



**California District 25  
Welcome to New Families  
Orientation Guide**

**Baseball & Softball**



**Serving Ladera Heights and Surrounding Communities  
Est. 1953**

Playing Facilities:  
Ladera Little League  
5401 S. Fairfax Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90056

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 3466  
Culver City, CA 90231

### **Acknowledgments**

Ladera Little League gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the District 25 Little League in providing the inspiration and some of the content for this guide.

### **Little League Pledge**

I trust in God  
I love my country and will respect its laws  
I will play fair and strive to win  
But win or lose I will always do my best

### **Little League Prayer**

Lord, give me strength to hit that ball  
And if I should, don't let me fall  
Help me to pick the one that's right;  
Then let me knock it way out of sight  
Then help me run, Lord with deer like grace,  
Don't let me slip, but tag first base  
Then on to second, stay with me Lord;  
Cause this one out, we can't afford  
Then let me zoom, like a flying bird  
Right down the line, and onto third  
Then let me slide, with foot out-thrust  
Across home plate, through swirling dust  
But first of all, Dear Lord, I pray  
Just tell the coach to let me play

### **Little League Baseball Mission**

Little League Baseball, Incorporated is a non-profit organization whose mission is to "to promote, develop, supervise, and voluntarily assist in all lawful ways, the interest of those who will participate in Little League Baseball and Softball."

Through proper guidance and exemplary leadership, the Little League program assists youth in developing the qualities of citizenship, discipline, teamwork and physical well-being. By espousing the virtues of character, courage and loyalty, the Little League Baseball and Softball program is designed to develop superior citizens rather than superior athletes.

Founded in 1939; granted Federal Charter July 16, 1964, by unanimous act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson as Public Law 88-378, 88th Congress H.R. 9234, and amended December 26, 1974, Public Law 93-551, 93rd Congress, H.R. 8864. Little League is tax exempt.

### **Ladera Little League Mission**

The Ladera Little League Board of Directors has vowed to provide its members the resources necessary to have an enjoyable Little League experience and adhere to the Little League International Mission.

## **Ladera Little League “The Organization.”**

Ladera Little League is a non-profit organization made up of strictly volunteers. It consists of the Board of Directors, Managers, Coaches, Team Mom, Parents and Players, Volunteers.

### **T-Ball - (Ages 4-6)**

Provides basic fundamentals of the game and introduces players to the concept of team play. This is a non-competitive league where players hit off a batting Tee. Scores are not officially recorded.

### **Rookie - (Ages 6-8)**

Players upgrade from a batting tee to a pitching machine or coach pitch. Rookie provides players a better understanding and concept of the game. Basic skills are refined and stressed and kids generally play multiple positions. 6 year olds are eligible to play if they have played one year of T-ball. Live pitching is introduced. Players become more familiar with new positions and plays are now being made on a consistent basis.

### **Minor - (Ages 8-12)**

Skill level increases and players are mixed with a variety of age levels and abilities. Players are allowed to steal any base and strategy is now being introduced.

### **Majors - (Ages 9-12)**

Advance play. Skill level is much higher than that of AAA. Play is faster and pitching becomes more consistent and accurate. Strategy becomes an integral part of the game.

**Juniors – (Ages 13-14)** High level and skill play. Players become high school, college and professional prospects.

**Softball - (Ages 8-12)** Minor and Major Levels only.

## **SPRING Season 2012**

The Spring season early registration opens in November. The 2012 spring season includes 6 divisions: T-Ball, Rookie, Minor, Major, Junior, and Softball. In the spring, all kids that will be new to the minor or major division aged 7-12 must attend a Skill Assessment Day January. The dates and times will be announced in December. All assessments will take place at one of Ladera Little League's Field. Skill Assessment Day is for player evaluation and team placement. At the completion of the assessments, managers will select players for team assignments by a draft for the Minor and Major levels **only**. All others will be placed on teams by a random selection of the Player Agent.

Team practices will begin in February. Games in the spring season for all divisions begin on Opening Day on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012 through June 2012.

