

ASAP news



Continuing the Little League tradition of making it "safer for the kids."

SAFETY A TOP PRIORITY

Little League continues commitment to safety efforts in 2011, requirements remain the same.

The 2011 season is almost here, and the new 2011 Safety Officer Manual has been completed and is available online at www.littleleague.org. The hardcopy forms are being printed now; the packet will be to you soon. The best news is no additional requirements are needed for your safety plan to qualify in 2011.

Little League is promoting safety for the leagues hosting the biggest events. New in 2010, every league must have an approved safety plan to host an All Star tournament above the District level.

Remember, you need to submit a safety plan annually, both to keep your league's children as safe as possible and to meet the requirements for a qualified safety plan. Why not get started right now, when the pressure of the new season isn't as great?

The 13 basic requirements can be found on the 2011 Qualified Registrations Form in your Safety Officer Manual packet or at Little League's website. For a quick-start reference to update your safety plan, see page 4.

Turn In Plans Starting January 1

Your safety plan needs to be in effect for the season in play, so Little League will start accepting the new year's plans starting January 1, 2011. You don't need to have held your training clinics prior to submitting your plan; you can submit the plan with the dates for the first aid and fundamentals clinics provided, as well as who is required to attend.

The Facility Survey, part of your safety plan's 13 minimum requirements, must be updated and submitted annually. You can go online to facilitysurvey.musco.com once the site re-opens in January. Drawings for a \$50 jacket will be held weekly of leagues completing their survey online and a final \$500 drawing will be held after the May 1 deadline from all leagues completing their survey at the website this spring.

Enter to Win

Every league submitting a qualified safety plan will receive a Disney®-designed ASAP pin. In 2011, the full team of Disney characters is displayed on the pin, making it a true collectors piece.

All leagues with a qualified safety plan that take Little League Insurance through Chartis Insurance will also receive a league cash award based on the number of teams covered by their

safety plan. On average, the league award is between \$150-\$250.

The two league safety plans judged to be the best in each region will also receive a \$500 award. The top safety plan from these two in each region will earn a trip for the president and safety officer to the 2011 Little League Baseball World Series.

The league judged to have the best safety plan in the US wins a Musco Light-Structure Green™ lighting system equipment for a 200-foot field.



So get started on your safety plan early, to make the

improvements needed for your league to have an even more safe environment for players, volunteers and spectators in 2011. And that's the true prize: creating a league that's "safer for the kids!"

Volunteer Application Simplified

Again this year, Little League has provided an updated Volunteer Application Form for your league to use. To simplify the process, there is just one form. The new form must be filled out and signed by all volunteers for the required background checks, whether run through the LexisNexis system or not.

This new form will help your league to remove the same name, different person issue by requiring the Social Security number of volunteers for their background check. While 10 states still have name-only references, the other 40 states' records will only return searches for the correct name and Social Security number combination. This will also help filter out duplicates and not show records that are to be expunged from official records.

To comply with federal law, Social Security numbers will now also be required for all injury claims for those leagues taking the national insurance program with Little League.

A 12-year old boy pitches batting practice to his entire travel team in the afternoon. That evening, he pitches in a scrimmage to open his final Little League season. His first middle school ball practice begins the following week. By morning he complains of pain in his throwing-arm shoulder. An orthopedic surgeon confirms a break in his shoulder growth plate, and prescribes rehabilitation that prohibits even lifting a spoon. The boy tires quickly of his arm sling, discontinuing use after three days instead of the prescribed four weeks. All three coaching staffs, one of which includes his father, allow the boy to resume infield play on all teams - simultaneously - for the remainder of the season despite visible discomfort and a significant loss of throwing velocity and control.



