



**2009  
YOUTH BASEBALL  
COACHES  
MANUAL**

**TALLAHASSEE PARKS, RECREATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD  
AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**

**YOUTH BASEBALL PROGRAM  
2009**

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# **TALLAHASSEE PARKS, RECREATION & NEIGHBORHOOD AFFAIRS BASEBALL PHILOSOPHY**

The goal of the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs is to provide an enjoyable, exciting and satisfying recreation baseball program for children. In addition to teaching the physical skills and techniques of the game, we ask that you work with the social and emotional development of the children by emphasizing self-discipline. Our rules are written to encourage participation and enjoyment by all, rather than a strictly competitive, win-at-all cost program. We hope that you will measure "success" not simply in terms of team victories, but also in the real enjoyment of playing an exciting sport, skills learned and having a great time!

## **ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH**

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs wants to thank you for accepting the responsibility of coaching one of our youth baseball teams. No program can be a success without good leadership. Please make sure that **all** of your assistant coaches complete the Volunteer Coach form before providing **any** assistance; return these forms to your Supervisor immediately.

The sport will take many hours and you will serve without pay, but your job is important. You will be building the moral fiber, mental health and physical strength of young players who will be the citizens of tomorrow.

These players are at a most impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, playing on your team may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

A successful experience for youth of this age in a developmental sports program is to have an opportunity to participate and enjoy (have fun) doing the activity. If each participant perceives the activity in this fashion they will be at the height of their "teachable" moments. This is when they are prepared and interested in learning about the activity and will strive to enhance their abilities and skills.

Please remember, "You can't make a youngster have fun." You must use your expertise to provide the atmosphere for enjoyment and the rest will follow.

Without your help, this program would not be possible. On behalf of the athletes, parents, and the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs, THANKS!!!!

## **YOUTH BASEBALL COACH CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS**

As a Youth Baseball Coach, we require that at all times you will conduct yourself as a mature adult and will follow these guidelines of good coaching:

1. All coaches must have a pre-season meeting with parents to discuss philosophy of the program, expectations, parental conduct, rules and regulations, practice days and other necessary team information.
2. No smoking on the field.
3. Reserve constructive criticism for a private moment.
4. Conduct all coaching from designated bench area.
5. Refrain from "running-up" a score against a weak opponent.
6. Refrain from using profanity.
7. Abide by the doctor's decision in all matters of a player's health and injuries and physical ability to play.
8. Never hit, strike or molest any player in any manner in a game or practice situation (Penalty will be removal from the program).
9. Never attempt to make a farce of the game by telling or teaching players unsportsmanlike strategies.
10. Strive always to make every youth activity serve as a training ground for life.
11. Never leave players unattended during or after practices or games. NOTE: If players are not picked up within 15 minutes of activity's conclusion, coaches must contact parents to reemphasize importance of doing so. If the problem persists (beyond a second occurrence) coaches must notify the Parks and Recreation Department and players may be restricted from further participation.
12. Abide by the Rules and Regulations and all decisions of the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs. Contact your league supervisor or the Athletic Supervisor with your concerns or comments. See phone numbers in front of manual.

# COED T-BALL, ATOM AND CUB LEAGUE BASEBALL GENERAL RULES AND INFORMATION

## 1. League

The league shall consist of at least four (4) teams.

## 2. Cost

\$27.25

## 3. Number of Players

Each team will consist of no more than thirteen (13) players for Coed T-ball, Atom and Cub League. If a park has reached its maximum number of teams, additional players will have to be assigned to another park if numbers permit.

## 4. Eligible Players

- A. Coed T-ball is for players five (5) and six (6) years old with April 30, 2008 being the age determining date.
- B. Atom League is for players seven (7) and eight (8) year old with April 30, 2008 being the age determining date.
- C. Cub League is for players nine (9) and ten (10) year old with April 30, 2008 being the age determining date.
- D. **A player may only register and/or play in one City of Tallahassee endorsed baseball program during the season.**

## 5. League Boundaries

Players will be permitted to go to the field nearest or most convenient to their home. Parks may be combined to form a full league. Games may be played at a field/park other than your home park.

## 6. Game

- A. Game time will be 6:00 p.m. If needed, players from the opposing team can play for a team that is short of players. Only players from that game's opposing team may be utilized when a team is short of players.
- B. The length of the game will be six (6) innings. However, no new inning shall start after one hour of play in T-ball and Atom league, and one hour and 15 minutes in Cub league. The umpire's watch or one he designates governs play.
- C. In the event a game is called, either two (2) innings or the regulation playing time shall constitute a game.
- D. In case of rained out games, the park supervisor will be notified and will attempt to reschedule the game.

## 7. The Playing Field

- A. The distance between all bases shall be fifty-five (55) feet.
- B. The distance between the point of home plate and the front side of the pitching rubber shall be forty (40) ft for the Coed T-ball, Atom and Cub Leagues.
- C. There will be coaching boxes at first and third base for use by the offensive coach and assistant. Defensive coaching should occur from near the player bench, in foul territory next to the fence, except in T-Ball where one defensive coach may stand in the outfield. All other assistants, parents, family members and friends should be behind the fence or in the stands.

## 8. Equipment and Uniforms

- A. Sneakers or one-piece sole composition soccer-style shoes. No screw on or metal cleats allowed.
- B. Team shirts and baseball hats will be supplied by the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs and must be visibly worn in the game. Other uniform equipment is optional but coaches should not ask players or parents to purchase additional uniforms. No

decals, letters or numbers may be added to the hats. Shirts may have the first or last name of the player on the back. The shirts may not be altered in any way, including cutting off the shirtsleeves.

