**COACHING YOUR OWN CHILD**

Coaching your own child can be difficult. Many parent-coaches are either too tough on their own kids or not tough at all. You want your children to feel as if they are being treated the same as their teammates, no more and no less.

Here are some suggestions that could help you if you are involved in this unique coaching situation:

* Have your child refer to you as "coach" in team settings. This tells the team that when you and your child are at the ball field, your child is just another member of the team.
* Make sure your child becomes fundamentally sound in all areas of the game. Spotlighting your own child in a single priority position is counterproductive both to them and the team as a whole. Train your child -- and the rest of the team -- to play more than one position. They should have a general understanding of all positions, especially in youth settings.
* Ensure that your child is experiencing the same level of character development as the rest of his/her teammates. The game of baseball will provide many teachable moments. Use these opportunities as their coach to teach sportsmanship, teamwork, work ethic and integrity, among other character traits.
* Make sure that your child knows that he or she is your son or daughter first and foremost and an athlete second. When managed correctly, many life-long relationships between parent-coaches and their children are strengthened by the common bond of baseball.

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that one day, you will no longer be their coach, but you will always be your child's parent.

**10 Things Every New Youth Baseball Coach Should Know**

Dan Spring was drafted in 2003 by the Detroit Tigers, and has spent the last 10 years providing instruction for over 17,000 youth baseball players. He currently runs the Spring Training Baseball Academy in Palos Verdes, California and runs the Eye Black Academy, a youth baseball instruction site.

10 Things For Coaches To Remember:

1) Your players are children playing a game they are still learning.

2) Use mistakes as an opportunity to teach, not to punish.

3) Yelling at a player is the best way to make sure he doesn't have fun playing baseball.

4) Yelling at a player is the worst way to make sure your message is heard.

5) Win with class.

6) Lose with grace.

7) The umpire is human and is going to make mistakes.

8) Your player's attitude will mirror your own.

9) HAVE FUN!

10) From Jim Leyland in a personal letter he wrote to all the Tigers players after he was announced as the manager in 2006: "I demand a lot from my players yet I want my players totally relaxed and having fun. This is not life and death but simply a competitive game."

**Top 10 Pieces of Advice for Baseball Parents**

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If you are the parent of a young baseball or softball player, it's easy to let the hectic nature of a season get in the way of the big picture. Below are my top 10 tips for parents to follow for each ballgame:

1) Celebrate your child's effort and sportsmanship, above results such as winning and losing.

2) Do not coach from the stands.

3) Never yell at the ump.

4) Never yell at the other team or their coaches.

5) Stay away from the dugouts during the game.

6) The umpire is human and will make mistakes.

7) Cheer positively.

8) Root for the whole team, not just your son or daughter.

9) HAVE FUN!

10) "Your child's success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are. But having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient and tries their best IS a direct reflection of your parenting."

**Northwestern University Baseball Videos:**

Infield Triangle Drill: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xc0gnbZf9sQ>

OF Picks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeZF4mXVOvQ>

INF Picks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqd-AlizFNU>

OF Break Drills: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zLhqmNHBqk>

INF Throwing Program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYKiiAzNlco>

Hitting Drills: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLT65DgNN18jtxfrNw6yhxDE0YTo8H-2sk>

**There are many, free resources out there. The best I have come across are:**

1. [**http://web.usabaseball.com/arc/coaches/**](http://web.usabaseball.com/arc/coaches/)
2. [**http://www.usabmobilecoach.com/PlayBall/index.jsf**](http://www.usabmobilecoach.com/PlayBall/index.jsf)

**Sample Practice Plans**

**3 Coaches/Parents**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Coach 1 Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** | **Coach 2 Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** | **Coach 3 Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** |
| Warm-up & Stretch | 5 | Warm-up & Stretch | 5 | Warm-up & Stretch | 5 |
| Interval Throwing | 15 | Interval Throwing | 15 | Interval Throwing | 15 |
| **Subtotal** | **20** |  | **20** |  | **20** |
| Infield Defense |  | Outfield Defense |  | Offense |  |
| Groundballs | 5 | Outfield groundballs | 5 | Location tee | 5 |
| Shuffle, Gather, Throw (Roll ball or Fungo) | 10 | Fly balls | 5 | Side soft-toss | 5 |
| Knee short hops | 5 | Crow hop throw | 5 | Front soft toss | 5 |
|  |  | Long toss | 5 | Rounding 1st base | 5 |
| Water Break | 5 | Water Break | 5 | Water Break | 5 |
| **Subtotal** | **25** | **Subtotal** | **25** | **Subtotal** | **25** |
| Group 1 to 2 |  | Group 2 to 3 |  | Group 3 to 1 |  |
| **Total Practice** | **95 minutes** |  |  |  |

**2 Coaches/Parents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Coach 1 Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** | **Coach 2 Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** |
| Warm-up & Stretch | 5 | Warm-up & Stretch | 5 |
| Interval Throwing | 15 | Interval Throwing | 15 |
| Defense |  | Offense |  |
| Groundballs | 5 | 1,2,3 Drill (stance, load, swing) | 10 |
| Shuffle, Gather, Throw (Roll ball or Fungo) | 10 | Location tee | 10 |
| Fly balls (Outfield) | 5 | All the way through 1st base | 5 |
| Outfield groundballs | 15 | Fastball front toss | 10 |
| Water break | 5 | Water break | 5 |
| **Subtotal** | **60** |  | **60** |
| Group 1 goes to 2 | 30 | Group 2 goes to 1 | 30 |
| **Total Time** | **90** | **Total Time** | **90** |

**1 Coach/Parent**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Duration (minutes)** |  | **Notes** |
| Warm-up & Stretch | 5 |  |  |
| Interval Throwing | 15 |  |  |
| Defense |  |  |  |
| Groundballs | 5 |  |  |
| Shuffle, Gather, Throw (Roll ball or Fungo) | 10 |  | Position players at 1B, 2B, SS, & 3rd. |
| Fly balls (Outfield) | 5 |  |  |
| Outfield groundballs | 15 |  | Have kids work in groups of 3, rolling ball to each other |
| Water break | 5 |  |  |
| **Subtotal** |  | **60** |  |
| Offense |  |  |  |
| 1,2,3 Drill (stance, load, swing) | 10 |  |  |
| Location tee | 5 |  |  |
| All the way through 1st base | 5 |  |  |
| Fastball front toss | 10 |  |  |
| **Subtotal** |  | **30** |  |
| **Total Time** |  | **90** |  |