**STOP
SPORTS
INJURIES**

Epidemic Rise in Youth Injuries Leads To “STOP” Campaign

What would you do as a parent? As a coach? As a Safety Director? The situation described at left isn't fiction, rather a real-life dilemma observed in a Midwestern Little League. It illustrates a growing problem that is occurring across the country. Sports injuries just like this are on the rise. There's a verifiable trend that youth sports injuries are increasing and are fueled by an increase in overuse, trauma and denial. Most alarming to industry experts, however, is the lack of attention paid to proper injury prevention and timely treatment. As a coach, parent and/or volunteer, you are in a unique position to help stem the growing tide of sports-related injuries by making safe and healthy play a higher priority for kids.

According to Dr. James Andrews, president of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) and STOP Sports Injuries Co-Campaign Chair, it's easy to think that kids can't get hurt because they're young and resilient, but youth who overextend their bodies may strike out of sports far too early. That's why Andrews and many other respected leaders in healthcare, wellness, safety and fitness, as well as professional athletes, recently teamed up to launch the STOP Sports Injuries campaign.

“The increasing number of youth sports injuries affects everyone involved in a young athlete's life. We created the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to raise awareness about the problem and provide accurate information to keep the lines of communication open and ensure that young athletes stay healthy, stay on the field and stay out of the operating room,” continued Andrews who has performed over 45,000 elbow, shoulder and knee surgeries on the most famous of athletes like Michael Jordan, Drew Brees, Brett Favre, Tom Brady and Sam Bradford.

The STOP Sports Injuries campaign is a public outreach initiative designed to inform and teach all the constituencies involved in a young athlete's participation to learn proper prevention techniques, identify overuse activities and resulting injuries, and encourage more advocacy for sports safety to keep kids in the game for life.

The campaign features a number of mediums that deliver information and tools including: public service announcements, Facebook and a comprehensive website containing sport specific resources, parenting and coaching resources, video and podcasts and a customized Pledge for athletes, parents, coaches, and healthcare providers to support.

Injuries Spike In Youth Sports

The primary driver for the STOP campaign is the sheer number of injuries. Orthopaedic surgeons are currently seeing two trends: a rapid rise in the number of youth sports injuries and a drop in the age of young athletes with overuse injuries. According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, every year more than 3.5 million children age 14 and younger are treated for sports injuries.

Dr. Andrews points out that high school and college injuries can be traced back to a player's youth days. “Minor injuries overlooked or ignored turn into major injuries that may not show up back-to-back or not until five to seven years later.

The American College of Sports Medicine reports that more than half of all injuries in children are preventable. According to Dr. Matthew Matava, an

associate professor of orthopedic surgery at Washington University Orthopedics in St. Louis, the high rate of youth sports injuries is generally propelled by trauma or repetitive use caused by improper training and/or technique, equipment failure and anatomic or biomechanical issues of the athlete. However, he says there are more complex factors at work.

Added Pressure To Specialize and Professionalize

“One of the primary causes of the burgeoning number of youth sports injuries is the year-round participation in a single sport through the so-called ‘select teams’. As a result, these kids are told by adult coaches and parents that if they have any desire to play at “the next level” they will have to play on these teams. Kids often will play on two or three teams at the same time resulting in overuse injuries from too much activity and too little rest,” Matava said.

Dr. Andrews adds that a dramatic undercurrent of professionalization and financial gain is also occurring. “Some have pitching coaches and sports psychologists. It’s taking the play out of baseball and putting an increased work load and mental pressure on these kids to make pro athletes out of them. Some parents are upside down with thinking that a child’s whole future is determined at this age group when they need to be thinking about their long-term future,” said Andrews.

Fortunately, multiple educational resources are centralized to assist concerned individuals, including athletes themselves, in addressing injury concerns. For more information, visit www.STOPSportsInjuries.org. The Facebook page is Stop Sports Injuries, or contact American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine Director of Communications Lisa Weisenberger at 847-655-8647 or at lisa@aossm.org.