- C. Batting helmets with chinstraps must be worn by on deck batters, batters and base runners.
- D. All other equipment is optional and must be approved by the athletic supervisor.
- E. Barrel-bat rule: If the bat used is not issued by TPRD, the bat must be approved prior to each game by the umpire or park supervisor. **"The bat can not be more than 33 inches in length, nor have a bat barrel in excess of 2 1/4 inches."**

## **9. Umpires**

- A. For each Cub League game, the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs will furnish a paid umpire with a blue umpire T-shirt, a ball and strike indicator and other necessary protective equipment. The umpire should be in proper attire.
- B. T-Ball and Atoms leagues will use volunteer officials for each game. The home team will provide a volunteer parent to umpire from behind the plate and the visiting team will supply the base umpire. The base umpire and home plate umpire should switch positions after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. If a rule discrepancy arises on a play, the two head coaches and the two volunteer umpires shall come together and resolve the problem immediately under the rules provided. The home plate umpire will make the final decision if a decision is not reached quickly. Judgment calls cannot be disputed or discussed. The home team head coach and home team plate umpire are responsible for getting the game started on time as listed on the schedule. The home plate umpire will be responsible for moving the tee when there is the possibility of a play at the plate.
- C. The umpire will instruct each on deck batter, batter and runner to wear his protective helmet.
- D. The umpire's decision on matters not covered by league or baseball rules shall be final, providing the league supervisor is not on hand to make a decision. No coach may unduly delay a game. Keep in mind the impression that is being made on the players at all times. Accept the judgment of the umpire and play ball. A coach may discuss a play after the ball game.
- E. Absolutely no smoking by the umpire anywhere.

## **10. Inter-League Play**

There shall be no games played among teams of different parks unless they are combined to allow for enough teams to form a league. This includes any kind of play-off.

## **11. Standings and Averages**

There will be no standings, averages or official score kept.

## **12. Who Plays**

All players must play in every game. See specific league rules for details. Each coach will be held responsible for enforcement of this policy. This is not the duty of the umpire.

## **13. Insurance**

Recreation Accident Insurance will be offered to those desiring to purchase it. The cost is \$6.30.

## **14. Rained-out Games**

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs does not cancel games. The umpires/supervisors will do this at the field at game time. If there is standing water on the field, the game will be cancelled. Site and park supervisors (or coaches and umpires in their absence) are the only ones that will make this decision.

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs will allow athletic fields to be used only when field conditions are deemed safe and when use will not create unacceptable damage to the fields and/or possible harm to the participants. Fields will be closed when one or more of the following occurs:

- Standing water is present on any portion of the grass or clay-playing surface.
- All grass including artificial or clay-playing surface is saturated and water is displaced when walking (squish method).
- Any other condition that is deemed unsafe or would create unacceptable damage to athletic fields or the safety of the users. This includes following the lightening policy.

**15. Lightning Strike Alert**

Facility Staff will follow the 30/30 rule for lightening safety. The criteria for suspension of activities is that by the time the flash-to-bang count approaches 30 seconds, all individuals should already be inside a safe shelter. If activity has been suspended due to lightening, the Facility Supervisor should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightening flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Each time additional lightening is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute period should be reset. Please see the attached City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs Lightning-Safety Policy for more information.

**16. Warm-Ups**

Do not hit balls into any fencing when warming up, as it will tear up the balls and the fence.

**17. Sling bat rule**

If any batter slings their bat, they will automatically be called out and no base runners may advance.

**18. Infield practice**

Teams make take organized infield practice 10 minutes prior to game time. The visiting team will take infield 10 minutes prior followed by the home team five minutes before the start of the game. The home team will need to be prepared to start the game on time.

Infield practices for second and subsequent round of games will be based on time available. Both teams will have equal time of practice with the visiting team taking infield first followed by the home team. All games must start on time and can't be delayed by infield practice.

**NOTES:**

- 1) Current Cal Ripken Baseball Organization Rules and Major League Official Baseball Rules published by the National Baseball Congress of America will be used in cases not covered in Coed T-ball, Atom and Cub League Rules and regulations. Consult the league supervisor on matters needing attention.
- 2) The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs cannot endorse or take responsibility for team activities beyond what is established as standard procedures in conducting this activity. Activities such as photography sessions, team picnics, etc. are activities that parents must understand are their personal choice and ultimate responsibility if they choose to participate in them. Coaches are advised to refrain from actually organizing "outside" activities. If parents want to undertake these activities, it must be understood that mandatory donations for these events from team members is prohibited. All donations are "optional" and cannot affect a participant's right to any benefits afforded any other player.
- 3) Any activities or functions taking place on sites other than those sites supervised by the City of Tallahassee will be the responsibility of the individual conducting those activities.