## **POST Season**

The post season begins in the middle of June. First is the Tournament of Champions (TOC). It's usually the winner of any major, minor or junior division. Each little league in the District usually sends one team. The location(s) is announced by the District 25 office. Next are the All-Stars tournaments. Again teams are from our district leagues and the locations are announced by the District 25 office. The All-Star teams can consist of age groups 9-10, 10-11, 11-12, or 13-14. Beside the District All-Star tournament, Ladera sometimes enter into tournament for 8 or 9 and under teams. All-Star tournaments play can last as long as the middle of August.

No matter what the age of your child, you should plan to help Ladera Little League throughout the pre, regular, and post season.

## **FALL Season**

Registration for the Fall baseball season opens in June. The Fall baseball season is made up of 4 divisions: "Minor, Major, Junior, Softball". Players are placed on a team and do not tryout. Games for the Fall season begin in September and conclude just before Thanksgiving for all divisions.

Fall baseball help players improve their skills learned from the previous season and prepares them for the next upcoming season.

## **California District 25**

Ladera Little League is one of 12 leagues in California District 25, under the direction of District Administrator Marty Hoy. You can get all the District information at [www.cadistrict25.org](http://www.cadistrict25.org)

## **Little League Residency Requirements**

Each league shall determine the actual geographic boundaries of the area from within which it shall select players. Players will be eligible to play at Ladera Little League only if they reside within the boundaries shown to and approved by Little League Baseball, Incorporated.

A player will be deemed to reside within the league boundaries if:

- A. His/Her biological parents who are living together reside within such boundaries, or if not;
- B. Either of the parents (or his/her court appointed legal guardian) reside within such boundaries.

“Residence,” “reside” and “residing” refers to a place of bona fide continuous habitation. A place of residence once established shall not be changed unless the parents, parent or guardian makes a bona fide change of residence.

Residence shall be established and supported by **THREE OR MORE** of the following categories to determine residency of such parent(s) or guardian:

1. Driver's License.
2. Voter's registration.
3. School records.
4. Welfare/child care records.
5. Federal records.
6. State records.
7. Local (Municipal) records.
8. Support payment records.
9. Homeowner or tenant records.
10. Utility bills (i.e., gas, electric, water/sewer, phone, mobile phone, heating, waste disposal)
11. Financial (loan, credit, investment, ect.) records.
12. Insurance documents.
13. Medical records.
14. Military records.
15. Internet, cable or satellite records.
16. Vehicle records.

Note: Example – THREE utility bills (three items from No. 10 above) constitute only ONE document.

It is recommended that the league require some proof of residence within the league's boundaries at the time the player registers. Players and their parents/guardians should be advised in writing that a false statement of residence may lead to ineligibility to play Little League Baseball or Softball. Under NO circumstances does ANY person have the authority to grant a waiver that allows a child to play in a local Little League program IN ANY DIVISION, when that child does not qualify under these residency requirements.

If the claim for residency is challenged, three of the above materials must be submitted to Little League Baseball, Incorporated, with an affidavit of residency from the parent(s) or guardian, which shall decide the issue, will be final and binding. Residency documents must illustrate that the residence (as defined above) was inside the league's boundaries for at least one-half of the regular season (as of June 15 of the year in question).

## Ladera Little League Boundaries



Note: Ladera Little League’s eastern border has been changed from Western to Arlington. Residencies east of Arlington are outside of the Ladera Boundaries.

## Parent Volunteers

Ladera Little League is a strictly a volunteer non-profit organization. The organization and the activities provided by Ladera Little League CANNOT exist without the help of adult volunteers.

Before a parent says “Why don’t they” and follows it with a complaint, remember that “THEY” is really “YOU”. If everyone does a little, then no one has to do a lot.

Remember, Ladera Little League is for our children in our community and we strive to provide the best resources available to them to have the ultimate baseball experience.

Ladera Little League trusts and expects each and every family will contribute and offer full support to our league activities. Parents are asked to fill out a Parent Volunteer Form at the time of registration to indicate the area in which they would like to volunteer.

## **Board of Directors**

The local league Board of Directors, elected from and by the adult members of the league, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the league within the rules, regulations and policies of Little League. This board does not have the authority to alter, suspend or change any of the rules, regulations or policies of Little League.

