

The Youth Baseball Coach

... helping coaches of tomorrow's leaders

Coaching Philosophy

January 6th, 2012 • Category: **General Coaching**

My coaching philosophy has been developed over several years of trial and error, success and failure. Over the years I've come to realize that winning a baseball game is secondary to doing your best. In the game of baseball individual players have very little control over the outcome of a game. Because baseball is a team sport, you can put the greatest baseball player in the world on a terrible team and that team will probably not win the championship. As coaches, if we focus our team on winning as the only goal, there is potential for great let downs and discouragement.

However, if we place our focus on effort first and winning second, not only do we give our players control over the goal, but teaching them to do their best will translate into lasting benefits for their future. Imagine in five years the difference between a player who is taught that winning is the primary concern as compared to a player who is taught that giving their best effort is the primary goal. Someone who has developed the discipline to give 110% effort in what they do, will be that much further ahead than someone who only has a few little league championship trophies collecting dust on their bookshelf.

That being said, please don't think that the team I coach will not strive to win baseball games. But winning is the frosting on the cake. And I would argue that players who are having fun and doing their best will do as well if not better than a player whose only goal is to win a game.

Here is my coaching philosophy-

*** Winning is the second priority. Safety, Effort and Fun are Number One.**

I would rather have a team that had fun all season and did not win many games, as opposed to a team that won the championship but no one learned much and hardly anyone returns for the next season. Too many coaches stress results instead of effort. By putting the emphasis on results we are adding pressure onto our players and whether we know it or not, detracting from their performance. If the players give less than 100% then they need to do better. If they give 100% then they are winners and are successful regardless of the outcome of a particular pitch, at bat, play or game.

*** Give the Players your Attention**

Kids crave attention. Kids deserve attention. As I coach I want to give my players all the attention they need to thrive as baseball players. Feedback and communication are foundational to giving kids attention.

*** Give the Players Affirmation**

Kids need affirmation. Affirmation is a key in helping kids develop. Players need a patient supportive coach that can teach and motivate in a positive way. If all a player hears is negativity and correction without affirmation that is a bad and potentially harmful situation for a player to be in.

*** Give the Players Affection**

The old saying is so true, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." By showing the players that you care for them, they will be far more open to respond to your coaching efforts.

*** Be Good Sports**

Sportsmanship is becoming a forgotten concept and is unfortunately being taught less and less by coaches. Most players are learning their idea of sportsmanship from professional athletes. And, I don't know about you, but what I've been seeing is really not good. Most of what I'm seeing is trash talking, taunting and belittling of opposing teams and players. This is neither healthy nor good. Players need to be taught that they are competing "with" the other team not "against" the other team. Good plays need to be complimented regardless of what team makes them. Winning and losing need to be handled graciously. The coach has a huge impact on how his players will act on the field. You are a role model, so make sure you model good sportsmanship when dealing with umpires and opposing teams. Maintain self control and teach your players to do the same.

*** Communication**

Communicating our expectations and listening to input and feedback from other coaches, parents and players are critical to the team's success. No one wants to be placed in an environment where they don't know what they are supposed to do, or where they do not feel like it is safe to speak up if they want to. As a coach I will listen to and take into account any concerns that are brought up. Players must communicate with other players in a positive manner. No put downs or foul language is tolerated.

*** Parents Must be Involved**

A big part of the success of the team is based upon the involvement of parents. This is "OUR" team. Parents, players and coaches need to be involved. Helping at practices, field maintenance day, games, organizing snacks and helping with umpiring duties will make the season run far smoother than a couple coaches doing everything themselves. Believe me, been there done that!

*** Integrity is Important**

Our players are learning from us as coaches. Not only by what we say, but they are being impacted even more so by what we do. We need to be consistent and honest as well as embody the values that we are trying to teach our players. We should treat players, parents, umpires, other teams, basically everyone with respect. We should be self-controlled at all times. With the understanding that nobody is perfect- We need to admit mistakes, acknowledge failures, learn from them and move on. In doing this we can teach our players in action and deed, values that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

*** Have Fun**

I don't want to do something that isn't fun. I know kids are the same way. So, in applying the values listed above, our players have a much better chance of learning baseball, winning some games and having fun. Effort, enthusiasm, development of baseball skills and fun are the goals for this season.

2 Responses to “ Coaching Philosophy ”

1.



Steve says:

January 16th, 2012 at 7:42 am

Hi there,

I read your philosophy and am very impressed with it. I am involved in little league baseball in Alberta, and wanted to ask you if I could quote parts of it to be used in helping us to train new (and veteran) coaches to work with our kids?

Thanks

2.



admin says:

January 16th, 2012 at 10:02 am

Hi Steve,

You are more than welcome to use any of it that you would like. This site is dedicated to helping coaches so please feel free to use it. If possible and you could add some sort of acknowledgement to this website, that would be appreciated but if not, no problem. Good luck this season!

Leave a Reply