# **T-BALL AND ATOM LEAGUE PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- 1) All players must play in the field every inning.  
EXPLANATION: There will be five (5) infielders. They are Pitcher, First Baseman, Second Baseman, Third Baseman, and Shortstop. There will be no catcher. All remaining players on the roster will play in the outfield. Outfielders should be no closer than the edge of the outfield grass and must be positioned in an arc of equal depth and spacing spanning from left field to right field. Players in the pitching position should be instructed to cover home plate when necessary.
- 2) Players may not play in the infield two innings in a row provided there are at least 10 players present. Each player should be given the opportunity to try different infield positions in each game. For example, the same players should not always play 1<sup>st</sup> base and pitcher.
- 3) The batting order is to be established before the game begins and is to be made available to the opposing coach, if he so desires. The batting order may not be changed once the game starts. The batting order must include all players' names as all players bat in each game. In effect, this means that if ten players came to bat and sides exchange, the eleventh (11th) player in the batting order will lead off the next inning. Coaches should plan their line-ups before each game and make adjustments as necessary at game time. This will save time between innings and ensure each player the chance to play different positions. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the game is not delayed by coaches positioning players.
- 4) One-half inning is completed when there are three outs or ten (10) players have batted in Atom league or 8 players have batted in T-ball, whichever comes first. The batting team's coach must announce when the last batter comes to the plate. Time will be called as it would with any other batter. The teams will switch sides once time is called.
- 5) The runner cannot leave the base too soon or he must go back. If the runner is off base and the batter gets a hit, the runner cannot advance more than one (1) base in front of the batter. There is no leading off or stealing.
- 6) The player playing the pitcher position must stand within 3 feet to the left, right or back of the pitching rubber.
- 7) **Batting Rules for T-Ball League**
  - A. The batter must stay out of the batter's box until the umpire has placed the ball on the tee. He may not swing at the ball until the umpire calls, "Play Ball".
  - B. The umpire will adjust the Tee if necessary to suit the height of the batter.
  - C. Batters are not permitted to swing easy or bunt the ball. The penalty is that the batter is called back and charged with a strike. The batter is called out if there is a bunt or easy swing attempt on the third strike.
  - D. A strike shall be called when the batter hits the "Tee" instead of the ball. It is also a strike if the ball does not go beyond the 15-foot arc line.
  - E. A foul ball on the third strike shall be considered a foul ball as in regular baseball and the batter will swing again.
  - F. Coed T-Ball players will bat off the tee for the entire season.
- 8) **Atom League Batting and Coach Pitching Rules**
  - A. The batting team's coach or assigned person shall be the pitcher. No players may pitch.
  - B. The batter can choose to hit off the tee or have the coach pitch to him.
  - C. If the batter is hitting from the tee, he gets 3 swings to put the ball in fair territory beyond the 15' Arc. Otherwise, the batter strikes out. A foul ball on the third strike shall be considered a foul ball as in regular baseball and the batter will swing again.

- D. If the batter is hitting pitches, he will receive a maximum of 6 pitches. Strikes will be called on foul balls and missed swings. A batter will strike out if he gets 3 strikes, even if he has not received 6 pitches. If a batter does not put the ball in play during his six pitches, he will be called out regardless of the number of strikes he has. A batter may choose to go back to the tee on the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch or with 2 strikes. However, he must either put the ball in play or strike out. A foul ball on the third strike or 6<sup>th</sup> pitch shall be considered a foul ball as in regular baseball and the batter will swing again. This is the only time he would get more than 6 pitches.
- E. Beginning the 5<sup>th</sup> week of the season, all players must attempt to hit the pitch with the option of going back to the tee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or 6<sup>th</sup> pitch.
- F. The pitcher coach must avoid the ball after a pitch has been hit so as not to interfere with the play.
- G. If a pitcher/ coach is hit or touched with the ball, the play is dead and any base runner will advance only one (1) base. The batter will advance to first base without liability of being put out.

9) The infield fly rule does not apply.

**10) A fielder will not be allowed to “roll the ball” to the nearest base to get a base runner out. There must be a throwing attempt to get the runner out.**

11) Time Out Will Be Called By The Home Plate Umpire As Follows:

- A. Ball Hit To The Outfield: Time will be called when the ball is THROWN into the infield. An infielder does not have to have possession. EXAMPLE: The ball is hit to left field. The player fields the ball and throws it towards second base. As soon as the ball crosses from outfield to infield, either in the air or on the ground, time will be called. **A baserunner who has advanced more than halfway to the next base when time is called will be allowed to proceed to that base. If they were less than halfway to the next base when time is called, they must go back to the last base.**
- B. Ball Hit To The Infield: Time will be called after one attempted play is made, whether the play results in an out or not. Baserunners may only advance one base at their own risk regardless if the fielder holds the ball or attempts a put out, this includes the batter.  
*EXAMPLE:* Ball hit to the Short Stop who fields the ball and throws to first base. As soon as the first baseman either misses or catches the ball, time will be called, even if the ball is overthrown into the outfield, or out of play. The batter/base runner will remain at first base if he was safe. There are no extra bases on an overthrow to any base.

