tall, isolated trees.
- Do not touch metal objects, such as tennis racquets, baseball bats, or golf clubs.
- Do not ride bicycles, or lean against fences or metal sheds.
- If you feel your hair suddenly stand on end, it means you may be a lightning target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands.
- Avoid wet areas that can conduct the lightning charge.
- If you can hear the outdoor warning sirens, move everyone indoors or to a covered shelter.



Coaches Handbook

Team MOM Guidelines

Work with your Head Coach to coordinate the following:

- ❖ Rescheduling of practices
- ❖ Notifying team members of rain outs and re-schedules
- ❖ Coordination of team pictures
- ❖ Establish a “Snack” schedule for each game
- ❖ Monitor team spirit
- ❖ Encourage each player to bring water to stay hydrated
- ❖ Pick up team pictures
- ❖ Pick up team trophies/medals
- ❖ Schedule end-of-year party
- ❖ Encourage Fun and Fair play!



Coaches Handbook

Guest Player Policy

FMYSA allows the use of guest players, under the below described guidelines, for purposes of avoiding forfeits and allowing kids to play ball.

The spirit of the Guest Player rule is intended to allow short handed teams the temporary use of other league players rather than forfeit the game. It is not intended to be used as a tool to exclude regular team members in favor of more highly skilled players.

Guidelines:

1. A coach is authorized to add up to two guest players per game, provided that:
 - a. The guest players are currently registered in the same FMYSA division,
 - b. The guest players play only with the permission of their parents AND regular coach,
 - c. The coach must announce and identify the guest players to the umpires and opposing coach prior to the start of each game,
 - d. The home team shall record the player's full name in the official game book,
 - e. The guest players play outfield positions only,
 - f. The guest players wear their regular uniforms,
 - g. The guest players must bat last in the batting order,
 - h. The guest players are not on the field if any regular roster player is present and available to play,
 - i. The involved guest players, during the course of the season, have not previously served this team as a guest player.
2. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure that all players, including guest players, have current, signed medical waivers present whenever an official practice or game is held.
3. Guest players may only be used if all of the above-described guidelines are met.
4. Regular season games involving guest players shall be official games and are not to be considered forfeits. Guest players are not to be used during tournament play.



Coaches Handbook

Team Formation Policy

Rev: 010804

This document defines the team formation policy used by FMYSA volunteers to assemble teams for FMYSA's regular season recreational teams.

Spirit of This Document:

The spirit of this document is to further FMYSA's commitment to provide a fun, constructive, and memorable experience for our members. We are providing a mechanism, the protected roster; to allow a group of children to stay together, build their skills, friendships, and character as a team. The rules set forth in this document are intended to eliminate the recruiting of players in our 11 and under non-select programs. FMYSA will, as necessary, enforce all rules detailed in this document, as well as, uphold the spirit of this document when making decisions about team formation and coaching positions.

General Information:

All children within the appropriate age guidelines that sign up with FMYSA will be placed on a team. This document divides the age groups into three categories, ages 3 through 8, 9 through 11, and 12 and up. These three age group categories have slightly different team formation abilities as detailed in this document. The reason for the division of the age groups is to better facilitate a functional and fair league for FMYSA's members.

League Age: For purposes of this document, all references to a player's age shall be their "League Age" defined as follows:

- Baseball: League age is determined by the player's age as of April 30th of the applicable year.
- Softball: League age is determined by the player's age as of January 1st of the applicable year.

Spring vs. Fall Seasons: FMYSA offers both a spring and a fall baseball season. The fall season is shorter and is intended to be instructional in nature. The longer spring season allows for more practices before games begin, a town championship tournament for ages 8 and up, and a skills evaluation for some players ages 9 and older. The skills evaluation is used to provide coaches some information about an individual player's skills for drafting purposes.



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Draft: The draft will only take place in the spring and is only for ages 9 and up. The draft is a mechanism that allows coaches who need additional players or would like to attempt to add a more skilled player to their roster a chance to do so. Any players on a protected roster are exempt from the skills evaluation. Any player not on a protected roster who does not attend the skills evaluation is not eligible for the draft and will therefore be assigned to a team by the age group director. The complete draft guidelines and procedures are not part of this document.

Buddy System: The “Buddy System” allows two friends to be on the same team. This system is only for players league age 8 and below. Both players must indicate on their registration form that they would like to be on one another’s team. Both players must indicate their desire to play with the other player. If the request is not reciprocated, it will not be honored. Neither player using the “Buddy System” can be on a protected roster. The age group director will assign the two players to a team. If either player is on a protected roster, the request will not be honored. The “Buddy System” is for players who want to be on the same team more than they want a specific coach/ team.

Playing Up: FMYSA allows players to play up one age group. Any player that wants to play up must have the permission of the age group director; unless that player was on a protected roster in the prior season and is on the same team’s protected roster for the current season. The age group director will, at his option, perform a skill evaluation of the player’s skills prior to giving that player permission to play up. FMYSA reserves the right to refuse any request to play up without explanation.

