



YOUTH COACHES HANDBOOK

DEVELOPING OUR YOUTH



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VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL YOUTH COACH GUIDELINES

Thank you for playing a part in the development of the youth in our community. Taking the time to be involved with the children can be very rewarding. Having softball background is not necessary to be a good coach, understanding what children need and want is! Learning and fun with friends! Remember your success as a parent coach is not measured by your wins/losses, it is by the impact that you had on the players. If the girls end the season excited to be there and wanting to come back, your season as a coach has been successful!

VAGSA Mission:

The mission of the Verona Area Girls Softball Association (VAGSA) is to promote, develop and regulate the game of softball at the youth level in the Verona Area. The primary goals of VAGSA are to develop team and individual softball skills that participants can carry with them through their school careers and throughout their lives. VAGSA will achieve the primary goals by providing the opportunity for girls ages 5-18 to play both recreational and competitive Fast Pitch softball in a fun, educational, and safe environment. VAGSA will use fast pitch softball as a means to promote personal growth and provide a learning experience for girls while encouraging fair play, sportsmanship and teamwork.

VAGSA Objectives for Coaches:

- Provide a fun, safe environment
- Commit to a teaching & learning environment
- Teach safety
- Treat girls fairly & equally
- Teach and reinforce sportsmanship
- Encourage teamwork
- Encourage girls to work hard to accomplish goals
- Be a great role model

Coach Guidelines - we hope you will consider the following as you prepare for your season of coaching.

1. *Learn as much as you can about the sport of softball*
Attend the yearly coaches' clinic and utilize the practice plans, drills and skills offered.
2. *Organize your practices, games & communication efforts.*
3. *Communicate regularly to players, parents and guardians.*
 - a. Start with an introductory letter/meeting to parents at the start of the season. Include the practice and game schedule, player responsibilities/expectations about being on time and ready to play. You should also cover the program philosophy.

- b. Weekly emails to parents/players to provide information such as practice times, game times and locations for the fields is very important.
 - c. Let the players know how you would like to be addressed. Coach (last name) or whatever your preference is.
4. *Plan practices so that every minute is accounted for.*
- a. Organize prior to practice time. Practice should not be more than two hours.
 - b. Stress the importance of attending practice.
 - c. Accommodate players with their favorite positions as much as possible. Otherwise, communicate that you may need them in another position to help the team to be successful. You have the final decision as to what position they will play. Coach every position with the same amount of conviction so that everyone feels they are an important part of the team. Focusing on a few positions will make the others feel they are not as important.
 - d. Take advantage of teaching situations. Mistakes will be made. Try to correct them in as positive and encouraging manner as possible. Be clear in what the problem is and teach the proper way.
 - e. Never belittle a player. Use positive motivation. Exercise should not be used as punishment.
 - f. It is okay to send a player or a team on a “time out” in order to focus. They need to learn to focus and use practice time efficiently.
 - g. Be firm and fair. And, remember to have FUN with your team too. You will get better results.
 - h. Safety. Have a cell phone, medical forms and first aid kit with you at all times.
5. Game Management
- a. Don't place a lot of emphasis on winning. If you organize, set goals and work on those things, winning will take care of itself.
 - b. Never complain about officiating in front of the kids.
 - c. Playing time is the basis for most complaints. Injury, poor attendance, poor attitude or disciplinary actions are the only reasons that a player should not be able to contribute significantly in the game. Document attendance and actions that may reduce playing time of a child and communicate those reasons to the players and parents.

Is success winning games? Yes, in part, winning is an aspect of successful coaching. But successful coaching is much more than just winning games. A successful coach will help children master new skills, learn to feel good about themselves and help develop the self-esteem that gives them the desire to compete and work hard to accomplish goals.

Remember that the ultimate goal of our youth program is to positively impact the children in our community. Make sure that they come back the following season to play again because they enjoyed the season that you gave them!

Thank you and have a great season!

Coach Keyes

Our Goal: To positively impact the youth of our Community through Girls Softball

VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL YOUTH COACHES REQUIREMENTS

All coaches including Greater Dane Recreational Softball League (GDRLS), South Central Softball League (SCSL) and Greater Madison Metro Fastpitch League (GMMFL) coaches must have a background check. In addition, all teams must have at least one coach that is certified by the American Softball Association (ASA).

