

Coaching Tips

- 1. Prepare for practice before you arrive to the softball field. Arrive early.** Once you arrive at the practice location, you will be bombarded with kids, parents, and other coaches, along with the task of setting up. Once you arrive, you will not have time to prepare activities, drills, etc.
- 2. Be clear expressing goals and expectations of the day and season.** Coaches quite often will assume that every player understands what they are supposed to do, and how they're supposed to act. Be sure to state the plans for the day and expectations as practice starts. This is also important to address at the beginning of the season when addressing the coaches, players and parents.
- 3. Ask for help.** Be sure to invite others to be assistant coaches as this will be valuable for practices and games. The players will enjoy their experience and will get better instruction when split up into small groups to run the drills. We recommend having a total of 3 coaches, one head coach and 2 committed assistant coaches.
- 4. Keep the practice moving.** Many coaches like to talk (too much). Depending upon the age group, kids typically have a short attention span and will lose interest. Be prepared to quickly explain the drill and then get it started. The more the kids are moving to various stations, the less likely you'll have to deal with other issues.
- 5. Focus on the fundamentals.** Always keep player development at the top of the priority list. Many coaches play to win and often forget they have 12 kids on the team. If you work to develop every kid by the end of the year your team will be better prepared than others. If each player leaves the season better than when they arrived, you have succeeded.
- 6. Encourage effort.** Practice is practice. Kids are going to make many mistakes, some more than others. The players will be trying new things and advancing in their development at different paces. The one thing they can all be good at is EFFORT. Encouragement will instill confidence in the players and provide them with a base for getting better.
- 7. Don't worry about the small things.** Kids will be kids. There should be certain guidelines for conduct, but "kids being kids" is going to happen. Set basic guidelines and reinforce them during practice.
- 8. Coaches are there for the kids, the kids aren't there for the coaches.** If you missed your chance to play pro-ball, coaching youth softball is not the replacement.
- 9. Coaches are role models.** Remember to always talk positively about players, parents, other teams, and coaches. Kids look up to the coach, so it's important to provide them with a positive image. What we say, how we say it, and how we act can leave a lasting impression on a young player. Always be positive!
- 10. Have Fun!** Coaching kids should be enjoyable. Try to have fun and keep the season in perspective.