



SAFA 2026 Parent Letter

- **Philosophy**

- SAFA works to promote a **fun** competitive environment that improves players' skills while developing sportsmanship, teamwork, and self-confidence.
- Our goal is to introduce the game of Fastpitch and develop basic skills. As players progress through the program, we are committed to the development of high school varsity softball players. The best part of every season is seeing each girl progress in some area from the start to the finish and want to play again next season.
- Our coaching techniques emphasize fundamentals, encouragement, and positive reinforcement.
- **Player development over wins** and **equitable playing time** is prioritized by coaches.

- **Expectations**

- Stillwater is part of the 10U Tri-County and 8U Metro Area Leagues.
- Traveling means that our league games include teams outside of Stillwater and a step-up in competition.
- Our 10U and 8U teams have traveled to cities such as Cottage Grove, Woodbury, Hudson, Rosemount, Eagan, Apple Valley and Farmington. **While Tri-County/Metro Area attempts to limit unreasonable travel, please be aware that your team may be asked to travel over an hour to games.** Sample schedules from 10U and 8U are attached.
- There are 120+ teams participating in both the Tri-County and Metro Area Leagues, across A, B and C levels. Each team we face has a range of player development.
- Dedication is important. **Attendance at practices and games are critical to success for the entire team.**
 - While we support multi-sport athletes in our program, we want to be transparent about the importance of commitment to the team your daughter is placed on. Please review the sample schedules. If you anticipate missing practices and games due to participation in another sport, please consider if Stillwater Fastpitch is the appropriate program or if an in-house option is better.

- **Registration:** <http://www.stillwaterfastpitch.com/>

- 10U: Open
 - Registration December 12th through January 31st
 - Late Registration February 1st through February 15th
- 8U: Open
 - Registration December 12th through January 31st
 - Late Registration February 1st through February 15th
- Registration is based on birthdate. 2026 Age Eligibility Calculator: <https://mnsoftball.com/pages/cms/age-calculator>

- **Fees/Fundraising:**

- Team registration – (Full uniform included – Jersey, Pants, Socks and Belt)
 - 8U/10U: \$670
 - 8U/10U: Late Registration: \$770
- Volunteer Obligation –
 - Volunteer Sign-up : <https://www.stillwaterfastpitch.com/dashboard/volunteer>
 - All families must volunteer for 1 item throughout the year or can choose to opt out by paying \$250 at registration
- Raffle Ticket Fundraiser at Annual Pony Picnic – Each year, SAFA families will receive raffle tickets to sell prior to the Pony Picnic which takes place each year in May. The Pony Picnic is an annual event that brings all Stillwater Fastpitch softball players together to watch and support the Varsity team. SAFA provides FREE food and drinks. Post-game is our raffle ticket drawing and a SAFA group photo.

- **Evaluations:**

- 10U

- Evaluation: **March 7, 10:00am – 2:00pm @ Stillwater Middle School**
 - Hitting/Bunting
 - Throwing
 - Catching
 - Fielding (Outfield and Infield)
 - Pitching and Catching Evaluations (35 feet) **March 3 and 5, 5:30pm – 9:00pm @ Stillwater Middle School (Date and Times will be assigned after registration closes)**
 - High/Low Targets
 - Inside/Outside Targets
 - Fastball/Change-up (if you have one)
 - Pitchers' Choice

- 8U

- Evaluation: **March 6, 6:30pm – 8:30pm @ Stillwater Middle School**
 - Hitting
 - Throwing
 - Catching
 - Fielding

- **Team Selections:**

- 8U/10U: 11-13 girls, depending on overall numbers
 - Player Placement:

- 10U:

- Players will be placed on teams based on evaluations made by a committee selected by the 10U Coordinator and SAFA board members. The committee may also consist of Varsity Head coach and his/her staff, Head Coach and/or coaching candidates, and/or others deemed qualified by the Board.
 - Pitchers/Catchers also impact placement. If you try-out as a pitcher or catcher, this may impact what team you are placed on. Players are evaluated on all skills, however a top-scoring pitcher may be placed on the top team. If you do not try-out as a pitcher, playing time as a pitcher may not be guaranteed on the team you are placed on.

- 8U:

- The goal of the 8U evaluation process is to ensure player safety and that players are placed at the right level and appropriate tier of play.
 - 8U team(s) shall be created based on parity. Evaluations are a chance for players to show their softball skills as an input to equal team formation. This is not a tryout, but an input for team creation after review of evaluations by the 8U Coordinator, SAFA board members, and any other deemed qualified by the Board.

- If your player is in their last year of 8U (DOB 09/2016-08/2017) and they desire to move up to 10U, they are eligible to participate in 10U evaluations to be evaluated amongst 10U eligible players. Participating in 10U evaluations does not guarantee placement on a 10U team.