However, wide latitude is given to this board in many areas of operation so that the local needs of the community may be met. For instance, the local league board of directors is entirely responsible for choosing a method for selection of Tournament Teams (or "All Stars").

Annually, the regular membership of each Little League is required to meet and elect the board of directors. Following the election, the board of directors meets to elect its officers from within the newly elected board. The officers required are: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, player agent, and safety officer (Information officer recommended but not required).

The board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its meetings and the management of the league as it may deem proper. The board has the power to discipline, suspend or remove any director or officer or committee member of the league, subject to provisions of the local league constitution.

Members of the local league board of directors, particularly the officers, should not be involved as members of other boards when such membership may cause a conflict of interest.

**President** - Apart from all other considerations, sound leadership, couched in knowledge, experience and common sense, is the greatest requirement and most exemplary qualification of the man or woman selected as president of a Little League.

While efficient organizational and administrative abilities are desirable credentials, the search for good leadership must transcend all other attributes in the adult who gives direction to the Little League movement in the local community. Dedication to the goals and purpose of Little League is inherent in the volunteer aspect of those who serve, but not everyone who serves is gifted with the quality of leadership. Presidents must reflect these qualities if they are to be of benefit to children.

The president has many responsibilities in the administration of the league. Each President is elected by, and is accountable to, the local league board of directors. Duties of a president are described within the limits of the rules and regulations, and within the local league constitution, giving each president the ability to oversee the affairs of all elements of the league.

As the chief administrator, the president selects and appoints managers, coaches, umpires and committees. As such, no person becomes a manager, coach, umpire or committee member without the approval of the president. However, all appointments are subject to final approval by the local league's board of directors.

Importantly, the president is the officer with whom Little League International maintains contact. The president also represents the league in the District organization.

The president should be the most informed officer of the league. Each president must know the regulations under which Little League operates and in authorizing the annual application for charter, binds all members of the league to faithfully observe the regulations. Little League Baseball International Headquarters reserves the right to require a league to remove any officer who does not carry out the terms of charter application. Serious violation can result in loss of the league's charter by action of the Charter Committee in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Beyond the requirements of league administration, the president should personify the best public image in reflection to the community at large. Each president should take an active role in gaining support and winning friends for the league program.

The president presides at league meetings, and assumes full responsibility for the operation of the local league. The president receives all mail, supplies and other communications from the Little League Headquarters. A president may manage, coach or umpire, provided he/she does not serve on the protest committee, nor serve as tournament team manager or coach.

**Vice President** - The vice president presides in the absence of the president, works with other officers and committee members, is ex-officio member of all committees, and carries out such duties and assignments as may be delegated by the president. Separate vice presidents may also be selected to oversee individual divisions within the league. If so, one vice president should be selected as the one to preside in the absence of the president. A vice president may manage, coach or umpire, provided they do not serve on the protest committee.

**Secretary** - The secretary maintains a register of members and directors, records the minutes of meetings, is responsible for sending out notice of meetings, issues membership cards and maintains a record of league's activities.

**Treasurer** - The treasurer signs checks co-signed by another officer or director (or as directed by the local league's constitution), dispenses league funds as approved by the board of directors, reports on the status of league funds, keeps local league books and financial records, prepares budgets, and assumes the responsibility for all local league finances.

**Player Agent** - The player agent conducts annual tryouts, is in charge of player selection, assists the president in checking birth records and eligibility of players and generally supervises and coordinates the transfer of players to or from the Minor Leagues according to provisions of the regulations of Little League Baseball. Separate player agents may also be selected to oversee individual divisions within the league. The player agent must not manage, coach or umpire in the division over which he/she has authority, unless the local league has received explicit written permission to allow this from Little League International.

**Safety Officer** - The safety officer coordinates all safety activities including supervision of ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program), ensures safety in player training, ensures safe playing conditions, coordinates reporting and prevention of injuries, solicits suggestions for making conditions safer, and reports suggestions to Little League International through the ASAP system.