Most of the time, playing up moves a child into an environment where they may be as physically capable as the other children they play with, however they may not necessarily be as mentally mature as the older children. Playing up may benefit the very talented player or may seriously harm the player’s confidence, playing time, and /or love of the game. This is a decision parents need to take very seriously. Most of the time, it is not the right thing for a child’s self-confidence.

Blue and Red Division: When age group numbers allow, age groups may be divided into two divisions to allow teams to compete against teams of similar ability. In this case, the Red Division will be the more capable teams and the Blue Division will be the less capable teams. These divisions are formed at the age group director’s discretion. Coaches should request which division they want to play in on their protected roster. However, the age group director will ultimately decide each division’s team placement. From season to season, age group directors reserve the right to shift teams between divisions based upon the team’s success.



Coaches Handbook

Protected Roster: A protected roster is a form a coach can fill out and turn into the league during the in-person registration day to protect his entire team of players. This document forges the rules that govern which players a coach can protect. Coaches electing to utilize this option must abide by all rules and deadlines set forth.

In the spring season, a coach can protect a sub-set of the players he had on his previous spring roster. Or, the coach can choose to protect a sub-set of the players he had on his previous fall roster. The coach may not combine players from his past spring and fall roster. In the fall season, a coach's protected roster must be a sub-set of his previous spring roster. With the exception of drafted players (spring only), players on protected rosters, and children ages 12 and up, all new players in FMYSA will be assigned to a team by the age group director.

If a team that has been together in the previous season decides to breakup for any reason, any parent(s) that is on that team may become a head coach and protect a subset of the players from that team. All open slots on these new protected rosters will be filled per the rules outlined in this document.

If a parent chooses not to have their player on a protected roster, they can list one coach on their registration form that they do not want their child to play for. The age group director will then be sensitive to this request and do what is possible to honor it when assigning players to teams.

Rules for League Ages 5 through 11:

1. Once an age group director forms an official roster from a coach's protected roster, those players on that official roster are frozen together, despite seasonal coaching changes. The coaching staff or head coach can change; it's the players that are held together.
2. The head coach of a group of players can choose to drop a player(s) from his/her previous season's protected roster.
3. A head coach must have the permission of the player's parent(s) before placing that player on his/her protected roster. All protected players must have played on that team, the preceding fall or spring season, depending on the "Protected Roster" choice as specified above.
4. All open slots on a "Protected Roster" will be filled by the age group director by the following guidelines:
 - a) Spring Season 8 and under and Fall Season for all age groups:
 - i. When possible, players will be assigned to coaches whose children attend the same school.



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- ii. If multiple teams are to be assigned players from the same school, the players will be evenly divided among teams in a manner which avoids placing older “league age” players on the same team.
 - iii. Teams in the Red Divisions will be filled out to 12 players per team.
 - iv. Directors will not accommodate requests for the “Buddy System” in the event either one, or both, of the involved players are on a protected roster.
 - v. Directors WILL NOT accommodate a parent’s request to be placed with a specific coach. When possible, Directors will try to accommodate parental requests to avoid placement with a coach with whom their child has previously played.
- b) Spring Season ages 9 and up:
- i. Draft picks by head coach.
 - ii. Following the draft, FMYSA Directors will assign remaining players to teams. These players are kids who 1) have not been protected by a coach or 2) did not participate in the skills evaluation. When possible, players will be assigned to coaches whose children attend(ed) the same school.
 - iii. If multiple teams are to be assigned players from the same school, the players will be evenly divided among teams in a manner which avoids placing older “league age” players on the same team.
 - iv. Teams in the Red Divisions will be filled out to 12 players per team.
 - v. Directors will not accommodate requests for the “Buddy System” in the event either one, or both, of the involved players are on a protected roster.
 - vi. Directors WILL NOT accommodate a parent’s request to be placed with a specific coach. When possible, Directors will try to accommodate parental requests to avoid placement with a coach with whom their child has previously played.
5. Any protected rosters turned in with players that are ineligible for protection will result in the ineligible player(s) being placed on other teams and the vacancies created by the ineligible players being filled by the age group director. Offending coaches will also be reviewed for disciplinary actions. An ineligible player is any player placed on a roster that does not conform to the rules set forth in this document.
6. Coaches are not allowed to hold a tryout for a player or group of players at any age group in order to form a team that will play recreational baseball in FMYSA’s regular season. Any coaches found breaking this rule will immediately be removed from their coaching role for the remainder of the season. Any non-sanctioned camps, skills evaluations, or like event may be viewed by the league as a try-out and could result in disciplinary action toward all the offending coaches involved.



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Rules for League Ages 12 and Up:

1. The major difference for ages 12 and older is recruiting. At this age the players and/or coaches may seek out and find other players that they would like to play with.