HELPING KIDS

Coaches should be watching for warning signs that a youth athlete may be having injury issues. “You’re looking for a drop in velocity, a drop in their accuracy and a drop in their overall performance,” said Dr. James Andrews, president of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine and STOP Sports Injuries Co-Campaign Chair. Health and medical experts also agree it’s important for young athletes to help identify problems as a way of getting committed to injury prevention early. For instance, kids need to understand that muscle soreness is normal after throwing but it’s NEVER acceptable to experience joint pain in the elbow or shoulder. Some tips for what kids should do include:

- Tell a parent or coach if you have any pain, headaches, dizziness, numbness, unusual weakness or severe joint or muscle stiffness.
- Warm up properly by stretching, running and easy, gradual throwing.
- Rotate playing other positions besides pitcher.
- Adhere to Little League pitch count guidelines.
- Avoid pitching on multiple teams with overlapping seasons.
- Ask for instruction if you’re not sure how to perform a skill.
- Never pitch with elbow or shoulder pain. If pain persists, tell parents and coaches.
- Don’t play year-round.
- Never use a radar gun.
- Develop skills that are age appropriate.
- Emphasize control, accuracy and good mechanics.
- Master the fastball and the change-up before considering breaking pitches.

HANDLING PARENTS

It’s an unfortunate reality of sports that some parents, and especially those who coach, may often downplay injuries at the youth level in order to “toughen up” players. Parents may also deny the severity of their child’s injury to help them avoid falling behind or losing a starting spot. “Coaches should remind parents that playing through an injury is not going to help the player or the team. A few days of rest now will likely prevent several weeks or months of rehabilitation later if an injury does develop due to too much play,” said Dr. Matthew Matava, an associate professor of orthopedic surgery at Washington University Orthopedics in St. Louis. Added Dr. James Andrews, “Parents need to question their kids and not depend on somebody else to tell them. If a child is having pain, it needs to be taken seriously.” Here are some additional tips for dealing with parents:

- Reinforce that kids should be playing for the fun of the game, to make friends and to develop the concept of teamwork.
- Talk with a parent privately if they are chastising a child for their injury.
- Ask parents to increase candid discussion with their children about aches and pains from repetitive play or trauma.
- Always err on the cautious side.
- If a child’s pain or restricted performance persists, encourage a parent to consult a youth sports medicine expert.
- Encourage open communication lines to learn how frequently a child is pitching in other leagues.
- Consider asking your league to adopt a physician approval system if an injury persists and a parent is allowing an overuse situation to develop.

Are You Ready for

2011

Make updates and resubmit your safety plan now; set dates for training clinics to qualify.

The new season is starting in some areas of the country, and planning is going on everywhere. The following will help you to get up and going as quickly as possible with an updated safety plan for your league. Remember, even if you had a qualified safety plan last year, you need to update it annually and re-submit it.

To make your safety plan and league compliant in 2011, you must update the following areas, and re-submit your entire safety plan.

1. Name Your Safety Officer

If you are new as safety officer, make sure your league president has provided your information to Little League International through the Officer Change Notice form. This will make sure you receive all the updates and important information to help your league maintain its safety focus.

2. Post Key Contacts

The people in your league who are emergency contacts may change. Make sure to list the correct people and their phone numbers to contact them if an accident happens during a Little League event. And then post the list in the concession stand, or other central place(s) around your facility, as well as include in the safety manual handed out to your volunteers.

3. Use 2011 Volunteer Form

The Little League Volunteer Application Form has been updated for 2011. Make sure you show in your

plan that you will use the new form when checking volunteers' backgrounds. State in your plan how you check volunteers. LexisNexis is the preferred method, and all regional finalists must use LexisNexis to be considered for the first or second place awards.

4. Update Clinic Dates

Each year, leagues must provide first aid training and fundamental skills clinics to their volunteers. You can send in your safety plan prior to holding these clinics by simply putting the date when the clinic will be held and who needs to attend it. The requirement for this point states leagues must have at least one representative from each team attend the clinics, as well as each volunteer attend at least once every three years. Just have a page that explains when the clinics will be held, who will teach what, and who is required to attend.