- Unless there is a safety risk to a player, all players will be placed on a 10U or 8U team.

- **Team Play Level for 10U and 8U**

- We will determine the level of play (A, B, C) after we evaluate all players and determine the number of teams we are able to field. The decision we will make is what we feel is best for players to compete competitively, have the best chance to improve their skills and have a fun experience.

- **Practice/Game/Tournament Information**

- 10U

- Practices

- Preseason - Practice 2-3 times per week.
- Regular Season – Practice 1-2 times per week in addition to games and tournaments.
- Game Schedules: Double headers on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays, beginning May 1st
- Tournaments: Up to 3 invitational tournaments per year to be decided by Coach/Team (in addition to Tri-County and State dates below). One tournament may be out of town.
- Plan for a minimum of 4 days of softball each week between practices/games and 5 tournaments.

○ 8U

- Practices
 - Preseason - Practice 2-3 times per week. Days TBD by Coach.
 - Regular Season – 1-2 time per week in addition to games and tournaments
 - Game Schedules: Games on Wednesdays, beginning April 30. June 19 and 26 will be double headers in preparation for 10U.
 - 1-2 Tournaments are TBD per coach and team.
 - Plan for a minimum commitment of 2-3 days per week.

○ Stillwater High School – Fields 2 and 3

- Every team will likely play on these fields at some point during the season. Driving to these fields is prohibited. Only coaches who carry equipment are allowed to drive back to Field 2 and 3 and they must stay on the walkway (never on the grass).
- Portable bathrooms are accessible, however they can be a significant walking distance for any family/friends that may have limited mobility.

○ Weather and Air Quality

- It is up to the discretion of the head coach whether practices or games will be cancelled by weather or air quality concerns. Please have patience with coaches as they may not make the call to cancel until 4pm the day of a game or practice and are often partnering with the Association, opposing team or MN Softball on weather or air concerns. It is parents' responsibility to stay connected to the coach's preferred method of communication (i.e. GroupMe or Crossbar) to ensure receipt of the latest updates and expectations.

○ State Tournament Locations

- State tournament locations may not be known until the week of the tournament (as they are based on record/placement at qualifiers). It is possible that teams may be required to travel and book last minute accommodations for the state tournaments.

● **2026 Key Dates**

- Metro Area 8U League Games Start: April 29
- Tri County League 10U Games Start: April 30
- 10U Qualifier Tournaments – June 26-28
- 8U State – June 27-28
- 4th of July Weekend – No games scheduled
- 10U State Tournaments – July 10-12
- 8U/10U Monsta Championships - TBD
- Fall Ball
 - Week 1 - August 22-23
 - Week 2 – August 29-30
 - Week 3 - September 12-13
 - Week 4 - September 19-20
 - Fall State Tournament – September 26-27

- **Equipment (both 8U/10U)**
 - 11" hard softball
 - Molded Cleats (no steel)
 - Glove-Big enough to hold 11" softball
 - Batting Helmet with Face Mask (Red or Black in color)
 - Fielder's Mask (required for all IF and recommended for outfield positions)
 - Equipment Bag
 - Water Bottle
 - Optional Equipment
 - Sliding Pad
 - Batting Gloves
 - Bat - We have limited bats available to use
 - 8U ONLY: Pitching will be handled by a blue Louisville Slugger Pitching Machine and set at 30-34 mph.
- **Uniforms** (included in registration fee)
 - All players must wear the Association's uniform
 - Jersey
 - Pants
 - Belt
 - Socks
 - Spirit Wear (available on-line or other)
- **Practice at Home**
 - It is recommended that all girls spend 15 minutes a day playing catch. At both levels, the fundamentals of throwing and catching are very important.
- **Pitchers/Catchers**
 - Pitching and catching are positions that require additional time and commitment to be consistent and successful.
 - Pitching at 8U/10U is 35 feet
 - In preparation for the 10U summer program, pitchers are encouraged to attend winter clinics. In addition to clinics, the girls should practice regularly.
 - The premise of 8U is not to develop pitchers; however, we encourage coaches and parents to work on pitching during every single practice, with every single kid.
- **Volunteers/Coaching:**
 - If interested in coaching, please fill out the [coaching application](#).
- **SAFA Board info here:** [SAFA Coordinators](#)
- **Tri-County League Info:** [Tri-County League](#)
- **Metro Area 8-Under League Info here:** [Metro Area 8U League](#)