**Information Officer** - The information officer manages the league's official home page on active.com, manages the online registration process and ensures that league rosters are maintained on the site, assigns administrative rights to league volunteers and teams, ensures that league news and scores are updated on a regular basis, collects, posts and distributes important information on League activities including direct dissemination of fund-raising and sponsor activities to Little League International, district, public, league members and media, serves as primary contact person for Little League and active.com regarding optimizing use of the Internet for league administration and for distributing information to league members and to Little League International, and displays enthusiasm for using the Internet for league administration, for sharing information and for creating a more enjoyable and efficient Little League experience.

### **Managers and Coaches**

The Little League manager and coach must be leaders. All must recognize that they hold a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a sensitive and formative period of a child's development.

It is required that the manager and coach have understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children. The manager and coach should be able to inspire respect. Above all else, managers and coaches must realize that they are helping to shape the physical, mental and emotional development of young people.

The Little League manager must be something more than just a teacher. Knowledge of the game is essential but it is not the only badge of a Little League coach or manager.

Children of Little League age are strongly influenced by adults whose ideals and aspirations are similar to their own. The manager/coach and player share a common interest in the game, a desire to excel, and determination to win. Children often idolize their managers and coaches, not because the adult is the most successful coach or mentor, but because the manager and coach are sources of inspiration.

Managers and coaches must be adults who are sensitive to the mental and physical limitations of children of Little League age and who recognize that the game is a vehicle of training and enjoyment, not an end in itself. It has been stated many times that the program of Little League can only be as good as the quality of leadership in the managing and coaching personnel. Local leagues should make a determined effort to enlist the best adults in the community to serve as managers and coaches.

The best way to train and qualify Little League managers and coaches is through the Little League Education Program for Managers and Coaches. A wide variety of materials are available for players and adults, as well as clinics and seminars led by experienced experts. You can learn more about this program by going to the Little League website and clicking on "Education Programs."

Who is responsible for the conduct of the manager and coach? First and foremost, it is the manager or coaches themselves. Each of us in Little League must take responsibility for our own actions.

However, as the chief administrator, the president selects and appoints the managers and coaches. As such, no person becomes a manager or coach without the approval of the president. All appointments are subject to final approval by the local league's board of directors.

Only the local Little League board of directors has the authority to remove or suspend a manager or coach. If a parent or anyone else is dissatisfied with a manager or coach, they must present the issue to the local league president and board of directors. Because the local league president and board of directors are closest to the situation, it would be a disservice if Little League Headquarters became involved in disputes or personality conflicts between managers/coaches and parents.

However, any person who believes that a manager or coach (or any other Little League personnel) is, or has been, violently or sexually abusive to children should report the situation immediately to Little League Baseball International Headquarters as well as to the local police. It is Little League policy that no person who has a history of sexual abuse toward children be given any volunteer responsibilities in Little League.

Ladera Little League seeks to appoint managers, coaches and volunteers who are a positive influence on their players at all levels of league play. Manager and coach selections are made by the President of the Ladera Little League Board of Directors and based on guidelines established by Little League Baseball, Inc. These selections must be approved by the Ladera Little League Board of Directors for the selections to be made final.

The manager and coach selection process should begin in October of every year. Parents or adult community members who wish to apply for a position as a manager or coach may submit their request at the time of registration and be committed to all Ladera Little League policies, activities, events, training and programs. Remember, our league is only as great as our manager, coach and volunteer programs.

The procedures for appointing managers and coaches must be understood and accepted by all concerned. The policies are:

- There is no seniority or tenure in serving as a manager or coach.
- All appointments expire annually in October.
- The power to nominate managers and coaches has been granted solely to the local league president and must be approved by the local league's Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors has the right to approve or disapprove any appointments made by the president.
- All managers and coaches must attend the mandatory training set forth by the Board of Directors and Little League Baseball, Inc.
- The president is responsible to the Board of Directors for the actions of all managers and coaches.
- Any manager, coach or volunteer may be removed from their position at anytime by the Board of Directors.
- Managers and coaches must support all Ladera Little League programs and events.
- All managers and coaches are subject to background checks yearly.
- Selections or removal of managers and coaches is the jurisdiction of the local league and is not subject to intervention from Little League Baseball, Inc.