5. Complete the 2011 Facility Survey

The easiest way to complete the Little League National Facility Survey for your league is to go online to <http://facilitysurvey.musco.com> and update your information from last year. Whether you submitted a paper form or went online last year, your league's information has been entered electronically to make it easier for you to keep track of your league's facility needs.

The site will open at the first of the year, and your league ID and password will be the same as last year unless your league has changed the password. This information will be emailed to league presidents and safety officers when the site re-opens for 2011, so make sure your contact information is correct at Little League International.

Complete Forms and Submit

And that's it! Just put these updates with your safety plan from 2010, which should contain the rest of the points required already if it was approved last year. Then resubmit as soon as possible to allow the Little League staff to process the thousands of plans submitted annually.

Send to:

Little League International
539 US Hwy. 15
South Williamsport, PA 17702

Of course you can improve on your plan to increase the safety of your players, participants and spectators, the main goal of the ASAP program. In addition, you would have a better chance to win one of the prizes offered each year for the best safety plans, leading up to the grand prize for the national winner of a Musco Light-Structure Green™ lighting system for a 200-foot Little League field.

After a couple of weeks, go to www.littleleague.org and look at the "League Officers" drop-down tab, for the "Check Safety Plan Status" bar. After the jump, enter your state two-digit abbreviation and two-digit District number, and the page will tell you when your plan was received, if it is approved, still being processed, or needs further information to be approved.

Then check back as needed until your plan is approved, or contact the Risk Management Department at Little League International (570-326-1921) to provide further information to get your plan approved. *Good luck in your new season!*

Use LexisNexis™ to Check Volunteers

Use the most cost-effective and still comprehensive criminal background check to meet Little League volunteer screening mandate.

For the past several years, Little League has been working with LexisNexis to provide the best possible resource to leagues for their required volunteer screenings. And this year, the process is improved.

In 2011, Little League International will again provide each chartered local league and District with 125 FREE background checks from LexisNexis. And now through the Little League Data Center, leagues and Districts can see how many checks have been run. So if you didn't use all 125 in 2010, you can still use those by Dec. 31 on board members and returning volunteers. And use the 125 checks for 2011 on new coaches and volunteers later this spring!

Instantly search over 200 million criminal records from all 50 states, including the required sex offender registries check required to meet Little League's Child Protection Program. And do it at little or no cost, with an easy-to-use website. That's the advantage of LexisNexis background checks. You can get started in four simple steps.

Here's How:

1. Complete the registration form online at their website (www.littleleague.lexisnexis.com) or call 888-497-0011. Before you call, make sure you have your league ID, and how many years your league has been in existence. If you don't have this information, call Little League for help (570-326-1921).

2. Receive your User Name and Password. These will come to you via email, and then you can begin using the LexisNexis website. For an online tutorial, go to the home page listed above. This should be forwarded to your league within 3-5 business days after registering for your account.

3. Order background checks on your volunteers. As noted in Regulation I (c) 8 & 9, each league must require that anyone "who provide(s) regular service to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with players or teams" annually submit a fully completed official Little League Volunteer Application for the current year. Conduct at a minimum an annual, national search of all states' sex offender registries.

Make sure you have the **signed** Volunteer Application form before submitting a person's information for a background check. Requesting a background check without a person's permission is against the law. Remind volunteers they will receive a letter when a hit on their name occurs; the league will investigate to see if the criminal named is their volunteer, but it is not an accusation against the person named.

4. Review your reports. This is the easy, but most critical part of the process. Review any positive reports your search returns, and determine if the person in the criminal record is your league's applicant. In many cases it may not be, as same-name hits can still occur. Also, the entire form must be completed, and not providing information, such as on past crimes, or putting in false information is also grounds for not approving an applicant. This step should be completed before an applicant is ever approved, and steps on the field for practice or meets with his or her team.