Stillwater Sample 10U Schedule

*Please arrive by 5:00 PM for warm-ups on Game Nights

Event	Day of Week	Date	Time	Location	Address
Practice	Wednesday	4/17	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	523 Marsh St W, Stillwater
Practice	Friday	4/19	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Sunday	4/21	1:30 – 3:00 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Thursday	4/25	6:15 – 7:45 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Sunday	4/28	1:30 – 3:00 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Wednesday	5/1	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away Inver Grove	Thursday	5/2	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Rich Valley Athletic Complex, Field 8	1841 105 th St. E. Inver Grove Heights, MN
Practice	Sunday	5/5	1:30 – 3:00 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Wednesday	5/8	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away TRAA	Thursday	5/9	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Harmon Park Field 4	230 Bernard St. West West St. Paul, MN
TOURNAMENT Mounds View Madness 1 day	Saturday	5/11	4 game guarantee Times TBD Saturday only	Rice Creek Fields	5880 Rice Creek Pkwy Shoreview, MN
Practice	Monday	5/12	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Wednesday	5/15	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home BW Hawks	Thursday	5/16	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School, Field 2	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Sunday	5/19	1:30 – 3:00 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away Faribault	Tuesday	5/21	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	North Alexander Park, Field 3	1816 2 nd Ave Northwest Faribault, MN
Practice	Wednesday	5/22	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away River Falls	Thursday	5/23	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	River Falls High School JV Field	818 Cemetery Rd River Falls, WI
Practice	Sunday	5/26	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Wednesday	5/29	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home Eagan	Thursday	5/30	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 2	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
TOURNAMENT - Rookies	Friday	5/31	5 game guarantee Times TBD	Dunning, Rice & Arlington, Battle Creek	TBD
	Saturday	6/1			
	Sunday	6/2			
Practice	Wednesday	6/5	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home Cottage Grove	Thursday	6/6	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Sunday	6/9	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home Prescott	Tuesday	6/11	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Wednesday	6/12	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home East Ridge	Thursday	6/13	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
TOURNAMENT – Eagan Down n’ Dirty	Saturday	6/15	4 game guarantee Times TBD	Northview Park Field 6, 7, or 8	964 Northview Park Rd. Eagan, MN
	Sunday	6/16			
Practice	Wednesday	6/19	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
TOURNAMENT Tri County	Saturday	6/22	TBD	TBD	TBD
	Sunday	6/23			
Practice	Wednesday	6/26	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
TOURNAMENT State	Saturday	6/29 6/30	TBD	TBD	TBD

Stillwater Sample 8U Schedule

*Please arrive by 5:00 PM for warm-ups on Game Nights

Event	Day of Week	Date	Time	Location	Address
Practice	Monday	4/15	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	523 Marsh St W, Stillwater
Practice	Thursday	4/18	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	4/22	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Thursday	4/25	6:15 – 7:45 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Sunday	4/28	1:30 – 3:00 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	4/29	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away Inver Grove	Wednesday	5/1	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Rich Valley Athletic Complex, Field 8	1841 105 th St. E. Inver Grove Heights, MN
Practice	Thursday	5/2	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	5/6	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Away TRAA	Wednesday	5/8	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Harmon Park Field 4	230 Bernard St. West West St. Paul, MN
Practice	Thursday	5/9	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	5/13	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
GAME – Home BW Hawks	Wednesday	5/15	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School, Field 2	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Thursday	5/16	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
Practice	Monday	5/20	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater High School	
GAME – Away Faribault	Wednesday	5/22	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	North Alexander Park, Field 3	1816 2 nd Ave Northwest Faribault, MN
Practice	Thursday	5/23	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	5/27	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater High School	
GAME – Away River Falls	Wednesday	5/29	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	River Falls High School JV Field	818 Cemetery Rd River Falls, WI
Practice	Thursday	5/30	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
Practice	Monday	6/3	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
GAME – Away Lakeville	Wednesday	6/5	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Aronson Park Field 8	8250 202 nd Street West Lakeville, MN
Practice	Thursday	6/6	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
Practice	Monday	6/10	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
GAME – Home Eagan	Wednesday	6/12	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 2	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Thursday	6/13	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
TOURNAMENT - Hudson Border Battle	Friday Saturday Sunday	6/14 6/15 6/16	5 game guarantee Times TBD	TBD	TBD
Practice	Monday	6/17	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater High School	
GAME – Home Cottage Grove	Wednesday	6/19	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Thursday	6/20	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
Practice	Monday	6/24	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater High School	
GAME – Home Prescott	Wednesday	6/26	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Thursday	6/27	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
Practice	Monday	7/8	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Oakland Middle School	
GAME – Home East Ridge	Wednesday	7/10	6:00 – 8:30 PM*	Stillwater High School Field 3	5701 Stillwater Blvd Stillwater, MN
Practice	Thursday	7/11	6:00 – 7:30 PM	Stillwater Middle School	
TOURNAMENT State	Saturday/Sunday	7/13 7/14	TBD	TBD	TBD

