



Shakopee Youth Baseball
Association Parents, Coaches,
and Players Handbook

Shakopee Youth Baseball Association

Parents, Coaches, and Players

Handbook

MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

Our mission is to assist athletes in developing advanced baseball skills and provide the opportunity to compete with other players of similar abilities. Our objectives are to provide an organized program for the youth of the community that will:

- Promote physical fitness, stamina, and agility
- Develop self-confidence
- Develop respect for others, teamwork, pride in team and community
- Teach the fundamentals of baseball
- Incorporate the spirit of good sportsmanship in victory and defeat
- Allow every player the opportunity to participate and develop
- Play in a safe and healthy environment
- Build character and set priorities in our lives
- Allow everyone to have fun and enjoy life

SHAKOPEE LEAGUE BASEBALL

SYBA offers several programs for Shakopee League baseball:

- **Mighty Mites** baseball is for kids who have completed the 2nd grade,
- **Little League** is for kids who have completed the 3rd grade,
- **Rookie League** baseball is for kids who have completed 4th grade,
- **Minor League** baseball is for kids who have completed 5th grade, and
- **Valley and Sr Valley League** baseball is for kids who have completed 6th-10th grade. Valley League teams will compete against other Valley League teams and other teams from surrounding communities.

All levels will practice/play two nights a week starting in early May and ending in July. Shakopee League baseball concludes the season with an in-house tournament.

To view the Scope and Sequence of each of these leagues please visit our website at www.shakopeeyouthbaseball.com.

SHAKOPEE LEAGUE BASEBALL PHILOSOPHY

Emphasis is on skill development and learning the game of baseball. All levels will stress that winning is not the primary goal.

TRAVELING LEAGUE BASEBALL

The program for **Traveling League** is determined by age as of May 1st or grade completed. The team (age level) for which a player is eligible is the same as the player's

age on that date. A player cannot “play up” (i.e. play on a team older than their age level) except for the following reasons: he/she is in the same school grade as the older age level and wants to play with others in the same grade, or to fill a vacancy due to lack of participants. The Board of Directors will review each situation where an individual wants to “play up” at the next age level. A player cannot “play down” for any reason. To view the scope and sequence of this league please visit our website at www.shakopeedyouthbaseball.com.

TRAVELING LEAGUE BASEBALL PHILOSOPHY

Winning is not the primary focus, however, more emphasis is placed on competing and striving to win. Winning at the constant expense of specific individuals will not be allowed.

THE BASEBALL SEASON

The summer program for **Mighty Mites** through **Traveling League** runs 9 to 12 weeks, beginning in early May and running through the end of July. Practices will begin early May. The summer program for the 16U to 18U program consists of American Legion, Senior Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle and VFW teams and will run from May through July (playoffs normally start the third week in July). Practices will begin after the high school season has ended.

Each **Traveling League** will participate in the Metro Baseball League. Leagues schedules consist of approximately 16 games. League games are played on week nights (the nights can vary from week to week). There will be an equal number of home and away games. The league provides umpires. Each team can participate in up to three (3) weekend tournaments. Each team will also participate in the league tournament, which may qualify them for the state tournament.

More information regarding Metro Baseball can be found at www.mbl.bz.

COACH SELECTIONS

All decisions concerning the selection and placement of coaches are the responsibility of the appropriate program coordinator and the SYBA. The selection of coaches is based on experience with kids and previous baseball experience. Written coaching evaluations will also be used in considering coaches who have coached in the SYBA in previous years.

COMMITMENT

Traveling baseball requires a significant time commitment from both players and parents, from April through July, and possibly early August. Every player’s presence is important and he/she is expected to attend all practices, league games, and the tournament games. Unexcused absences will result in a reduction in playing time.

Commitment from our parents is as important as that from our players. We are hosting one (1) state qualifier tournament this year. In order to be successful and for the kids to maximize their joy of playing traveling baseball, we expect your help in running this event. You will be expected to volunteer your time to the tournament as part of your commitment to traveling baseball.

PLAYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Players on a traveling team should take pride in their selves, their team, and in their community. They must follow the directions of the coaches, and must be willing to accept constructive criticism.

PLAYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Have pride and confidence in yourself, your teammates, and your coaches.
- Be attentive and work hard in practice and in games. Make your best efforts to perform the tasks as directed by the coaches.
- Be a competitor, perform up to your full ability, and contribute to team unity. Compliment teammates and let the coaches handle criticism.
- Show respect toward your coaches, teammates, and parents.
- Show respect toward opposing players, coaches, umpires, and spectators.
- Keep your (personal and team) equipment clean and in good repair.
- Maintain a responsible attitude toward your health.
- Be aware of, and adhere to, the SYBA policies on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Remember that baseball is a game and keep it is perspective with family, school and/or church activities, and responsibilities.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
- Remind your parents that you need to be at practices and games on time.
- Inform the coach whenever you will miss or be late for a practice or game.

PLAYERS' RIGHTS INCLUDE

- To participate at the level that matches your maturity and ability.
- To play as a child, not as an adult.
- To participate in a safe, healthy environment.
- To be treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect.
- To have fun in sports.
- To have an equal opportunity to develop your abilities and strive for success.
- To have good coaching; to be taught the fundamentals and strong character development.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

The coach is a teacher of baseball skills, a manager of the functions necessary to run a team, and is responsible for the social, psychological, and physical development of all

players in his/her care. He/she is accountable for the players, the parents, and the Shakopee Youth Baseball Board.

COACH'S RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE

- Obey and enforce all SYBA rules.
- Treat all players in an equitable and fair manner.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, self-control, and proper behavior.
- Ensure the good sportsmanship and the proper behavior of team players, assistant coaches, parents, and spectators.
- Attend the Coaches Clinic and Parent Information meetings.
- Attend the Metro Baseball League coaches meeting and scheduled meeting.
- Assure that all players receive playing time that is mandated by the SYBA.
- Teach the players to have fun and enjoy competition.
- Help the players develop a healthy, competitive attitude towards winning and losing.
- Assess individual player's strengths and weaknesses and work with them to improve their skills.
- Encourage and compliment players, use only constructive criticism.
- Attend a minimum of 90% of their team's games and practices.
- Care for the equipment that is issued to them. If any equipment is lost or damaged, coaches should report the problem to the appropriate coordinator.
- Conduct a pre-season meeting. At this meeting, the coach should set the tone and expectations for the season, distribute team schedules, roster, and team rules and collect any additional fees that may be due.
- Schedule field time for practices and make-up games with Judy Techam at the Community Center.
- Report any problems with the fields to the Field Coordinator.
- Attend the post-season meeting in October. At this meeting, they should review their season, return equipment, and provide suggestions for improving the program in future years.
- Adhere to the SYBA drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies.

COACH'S' RIGHTS INCLUDE

- To be treated with respect by players, parents, volunteers, umpires league, and baseball officials.
- To be made fully aware of the rules and policies under which they must function.
- To have access to necessary safety equipment and practice fields.
- To expect full cooperation from parent's when they are asked to assist.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Your child's participation in the SYBA baseball program will require significant contribution of your time and effort. Parents can contribute many things to support their child, team, and the program.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE

- Compliment and encourage your child, win or lose, whether he plays well or not.
- Let the coaches handle coaching and criticism. Coordinate your efforts to help your child's development with the recommendations of the coaches.
- Don't compare your child to other players. Be honest with yourself and your child about his abilities.
- Regard each player on the team as your own.
- Keep negative comments to yourself. Express concerns only to the coach and in a straightforward, fair, and objective manner.
- Teach your child to enjoy competition. Don't tell him that winning does not count, because it does, and your child knows it. Instead, help him develop a healthy competitive attitude towards winning and losing.
- Follow the "Parents Code of Conduct" included in this handbook.
- Ensure the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of your child and your guests.
- Get your child to, and pick them up from, practices and games on time.
- Inform the coach in advance whenever your child will miss or be late for a practice or game.
- Provide a copy of your child's birth certificate to the head coach at the first team practice.
- Volunteer your time and talents to make your team's tournaments a success.

PARENTS' RIGHTS INCLUDE

- Have your child treated fairly with respect.
- Have your child practice and play in a safe and healthy environment.
- Have your child coached by effective and qualified adult leadership.
- Have your child engage in practice and playing activities that increase his skills and enjoyment of the sport.
- To be fully informed by the coaches with respect to schedules, team philosophies, team rules, and your child's strengths and weaknesses.

SYBA PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

As a parent/guardian of a child involve in the Shakopee Youth Baseball Association.

I/We agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- I/We will respect the property and equipment used at any sports facility both home and away.
- I/We will encourage good sportsmanship through my/our actions, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game or practice.
- I/We will promote emotional and physical well-being of the athlete's head of any personal desire to win.

