

Youth baseball practice planning

Practice time and skill accomplishment may be one of the most critical coaching tasks to effectively implement in an attempt to promote player development, parent satisfaction, and fun. The struggles a coach faces when forming a practice plan is often times the result of a few common problem areas.

Problem: Failure to communicate practice expectations with players and parents.

Fix: *Communicate verbal and written agreement. Agreement may contain coaches attendance, attention, hustle, conduct, equipment use, = incorporate rules that increase safety, attention, energy, and motivation to learn.*

Problem: Not prioritizing player skill development to coincide with game day expectations. **A player or team cannot be expected to understand or complete a skill in which they have not prepared for or may not have yet attained the skills required to successfully complete.

Fix: *Prioritize your first 10 practices. Start with player skills that are essential in the game of baseball for both success and safety. **Fundamentals= glove work, throwing mechanics, hitting mechanics. When players have successfully demonstrated use of glove work and throwing, progress to in-game situational use of skills. Continue to progress from routine defensive plays to more complex situations as the players ability dictates. If properly structured a coach should have accomplished a sufficient amount of player skill development and game day situations to begin the season.*

Problem: When the season begins, wins and losses, start to shape practice plans.

***Everyone just wants to play catch and take batting practice.

Fix: *Keep your focus on the fundamentals!! Increase expectations (throwing acc, glove use, hustle, swing mech).*

Problem: TOO MANY COOKS!! Games have come and gone, kids have struck-out, made errors, thrown the ball around. Practices and pre-game warm-ups become a stew of parenting and multi coaching opinions on **HOW TO**. The players are now getting overwhelmed with differing opinions.

Fix: **EXPECTATIONS**, *Asst coaches and parental assistance can be of great help if your philosophies and expectations are communicated. State what your philosophies are in regards to baseball skills and oversee that others are not giving the players conflicting info.*