

WEST SPRINGFIELD LITTLE LEAGUE 2024 SAFETY PLAN



WEST SPRINGFIELD LITTLE LEAGUE

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INTRODUCTION: SAFETY IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY

Safety is stressed at all levels of play, practice, and even idle time at WSL. Safety is paramount in all we do, beginning with the annual inauguration of new board members and through the closing ceremonies. Safety is always reinforced to parents, beginning at registration where they are educated on the steps WSL takes to ensure the safety of our players, coaches, and families, through the end of the season, and at all points between. Safety is an unwavering part of the league culture and the driving force behind all decisions made throughout our league.

This document combines WSL philosophies, policies, and procedures as they relate to running a safe and healthy little league program. Members of the Board of Directors, specifically the Safety Committee, have invested numerous hours in developing this comprehensive Safety Plan, implementing the program in our league, and educating our members and players toward preventing mishaps. Stay Safe!

All league officials, including managers, coaches, and umpires can retrieve a copy of this plan from the WSL website. Printable versions of this document are available for download at www.westspringfieldlittleleague.org

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about our program please contact our Little League-registered Safety Officer, Matt Spitzer, via email at matt.spitzer@gmail.com.

CHAPTER ONE:

WSLL SAFETY PLAN AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE SAFETY OFFICER

AUTHORITY – LEAGUE SAFETY OFFICER

By unanimous action of the 1965 Little League International Congress and subsequent ratification of the Board of Directors, it was resolved that every chartered Little League shall appoint a Safety Officer.

WSLL's current Safety Officer is Matt Spitzer. He can be reached at (978) 302-5825 or matt.spitzer@gmail.com.

League Safety Officer's Authority

The League Safety Officer's authority is mainly advisory with as much force behind advice as the league president has delegated that officer. It must be remembered that managers, player agents, and umpires must carry out their own duties and responsibilities. Any differences of opinion on safety policy should be referred to the League President rather than argued. Further questions may be taken up with the District Safety Officer. The latter may refer such problems to Little League Headquarters.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility of a League Safety Officer includes:

1. Developing, implementing, and maintaining the league's safety program.
2. Ensuring first aid facilities are available and emergency arrangements have been made for emergency medical services
3. Inspecting the league's fields and facilities for unsafe conditions.
4. Providing advice regarding unsafe conditions.
5. Preparing annual safety training for managers and coaches.
6. Conducting background checks using Little League's background check provider.

7. Developing procedures and protocols to mitigate human elements that may be the cause of accidents.
8. Serving as a resource to families of injured players to assist with any insurance claims related to the injury.
9. Ensuring that safety-based rules and protocols are followed throughout the league by managers, coaches, volunteers, players, and spectators.

SAFETY PLAN STRUCTURE

The first duty of the Safety Officer is to prepare and maintain a safety program for the league. This WSLI Safety plan is available and distributed at the start of each season to WSLI families as requested. It has the essential objectives of assuring that:

1. Practice and playing field conditions are made as safe as possible.
2. Players' protective equipment and facilities are available and in good condition.
3. Arrangements have been made for first aid treatment and emergencies.
4. All managers, player agents, coaches and umpires have been instructed to include all suitable safety precautions as an integral part of their regular duties.
5. Other volunteers, such as grounds keepers and auxiliary members are carrying out their jobs safely.
6. A definite plan is in effect for traffic safety including player travel field.
7. Arrangements are made for the prompt investigation and reporting of accidents and near-misses with a definite follow up for the prevention of further accidents of a similar nature.
8. Procedures are in place for prompt and timely reporting of accidents requiring medical treatment to Little League Headquarters.

If this safety plan and program is to be effective, League Officials must not only agree that safety is essential to the operation of our Little League, but that they will do their part to make it succeed.

MANAGERS AND COACHES

Managers and coaches play an important role in maintaining safety for players, volunteers, and spectators.

Managers and coaches must complete a WSLL-sponsored safety and first-aid class once every year. The class's purpose is designed to provide safety training to enable coaches to recognize and react appropriately to common injuries and conditions encountered by youth baseball coaches. The Safety Officer will be responsible for developing and administering this training, furnishing evidence of training to those who successfully completed the class and maintain a roster of those attending.



Managers and coaches also play an important role in preventing injuries from occurring in the first place. As discussed *infra*, managers and coaches must follow WSLL guidance concerning field, equipment, and weather, and injury-preventative drills in and injury-preventative drills to ensure that players remain safe avoid preventative injuries.