## CUB LEAGUE PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1) One-half (1/2) inning is completed when there are three (3) outs or ten (10) players have batted. The last batter (10th) of each inning cannot be walked. He must either strike out or hit the ball. If a pitched ball hits the 10th batter, he will have a courtesy runner and the 11th batter will be permitted to bat. This is the only occasion where eleven (11) batters would be allowed. The batting team's coach must announce when the last batter comes to the plate. Time will be called as it would with any other batter. The teams will switch sides once time is called.
- 2) There shall be no base stealing. The runner cannot leave the base until the batter puts the ball into play. If a runner is off base and the batter gets a hit, the runner cannot advance more than one (1) base in front of the batter.
- 3) The batter is out if the catcher drops the third strike.
- 4) The runner may advance one base at his own risk on an over-throw to first or third base. He may attempt as many bases as he wishes on an overthrow that is within fair territory.
- 5) The batting order is to be established before the game begins and includes all players present. The batting order may not be changed once the game starts. The batting order must include all players' names that are on the game roster that day as all players bat in each game. In effect, this means that if ten (10) players bat in one inning, the eleventh (11th) player in the batting order will lead off the next inning. The batting order does not change regardless of defensive positioning.
- 6) Player Participation Rule- Players cannot sit the bench defensively for 2 consecutive innings. Players should be given the opportunity to play different positions in each game **and must be given an opportunity to play both the infield and outfield throughout the season.** Coaches should plan their line-ups before each game and make adjustments as necessary at game time. This will save time between innings and ensure each player the chance to play different positions.
- 7) The infield fly rule does not apply.
- 8) Bunting in the Cub league is permitted, **however slap-bunting isn't allowed (if a player shows bunt, he/she must bunt).**
- 9) Time Out: A play shall be declared terminated when, in the judgment of the umpire, play on the lead runner has stopped. The umpire shall call time. Players should not be taught to hold the ball up and call time; they should get the ball to the base in front of the lead runner.
- 10) There will four (4) outfielders playing on defense at the same time. They must line up from left field to right field in an arc.
- 12) Pitching Rules- the following pitching rules are in effect the entire season. The batting teams' coach or assigned person shall pitch the ball the first 3 innings of the game. A player pitcher will begin pitching in the top of the fourth inning.

### **Coach Pitch Rules**

- 1) The ball shall be pitched overhand (not lobbed gently) by the coach or assigned person in the first three (3) innings.
- 2) The pitcher coach can only pitch a total of six (6) pitches to each batter. Strikes will be called on foul balls and missed swings. A batter will strike out if he gets 3 strikes, even if he has not received 6 pitches. If a batter does not put the ball in play during his six pitches, he will be called out regardless of the number of strikes he has. A foul ball on the third strike or 6<sup>th</sup> pitch shall be considered a foul ball as in regular baseball and the batter will swing again. This is the only time he would get more than 6 pitches.
- 3) The pitcher coach must have one (1) foot in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball leaves his hand.

- 4) There will be no walks, including the batter being hit by a ball pitched by coach, during the first 3 innings.
- 5) A defensive player will play behind the pitcher coach (off the mound) but no more than three feet to the left, right or back of the mound.
- 6) If a pitcher/ coach is hit or touched with the ball, the play is dead and any base runner will advance only one (1) base. The batter will advance to first base without liability of being put out.

### **Player Pitchers**

- 1) A pitcher may pitch NO more than six (6) innings per week. (Mon. thru Sat.)
- 2) A pitcher must have 1 day of rest between pitching appearances even if he only throws 1 pitch.
- 3) No balks shall be called.
- 4) A pitcher CANNOT be returned to the mound after once having been removed as a pitcher even if he is placed in another position and remains in the game. The pitcher must have one (1) foot in contact with the pitching rubber until the ball leaves his hand.
- 5) The regular number of balls (4) and strikes (3) will be called.
- 6) A batter who is hit by a pitch must have a courtesy runner. If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in the same inning, he must be removed from the pitcher's position. If a pitcher walks 3 batters in a row in one inning, he shall be removed if another pitcher is available. Intentional walks are prohibited.
- 7) Catcher equipment "speed up rule"- The last player who made an out will replace any catcher who is on base with 2 outs. This will allow the catcher to return to the dugout and get his equipment on so play will continue in a timely fashion in the next half inning. NOTE: Coaches should see that catchers have their equipment on in all other situations so play will not be delayed.

## **ATTENTION: Supervisors, Officials, Coaches and Volunteers**

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs has ZERO tolerance for the use or distribution of alcohol and drugs while administering City services.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

We want to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to "treat" victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may involve discussing the situation with the victim, coach, or parent, or to call in the Ambulance Service. Listed below are some guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt as to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep him comfortable and reassured and call an ambulance. If the situation calls for it, apply ice or keep the patient warm and comfortable.
2. Front line care of an accident would include use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, and treatment for shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.
3. Be sure victim is as comfortable as possible. If it's cold, cover them. If it's hot, loosen equipment, etc. **USE GOOD COMMON SENSE!**
4. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials and never leave the patient alone with other players.
5. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.
6. Always prepare an accident report that will be turned in to the supervisor who will then get the information to the Parks and Recreation Dept.
7. Be sure you have access to a phone within a short period of time.
8. Submit a follow up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how he is doing.

**Supervisors and coaches take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered. It is important that all aspects of an accident are handled properly and expeditiously.**

## **Protect Yourself**

### **Heat Stress**

When the body is unable to cool itself by sweating, several heat-induced illnesses such as heat stress or heat exhaustion and the more severe heat stroke can occur, and can result in death.

### **Factors Leading to Heat Stress**

High temperature and humidity; direct sun or heat; limited air movement; physical exertion; poor physical condition; some medicines; and inadequate tolerance for hot workplaces.

### **Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion**

- Headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting.
- Weakness and moist skin.
- Mood changes such as irritability or confusion.
- Upset stomach or vomiting.

### **Symptoms of Heat Stroke**

- Dry, hot skin with no sweating.
- Mental confusion or losing consciousness.
- Seizures or convulsions.

### **Preventing Heat Stress**

- Know signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses; monitor yourself and coworkers.
- Block out direct sun or other heat sources.
- Use cooling fans/air-conditioning; rest regularly.
- Drink lots of water; about 1 cup every 15 minutes.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, or heavy meals.