## **Team Parent**

The Team Parent (Team Mom) is responsible for coordinating league activities with the team parents. The Team Parent assigns each family's time in the snack bar during the designated team week and all team related fundraising activities.

## **Umpires**

The umpires play a valuable role in Little League Baseball. Without umpires we would not have baseball. Parents and spectators need to bear in mind that our umpires try their best to be fair and impartial while umpiring Little League games. Parents are reminded that umpires have no vested interest in the outcome of any game.

Umpires have the right to remove unruly spectators from any game at anytime. Once removed, the individual removed must leave the facility prior to the game resuming.

## **Commissioners**

Commissioners are appointed by the board of directors to oversee divisions and report all protest, rule and safety concerns to the board of directors for review.

## **Protest Committee**

The protest committee is made up of three board members other than the president and vice president. The committee is responsible for reviewing all protest and making decisions based on Little League rules at the direction of the District Administrator and Little League Baseball, Inc.

## **Tournament Committee**

The tournament committee is responsible for developing protocol and programs for the selection of All-Star players, managers and coaches at the direction of the board of directors. This committee is also responsible for the organization, operation and assignment of volunteers for all hosted tournaments at the Ladera Little League facility.

## **"The Players Club" Auxiliary Committee**

The Players Club is open to any registered player at any level committed to meeting regularly to provide guidance and direction from a player's point of view to the Ladera Little League Board of Directors.

Players must enroll at the time of registration annually and cannot miss three consecutive meetings as a member. The Chairman of the Players Club cannot be a member of the Board of Directors.

## **“The Parent Club” Auxiliary Committee**

The Parent Club is open to any parent of a registered player at any level committed to meeting regularly to provide guidance and direction on the implementation of policies, procedures, programs and events to assist with the operation of the Ladera Little League Baseball Program.

## **Snack Bar Duties**

One parent of a registered player is required to present a refundable check deposit of \$100 per child in exchange for 4 hours of snack bar duty. At the conclusion of regular season, all check deposits will be returned to those who have completed their service and deposited from those who have not.

## **Uniforms and Equipment**

All players must complete the registration process prior to receiving a uniform or equipment. On the day of uniform distribution the snack bar deposit check is to be filled out with that date and handover in exchanged for the player’s uniform.

Uniforms are passed out before the beginning of the season. Each team manager is responsible for distributing a uniform to each team member. Players **KEEP** their uniforms, which includes a replica jersey, socks, belt and hat.

Players must provide their own baseball glove, pants and cleats.

Ladera Little League takes pride in the appearance of its players. Uniform pants are to be worn at the waist, with the shirt tucked in so the belt is clearly visible. Uniform hats are to be worn with the bill to the front.

# **Coach's / Manager's Role**

The Little League manager and coach must be leaders. All must recognize that they hold a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a sensitive and formative period of a child’s development.

It is required that the manager and coach have understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children. The manager and coach should be able to inspire respect. Above all else, managers and coaches must realize that they are helping to shape the physical, mental and emotional development of young people.

The Little League manager must be something more than just a teacher. Knowledge of the game is essential but it is not the only badge of a Little League coach or manager.

While an adult with training and background in the game is a desirable candidate for manager or coach, league screening committees should look for other important qualities. Screening of managers, coaches

and others at the local league level who have contact with children is also important in attempting to discover those with a history of child abuse.

The heart of Little League is what happens between the adult manager/coach and player. It is the manager more than any other individual who controls the situation in which the players may be benefited. Improving the level of leadership in this vital area must be a continuing effort.

Children of Little League age are strongly influenced by adults whose ideals and aspirations are similar to their own. The manager/coach and player share a common interest in the game, a desire to excel, and determination to win. Children often idolize their managers and coaches, not because the adult is the most successful coach or mentor, but because the manager and coach are sources of inspiration.

Managers and coaches must be adults who are sensitive to the mental and physical limitations of children of Little League age and who recognize that the game is a vehicle of training and enjoyment, not an end in itself. It has been stated many times that the program of Little League can only be as good as the quality of leadership in the managing and coaching personnel. New leagues particularly, should make a determined effort to enlist the best adults in the community to serve as managers and coaches.