Coaches must also attend a training program each year on baseball fundamentals, which can be satisfied through programs WSLL sponsors through third parties or through programs WSLL conducts prior to the season start each year. These programs emphasize proper techniques that reduce the risk of injury to players.

UMPIRES

In baseball, the umpire is the person charged with officiating, beginning and ending the game, enforcing game rules and grounds surrounding the field, making judgment calls on plays, and handling disciplinary actions that influence the game.

Judgment calls – An umpire's judgment call is final, unless the umpire making the call chooses to ask his partner(s) for help and then decides to reverse it after the discussion. Most of the rules allowing for umpire judgment are founded in safety and thus must be respected.

UMPIRE SAFETY GEAR

Umpires who perform this job are trained and are aware of the safety needs for using the proper safety equipment. However, parents from the stands may be asked to perform this job. When this day comes; you need to know where the equipment is located, what equipment is needed, and what equipment is on hand. WSL provides umpire equipment that's stored at each game location and shared from game to game. The equipment at Byron can be found in the central tool shed next to the concession stand. Equipment at Burke (Fenway) can be found in the tool shed behind concessions. Umpire gear should be available at each of the satellite elementary schools (West Springfield, Rolling Valley, and Keene Mill), and can be found in the locked equipment boxes behind each of the field backstops.

Rule 9.01 (excerpt) – The plate umpire, like the catcher, must wear a chest protector, facemask with 'preferably' a throat guard, and shin guards. Male umpires must wear a protective cup (wrap-around cup preferred). Umpires who have their own equipment often add steel toed shoes to the mix and shanks that cover laces. It seems to help.



CHAPTER TWO:

CHILD PROTECTION

Little leagues world-wide are required to conduct background checks on managers, coaches, each member of the board of directors (BOD), and all ‘volunteers and hired workers’ who provide service to the league and/or have consistent and repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams.

Advances in computer technology – allowing greater access to public records – makes it possible for background checks (at a minimum, to see if an individual is a registered sex offender in any given state) to be conducted in every U.S. state. Local little league programs are now required to annually conduct a background check of managers, coaches, board of director members and any other persons, volunteers or hired workers, who provide regular service to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. (Reg. I [b], Reg. I [c] 9.)

The purpose of background checks is, first and foremost, to protect children. These checks help preserve Little League as a hostile free environment from those who would seek to cause harm to children. **Be Responsible – Be Adult – Protect and Guard!**

On a local level, WSLI policy is consistent with this effort, where all such individuals are required to complete and submit to a background check on a yearly basis. The Safety Officer maintains a list of those volunteers who have been cleared by this check process. This effort is completed twice yearly, before the spring and fall seasons begin, which is when new volunteer sets typically turnover.

The current background check protocol mandates that all volunteer candidates engage the J.D. Palatine website to input their individual information. Any candidate who refuses to do so is disqualified from consideration for a volunteer assignment that season. The entered information is processed by the J.D. Palatine, and the results are made available to the Safety Officer of WSLI. Results are treated with the utmost confidence by the league. The information that is entered by any volunteer candidate is not seen or retained by the league – only the results are viewed. An analysis of the results is then conducted by the league Safety Officer. If an individual’s background check report warrants further investigation, the Safety Officer may consult with the league President for input.

Investigations are conducted in a timely manner and a decision to either retain or dismiss the candidate from volunteer status is made as quickly as possible.

WSLL'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

In accordance with the enactment of the federal law "Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act" ("Safesport") in 2018, WSLL maintains a Child Protection Policy that outlines volunteers' obligations to recognize and report suspected child abuse. The policy requires an annual training for all volunteers who will have contact with children throughout the season. WSLL's Child Protection Policy is attached to this safety plan as Appendix C.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Most children have been warned about the dangers of talking to strangers. But for many children, sexual molestation is committed by someone they know. In fact, 80 to 85 percent of all sexual abuse cases in the U.S. are committed by an individual familiar to the victim, according to statistics compiled by Big Brothers & Big Sisters of America.



The truth is, child sex offenders can come from every background, every occupation, every race, and every level of education. They may be married, and they may have children of their own.

It is dangerous to believe the only threat is the stranger in a long raincoat, lurking behind a tree. **Not True!**

In fact, the promotion of this myth may contribute to the problem. Sometimes, a child who is molested by a known and "trusted" person will feel so guilty about not reacting the 'correct way' that he or she never reports the problem.

Sadly, we have all seen too many reports in which teachers, police officers, clergy, youth sports volunteers, etc., trusted by all, have violated that trust and molested children in their care. Of course, this must never be tolerated in Little League or anywhere else.

