

Clarendon Hills Cardinals - Coaches Expectations

- 1) **“For the Love of the Game”** Encourage, develop and promote a love for the game of baseball in your players and families. Baseball is a game of failures, skill development is tedious, and games can move slowly. Learning to not only have fun but to truly love the game is the only way young players will remain self-motivated to achieve their highest potential.
- 2) **“Honor the Game”** at all times. This is a broad reaching directive that goes FAR beyond simply displaying good sportsmanship. It is a message intended to inspire and motivate you to always be at your best, especially in the toughest situations.
 - a) Rules – No “nonsensical gamesmanship” or gimmick plays. Teach your team that you will win the right way without bending the rules. Respect the “Spirit” as well as the “Letter” of the rules
 - b) Opponents – A worthy opponent is a gift. Be respectable and compete honorably no matter the score or outcome. Understand that the other team and coaching staff has worked just as hard as you to prepare to play. Look for ways that good competition brings out the best in your team
 - c) Officials – Respect officials even when they make mistakes (which they will) or when you disagree with a call. Do NOT argue with officials. There is never an excuse for not treating them with respect
 - d) Teammates – No one player is more valuable than any other. Be optimistic about each player’s potential, look for the positive attributes of each player that can help them contribute to the team
 - e) Family – Communicate to your parent group appropriately at all times. Be receptive of feedback. Encourage Parents to reinforce the lessons that are being taught at each game about effort, attitude, awareness and development.
 - f) Self – No personal agenda, put the needs of the team ahead of your own and your child’s. Set your own high standards so that even when others around you are not honoring the game, you will be
- 3) **“Even when no one is watching”** demonstrate the correct, desired behavior **AT ALL TIMES!**
- 4) **Focus on the fundamentals.** Reinforce the lessons that are being taught by the trainers AND the spirit of how they are teaching. Knowledge and instinct come through repetition, not lectures. Confidence builds over time with support and trust, not constant criticism.
- 5) **Focus on approach** over technical instruction. The games are for the players, let THEM perform. Allow players to expand their knowledge by trying / failing / learning / then improving. Inquire first about their approach or strategy for a certain play, before reinforcing to them what could have been done better and how to do get it right next time. The long term goal is to create independent learners. Teach your players to coach themselves.
- 6) **“Be a Mentor, NOT A JUDGE”** No player has FIXED abilities. Knowledge and skill build slowly over time and at a different pace for each player. Be patient with every child on their journey. It is not our job to protect the players from mistakes, but you can help them learn and become stronger from them.
- 7) **“Win or Lose is the wrong question”** Winning feels good, but it is often misleading. If you are too focused on the scoreboard, you lose sight of true development. Find ways to measure effort and improvement in order to have long term success. There is never a time when you should say “We NEED to win this game”. By believing in this, you will naturally find ways for each player to have the opportunity to contribute to the success of the team in a meaningful way, and ultimately your whole team will be more competitive on the scoreboard in the long run.
- 8) **“What coaches say matters”** Players won’t follow WHAT you say, unless they believe in and trust WHY you are saying it. Praise and recognize the process and effort in your players, not just their ability and results. Provide balanced feedback to all levels of players. Find statistics to measure REAL progress in effort, knowledge, awareness and decision making. At the end of the day, players will remember what you SAID, more than what they did.