League Requirements:

Must have a parent meeting to cover:

- Parent, player and coaches Code of Conduct including obtaining signed forms
- Hand out team roster, practice, and game schedules
- Discuss rules of age division
- Discuss coaching philosophy
- Select/Assign a team parent /representative and provide weekly communications to parents/players
- SCSL and GMMFL coaches must collect additional ASA league fees and turn in to VAGSA

Field Maintenance of every team:

- Put away bases and replace with plugs
- Sweep dugouts
- Pick up trash
- Rake mound, batters box, hitting, pitching & catching areas used
- Don't allow any hitting into fences
- MAKE SURE FIELD IS LOCKED WHEN LEAVING
(Any problems with fields, call Kelly Keyes @ 513-3483)

Coach Equipment Checklist

- First Aid Kit with ice packs
- 1 bucket practice balls
- 6 game balls
- 1 equipment bag
- 1 set of catcher's gear (mitt, helmet, chest protector, shin guards, knee savers)
- 5 helmets
- Scorebook & rule book
- Bats (not all divisions receive bats)
- Uniforms
- Insurance cards
- Picture/Youth Day information

VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL

HOW TO CANCEL A GAME:

Communication of the cancellation of a game is the responsibility of the Home team. In Verona, there are different steps for determining if a field is playable for the various fields:

Verona City fields (Community, Lincoln Street, and Legion Street):

- Determination is made by the City
- Call after 4pm on game day. (608) 848-6815 or <http://www.ci.verona.wi.us>

VAHS fields (Country View)

- Determination is made by field maintenance
- Home Coach will be called by field maintenance by 3pm
- Call Kelly Keyes (608) 513-3483 with problems

Other Communities Field Contact Information

Please refer to the VAGSA website (www.vagsa.org) or the specific league rules for the procedures and field contact information for other communities in the various softball leagues we participate in.

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GAME CANCELLATION:

Once the determination is made that a field is not playable and a game is to be cancelled, the following steps **must be** taken:

1. Contact opposing coach
2. Contact Field Scheduler to cancel and obtain available fields and new dates – Amanda Blomberg (608-513-8043) – Amanda.blomberg@bakertilly.com.
3. Contact Umpire Coordinator (to cancel umpires)- Kelly Keyes (608-513-3483) – Kelly.keyes9500@gmail.com.

HOW TO RE-SCHEDULE A GAME:

1. Contact Field Scheduler – Amanda Blomberg (608-513-8043) for new game dates available.
2. Decide on make-up date with opposing coach.
3. Confirm final date with Field Scheduler – Amanda Blomberg - to reserve a field for that date.
4. Confirm final date to the Umpire Coordinator and indicate field reserved and get umpires assigned – Kelly Keyes (608-513-3483).

Extreme Weather or Heat: Coaches will stay in close contact when determining whether a game can be played or not. Some teams/families are willing to play in all weather conditions (heat, cold, drizzle, etc).

There are some precautions players/families can take to be safe and still play a game in hot weather conditions: 1) Players should begin hydrating early in the day; 2) Players should hydrate during the game; 3) A designated family could bring cold/wet towels stored in a cooler for players; 4) Agree on a later start time (6:30 or 7pm) if playing on the VAHS softball fields (the community field times are locked in and cannot be changed).

VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL YOUTH COACHES CHECKLIST

The same criteria will be given to players and parents at the end of the season to provide feedback for all of the youth coaches. These include:

- ✓ The coach is properly dressed for practices and games.
- ✓ The coach listens to players and their parents and provides constructive feedback.
- ✓ The coach gives appropriate feedback in a positive manner by telling the player what to do and how to do it in order to improve.
- ✓ The coach is prompt and attends all practices and games.
- ✓ The coach possesses enthusiasm for the game of softball.
- ✓ The coach demonstrates knowledge of the game and the ability to teach new skills.
- ✓ The coach is well organized in practices and has players engaged and working on their skills.
- ✓ The coach is well organized in games, provides all players a chance to play and ensures that players understand the importance of their role.
- ✓ The coach is a good role model and was respectful to players, parents and officials.
- ✓ The coach does not let winning get in the way of good judgment and fair play.
- ✓ The coach made Softball Fun!

Coaches Performance Evaluation

For Players and Parents



Coach Name: _____ Team: _____ Date: _____

Your Name (optional): _____

Please fill out the following form to rank your coach on their effectiveness in the following areas.

	1-Poor	3-Good	5-Excellent	1	2	3	4	5
Personal. How was the coach's:								
1. Appearance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Attitude towards players.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Attitude towards parents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Promptness for practices and games.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Dependability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Enthusiasm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Good Role Model.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Sport. How well did your coach:								
1. Know the sport?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Organize and prepare for practices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Organize and prepare for games?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Show proper leadership on and off the field?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Treats players Fair?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Communication. How well did your coach:								
1. Communicate with the players?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Communicate with the parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Communicate with other volunteers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Provides Constructive Feedback?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would you recommend this coach? Yes No

Overall, how would you rate your VAGSA experience:

1 Poor 2 3 Good 4 5 Excellent

Comments:

Please mail completed evaluation to: VAGSA • 2713 Gust Rd • Verona, WI 53593

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VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL SAMPLE SCHEDULES

YOUTH SOFTBALL PRACTICE SCHEDULE (approx. 2 hour)

ARRIVE 15 MIN EARLY TO START ON TIME!