### **What to Do for Heat-Related Illness**

- Call 911 (or local emergency number) at once.

While waiting for help to arrive:

- Move the worker to a cool, shaded area.
- Loosen or remove heavy clothing.
- Provide cool drinking water.
- Fan and mist the person with water.

# **Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs Department**

## **Lightning Safety for All Outdoor Activities**

### **Lightning-Safety Policy**

All adults participating in or observing outdoor activities or events are responsible for their own safety and the safety of their children. Adults shall monitor threatening weather conditions at all times.

During supervised activities, before each practice, warm-up time or game, the umpire, home team coach, recreation supervision personnel or other official shall appoint an adult as a designated “weather watcher.” The “weather watcher” will make the call to stop play, remove individuals from the field, and announce a warning to the spectators should weather conditions be determined to be potentially dangerous due to the approach of a lightning storm.

Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds and thunder or lightning. Even storms that are many miles away can pose a lightning danger to your area. This may mean the appropriate decision is to suspend activities even before the first sight of lightning or sound of thunder.

All participants shall have the right to leave an athletic site or recreational activity, without fear of repercussion or penalty, in order to seek a safer structure or location if they feel they are in danger from impending lightning activity. Safety is the number one consideration. The activity can be made up later.

#### **LIGHTNING SAFETY STRATEGIES**

Lightning safety strategies include avoiding shelter under trees, avoiding open fields and spaces.

Individuals who feel their hair stand on end or skin tingle or hear crackling noises should assume the lightning-safe position (i.e., crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered). Do not lie flat on the ground.

#### **SAFE LOCATIONS**

The following areas are not appropriate shelter and should be avoided: Any area of higher elevation; wide-open areas such as sports fields, tall isolated objects such as flag poles, light poles, or trees; metal fences and metal bleachers, unprotected open buildings like dugouts, picnic pavilions, and rain shelters.

The primary choice for a safe structure is any fully enclosed, substantial building. If a substantial building is not available, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows completely closed is a reasonable alternative. Convertible vehicles and golf carts do not provide a high level of protection and cannot be considered safe from lightning.

A swimming pool can be a dangerous location during thunderstorms. The current can be propagated through plumbing and electric connections via the underwater lights and drains of most swimming pools.

Lightning current can also enter the building, either into the electric wiring inside the building or through underground plumbing pipelines that enter the building. If lightning strikes the building or ground nearby, the current will most likely follow these pathways to the swimmers through the water.

Small structures, such as rain or picnic shelters or athletic storage sheds, are generally not properly protected and should be avoided during thunderstorms as well. These locations may actually increase the risk of lightning strike via a side flash and cause injury to the occupants.

#### **CRITERIA FOR POSTPONEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

When determining whether or not to suspend play, the designated “weather watcher” should use his/her common sense, good judgment and the “30-30 Rule.” If a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (regardless of whether or not lightning is seen or thunder heard), postpone or suspend the activity until the hazard has passed for at least 30 minutes.

## **THE 30-30 RULE**

### **Criteria for suspension of activities:**

By the time the flash-to-bang count approaches 30 seconds, all individuals should already be inside a safe shelter.

If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated weather watcher should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Each time additional lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute waiting period should be reset.

### **Criteria for resumption of activities:**

**Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound (thunder) or observation of lighting before leaving the 'safe shelter' to resume activities.**

The 30-minute rule can also be explained in another way. A typical thunderstorm moves at a rate of approximately 25 miles per hour. Experts believe that 30 minutes allow the thunderstorm to be about 10 to 12 miles from the area, minimizing the probability of a nearby, and therefore dangerous lightning strike.

A clear sky or lack of rainfall are not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum 30-minute return-to-play waiting period should not be shortened. Play should not be resumed even after the 30-minute waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remains in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

## **THE FLASH-TO-BANG METHOD**

The flash-to-bang method is the easiest and most convenient means for determining the distance to a lightning flash and can also be used to determine when to suspend or postpone activities. The flash-to-bang method is based on the fact that light travels faster than sound, which travels at a speed of approximately 1 mile every 5 seconds.

To use the flash-to-bang method, begin counting on the lightning flash, and stop counting when the associated clap of thunder is heard. When storms have a high flash rate, it is important to correlate a specific flash with the thunder it produced. Divide the time to thunder (in seconds or count one thousand one, one thousand 2, and so on) by 5 to determine the distance, in miles, to the lightning flash. As the flash – to - bang count approaches 30 seconds, all persons should be seeking, or already inside, a safe structure or location. This is the minimal guideline when using the flash-to-bang method to halt activities.

**A significant principle to remember is, “if you see it (lightning) flee it, if you hear it (thunder), clear it.”**

**NO LIGHTNING SAFETY GUIDELINES CAN GUARANTEE ABSOLUTE SAFETY. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY PERSON TO BE AWARE OF WEATHER CONDITIONS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO BE SAFE. USE COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGMENT. PLAN AHEAD AND MAKE SAFETY YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.**

# **TALLAHASSEE PARKS, RECREATION & NEIGHBORHOOD AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**

## **Expectations of Spectators**

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department has developed the following expectations of spectators at all sporting events:

Cheering in a positive fashion, for both sides, is highly encouraged. Cheer for a good effort as much as good performance. Always behave in a responsible manner and exercise self-discipline. Make only positive comments about children – yours or somebody else's. Always show respect for all involved in the game including coaches, players, opponents, opposing fans and officials. Ours programs are recreational leagues with fun as the primary emphasis. All coaches and perhaps some of the officials are volunteers and we should all appreciate their efforts and support them, setting a good example for the children.