WARNING SIGNS OF A SEDUCER

While it remains important to teach young children about the dangers of accepting items from strangers, or talking to them, we should all beware of the danger posed by the “seducer-type” child sex offender.

Each of the individual signs below means very little. Taken as a group, however, the signs **MAY** point to this type of child sex offender and should be applied to anyone who has repetitive access to, or contact with, children.

- Provides unwarranted gifts, trips, affection and attention to a specific child or small group of children
- Seeks access to children
- Gets along with children better than adults
- “Hangs around” children more than adults
- Has items at home or in vehicle specifically appealing to children, such as posters, music, videos, toys, and even alcohol or drugs
- Displays excessive interest in children (may include inviting children on camping trips or sleepovers)
- Single, over 25 years old (but could be married, sometimes as a “cover,” and could be any age)
- Photographs or videotapes children specifically
- Lives alone, or with parents
- Refers to children as objects (“angel,” “pure,” “innocent,” etc.)
- Manipulates children easily



Again, each of these items, by themselves, is relatively meaningless. Taken together, however, they may indicate a problem.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN YOUR CHILD

We’ve seen the signs that could point to a child sex offender, but what about the signs a child might display when he or she has been sexually abused or exploited? Some of these symptoms may be present in a child who has been or is being sexually abused. Such

symptoms may not be otherwise explainable: sudden mood swings, excessive crying, withdrawal, nightmares, bed-wetting, rebellious behavior, fear of particular people or places, infantile behavior, aggressive behavior, and physical signs such as pain, itch, bleeding, fluid or rawness in private areas.

Getting More Information

These items are meant solely as a general guide and should not be used as the only means for rooting out child sex offenders. Parents can access more information on child abuse through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (a non-profit organization founded by John Walsh, <http://www.missingkids.com/>) and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (part of a service of the Children's Bureau, within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD MALTREATMENT

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information advises this: If you suspect a child is being maltreated, or if you are a child who is being maltreated, call the Childhelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453; TDD [text telephone] 1-800-2-A-CHILD). This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Hotline can tell you where to file your report and can help you make the report.

Or, for a list of states' toll-free telephone numbers for reporting suspected child abuse, call the Clearinghouse at 1-800-FYI-3366 or visit the "Resource Listings" section at this site:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/>

TALK TO YOUR KIDS; LISTEN TO YOUR KIDS

It is important that you as a parent talk frankly to your children. If a child reports sexual abuse, statistics show he or she is probably telling the truth. Unfortunately, the sexually molested child often sees himself or herself as the one "at fault" for allowing abuse to happen. Your children MUST know that they can come to you with this information, and that you will support them, love them, and believe them.

If there is an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, the crime should be reported immediately.

Criminals who steal or intend to steal a childhood **MUST BE STOPPED.**



This advice was produced by Little League Baseball, Incorporated; P.O. Box 3485; Williamsport, PA 17701

TWO GOOD RULES TO FOLLOW FOR ALL LITTLE LEAGUES AND PARENTS

1. Generally, a person involved in a local Little League program should not put himself or herself in a one-on-one situation involving a child who is not their own. Of course, some isolated situations may arise where one-on-one situations could take place. However, a one-on-one situation should not be actively sought out by the adult and should not be an ongoing occurrence.
2. Generally, a person involved in a local Little League program should not provide unwarranted gifts, trips, attention and affection to individual children who are not their own. The key word is '**unwarranted**'.

CHAPTER THREE:

FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND CONCESSIONS

Just like this Safety Plan, change is never ending. The first baseball thrown under the name Springfield LL was in 1956. Since that day, our league has been building, changing and making improvements.

GAME FIELDS

Yankee Field - This field supports play at all levels of play, T-ball, A, AA, AAA, and Majors play with artificial lighting, electronic scoreboard and PA system.

Wrigley Field - The field was rebuilt from the bottom up to continue supporting all levels of play T-ball, A, AA, AAA, and Majors games with lighting, electronic scoreboard, and PA system. During the summer of 2012, Wrigley was the first of two fields available to support Intermediate 50/70 level baseball games.



Fenway Field – Fenway way built in 1999 and has grown into a world class LL diamond supporting A, AA and AAA games. In the fall of 2012, the infield at Fenway was graded to level and the field was recreated to little league standards as originally implemented, as well as, the second WSLI field made convertible for 50/70 level baseball games.

