

“It’s not what happens that’s important, but how you react to it.”
Vince Lombardi

**“Spirit of the Game”
Coaches Conduct Code**

Everyone likes to win, but at what cost? As volunteers in organized kid sports we try as best we can to make all things equal. Unfortunately things fall through the cracks or get mixed up in a shuffle. But, let’s also keep in mind what we are trying accomplish here with the Baseball program and that is to be instructional and make sure the kids “grasp it”, the value of teamwork, the meaning of sportsmanship, introduction into a more competitive environment, develop friendships, and make sure they are having fun while doing all of this. It won’t always be easy, but it will be an experience the kids will likely always remember.

Your example is powerful, for better or worse. If you insist on fair play, if you concentrate on your players’ enjoyment of the game and their overall, long term development, and if you support the officials, your players and their parents will notice. If you’re overly concerned about results, and if you criticize the officials harshly, your players and their parents will also notice.

Think about what you’re doing during a game! Uphold the Spirit of the Game! If you follow the expectations, the spirit of the game will be alive and well in Miamisburg and will grow, along with the enjoyment of all.

The MCYBSA Coach’s Code details basic requirements, organized under four principles. They are: Setting a good example; keeping players safe; ensuring that all participants in MCYBSA have a positive experience, and relate to game officials in a respectable manner and encouraging players to do the same.

1. Setting a good example

Each person associated with MCYBSA is accountable for his/her own behavior at all times on or off the field of play. Parents, coaches and other adults should remember that children learn by example - it is up to the adults to set good examples. MCYBSA will not tolerate conduct that is detrimental to the sport, the participants, or the community. Such conduct includes: Vulgarity by coaches, players or parents; harassment or belittling of officials, coaches or players; verbal abuse, threats or physical violence toward anyone before, during or after a game; and the taunting of opposing players, coaches and parents. We require self-restraint by all participants - both players and adults. Teams must exercise appropriate control over those who fail to control themselves. Above all, children deserve a coach they can respect.

2. Keeping players safe

Coaches should have the safety of the players in their charge as their first priority at all times. Coaches should be familiar with the facility(ies) and fields on which their teams practice and play, and be mindful of the levels of fitness and skill of each one of their players. Coaches should also be familiar with principles of age-appropriate coaching, aware of applicable existing rules and regulations, and informed of the affairs of MCYBSA and their age appropriate league.

Coaches should follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured player is ready to play again. During a game, and in an absence of medical advice, coaches should err on the side of caution in permitting an injured player to return to play.

3. Demonstrating a positive attitude

Players, parents, and coaches are expected to show a positive, respectful attitude for everyone

involved in the sport. Criticism and disrespect for officials, opponents, coaches or fans undermine the purpose of the sport and encourage behavior contrary to the spirit of the game and the mission of MCYBSA.

4. Maintaining good relationships

Umpires - especially young and inexperienced ones - are like your players and yourself, in that they need time to develop. You can play an important role in helping them to improve by letting them concentrate on the game. You can help by encouraging them, by accepting their inevitable, mistakes and by offering constructive post-game comments. On the other hand, you could discourage and demoralize the umpires by criticizing their decisions, or by verbally abusing them. A small disagreement should be discussed with the referee calmly after the game. For major complaints, or if the umpire appeared to be unfair, biased, unfit, or incompetent, report opinions to the Head Umpire.

Opponents - Players and coaches are required to maintain a sense of fair play and be respectful of opposing players, coaches and fans at all times. Sportsmanship begins with respect. Without it, the positive competitive environment, which should be a perfect classroom for learning the values of baseball / softball, is completely undermined. Occasionally we will encounter opponents who do not share our values and high standards. If we allow ourselves to be drawn down to their level, we will have lost regardless of the final score.

Our Own Team - In an environment where our children are competing not only against other teams but also frequently against their schoolmates, it can be difficult to control jealousies and rivalries. A successful team resembles a family in that members put their own needs second, behind the greater good of the team. Great care must be taken not to undermine the coaches' authority.

In Closing - Coaches, in all contact with MCYBSA players, parents, officials and other coaches, should strive to set an example of the highest moral conduct. Before, during, and after the game, they should be an example of dignity, patience and positive spirit. Before games, opposing coaches should meet and exchange greetings to set the proper tone for the game. After games, the teams and coaches should meet and congratulate each other in a sportsmanlike manner. Coaches should ensure that their player's experience is one of fun and enjoyment, and improvement in skill (winning is only part of it). Players should never be yelled at, lectured or ridiculed for making mistakes or losing a game. Coaches should be generous with praise when it is deserved. Coaches should avoid any conduct which could be construed as physically or verbally abusive. During the game, the coach is responsible for the sportsmanship of the players, their parents and any other person or persons supporting their team.