If a person has a criminal record against a child, that person is not eligible to be a volunteer in Little League. If a person has any other crime, it is the responsibility of the board of directors of the local league to decide if the crime should prohibit the person from volunteering for the league. This decision should not be made lightly, as the board is ultimately responsible for a volunteer's actions.

The information discovered by the background check should not be shared outside of the group designated by the board to review these checks for confidentiality reasons, and the applicant should just be told his or her assistance is not needed; no reason given. The board does not need to know who has a past conviction to determine if that offense warrants removal from the list of potential volunteers, and it will reduce the chance of "innocent" remarks becoming inflammatory to a denied applicant.

The 125 free checks should allow an average-sized league or District to perform the needed checks for the volunteers of 20 teams, the board of directors, and umpires, concession workers or field maintenance staff. If additional checks are needed, the league can purchase those for \$1 each.

So for the welfare and safety of your entire league, give LexisNexis a chance to prove the benefit of a nationwide check of all states' sex offender registries **and** millions of criminal records as well. It's as easy as: 1-2-3-4.

GIS Field Locators – Helping Emergency Services

Is your league taking advantage of the latest technologies to improve emergency response time?

In an emergency, do your volunteers know where to send first responders?

That may seem easy, but many leagues have multiple fields for play, or different fields for practice as opposed to games. With such a variety of sites, it can be easy for responders to get confusing or contradictory instructions in the event of an emergency. And that's when minutes count.

GIS: A New Resource

To provide the best possible information, Pennsylvania's District 16 registered their fields in a GIS system with the help of local Wilkes University and Luzerne County 911. A GIS – or geographical information system – gathers, stores and displays large amounts of attributes about a designated location.

Resources online are a sure way to find an organization near your league that can aid in setting up your fields with a geographical information system of their own. For local Little Leagues, having GIS services can help you provide invaluable directions to ambulance or fire truck drivers, if the unfortunate need ever arises.

Data can be gathered through simple inspection of the area or photographs taken by aerial surveillance or even satellites. That information, like elevation, landmarks, roads, and more, is then rendered into a format to provide easy access to the facts for emergency services.

