



Stratford Minor Baseball
House League
7U Coaches Guide

Code Of Conduct

The SMBA House League Committee has assured players coaches and umpires that it will provide them with an environment at all SMBA events that are safe and secure so that they can carry out their duties and responsibilities.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is a form of abuse at the hands of peers that can come in different forms at different ages. Bullying is defined as repeated aggression in which there is an imbalance of power between the person who bullies and the person who is being victimized and is understood as a disrespectful relationship problem.

Bullying is offensive, cruel, intimidating, insulting and humiliating behaviour. Combined with the misuse of power it can be physical or verbal, direct or indirect. Children or youth who bully are typically cruel, demeaning and hostile towards the target of their bullying. The issue of bullying between youth under the age of 12 years old is not addressed by law. However, bullying behaviour is similar to harassment in that it is defined as the hurtful interpersonal mistreatment of another person.

Harassment is defined as conduct, gestures or comments which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals. This creates a hostile or intimidating environment for sports activities and negatively affects performance in those sports activities. Any of the different forms of harassment must be based upon prohibited disciplinary Human Rights legislation. Some types of harassment include, but are not limited to racism, disability harassment, sexual harassment and criminal harassment. Bullying behaviour is not permitted within SMBA. Any concerns should be reported to the coach or the division convenor.

Role of Coaches and Parents in Reporting Concussions (Baseball Ontario)

Coaches and parents play a key role in concussion safety and management. It is critical for all coaches and parents to be aware of concussion signs and symptoms, and what should know what to do if a concussion occurs.

The most important decision is whether to remove the player from the play until further evaluation is completed by a medical practitioner. The saying “If in doubt, sit them out” is the safest approach for coaches to take if they suspect that a player has suffered a concussion. If a coach even suspects a player has sustained a concussion or is exhibiting any signs or symptoms of a concussion, they are not expected to diagnose the player, but the following steps need to be taken:

1. Remove the player from the game
2. Inform the parents that the player may have sustained a concussion
3. Request that the parents ensure the player receives proper medical attention from a trained health care professional and undergoes a concussion evaluation.
4. Complete an incident report.
5. Obtain medical clearance before the player is allowed to return to play.

For parents: If your child has sustained a possible concussion, stop them from playing right away. Do not leave them alone and get them proper medical assessment and treatment immediately.

The most up to date information on concussion management can be found under Risk Management (within About Us) on the Baseball Ontario website (baseballontario.com)

Player Uniforms

All players must wear a team shirt (SMBA Provided), team cap, Short or Pants (encouraged) running shoes or rubber cleats, and a jock/jill. No metal spikes or metal cleats are permitted. No open-toed shoes. There is no visible jewelry allowed.

All players on the playing field (players coaching 1B/3B, batters, on-deck batters and runners) must wear double-ear flap helmets with a chin strap. Note: these helmets must be provided by the player.

Catchers must wear shin guards, chest protector, helmet, face mask and throat protector, all provided by the league. Catcher mitts can be requested from your convenor.

SMBA House League Rules

These rules apply to all 7U house league games in within SMBA, unless otherwise noted.

The Official Rules of Baseball, published by Baseball Canada, is the basic rules publication.

These rules apply to regular season play;

- 1) Aim to start the game no more than five (5) minutes after "game time" as scheduled by the league. Teams can arrive a few minutes early and use park space to warm up or play catch (mindful of spectator safety)
- 2) The 'Home Team" takes the field in the top of the inning and the "Visiting Team" bats first. An inning consists of three (3) outs or once through the batting order (Try to maintain a consistent batting order). The Batting Team will call "Last Batter". The inning is over when that "Last batter" reaches base safely or is tagged or forced out.
- 3) The Batting Team's Coach will pitch to their players. Coaches can assess the best means to pitch to the players based on their skill level. On a knee, near the batter with under hand lobs may be required at the beginning of the season, we encourage you to move back throughout the season as the players batting ability improves. This will be assessed by the coach on a player by player basis to encourage success and fun.
- 4) Each Batter will get five (5) strikes. A Strike is a swing and miss on a fair pitch. There are no strike outs. If a Batter incurs five (5) strikes then a Batters Tee will be placed on home plate for the Batter to hit off of. Please be consistent with the Five (5) strike rule to ensure the flow of the game and retain players attention. Foul balls are considered strikes.
- 5) When the Batter bats a ball in play the Batter will drop the bat and run the bases as normal. Balls that do not pass the 10' "Dead Ball Arc" are called Dead or Foul and are considered a strike
- 6) Base Runners can be forced out in a force situation, or tagged out on base paths. Base Runners who are deemed out will return to their dug out. Base Runners must adhere to the baseline.
- 7) Base Runners can advance as many bases as they can on a fair batted ball. Normal baseball rules pertaining to force outs, and tagging up or fly balls apply. The infield fly rule does not apply.
- 8) There are no lead offs, steals or advancing on over throws.