- I/We will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athlete to provide a positive experience for all.
- I/We demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free environment for my child, and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all SYBA events, home and away.
- I/We will remember the game is for the athletes and not for the parents.
- I/We will demand that our/my child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- I/We will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of our/my child of the safety of others.
- I/We will inform the coach, within a reasonable period of time, of any anticipated absence from a game or practice my child might incur due to sickness, injury, vacation, or any other reason.
- I/We also agree that if I/we fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I/we may be subject to disciplinary action. This action may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Verbal Warning
 - Written Warning
 - Parental Game Suspension
 - Parental Season Suspension
 - Parental Banishment

PLAYER REMOVAL

Once a team is selected, a coach cannot replace a team member solely because of lack of skills. A player may be released for the following specific reasons:

- Frequent, flagrant disregard of the players responsibilities.
- Continued play in such a manner as to endanger others and/or self.
- Displaying an uncaring attitude, this results in not applying oneself, thus hurting the team's
- competitive potential.
- Failure to work within a team environment (placing self-interest before the teams).
- Repeated un-sportsmanlike behavior.

Before requesting the removal of a player, the coach must discuss the situation with Metro Coordinator, and the player's parents and attempt to correct the situation. The discussion would include an objective description of the behavior and of the intended discipline. If this fails to correct the situation, the coach must notify the Metro Coordinator, who must approve any further action. The Coordinator must, in turn, notify the SYBA Board of the action taken within 48 hours of its occurrence. Written documentation must be given to the SYBA Board.

PLAYING TIME

Minimum playing time for the 10-13 year olds will be 3 defensive innings per game*. This includes all regular season, playoff, and tournament games. The starting lineup will

provide an opportunity for every player to have a place in the batting order. Minimum playing time for 14-15 years olds will be 2 innings defensively. If a player is in the lineup as a designated hitter (DH), he may not receive any defensive playing time for that game.

BEHAVIOR

The highest standards of sportsmanship will be expected from the players, parents, coaches, umpires, and spectators. Conduct that will not be tolerated includes verbal abuse, tantrum-like acts, profanity, physical aggression, on or off the field, and acts intended to cheat the spirit of the rules or to intimidate the umpires.

Umpires may use their discretion whether to issue a warning or to immediately eject the violator (coach, player, or spectator) from the game. The umpires and/or coaches are responsible for reporting all incidents to the SYBA Board. Subsequent violations may result in suspension from play and/or attendance. If a parent or player has a problem with the performance of an umpire he/she should direct his/her concerns to the team's coach.

The coach represents the SYBA program and should be the only person communicating with the umpires. One of the objectives of the program is to teach the respect of officials and the proper procedure for dealing with any problems with the umpires. Unless playing in the field, at bat, on base, on deck, or coaching, all players shall remain on the bench. It is mandatory that each batter, or on deck player, runner player in a coach's box, or non-adult bat/ball shagger on the field, wears a batting helmet that meets NOCSAE standards.

Players will treat their coaches, parents, teammates, the umpires and the opposition with respect. After each game, the participants will line up and shake hands.

Spectators are restricted to the areas that are "out of play" and away from the benches.

COACH REMOVAL

Removal of a team coach is a very serious situation and must be dealt with in a fair and open manner. Coaches may be removed for the following reasons:

- Failure to perform duties
- Conduct detrimental to the player, the team, the organization, and/or the parents
- Abusive behavior, whether physical, or psychological, towards players, parents, opposing players, coaches, spectators, umpires, volunteers, or league officials.

In order to remove a coach, a written complaint must be submitted to the Program Coordinator. If there is sufficient justification, a hearing before the SYBA Board will be held. The vote of a simple majority will be sufficient to dismiss a coach. Written documentation must be given to the SYBA Board of Directors.

GENERAL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Each player's presence is important and expected. Unless otherwise exempted by the coach, all players are expected to attend all practices, league games, and tournament games. Excused absences will be granted from school and religious events; however, it is expected that the coach will be notified in advance of such events. Unexcused absences will result in a reduction of playing time.

SUSPENSIONS

The SYBA Board reserves the right to suspend any coach, player, or parent who violates the SYBA Code of Ethics provided by the SYBA Board of Directors. Suspensions will be documented and kept on file with the SYBA Board.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

The SYBA mandates that all players/coaches, parents participating in a SYBA youth sport activity (practice, scrimmage, game) should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player/coach, while participating in a SYBA youth activity, to use a beverage containing alcohol, or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any controlled substance. Once a violation has been brought the Board's attention and a decision has been made, the player/coach will be informed of his/her ineligibility by written letter from the program coordinator.