Give Simple, Clear Directions

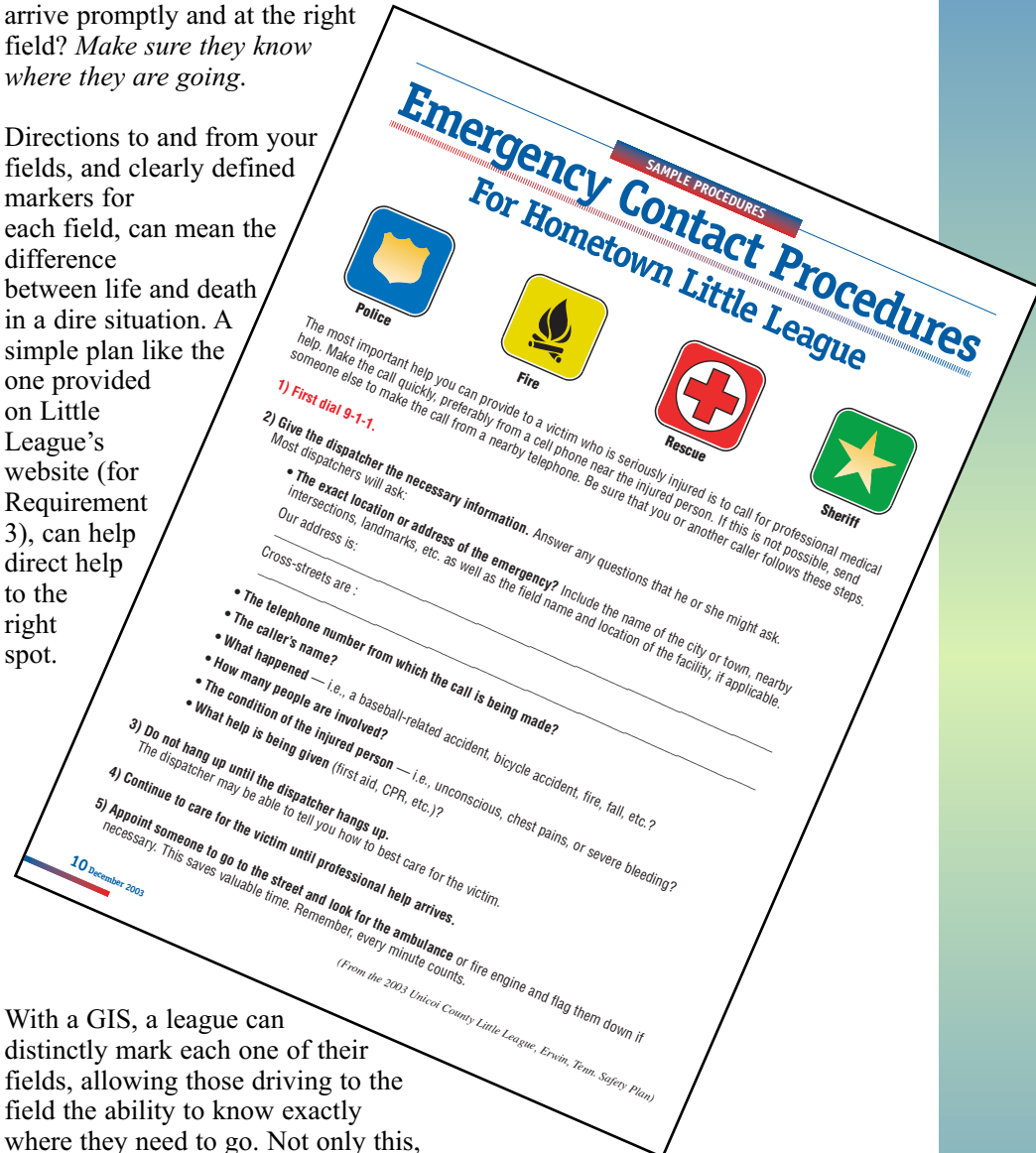
What is the best way to make sure, in the hopefully rare event of an accident, that emergency service personnel

arrive promptly and at the right field? *Make sure they know where they are going.*

Directions to and from your fields, and clearly defined markers for each field, can mean the difference between life and death in a dire situation. A simple plan like the one provided on Little League's website (for Requirement 3), can help direct help to the right spot.

With a GIS, a league can distinctly mark each one of their fields, allowing those driving to the field the ability to know exactly where they need to go. Not only this, but such a system also allows for a detailed road map, so the fast-action response teams can also know *how* to reach their destination as well.

To make it even easier, have each field's GIS designation included in your safety plan's emergency contact procedures. Without a GIS, a regular map of all your league's fields and roadways nearby included with the contact procedures is still a huge benefit.



Clear the Way

Finally, another great way to help emergency personnel is to give them easy access to the victim, by moving cars out of the way, and making sure there is no large crowd around the victim to distract and act as obstacles to the medics.

Simple common sense with relatively new technologies like these are great ways to help in the goal of "making it safer for the kids."

Common Sense Suggestions from the Field

Selected participants within the league will be identified as a coach, manager, team parent, etc. and photographed by the league. The participant while on the field shall carry a photo ID. **No participant will be allowed to be around children without proper ID.**

Several Leagues

If your team has a female player, you must have an adult female present at all team activities to administer first aid to the female player.

Quad Cities LL, California

When transporting children other than your own, our policy is that two adults should be present. This is for the safety of all involved.

Painesville National/American LL, Ohio

The 'Code Adam' system has been adapted and put in place in Warren County; if Code Adam is alerted all play will cease and emergency procedures will be followed; call will be cancelled if child is found within 10 minutes, if not 9-1-1 will be called.

