

BELOW IS A BRIEF INTRODUCTORY LETTER THAT WE RECOMMEND YOU ADAPT AND SEND TO ALL OF YOUR TEAM PARENTS. ADDITIONALLY, WE HAVE INCLUDED SOME OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES YOU SHOULD ADDRESS WITH YOUR FAMILIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Welcome everyone to [year][season] rec baseball. My name is [name] and I will be coaching your child's team this season. *[Also, helping me will be name and name.]* We are looking forward to a fun and competitive season of baseball, but before we hit the field, it is important to address a few things. First, we would like to stress to all parents that this is a developmental league and for some kids it could be their first year of organized baseball. While we will be teaching individual skills, the importance of teamwork and game strategies, it is important to remember that we will ultimately stress fun over all else.

The keys to getting the most out of baseball this season is to focus on continued learning and improvement of skills and to not let mistakes (or fear of making mistakes) stop the kids from improving. As a parent or guardian, you can help by appreciating your child's effort above all else; get him to talk about his play rather than providing your critique of his performance. Avoid giving advice right after a game, especially a tough loss and please avoid discussions of any other child's performance. Although this all seems like common sense, it can be easy to forget after a tough day on the field.

Coaching youth sports is a team effort and we encourage all parents to help out on gameday by keeping the kids focused, encouraging effort and cheering good play on both sides of the diamond. Many of the umpires in this league are kids only a few years older than the children playing. **Never** protest an umpire's call. If a call is wrong in your opinion, please be silent and don't blame a loss on a bad call.

[For younger divisions] Kids will often want to emulate their favorite player or an older sibling and that means playing a specific position. The league encourages defensive alignments that provide all children an opportunity to experience each position, however, there are practical limits that need to be addressed. For safety reasons, children that have difficulty catching the ball may not be able to play first base or catch. When children reach pitching age, players that cannot reach the plate or players that have difficulty consistently throwing strikes may not have opportunities to pitch.

All rules, program information, field locations, etc. can be found on the 78th Youth Sports web site (www.78youthsports.org) under the "Resources" tab.

Lastly, please make sure that someone is there after practices and games to pick up your child.

Play Ball,
[coach name]

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES:

1. Scheduling practices – when and where.
2. Immediately establish dates when you will not have enough to field a team – school trips, graduation parties, religious holidays, etc. and communicate it to the League Commissioner.
3. Choose assistants to help with:
 - a. communication with parents;
 - b. keep the scorebook during the games;
 - c. assist with practices;
 - d. manage uniforms and equipment pick up and drop off.
4. Instruct everyone to download the Crossbar app to their phone. Team schedule information will be posted and updated there. Coaches and team admins will also be able to access roster information and the entire team can communicate via the app.
5. Communicate clearly about schedules. As you know, much of the scheduling is out of our hands. The PPBA must coordinate over 100 teams and each team's requests, restrictions and blackout dates which means schedules are often not available until just before opening day. It can be frustrating, but less so when we are all up to date.
6. Please encourage your players and parents to support 78 Youth Sports through sponsorships; fund raisers like picture days and 78 YS-promoted Cyclones games; and volunteering for non-coaching roles as part of a field crew, a school liaison or even joining our Board.