Anyone interested in being a Little League manager or coach should contact their local league president in person, and be willing to undergo a screening process that may include a background check, as well as interviews of those with personal knowledge of your qualifications.

The best way to train and qualify Little League managers and coaches is through the Little League Education Program for Managers and Coaches. A wide variety of materials are available for players and adults, as well as clinics and seminars led by experienced experts. You can learn more about this program by hitting the "back" button on your browser and clicking on "Education Programs."

Who is responsible for the conduct of the manager and coach? First and foremost, it is the manager or coaches themselves. Each of us in Little League must take responsibility for our own actions.

However, as the chief administrator, the president selects and appoints the managers and coaches. As such, no person becomes a manager or coach without the approval of the president. All appointments are subject to final approval by the local league's board of directors.

Only the local Little League board of directors has the authority to remove or suspend a manager or coach. If a parent or anyone else is dissatisfied with a manager or coach, they must present the issue to the local league president and board of directors. Because the local league president and board of directors are closest to the situation, it would be a disservice if Little League Headquarters became involved in disputes or personality conflicts between managers/coaches and parents.

However, any person who believes that a manager or coach (or any other Little League personnel) is, or has been, violently or sexually abusive to children should report the situation immediately to Little League Baseball International Headquarters as well as to the local police. It is Little League policy that no person who has a history of sexual abuse toward children be given any volunteer responsibilities in Little League. Read more about the [Little League Child Protection Program](#)

# Communicating with your Child's Coach

Your child is likely to be considerably influenced by his or her coach, not only in learning how to play baseball and enjoy the game but also in physical, psychological, and social development. Because coaches are powerful role models for young athletes, they face tremendous challenges and considerable responsibilities.

Of course, we cannot tell you about your child's particular coach; you will need to find that out. But we can tell you some things about Little League coaches in general. They come from all walks of life, motivated by their love of baseball and their desire to teach young people. All Little League coaches are volunteers; two of every three have children participating in the program. They donate many hours a week throughout the season to coach your child and other young athletes.

Unfortunately, as in many human endeavors, there are a few "bad apples" in the coaching world. Little League does all it can to eliminate (or reeducate) them, but once in while a poor coach slips through. Thus, it is important that you make sure your child's coach acts in your son's or daughter's best interest.

## Evaluating Your Child's Coach

Use the Coach Evaluation Checklist to help you find out about the person with whom you are going to entrust the welfare of you child.

---

## COACH EVALUATION CHECKLIST

- **Coaching Philosophy**  
Does the coach keep winning and losing in perspective, or is this person a win-at-all -costs coach?  
Does the coach make sure that learning baseball is fun?
- **Motives**  
What are the coach's motives for coaching?  
Does the coach seek personal recognition at the expense of the players?
- **Knowledge**  
Does the coach know the rules and skills of the sport?  
Does the coach know how to teach those skills to young people?
- **Leadership**  
Does the coach permit players to share in leadership and decision making, or does he or she call all the shots?  
Is the coach's leadership built on intimidation or mutual respect?
- **Self-Control**  
Does the coach display the self-control expected of the players, or does she or he fly off the

handle frequently?

When kids make mistakes, does the coach build them up or put them down?

- **Understanding**

Is the coach sensitive to the emotions of the players or so wrapped up in his or her own emotions that the kids' feelings are forgotten?

Does the coach understand the unique make-up of each child, treating children as individuals?

- **Communication**

Do the coach's words and actions communicate positive or negative feelings?

Does the coach know when to talk and when to listen?

- **Consistency**

Does the coach punish one youngster but not another for the same behavior?

Is the coach hypocritical, saying one thing and then doing another?

- **Respect**

Do the players respect and listen to what the coach says?

Do the players look up to the coach as a person to emulate?

- **Enthusiasm**

Does the coach demonstrate enthusiasm, for coaching baseball?

Does the coach know how to build enthusiasm among the players?

---

## **No One Is Perfect**

There are several ways to learn more about your child's coach. Don't feel you are snooping; you are fulfilling your obligation as a responsible parent!