Any spectator who does not behave appropriately (as described above) will be asked to leave, according to the following steps:

1. The site supervisor, officials/umpires, Park President or Board Member and/or another Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department staff member, that will be further identified as the site official, will identify violators to the coaches or vice versa.
2. The site official will confer with both coaches, one of whom will then approach the spectator and give a warning, or ask him/her to leave. If the spectator is not recognized by either coach, the home coach and/or the site official will speak to him/her.
3. If the decision is made for the spectator to leave, play will not resume until he/she has left the facility. If he/she refuses to leave, his/her team will forfeit and the game will be over.

Please help us foster good sportsmanship and encourage positive experiences for our youth. We thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

## Ten Commandments of Sports for Parents

1. Thou shall be sure that your child know that – win or lose, scared or heroic – you love him/her, appreciate his/her efforts, and that you are not disappointed in him/her.
2. Thou shall try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, his/her competitive attitude, his/her sportsmanship--and his/her actual skill level.
3. Thou shall be helpful--but don't coach him/her on the way to the rink, track, court, field or pool--or on the way back home.
4. Thou shall teach your child to enjoy competition for competition's sake, remembering that there are lessons to be learned in winning as well as in losing.
5. Harken `O parents: Try not to relive your athletic life through your child--or try to create an athletic career to replace the one that you never had.
6. Thou shall not compete with the coach--remember, in many cases, the coach becomes a hero to the athletes, a person who can do no wrong.
7. Thou shall not compare the skill, courage or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the squad or team--at least not in his/her hearing.
8. Thou shall get to know the coach so that you can be sure that his\her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to expose your child to him\her.
9. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reactions when they bring home tales of woe--or tales of heroics.
10. Thou shall make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains but fear flight-- some of us will want to fight but turn to jelly if a spider crawls nearby. A child must learn: courage is not absence of fear, but rather doing something in spite of fear.

## **Inclusion Programming**

Individuals with disabilities are no different than those without disabilities.

1. Enthusiasm, understanding and knowledge are **key factors** to successful inclusion.
2. Work hard to involve the participant in all aspects of the program.
3. Focus on their **abilities** rather than their **disability**.
4. Create opportunities that promote cooperation between individuals to achieve common goals.
5. **Respect the individual's right to privacy and confidentiality.** Ask permission before sharing information about their disability with others.
6. Recognize the importance of the individual with whom you are working.
  - a. Accept their worth
  - b. Create a supportive atmosphere
  - c. Establish friendship
  - d. Listen with your fullest attention
  - e. Develop self-confidence in the individual
  - f. Verbally compliment the participant for his/her efforts
  - g. Encourage problem-solving
  - h. Demonstrate patience and tolerance
  - i. Bring understanding to every situation
  - j. Ask the participant if they would like assistance and how you can best assist them
7. Be sensitive to the needs and limitations of his/her particular disability, while still capitalizing on his/her abilities.
8. Encourage building bridges with other participants.
9. Encourage involvement. Choose activities which involve the five senses (smell, taste, touch, hearing, vision)

## **Sensitivity Awareness**

**Making friends is a crucial and fundamental component of a child's camp experience. Being accepted and feeling part of a group is very important to all individuals and FUN should be the #1 RULE! Children learn essential life skills from each other through communication, and sharing of ideas and feelings. Children without disabilities need to understand that although some of their peers have disabilities, they can develop new friendships while helping them to have fun.**

### **Remove Barriers:**

Fear  
Ridicule, laughter or staring  
Being overly sympathetic  
Lack of knowledge and education  
Accepting and understanding things that are different

### **Ways to Remove Barriers:**

Icebreakers  
Model interaction  
Small Groups/buddies  
Modifying activity to fit All Children  
Teach and educate

Children and adults have preconceived attitudes and stereotypes about people with disabilities. It is the staff that has the opportunity to transpose these ideas and make positive learning experiences for ALL. Through inclusion, we have the opportunity to eliminate barriers and create a more cohesive environment within our community and in recreation.

## **Disability Etiquette**

**Ask Before You Help.** Just because someone has a disability, don't assume he/she needs help. If the setting is accessible, people with disabilities can usually get around fine. Adults with disabilities want to be treated as independent people. Offer assistance only if the person appears to need it. And if he/she does want help, ask how before you act.

**Be Sensitive About Physical Contact.** Some people with disabilities depend on their arms for balance. Grabbing them – even if you intention is to assist – could knock them off balance. Avoid patting a person on the head or touching his/her wheelchair, scooter or cane. People with disabilities consider their equipment part of their personal space.

**Think Before You Speak.** Always speak directly to the person with a disability, not to his companion, aide or sign language interpreter. Making small talk with a person who has a disability is great; just talk to him/her as you would with anyone else. Respect his/her privacy. If you ask about his/her disability, he/she may feel like you are treating him/her as a disability, not as a human being.

**Don't Make Assumptions.** People with disabilities are the best judge of what they can or cannot do. Don't make decisions for them about participating in any activity. Depending on the situation, it could be a violation of the ADA to exclude people because of a presumption about their limitation.