Ebbets Field – One of our busiest fields supporting A/AA/AAA games with only the basics.

Forbes Field & Phillips Field – These are primarily for T-Ball and A.

Note: As part of pre-game preparations, a member of the HOME TEAM coaching staff and/or the umpire shall walk each field for potential hazards and share those at home plate discussion before each game. If warranted, the hazard should be brought to the attention of the WSLI Safety Officer and Fields Manager.

ANNUAL FIELD INSPECTION AND SURVEY

WSLL's safety officer conducts an annual field inspection and survey in coordination with WSLL's fields manager. Any safety issues will be documented and reported to the field manager with recommended remediations.

WSLL's annual Little League Field Survey is filed with the league's annual safety plan submission to Little League's Data Center.

BASEBALL EQUIPMENT

THE EQUIPMENT MANAGER

WSLL's equipment manager is responsible for the management, procurement, and safety of the equipment provided by the league. The equipment manager is responsible for inspecting all league equipment prior to issuance at the beginning of the league season to ensure it meets the standards dictated by International Little League, is

BATS

Our equipment budget continues to be updated with team bats as warranted. In 2018, Little League bat regulations were amended. The changes included a maximum barrel size of 2 5/8" and an approved "USA Baseball" label to be present on each bat intended for use in regulation and tournament play. This mandate was issued to mitigate the increasing risk of batted baseballs rebounding back toward defensive players 'too quickly'.

Note: There's no requirement for parents to buy bats for any level of play at WSLL. The league provides each team with high quality bats meeting all safety requirements.



Starting in 2018, non-wooden bats used in Little League Baseball (Majors Division and younger) must have this logo in order to be used in competitive play. Without it, the bat is not legal and will be removed.

RULE 1.10 EXCERPT – BASEBALL BATS

The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).

Beginning with the 2018 season, non-wood and laminated bats used in the Little League (Majors) and below, Intermediate (50-70) Division, and Junior League divisions shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USABat – USA Baseball's Youth Bat Performance - Standard. All BPF/1.15 bats are prohibited. Additionally, the bat diameter shall not exceed 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches for these divisions of play. Bats meeting the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) standard may also be used in the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League divisions. Additional information is available at [Little League Bat Info](#).

TEE BALL:

Under the USABat standard, certified Tee Ball bats (26" and shorter) will feature the USA Baseball mark and text which reads ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEE BALLS. All Tee Ball bats must feature the USA Baseball mark and accompanying text. Tee Ball bats that were produced and/or purchased prior to the implementation of the new standard can be certified using an Approved Tee Ball Sticker via the USA Baseball Tee Ball Sticker Program (USABaseballShop.com) beginning September 1, 2017.

MINOR/MAJOR DIVISIONS:

Bats shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end.

NOTE: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

The bat shall be made of wood or of composite material tested and proven acceptable.

Batting donuts or weights placed on bats are not permissible (not allowed) at practice or games.

INTERMEDIATE (50-70)

Bats shall not be more than 34" inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ($15/16$) inches in diameter ($7/8$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

NOTE 2: Also, permitted for the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division are bats meeting the BBCOR performance standard, and so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

UNIFORMS - OUR LEAGUE

Our league provides uniform shirts, baseball pants, socks, and a baseball cap to each player with sequential numbers on the back. We also require players be properly dressed for baseball activities before and for all games and practices. Each article of covering serves a real purpose toward keeping players safe. Long baseball pants, socks and properly cheater shoes help to protect the lower body from scraps, cuts and falls while fielding or sliding into base. The cap is vital for helping keep sunlight out of players' eyes. Practices without sliding or fielding could be held with players wearing shorts and regular athletic shoes. However, the cap is still required and a shorts option must be pre-arranged with your team manager or a coach of record who's running the practice.

RULE 1.11(EXCERPT) - BASEBALL UNIFORMS AND WEARABLE ITEMS

Item (a.3) – Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid non-white, nor gray in color. A pitcher shall not wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter. Basically, anything a pitcher could

wear that would or could prevent a batter from detecting the incoming ball 'in time' to get out of the way, should be avoided.

Item (k) – Casts may not be worn during the game by players and umpires. **Note:** persons, including managers and coaches, wearing casts must remain in the dugout.

Rule 1.17 – All male players must wear athletic supporters.

Personal Protection Cup – Athletic supporters are required for all players, but the metal, fiber, or plastic type cup protection is required for male defensive players in the catcher position. We at WSLI highly recommend parents and team managers encourage all players to wear the cup protection. It's especially recommended at the AA, AAA and Majors level, increasing in severity in that order. There's also a female pelvic protector available that is equally recommended. The goal is to keep players safe, in the game, and having fun.