1. Talk with the coach to find out answers to the questions in the checklist.
2. Observe the coach in practice and games.
3. Talk with other parents who have had children play under this coach.

Remember, no coach will be perfect (just as you are not a perfect parent), but you need to be satisfied that your child's coach meets some minimum standards.

## **Dealing With Unsatisfactory Coaching**

Parents often have a difficult time dealing with their child's coach when they decide that he or she is coaching in an unsatisfactory way. Thoughtful parents are reluctant to interfere and hesitant to remove their child from the team. Children may resent being forced to quit; they fear losing face and may enjoy the sport so much that they want to continue participating in spite of a poor coach. Parents must use good judgment in such situations, communicating with both the child and the coach to resolve the problem.

We recommend that you begin by discussing the problem with the coach. Explain your concern and then listen to the coach's perspective.

If the problem with the coach is not severe, consider taking special steps with your child explain the coach's unsatisfactory behavior when it occurs. When children have help to recognize negative behavior, they often can learn positive lessons. For example, if the coach throws a temper tantrum whenever a player makes an error, help your child understand that this reaction is the coach's problem of self-control. Explain that mistakes are part of learning. Make it clear that you value the improvement your child continues to show, despite the coach's negative reactions. This intervention requires wise counsel and time on your part to avoid pitting your child against the coach's methods or philosophy.

If discussing the issue with the coach does not resolve the problem, then you need to consider going to your local Little League officials. If they cannot remedy the problem to your satisfaction, then determine the feasibility of transferring your daughter or son to another team.

If all these fail, and you consider the problem to be bad enough, you may need to remove your child from Little League. If the coach's actions are illegal, then of course you need to contact the appropriate legal authorities.

### **Helping Your Child's Coach**

Remember that most coaches are striving to do the best they can. You can help make the coach's job a bit easier, as well as help your child enjoy Little League more, by doing the following things:

1. Let your child know you support his or her participation in Little League. Get involved volunteer your time in the league, practice with your athlete, attend games, and show that you care.
2. Provide your child with proper equipment and encourage its correct use.
3. Monitor your child's participation so that you know how your child is developing.
4. Do not interfere with the coach unless the coach has clearly erred.
5. Keep the coach informed if your child is injured or ill.
6. Make certain your child is sleeping and eating properly.
7. Help the coach when asked to do so. You might be needed to raise funds, drive kids to games, keep score, or even be an assistant coach.
8. Keep control of yourself show by your example how you want your child to behave on and off the field.

## **Parent/Volunteer Pledge**

- I will teach all children to play fair and do their best.
- I will positively support all managers, coaches and players.
- I will respect the decisions of the umpires.
- I will praise a good effort despite the outcome of the game

# Your Role as a Little League Parent

Local Little Leagues are entirely volunteer organizations. Each league depends on adults like you to organize and conduct every aspect. Not only do adults serve as administrators, volunteer coaches, and umpires they also help with field maintenance, fund-raising, concessions, and numerous other special projects.

Your willingness to exchange time and effort for your child's benefit and enjoyment is very important to the functioning of your local Little League. Cheering your daughter or son on from the stands is one important way to be involved, but we invite you to do even more by volunteering to help run your local Little League program.

Without a doubt, Little League is a family affair that gives parents and children a common ground for spending time together. Whether you are coaching the players, selling popcorn to the fans, or bringing soda for the team after the game, your family will enjoy being a part of Little League in your community. Most of all, you will appreciate the benefits of your enthusiasm and involvement in his or her activities.

When winning is kept in perspective, there is room for fun in the pursuit of victory or more accurately, the pursuit of victory is fun. With your leadership Little League can help your child learn to accept responsibilities, accept others and most of all, accept her - or himself.

## **Keeping Winning in Perspective**

Are you able to keep winning in perspective? You might answer with a confident yes, but will you be able to do so when it is your child who is winning or losing, when your child is treated a bit roughly by someone on the other team, or when the umpire makes a judgment against your child? Parents are sometimes unprepared for the powerful emotions they experience when watching their sons and daughters compete.

