



MYERSVILLE JUNIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE



PARENT / SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

OBJECTIVE:

The goal of Myersville Junior Baseball League is to ensure that its members, players, coaches, parents and officials maintain the highest standard of sportsmanship and ethical behavior at all times. In order to achieve this goal, a Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Board of Directors of the League.

AS A PARENT OR SPECTATOR:

- Notify the coach ahead of time if your child will not make a practice or game.
- As needed, assist the coach with field maintenance before and after games and practices.
- Show appreciation, respect and good sportsmanship towards your team's opponents. Without them, there would be no game.
- Resist shouting out instructions or coaching from the stands. That is the coach's job and can be distracting and confusing to the players.
- Leave the umpires out of it. They do not care who wins. Any mistakes are honest ones, and your children need to know that you believe this. Being an umpire is a difficult job, please respect this.
- Remember – It is a game played and enjoyed by kids.
- Maintain self-control. Refrain from disrespectful conduct of any sort, including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, taunting or other actions that demean any individual.
- Condemn the use or threat of violence in any form whether in the form of verbal or physical violence.
- Absolutely no use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is permitted nor will it be tolerated at any game. Smoking is not permitted on or near the fields, dugouts or spectator areas.
- The Board of Directors of MJBL has adopted a **"ZERO TOLERANCE"** stance on these points.

WARNINGS AND EJECTIONS:

The following behavior may result in an ejection from the premises with the game being suspended and/or forfeited unless the violator ceases his or her conduct or leaves the premises following an ejection:

- *Any spectator engaged in profane or rude speech, gestures or actions towards an umpire, coach or player of either team or fellow spectator(s).*
- *The use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on the premises.*
- *Any actions and/or comments deemed inappropriate or that do not promote good sportsmanship.*
- *A spectator may be ejected and asked to leave the premises by the umpire, Myersville Coach or any member of the Board of Directors of Myersville Junior Baseball.*
- *Threats of violence, either verbal or physical, will not be tolerated and will be handled by law enforcement.*

PARENTS AND PLAYING TIME:

Disclaimer:

The article below was written by Brian Gotta, a former professional youth baseball coach who is the President of Coach Deck and author of four youth sports instructional books. Mr. Gotta is regarded as an expert in the parent/coach relationship. This is by no means meant to be derogatory towards anyone or state how to be a parent. It is simply a perspective on youth sports and how to handle a situation with a coach and your child pertaining to playing time.

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Parents want what's best for their children. But far too many parents feel that they must control every aspect of what happens to their kids – and ensure its all positive – in order for their children to be happy. And while this may lead to more happiness in the short term, it can have severe, negative long-term consequences. We all know that life is filled with ups and downs. Everyone reading this has suffered substantial setbacks at one time or another. And for the most part, when we're adults, there is no mommy or daddy to swoop in and save the day when we face adversity. We must pick ourselves up and forge ahead on our own. We have to cope. And most of our coping mechanisms were learned as children. Part of our growth process was figuring out that life isn't always fair, and that sometimes things don't go our way. And as painful as those lessons are to learn, they're what develop character in us so that we can handle struggles in our lives.

Where better for our children to learn these lessons, than in sports?

Let's say your son or daughter plays a sport where foot speed is an advantage, and a teammate who is faster is getting more playing time. You and your child have a few options: You could speak to the coach, try to influence him, and maybe even pressure him into playing your child more. Or, maybe your child could work on his speed or try to develop other skills that make him valuable to the team. Or, if that sport isn't the right one for him, maybe he could use this setback as motivation to find a new activity that better suits him.

Because let's fast-forward ten or fifteen years: Imagine now that your child really wants to become an architect but has no talent in drawing. They have a few options: They could work hard to improve their drawing skills. Or maybe they could sharpen other talents to compensate. Or maybe they might just have to give up that dream and find something else to do. But it is unlikely you'll be able to storm into an architectural firm and demand they give your child a job he's not qualified to do.

However, if we've been doing this for our children all their lives, what else would they ever expect?

Our job as parents is not to make sure our children never have any pain or disappointments – quite the contrary. Our job as parents is to prepare them as best we can for the inevitable time that they are on their own, without us to catch them when they fall. By trying to pressure our child's coach into doling out more playing time we are weakening our children, making life miserable for the coach, and being unfair to other kids whose parents *are* playing by the rules. And we are teaching our children that if things don't go well for them, it is not their fault, but the fault of someone else. Think about how successful someone will be carrying that attitude with them through life.

Below is a suggested paragraph regarding how to address playing time with parents:

Regardless of where your son/daughter shakes out in the playing time or lineup mix, it is important that your communication to your child be positive. If your child hears you talking about what a bad deal they are getting, or something similar, your child's attitude is going to suffer. And if your child's attitude suffers, there is nearly no chance that he/she will earn more playing time or time at a different position they may like better. Conversely, if your child really is deserving of more playing time and I'm just missing it, if they continue to work hard, trying their best and bringing a positive attitude to the field, I'll notice it. I can tell you that if a parent comes to me to complain about position or playing time, then forever after that, if the player does move up or play more, you'll have to wonder if it was something they earned themselves, or if it was something that came as a result of your complaint. On the other hand, if everyone takes the attitude that "the cream will rise to the top," and is patient, then you'll know that everything your child gets is deserved. (The latter feels much better). Everyone will have their chances to show what they can do in the game. It is important that they are prepared for those opportunities, and make the most of them.

And what if your child really *is* getting a raw deal? What if you know his plight is clearly based on favoritism or politics?

First of all, unless you've been at every practice – not just the games, you *don't* know. Children don't see it objectively, so you can't just take their word for it. Or maybe you can. I have a son who played Pop Warner football and he began the season as the starting running back. After two games, he was replaced by the coach's son. And don't get me wrong, the coach's son is good, but I haven't seen anything in the games that he did to supplant my son. And I was angry about it. Then I asked my son, "So what happened to make Johnny the starter over you?" And my son said, "Probably that I had a terrible week at practice and messed up my assignment on a couple plays and fumbled." Oh. OK.

And finally, if you're sure after really waiting for things to change, after observing practices and getting an "honest" assessment from your child, you still feel like it's not going the way it should be, what should you do? Nothing.

That's right, YOU, should do nothing. But it would be very appropriate for your child to approach the coach and tell him he feels he could be helping the team more and ask what he can do to improve his playing time or position. The coach will respect that much more, and your child's self-esteem and communication skills will get a big boost. And, unless we plan on spending the rest of our days clearing the path of any obstacles for our children, isn't them standing up for themselves exactly what they're going to have to do all their lives anyway?

As published by:

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