CATCHERS GEAR – ALL DIVISIONS OF PLAY

Rule 1.12 (excerpt) – The catcher must wear a catcher's mitt (not a first baseman's mitt or fielder's glove) consistent with protecting the hand.

Rule 1.17 (excerpt) – All catchers must wear long or short model chest protectors with neck collar, shin guards, and a catcher's helmet with throat guard. Male catchers must wear cup protection. **Note:** All catchers must wear a mask, 'dangling type' throat protector with catcher's helmet during practices, pitcher warm-ups, hitting infield or shags, and in all games. **No Exceptions!**

Warning! Manufactures have advised that altering helmets in any way can be dangerous.

BATTING HELMETS - ALL DIVISIONS OF PLAY

Per **Rule 1.16** – WSLI provides each team with the appropriate number of protective batting helmets that meets NOCSAE specifications and standards.

- Use of the helmet by batters, base runners, on-field bullpen 'observer', and youth base coaches is mandatory.
- Use of a helmet by an adult base coach is optional.

Do not alter helmets: paint, add decals, or tape unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer or dealer. Names or numbers should be written on the underside of the helmet visor/bill.

Per Little League International 2015 – Helmets must have a non-glare surface and cannot be mirror-like (or chromed) in nature at any division/level. Additionally, if the protective helmet is, or needs to be, modified (drilling of holes, removal of padding, etc.) in order to accommodate a C-flap or other addition, it will make the helmet unsafe and void the manufacturer's warranty. Accordingly, the helmet will not be legal for use in WSL and will be removed from play.

BASEBALLS - TEE BALL, MINOR LEAGUE, MAJORS LEVEL

WSL provides age-appropriate new and used Little League Approved game baseballs and issues practice baseballs to each team. 5-T and T-Ball use a softer baseball.

FACE MASK AND MOUTH GUARDS

Little League regulations do not require players at any level of LL Baseball to wear a batting helmet with face shield. It is managers', coaches', and parents' discretion for players at the A/AA levels wear face shields. This would help players at these levels gain confidence while growing their baseball skills.

FOOD CONCESSIONS

Safe grilling, serving, and sanitary safety practices are required and are in place at WSL. It is recommended by Fairfax County Park Authority and WSL Board of Directors that anyone interested in working the concession stand should review the food handling information available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/food/>. [Note: Effective July 1, 2013, a Health Department Permit to Operate is no longer required to serve food from a youth athletic concession stand. In the past, the Health Department has conducted food safety workshops for volunteers who work at the concession stands. It is no longer required that volunteers attend the food safety workshops.]

Our main goal at WSL is to remember to have clean hands and a clean working environment to serve our families. Remember to **Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill!** Food safety brochures are available upon request from the Health Department and Cooking for Groups: A Volunteer's Guide to Food Safety is a good resource available from the USDA. If you have any questions, please contact the Health Department.

GRILLING SAFETY

According to the Insurance Information Institute, backyard barbecues result in more than 2,000 fires and even three deaths each year. Most problems happen when you fire up a grill that hasn't been used for several months. **Inspect It!**

GAS GRILL SAFETY TIPS (PROPANE)

Propane Grill Do's

- Ensure lid is up when lighting grill!
- Turn burner controls off and keep the cylinder valve closed when not in use.
- Be sure to store cylinders outdoors and away from sources of ignition.
- Before lighting a gas grill, check all connections for tightness.
- If there is a significant and uncontrollable release of gas or fire, call the fire department immediately and move all people and pets away from the unit.

Propane Grill Don'ts

- Do not light grill when lid is closed!
- Do not leave the cylinder in a vehicle.
- Do not use matches or lighters to check for leaks.
- Do not allow children to tamper or play with the cylinder or grill.
- Do not use, store, or transport a cylinder where it could be exposed to high temperatures. (This includes storing spare cylinders under or near the grill.)

PREPARE TO EXTINGUISH

Extinguishers for Class A fires (i.e., ordinary combustible materials such as paper, wood, cardboard, and most plastics) must be located no more than 75 feet from hazard.

Extinguishers for Class B fires (flammable or combustible liquids such as gasoline, propane, kerosene, grease and oil) must be located no more than 50 feet from hazard.

Extinguishers for Class C hazards (fires involving electrical equipment, such as appliances, wiring, circuit breakers and outlets) must be located 50 to 75 feet from hazard.