League Age	# of Players Protected	Spring Draft	Divisions	Recruiting
Blast Ball (3U) ¹	6	No	One	Not Allowed
4U	12 ⁴	No	One	Not Allowed
5U	12	No	One	Not Allowed
6U	12	No	One	Not Allowed
7U	12	No	Red / Blue ^{2,3}	Not Allowed
8U	12	No	Red / Blue ²	Not Allowed
9U	12	Yes	Red / Blue ²	Not Allowed
10U	12	Yes	Red / Blue ²	Not Allowed
11U	12	Yes	Red / Blue ²	Not Allowed
12U	12	Yes	One	Allowed
13/14	12	Yes	One	Allowed
15-18	12	Yes	One	Allowed

¹Blast Ball is co-ed

²Certain age groups may not have the number of players necessary or disparity in ability among the players to necessitate two divisions of play. The creation of two divisions of play is at the discretion of the Age Group Director.

³For 7U, separate divisions are only allowed in the Spring.

⁴In 4U, the Fall protected roster is limited to a maximum of 6 players. The Spring protected roster can be a subset of the Fall roster (up to 12 players), or a new roster with a maximum of 6 protected players.



Coaches Handbook

Coach's and Player's Uniform Policy

Rev. 010804

Rationale:

To maintain a spirit of equity, minimize participant costs, and to maintain good-faith relationships with our sponsoring organizations, FMYSA has revised the "Coaches and Players Uniform Policy."

Policy:

All FMYSA Players and Coaches shall wear the official issued uniform items (jersey & cap) during all FMYSA sanctioned games. Uniforms that have been modified, altered, or enhanced, shall be ruled "In violation" of the FMYSA Uniform Policy. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, personalized names on jerseys and/or the removal of jersey sleeves, etc.).

All FMYSA Recreation League baseball players shall wear solid white, solid gray, or solid black baseball pants during sanctioned games. Rubber baseball cleats (or tennis shoes) and socks are also required. Belts may be used, but are not required. Teams may, at the player's expense, wear coordinating socks and belts. Baseball shoes equipped with metal cleats (spikes) are prohibited in all FMYSA Recreational League play.

Coaches shall refrain from requiring additional uniform items and/or collecting additional monies for non-sanctioned uniform items. While on the field, coaches may wear baseball pants identical to the players', slacks, or hemmed shorts (no cut-offs).

Noncompliance with this policy will result in a game forfeiture. The Age Group Director will officially declare forfeitures for contested games. Any Team with one or more forfeits will be prohibited from participating in the City Championship Tournament.

The head coach is solely responsible for ensuring the intent of this policy is followed. Head coaches of teams violating this policy may be subject to dismissal from the FMYSA league.



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General Draft Guidelines:

Below are the general draft guidelines. Age group directors may modify these guidelines to better accommodate their specific age group.

- The draft is used as a mechanism to level the ability of the teams within the age groups where the draft is utilized. Due to the time necessary for Skills Evaluation and the actual drafting process, drafts are only held during Spring seasons.
- Each Age Group Director is responsible for holding their age group's draft.
- Skills Evaluation is a process where players that want to be eligible for the draft have their throwing, fielding, and batting skills evaluated and scored. FMYSA has volunteers, typically experienced coaches, evaluate and score the players. When possible, volunteers do not score the age group that they coach.
- In order for a player to be eligible for the draft, that player must attend the Skills Evaluation. The league will blindly assign players that do not attend the Skills Evaluation to teams during or right after the draft.
- A coach will be able to draft in the draft round number that is one higher than the number of players that the coach has protected. For example, a coach that has protected six players will be allowed to draft for the first time in round seven.
- The drafting order of the coaches is to be determined by having the coaches draw a number from a hat. The number drawn is the coach's Draft Number. These numbers will determine the draft order for each round. Coaches not yet eligible to draft in a given round due to already having a protected player in that round will be skipped.
- All FMYSA drafts are completed in a Serpentine Method. That means the coaches with the lowest Draft Number will draft first, in the first round of drafting. The second round of the draft will use the Draft Numbers in reverse order. Therefore, the coach with the highest Draft Number will draft last in round one and will draft first in round two. Each subsequent round of drafting will alternate the order in which the Draft Numbers are utilized.
- At the discretion of the Age Group Director, Red and Blue Divisions may be put in place to divide the teams within an age group. The divisions are used as a mechanism to schedule games between teams of similar ability. Teams with more ability will be placed in the Red Division. The Age Group Director determines which teams will participate in each division. The decision to have a Red and Blue Division may be made by the Director before or after the player draft. If the decision is made prior to the player draft, the Director may allow the Red Division coaches to draft prior to the Blue Division coaches drafting.
- In the event a head coach must be recruited by the Age Group Director for a given age group, that coach will be assigned to the Blue Division.