One reason that parents' emotions run to high is that they want their children to do well; it reflects on them. They also may believe that their children's failures are their own. Parents need to realize that dreams of glory they have for their youngsters are not completely unselfish, but they are completely human. Parents who are aware of their own pride, who are even capable of being amused by their imperfections, can keep themselves well under control.

## **Being a Model of Good Sportsmanship**

Flying off the handle at games or straining relations with the coach or other parents creates a difficult situation for your child. Just as you don't want your daughter or son to embarrass you, don't embarrass your Little Leaguer.

It's no secret that kids imitate their parents. In addition, they absorb the attitudes they think lie behind their parents' actions. As you go through the Little League season with your child, be a positive role model. How can you expect your child to develop a healthy perspective about competing and winning if you display an unhealthy one? Remember Little League is supposed to be a fun experience for your child, and one in which he or she will learn some sport skills. Winning will take care of itself.

Some parents seem to abandon good principles of child rearing when their child is participating in sports. However, just as your child's home, school, and religious environment affect the type of person he or she will be, so does the sport environment especially when your child is young. Remember this:

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with praise, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they have to have a goal.

If children live with honesty, they learn what trust is.

*Note: From "Great Projects Report," Baltimore Bulletin of Education, 1965-1966, 42 (3).*

### **Parents' Checklist for Success**

Here is a list of questions you should consider when your child begins playing Little League. If you can honestly answer yes to each one, you will find little trouble ahead.

- ***Can you share your son or daughter?***

This means trusting the coach to guide your child's Little League experiences. It means accepting the coach's authority and the fact that he or she may gain some of your child's admiration that once was directed toward you.

- ***Can you admit your shortcomings?***

Sometimes we slip up as parents, our emotions causing us to speak before we think. We judge our child too hastily, perhaps only to learn later the child's actions were justified. It takes character for parents to admit they made a mistake and to discuss it with their child.

- ***Can you accept your child's disappointments?***

Sometimes being a parent means being a target for a child's anger and frustration. Accepting your child's disappointment also means watching your child play poorly during a game when all of his or her friends succeed, or not being embarrassed into anger when your 10-year-old breaks into tears after a failure. Keeping your frustration in check will help you guide your son or daughter through disappointments.

- *Can you accept your child's triumphs?*

This sound much easier than it often is. Some parents, not realizing it, may become competitive with their daughter or son, especially if the youngster receives considerable recognition. When a child plays well in a game, parents may dwell on minor mistakes, describe how an older brother or sister did even better, or boast about how they played better many years ago.

- *Can you give your child some time?*

Some parents are very busy, even though they are interested in their child's participation and want to encourage it. Probably the best solution is never to promise more than you can deliver. Ask about your child's Little League experiences, and make every effort to watch at least some games during the season.

- *Can you let your child make his or her own decisions?*

Decisions making is an essential part of young person's development, and it is a real challenge to parents. It means offering suggestions and guidance but finally, within reasonable limits, letting the child go his or her own way. All parents have ambitions for their children, but parents must accept the fact that they cannot mold their children's lives. Little League offers parents a minor initiation into the major process of letting go.

## **Parents Responsibilities**

1. Let your child choose to play Little League and to quit if he or she does not enjoy baseball or softball. Encourage participation, but don't pressure.
2. Understand what your child wants from participating in Little League and provide a supportive atmosphere for achieving these goals.
3. Set limits on your child's participation in baseball or softball. You need to determine when she or he is physically and emotionally ready to play and to insure that the conditions for playing are safe.
4. Make certain your child's coach is qualified to guide your child through the Little League experience.
5. Keep winning in perspective by remembering Athletes First, Winning Second. Instill this perspective in your child.
6. Help your child set realistic goals about his or her own performance so success is guaranteed.
7. Help your child understand the experiences associated with competitive sports so she or he can learn the valuable lessons sports can teach.

8. Discipline your child when he or she misbehaves, breaks the rules, or is uncooperative or uncontrollable.
9. Turn your child over to the coach at practices and games, and avoid meddling or becoming a nuisance.

**Ladera Little League wishes you and your child a successful and enjoyable season!**