First Violation – Upon notification by the Board, the player/coach shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive games or two weeks of a sport season in which the player/coach is participating, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted.

Second Violation – The player/coach shall lose eligibility in SYBA for that sport season. No exception is permitted.

Accumulative Penalties – Penalties shall be accumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player's/coach's participation in any and all SYBA activities.

TOBACCO POLICY

SYBA does not condone the use of tobacco by players under legal tobacco age. It shall be a violation of this policy for player participating in SYBA to use tobacco. Once a violation has been brought to the Board's attention, the player will be informed of his ineligibility. Ineligibilities will be the same as for the drug and alcohol policy.

SYBA mandates that coach's refrain from the use of tobacco in any form during a youth sport activity (practice, scrimmage, game). If a parent must use tobacco during a baseball activity, they must remove themselves at least 100 feet from the playing area, which includes the bench area.

EQUIPMENT ABUSE

Under no circumstance will the abuse of equipment be tolerated. Umpires and coaches are instructed that each instance of equipment abuse will result in that player sitting on the bench for remainder of the game. At the umpires or coach's discretion, one warning may be given. If the abuse of equipment results in any damage to the equipment, that player and/or his parents will be held responsible for reimbursing the cost of replacement. Players may be suspended from participation in future SYBA activities until reimbursement is made.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, the coach will determine if there is practice. At games, the home team's coach is responsible for determining whether the game will be started. Once play begins, the umpire is responsible for determining whether play should be halted. In all cases, unless you receive a call from your team's coach, you should appear at the site of the game or practice scheduled. Weather conditions can vary widely even short distances, so our policy is to make the decision at the field site. Games and practices will be suspended when lightning is visible and deemed a threat to continue. If you (parent/guardian) are not able to be present during an event, be sure that your child knows another parent who will be present with whom he can take shelter if bad weather suddenly appears.

BLOOD POLICY

A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment cannot be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual will have to leave the game. (The length of time considered to be reasonable shall be in the umpire's judgment). Once bleeding has been stopped, the player or coach may reenter the game. If there is a substantial amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the individual may participate.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

When a player or parent has a question regarding the general policies or procedures of Metro Baseball, they should address their question to the coach of their team. Choose a time and place that is convenient for both parties involved (not prior ordering a game or practice) and address your questions in an appropriate manner (keep the conversation polite, private, and out of earshot of other players or parents. If a question is not answered

satisfactorily and a player/parent feels the need to pursue the matter further, they may contact the appropriate Age Group Coordinator, but should do so only after exhausting all efforts with the coach and his/her assistants. When approaching the Coordinator, the player/parent should follow the same guidelines as those stated above.

When a player or parent has a major concern about the handling of the team or an individual player, they should:

- Adhere to the *24-Hour Rule*, which requires a player/parent to wait at least 24 hours before approaching a coach in the matter.
- Choose a time and place that is convenient to all parties involved and approach the situation in an appropriate manner.
- If the problem persists or cannot be resolved between the player/parent and the coach within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Coordinator. At this time, the Coordinator will act as a mediator between the player/parent and the coach. All parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution.
- If the problem cannot be resolved at that level within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Traveling Baseball Coordinator. Again, all parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution. The Director shall communicate with the SYBA Board of Directors with any mediation and outcome of that mediation.
- If mediation is still unable to resolve the issues, and all of the above steps have been followed, the Program Director shall inform both parties in writing within 5 days that the complaint has been forwarded to the Board of Directors. The decisions made by the Board will be final.
- If the Program Director is the subject of the grievance, a written complaint should be submitted directly to the Board of Directors. (See list of Board of Directors provided in front of this Handbook).

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- I/We will encourage good sportsmanship through my/our action, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game or practice.
- I/We will promote emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I/We will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all.

- I/We will demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free environment for my child, and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all SYBA events, both home and away.
- I/We will treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- I/We will treat all players, coaches, and officials with dignity and respect in language, attitude, behavior, and mannerisms.
- I/We will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of others.
- I/We will inform the coach within a reasonable period of time, of any anticipated absence from a game or practice due to sickness, injury, vacation, or any other reason.

Parent/Guardian/Coach Signature

Player Signature