Warren Township LL, Indiana

We provide a booklet on Child Abuse, Handling Angry Parents - includes the "Parent Sportsmanship Checklist" and "10 Things Kids Say They Don't Want Their Parents to Do."

District 43, California

All managers, coaches and umpires must be fingerprinted and processed through the state Department of Justice.

Tujunga LL, California

Uniforms shall not have names (first or last) inscribed on them.

Aliso Viejo, California

Should equal to or greater than three injuries occur specific to one team, the Safety Committee shall meet to review and determine if any action is needed.

Blacksburg LL, South Carolina

We require a medical release to play following a player's injury before he's allowed to return to ensure the player has been evaluated and fully recovered from his injury.

CALN Township, Pennsylvania

We use an automated injury database to track our injuries. Injury reporting can be done electronically through this database.

Fairfax American/Dominion/National LL, Virginia

We encourage the managers or coaches to talk to the rest of the team when an injury occurs. Often players are upset and worried when another player is injured. They need to feel safe and understand why the incident occurred.

Missouri Valley East LL, Missouri

Remember, in the absence of spinal injury: When the face is red, raise the head. When the face is pale, raise the tail.

Annandale North Springfield LL, Virginia

Children should not be encouraged to play through pain. Pain is a warning sign of injury. Ignoring it can lead to greater injury.

Hopatcong Little League, New Jersey

Players who are dejected, ill or injured should remain under supervision until released to the parent or guardian.

Chambersburg Little League, Pennsylvania

Select those players whose lack of coordination or physical handicap might make them susceptible to injury and give them extra attention and training. Play these players at positions that minimize their risk of injury.

Costa Mesa American LL, California

A useful reminder for everyone handling injuries on the field is 911:

Never move a child who has suffered a head or neck injury

Ice injuries to minimize swelling

Never rush an injured player back into the game

Elevate injured areas

Only treat an injury if you are qualified to do so

Never hesitate or feel funny about asking for help

Examine injured area

Organize your thoughts, and then call emergency services

Never underestimate the severity of an injury

Explain to the injured person what is being done to help them

Woodland Hills Sunrise LL, California

All injuries must be reported by telephone to the Safety Officer on the date of injury. Injury/incident written report must be submitted to the Safety Officer within 48 hours.

Crystal Lake American LL, Illinois

For a non emergency injury: Have Manager or Coach sit with injured player until they can resume play.

Herscher Lions LL, Illinois

Continued next page.

Common Sense Suggestions from the Field, continued

When injury occurs make sure to stop all play to protect the player from further injury, as well as those not being closely monitored due to the focus on injured player.

Boling - New Gulf Youth LL, Texas

Try to obtain extra training for players whose physical handicaps or lack of coordination might make them susceptible to injury.

Sitka LL, Arkansas

Do not allow players who have had injuries which required medical attention to return to practice or play without a written release from a parent or physician.

Sequim LL, Washington

If a child is injured or ill, he or she cannot return to practice unless they have a note from their doctor. This medical release protects you if the child should become further ill.

Marple Township, Pennsylvania

Track all injuries and near misses in order to identify injury trends.

Several leagues and districts

Injuries that look like sprains in adults can be fractures in children. Children are more susceptible to fractures as their bones are still growing.

Oswego American & National, New York

Growth plates are weak spots in a child's body and can be the source of injury if the child is pushed beyond their athletic limits.

Oswego American & National, New York

Rest is by far the most powerful therapy in youth sports injuries. Nothing helps an injury heal faster than rest.

Middlesex, New Jersey

*Have a tip to share?
Call the ASAP Hotline
at 800-811-7443 today!*



All materials in the ASAP
E-mail: asap@musco.com
Fax: 641/672-1996

**24 Hour Hotline:
800/811-7443**

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