**Respond Graciously to Requests.** When people who have a disability ask for an accommodation at your business, it is not a complaint. It shows they feel comfortable enough in your establishment to ask for what they need. And if they get a positive response, they will probably come back again and tell their friends about the good service they received.

**Put The Person First.** Say 'person with a disability' rather than 'disabled person'. Say 'people with disabilities' rather than 'the disabled'. Use the persons name not their type of disability.

**Avoid** outdated terms like 'handicapped' or 'crippled'. Be aware that many people with disabilities dislike jargons terms like 'physically challenged' and 'differently abled'. Say 'wheelchair user' rather than 'confined to a wheelchair' or 'wheelchair bound'. The wheelchair is what enables the person to get around and participate in society; it's liberating, not confining.

With any disability, avoid negative, disempowering words, like 'victim' or 'sufferer'. Say 'person with AIDS' instead of 'AIDS victim' or 'person who suffers from AIDS'.

We should focus on the **individual** not the disability. Labels are so powerful, so remember to make their person more important than the disability.

**Be positive.** Words like 'pitiful' or 'hopeless' convey negative feelings. It is better to say 'she uses a wheelchair' instead of 'she is confined to a wheelchair'. The wheelchair is a means of mobility, to go to work, to travel and to play.

Be **accurate** with terms in which you use. Many terms are negative and degrading. The phrase 'people with disabilities' is more appropriate than 'the disabled' being that it allows for the emphasis to remain on the individual.

### **History of Attitudes Toward People With Disabilities**

Treatment of people with disabilities throughout history reveals how the attitudes toward people with disabilities have changed throughout the course of time. Hundreds of years ago, people with disabilities were left to die or were actually killed. They were thought to be possessed or as capable of bringing a curse upon those who came in contact with them. Later in history, people with disabilities were used in freak shows or as court jesters for people to laugh at. More recently, people with disabilities were put in institutions of like people. Only recently, society has begun to treat individuals with disabilities as people who contribute to society and who can learn skills and traits.

How can we change the attitudes?

Just like adults, children may have questions about disabilities that we find difficult to answer. By allowing a child to experience some of the challenges that a disability may pose, we can help that child better understand the struggles a person with a disability faces daily. We are not focusing on why the developmental disability occurred but in how we can make people's lives better.

# PREVENTING PROBLEMS

**Develop Policies and Procedures:** Clearly defined organizational policies and procedures help clarify the rights and responsibilities of parents and how they should behave within the confines of the youth sports environment. Without boundaries and guidelines for behavior it is difficult to hold individuals accountable for their actions later. Often, parents are out of control because no one has ever told them they are not supposed to be out of control!

**Communication:** Communication is the key to so many things a youth sports administrator is responsible for and dealing with parents is no exception! Policies and procedures will have no effect unless all involved, including the parents, are made aware of them and understand them. This is where communicating with the parents is vital. Parents must be acknowledged for the important role they play. There are several opportunities for the administrator to communicate with parents effectively: Registration, orientation and parent meetings.

**Registration:** Provide parents with important information in the following areas following, or during registration:

- Organizational philosophy and goals
- Season schedule
- Maps to fields or other facilities
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Safety information about equipment
- Information about areas for parent involvement
- Details about the orientation meeting
- Parents' Code of Ethics
- The coaching approach and philosophy to be employed
- Team goals

**Orientation Meeting:** A parents' orientation meeting is a vital tool in developing a positive youth sports experience for children. Orientation meetings can be held on a league wide basis, on an individual basis with each coach meeting his/her team's parents, or both. The orientation meeting allows parents to raise questions and concerns while coaches and administrators are both present. It also allows the coach to get to know the parents he/she will be dealing with during the season. A healthy two-way communication process should be encouraged and initiated at the orientation meeting. Time should be left at the end of the meeting for questions from parents.

Topics to be discussed at this meeting should include:

- Structure of the league – who should parents contact with concerns or questions.
- Philosophy of the league – equal play, skill development, FUN, etc.
- Program specifics – rules, location, times, etc.
- Season specifics – duration, special events, etc.
- Equipment specifics – what is needed, what is optional, etc.
- Transportation guidelines
- Health & safety guidelines – inclement weather policies, etc.
- How parents can get involved
- The rights & responsibilities of the youth sports parent
- Parent's Code of Ethics

**Get to Know the Parents Informally:** The administrators and coaches of each team should make a point of getting to know the parents of the children. The coach should be aware that all families are different and the motives for children being involved in sports will vary. It may be useful for the coach to have the parents complete a simple questionnaire, asking them specifically what they want their child to get out of the youth sports experience. This questionnaire can be completed at the time of registration and then given to each coach.

By informing each parent of the organizational philosophy many problems may be prevented in the future. Also, if the parents feel comfortable, it is more likely that youth sports administrators will have an open, constructive relationship with them. Coaches may make the effort to contact each of his/her players' parents on an individual basis or simply spend time talking to each parent at the orientation meeting. What is important is that during and after practices and games the coaches and administrators acknowledge the parents as a valued part of the youth sports experience. If ignored or shown any disrespect, parents feel less secure and are less likely to be supportive.

# SKILLS CARD – FIRST AID AMERICAN RED CROSS

## **A. CHECKING AN ILL OR INJURED PERSON** – Conscious Person

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person.
2. Obtain consent.
3. **Call 911** for any life threatening conditions.
4. Ask the person
  - a. What is your name?
  - b. What happened?
  - c. Where do you feel pain or discomfort?
  - d. Do you have any allergies?
  - e. Do you have any medical condition?
  - f. Are you taking any medications?
  - g. When did you last eat or drink anything?
5. Check head to toe for
  - a. Bleeding, fluids or wounds.
  - b. Skin color or temperature.
  - c. Medical ID bracelets or necklaces.
  - d. Observable signals of pain. (**TIP:** For infants and children, check from toe to head. Do not separate them from parent or guardian.
6. Continue to monitor Airway, Breathing and Circulation (**ABC's**).