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
12 min	Warm-ups	Jog laps, stretch all body parts, sprints
12 min	Throw Warm-up	Refer to drills
	Break	
25 min	Fielding	Refer to drills
	Break	
35 min	Hitting	Refer to drills
35 min	Situations	Refer to drills
	End with a competition!	

YOUTH SOFTBALL PREGAME WARMUPS (approx. 45 minutes)

ARRIVE 45 MIN PRIOR TO GAME TIME!

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
10 min	Warm-up	Jog, stretch, sprints
02 min	Warm-up Hitting	Bat circles to loosen up
12 min	Hitting	3 lines of side tossing
10 min	Throwing	Partners: snaps, forms, throwing
10 min	Infield	Coach hit to positions

SAMPLE GAME ROTATION OF PLAYERS

9 PLAYERS

1 ST INNING		3 RD INNING		5 TH INNING	
Position	Player	Position	Player	Position	Player
P		LF		2	
C		CF		3	
SS		RF		CF	
1		P		RF	
2		C		LF	
3		1		SS	
LF		2		P	
CF		3		C	
RF		SS		1	

10 PLAYERS

1 ST INNING		3 RD INNING		5 TH INNING	
Position	Player	Position	Player	Position	Player
P		RF		1	
SS		LF		P	
C		1		RF	
LF		2		C	
1		RC		LC	
RC		3		LF	
2		LC		SS	
RF		SS		3	
3		P		RC	
LC		C		2	

11 PLAYERS

1 ST INNING		3 RD INNING		5 TH INNING	
Position	Player	Position	Player	Position	Player
P		RF		X	
SS		X		LF	
C		1		SS	
LF		2		RC	
1		LF		P	
X		P		RF	
RC		3		LC	
2		LC		C	
RF		SS		3	
3		RC		2	
LC		C		1	

Date												
Inning	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5
Player												
1	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X
2	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P
3	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS
4	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C
5	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF
6	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1
7	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X
8	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC
9	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2
10	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF
11	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3
12	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC

Date												
Inning	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5
Player												
1	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X
2	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P
3	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS
4	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C
5	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF
6	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1
7	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X
8	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC
9	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2
10	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF
11	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3
12	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC

Date												
Inning	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5
Player												
1	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X
2	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P
3	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS
4	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C
5	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF
6	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1
7	RC	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X
8	2	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC
9	RF	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2
10	3	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF
11	LC	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3
12	X	P	SS	C	LF	1	X	RC	2	RF	3	LC

VERONA AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL

FUNDAMENTAL BREAKDOWN OF SKILLS

SKILLS	DRILLS
THROWING	Throwing :
Grip	4 corners: clockwise
Wrist Snaps	Front turn
Long Snaps	Back turn
Form Throws	With sweep tag
Regular Throwing	
Distance Throwing	Star drill
Distance with Crow hop	Target throwing for outfielders
FIELDING	Fielding :
Hand position in glove	3 lines: field from dirt
Glove positions: Forehand	Field with pivot
Backhand	Field off the bat
Middle	Ozzie: Forehands, backhands, middle
Above waist	4 quadrants with partner
Below waist	One hoppers with partner
Stance & body position	10 ball drill-infield
Receiving with soft hands	10 ball drill -outfield
Charging & moving through the ball	
HITTING	Hitting :
Grip	9 zones
Stance	9 zones with T
Head	16" softballs
Load	2 step T
Stride	Top, bottom hand T
Contact	3 bases-machine
Follow through	
BUNTING (sacrifice/bunt for hit)	
Stance & bat angle	
Pivot	
Head & eyes	
Receiving ball & placement	

SAMPLE DAILY PRACTICE PLAN

DAY:

DATE:

PRACTICE PLAN		GAME SITUATIONS	CONDITIONING
TIME			
3:45	ATTENDANCE	Cutoffs, relays, throw downs	Singles/D/T/HR
3:50	ANNOUNCEMENTS:		Suicide Lines w/balls
		1 st & 3 rd	Races
		Delayed steal 1 st & 3 rd	
4p	TEAM WARMUPS:		
	Stretch, light jog, interval run beginning medium speed 8 laps, dynamic stretch, ladders		
4:25	THROWING:		CORE
	Wrist snaps		Plank, sideplank, pillars, sit-ups
	Form throws-check rotation		Wall sits, push ups
	Throwing-rotation check		
	Throw up with hop for distance		
BREAK		CHALK TALK	GAMES
4:40	FIELDING:	Positioning	Line game
	3 lines down, with pivot-glove to dirt	Base coverage	
	4 quadrants w/partner	Back up coverage	
	1hoppers forehand/ backhand w/partner		
	Range Drill/Quarterbacks/fliers w/drop step		EQUIPMENT
BREAK			
5:15	HITTING:		
	Warm-ups		
	9 zones w/tee		
	T-work and front toss		
	Machine work		
	Live pitching		

NOTES:

