

Team Set-up

Besides having a manager and coach here are key people that help make your season successful!!!!

-Bench Coach- This person is probably the most important of all your coaching staff. This person needs to be a disciplinarian and coaches need to give them the power to be. At this age the kids are not the most attentive kids in the world. Another thing that helps kids to stay in order is buying little plastic chairs with their names on them. They are easy to move around (Batting Order) and store. The bench coach makes sure the kids are:

- Ready to bat when it is their turn
 - Ready to go out in the field at 3 outs.
 - Attentive and learning something when they are not involved in the game.
 - Behaving
 - Not swinging bats, throwing gloves or other equipment
 - Learning where to put their hats and gloves when they come in to hit.
- Team Mom/Dad- This person needs to be your secretary. They need to:
- Send emails regarding practices, games, snacks, picture days, cancellations.
 - Arrange snack days.
 - Create Roster with emails, phone numbers, etc. for all parents to have.
- Assistant Dad/Mom coaches- These parents should be able to do the following:
- Throw wiffle balls
 - Throw fly balls, groundballs
 - Shag
 - Run stations that the head coach sets up
 - Coach Bases

Practice Drills (K.I.S.S.)

If there is one thing that kids at this age need it is structure. The key to a successful year is to not overwhelm the kids with drills and practices. Have a few drills and stations that you do religiously. If you work on the right things for the kids they will get very comfortable on the field and will start to perfect the important things.

Here are a few drills and stations that work well:

-Hitting Day-4 kids in each group (20 Minutes each station)

-Batting Tee/Soft Toss station (Whiffle Balls) 2 Coaches, 2 Groups. 1 kid hitting on tee. 1 kid hitting soft-toss. Use each side of backstops. Whiffle Balls ONLY into fence. Other kids shag. Rotate as needed.

-Whiffle ball Station- 2 Coaches, 2 Groups. Both Coaches throw from a knee to 1 kid. The other 2 kids shag. Rotate as needed

-Live Station- 1 Coach. 1 kid hits from coach pitch, the others shag. Rotate as needed.

-Defensive Day- 4 kids in each group (20 Minutes each station)

-Fly Ball/Relay Station-2 Coaches, 2 groups. One kid deep the other closer to coach. Spread out about 30 feet in a straight line. Throw fly ball to deep kid and have him "Hit the Cut". Throw back to coach. Throw some "Divers" to keep interest and have fun Rotate as needed.

-Ground Ball Station- 2 coaches, 2 Groups. Hit 3 ground balls then rotate. Kid not taking ground balls need to back up player. "Divers" here is good as well.

- Situation Station- 1 Coach, 1 Group. Kids are at infield positions and coach hits balls to them. Before the ball is on play coach tells kids where the play is. Rotate all kids to all positions.

-Live Day- All kids together. 8-10 kids in the field, the rest run.

-Coach puts ball in play. Coach also, before ball is in play, reminds kids where the play is. Also remind runners about needing to run depending on situation.

All these drills help kids grow into better players, have fun, and learn to work in groups.

Game Day

There is nothing worse than as a parent pulling up to their game 15 minutes before your game and seeing the other team already there warming up. I would love to see BOTH teams doing the same things at the same times to help their kids get ready for the game. Here is a good Pregame schedule to follow before EVERY game. Example is for a 10:00 AM Game

- 9:15- Get to field. Encourage kids to be Baseball ready (Shoes on, Gloves under seat, Bats out, etc.) at time that you designate
- 9:15- Whiffle Balls. 2 Stations, kids that get there first hit first.
- 9:30- Play Good Catch. Single file line on foul line, other player in the outfield. Play catch parallel to 2nd-3rd or 1st- 2nd Baseline. Tell kids to stay off the infield. Teach them early.
- 9:40- 1 Ground Ball line, 2 and rotate. 1 Fly ball Line, 2 and rotate. Rotate after five minutes
- 9:50- Head to bench. Here you can go over things that kids learned at practice, things we worked on at practice, and things to pay attention to in game. Give the kids line-up and defensive positions.
- 9:55- Hit the field.

These things should help all coaches to be better prepared, make better use of the practice times, get the kids game ready and make the playing field much more level.