## **B. SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION** (Anaphylaxis)

### **What to look for:**

- Occurs suddenly after contact with the substance
- Contact area swells and turns red
- Hives, itching or rash
- Weakness, nausea, vomiting or stomach cramps
- Dizziness
- Difficulty breathing, including cough or wheezing

### **What to do – Call 911** (**Note:** Some agencies might not allow you to take the following steps)

After determining a person is having a severe allergic reaction, assist with prescribed medication (epinephrine auto-injector). (**TIP:** Use disposable gloves and other personal protective equipment).

- Verify person's name, directions and expiration date.
- Grasp the auto-injector firmly and remove safety cap.
- At a 90-degree angle, inject medication and hold firmly for 10 seconds.
- Continue to monitor ABC's
- Give used auto-injector to EMS personnel.

## **C. ASTHMA ATTACK** – **Call 911** (**Note:** Some agencies might not allow you to take the following steps)

### **What to look for:**

- Coughing or wheezing noises
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Sweating
- Tightness in the chest
- Unable to talk without stopping for breath
- Feeling of fear or confusion

### **What to do:**

- After determining a person is having an asthma attack, assist with prescribed medication (inhaler). (**TIP:** Always obtain consent and wash your hand immediately after giving care.)
- Verify person's name, directions and expiration date.

- Shake inhaler and remove cap. (**TIP:** If extension or spacer tube is available, attach and utilize.)
- Have person breathe out and place lips around mouthpiece.
- Quickly press down on inhaler canister while person inhales deeply. (NOTE: If possible, have person self-administer the medication.)
- Have person hold breath for count of 10.
- Exhale and rinse out mouth with water.
- Note time administered and monitor **ABC's**.

#### **D. SEIZURE**

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person.
2. Obtain consent.
3. Remove nearby objects.
  - DO NOT hold or restrain person
  - DO NOT place anything between person's teeth or in person's mouth
4. Protect the person's head.
  - Place a thin folded towel or clothing beneath it.
5. Check **ABC's** and **Care** for injuries
6. Place in recovery position.
7. Comfort and reassure the person. (**NOTE: CALL 911** if the person –
  - Does not regain consciousness
  - If pregnant
  - Is a known diabetic
  - Has sustained injury
  - Shows life-threatening conditions
  - Has never had a seizure before, seizure last longer than 5 minutes or seizure is repeated.)

#### **E. POISONING**

##### **What to look for:**

- Breathing difficulty
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Chest or abdominal pain
- Sweating
- Changes in consciousness
- Seizure
- Headache or dizziness
- Irregular pupil size
- Burning/tearing of the eyes
- Abnormal skin color
- Burns around the lips, tongue or on the skin

##### **What to do:**

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person
2. Obtain consent
3. For life threatening conditions, (e.g., unconscious, not breathing or a change in consciousness) **Call 911**. OR if conscious, Call the National Poison Control Center (PCC) at 800-222-1222 and follow advice given. (**TIP: DO NOT** give anything to eat or drink unless directed by PCC or EMS.)
4. **Care** for conditions found. (NOTE: If possible find out
  - What type of poison?
  - How much was taken?
  - When it was taken?
  - How the poison entered the body?

## **F. SHOCK**

### **What to look for:**

- Restlessness, irritability or confusion
- Altered level of consciousness
- Pale or ashen, cool, moist skin
- Rapid breathing and pulse
- Excessive thirst
- Nausea or vomiting

### **What to do:**

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person
2. Obtain consent
3. **CALL 911**
4. Monitor **ABC's**
5. Control any bleeding
6. Keep person from getting chilled or overheated
7. Elevate legs 8-12 inches if you do not suspect a head, neck or back injury or broken bones in the hips or legs
8. Comfort and reassure the person

## **G. STROKE**

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person.
2. Obtain consent.

### **SUDDEN SIGNALS OF STROKE, THINK F.A.S.T.**

Face – Weakness on one side of the face

- Ask the person to smile

Arm – Weakness or numbness in one arm

- Ask the person to raise both arms

Speech – Slurred speech or trouble getting the words out

- Ask the person to speak a simple sentence

Time – Note time signals first observed and **CALL 911**

## **H. CONTROLLING EXTERNAL BLEEDING** (TIP: Use disposable gloves and other personal protective equipment.)

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person.
2. Obtain consent.
3. Cover wound with a sterile dressing.
4. Apply direct pressure until bleeding stops.
5. Cover dressing with bandage.
6. If bleeding does not stop –
  - Apply additional dressings and bandages.
  - Take steps to minimize shock.
  - **CALL 911** if not already done.

(NOTE: Wash hands with soap and water after giving care.)

## **I. BURN CARE** (TIP: **CALL 911** for serious burns.)

1. **Check** scene, then **Check** person.
2. Obtain consent.
3. Stop the burning.
4. Cool the burn with cold running water until pain is relieved.
5. Cover the burn loosely with a sterile dressing.
6. Care for shock.

(NOTE: Do not break blisters; loosely cover blisters with a sterile dressing.)