All players will play defensively, but only 1 per infield position. All others can be spread out in outfield. No players should sit.

Scoring System

Please have a parent helper assist with keeping track of simple scoring, and notes of any exceptional player performance (ie good fielding, hitting, extra base hits etc). Report final game scores and highlights to league convenor.

Each inning will conclude once the team has batted once through the order OR 3 outs have been made, whichever is sooner.

Positions

There is no catcher. If a player is taking the Pitcher position they must be behind the mound and must wear a helmet with face mask, omitting the Pitcher position is allowed.

Length of Game and Time Limits

All games will start at their designated time. All games will play to a maximum of seven (7) innings (6.5 if the home team is ahead) or the 1.5 hour time limit, which ever comes first.

Lightning Rule

In the interest of player safety, if any umpire (Or Convenor) assigned to a game observes lightning or hears thunder, the home plate umpire will immediately end the game. All cancelled games should be reported to the convenor. The rescheduling of cancelled games will be at the sole discretion of the league and may be subject to umpire and diamond availability.

Ejections

If a team has a player ejected (Or injured), then said player's spot in the batting order will be removed but NOT counted as an automatic out.

Umpires

Games will have two (2) umpires (One for home plate and one for the field). In the event of an umpire no show, the coaches will make the calls.

Coaching Basics

People become coaches for many reasons; because they have a child in sports, because they were an athlete themselves, or because they want an opportunity to help in their community. Some coaches step forward; some are asked to help. No matter what the reasons, all coaches have the same roles. You will be a teacher, a leader, and sometimes will even act as a counsellor.

Organize a Great Practice

To begin, break your practice down into five (5) to ten (10) minute segments following this order:

Introduction

-Explain briefly what will happen today, and what they will learn.

Warm up

- Get the athletes moving and get them ready for activity
- Raise body temperature through vigorous activity
- start slowly, then slowly increase the pace
- flexibility exercises (From general stretching to sport specific, slow static stretching)
- activities that employ basic skills (i.e. throwing) but keep them moving

Review previously learned skills

- Utilize drills that give them an opportunity to practice fundamental skills or skills that they learned recently

Learn new skills

- Describe the new skill
- pick 2-3 teaching points to emphasize
- provide drills that utilize the new skill
- make sure everyone gets to participate (Avoid long lines of standing around)
- provide feedback and encouragement
- change or modify skills as athletes improve

Game-like activities and/or conditioning

- Simplified game situation (Reduce area of play, number of players, rules, etc)
- Incorporate fitness activities if appropriate

Cool Down

- Decrease level (intensity) of activity gradually
- Stretching exercise (for muscles most used in practice)

Wrap up

- Review practice and plan with athletes
- prepare them for next practice or game
- do your own personal evaluation... What could be better next time?

Plan for a Game Day

Warm up

- Prepare for game activity as you would practice

Establish what we want to do today

- play fair
- good sportsmanship
- do our best
- tactics and skill reminders (good defence, good throws etc.)

Post competition wrap up

- Highlight the positive things that happened
- Praise effort- BE POSITIVE
- Ready them for next practice
- Evaluation the game (Make note of performance and accomplishments, make note of things that need to be addressed at the next practice)

Thank you again for choosing to be a coach with the Stratford Minor Baseball House League. As I'm sure you're aware there is a lot to learn. However, now that you have started the most important thing is to use what you have learned....to enjoy your athletes, your sport, the competition, and to have fun.

The real rewards for your efforts are not in the awarding of trophies or medals but in the words of an athlete who, at the end of the season, extends to you a heartfelt "Thanks Coach". Enjoy your season, your athletes and everything coaching has to offer.