Application of extinguishers (fire extinguishers must be aimed at the base of the fire during application).

NOTE: Never use water to extinguish a Class C - Electrical Fire, 'shock hazard' or a Class B fire (flammable or combustible liquids such as gasoline, propane, kerosene, grease and oil) fire spreads as fuel floats on the water.

CHAPTER FIVE:

PREVENT PREVENTABLE INJURY

The physical well-being of players who are accepted in the Little League program is essential to avoid the hazards of unsafe personal conditions. WSL, as a league, takes every measure it can to prevent injury from occurring.

It is strongly suggested that all candidates for the Little League program pass a basic physical examination before playing, including for a medical release after a player has recovered from an accident and prior to playing ball.

CONTROLS ARE ESSENTIAL

Having set the stage for our Little League safety program, let's look at the control of unsafe conditions. It is a logical step because accidents caused by unsafe conditions can be controlled more readily than those involving a human element.

RESPONSIBILITY

The League President has the primary responsibility for safe conditions. However, it is not possible to cover all details personally, so most of this responsibility is delegated to others. The following delegations are in-place:

1. Safe maintenance of fixed ball field property, including structures - the head groundskeepers
2. Procurement and upkeep of practice and playing equipment, particularly personal protective equipment, the equipment manager
3. Each manager should see that the field in-use and playing equipment does not create hazards
4. The umpire should take the initiative to ensure unsafe conditions are corrected on the playing field and in foul territory during games.

5. The responsibility for maintaining safe conditions for the entire league falls on the shoulders of the president. Many other important safety jobs are delegated to the Safety Officer most suited to handle them, as follows:

(a) The safety of players and adults going to and from fields is very important as shown by the severity of traffic accidents. See section on Traffic Safety.

(b) The first aid kit must be kept properly equipped and arrangements for emergencies up to date. See section on First Aid.

(c) Taking measures to counteract hazards that may be connected with special events such as picnics, fund-raising projects, etc.

(d) The safety of spectators, including parking facilities.

(e) The safe handling of food and drinks at the concession stand.

(f) If the league operates under artificial lights, the league has the very important responsibility for making sure the lights meet minimum requirements. This is a must for safe conditions. Light meter checks should be made at regular intervals to find out when it is necessary to clean reflectors and replace partly worn light bulbs.

EXPOSURE TO UNSAFE PRACTICES

Unsafe acts are far more difficult to control than hazardous conditions because they involve the unpredictable human element and surprise. ***It has been estimated that unsafe acts account for 80% of all accidents.*** Assuming every effort has been made to provide safe conditions, we should look at players' exposure to unsafe acts. Finding the causes is not enough—definite steps must be taken to counteract such acts.

EXISTING SAFEGUARDS

Before looking at these accident exposures and some suggestions for their control, let's look at some of the built-in safety factors in our favor.

1. It is obvious that non-contact sports such as baseball and track produce far fewer accidental injuries than contact sports like football and hockey.

2. Little League has proven the value of its playing rules and equipment requirements by the fact that each season less than 2 in 100 players have accidents resulting in injuries requiring outside medical treatment.

This is far better than the average accident frequency of 6 accidents per 100 participants in school baseball programs for the same age group.

3. Furthermore, 9 and 10-year-old Little League children have fewer accidents than the 11 and 12-year-olds.

There are probably a number of factors that account for this difference, such as:

(a) The ball is neither batted nor thrown as hard by younger players as by older ones.

(b) Nine and ten-year-olds do not put in as much time actually playing ball as the older players.

(c) Younger players are less easily disabled by bumps and falls than their older teammates.

With proper instruction and drill, it is expected that younger players will develop protective skills that will see them through the more competitive age levels of the game. It must be kept in mind too that some younger players will develop faster and be better able to handle themselves than some 11 and 12-year-olds. *EXCEPTIONS ARE VERY FEW.*

Don't rush your child to play at higher levels than they are truly ready for. Use your 'parental' hat and say no. Kids have plenty of time to grow. Why rush it?

Bottom-Line: Baseball at all levels (like any other sport) has dangers. The only path toward mitigating these risks flows straight through each manager and coach 'to the players' in the form proper preparation and education. **There is no such thing as avoiding the unexpected. Know it could happen and plan for it.**

WARM-UP DRILLS – STRETCHING AND CONDITIONING

This important phase of Little League training has a direct bearing on developing a safe personal condition. Extensive studies on the effect of conditioning, commonly known as "warm-up," have demonstrated that:

1. The stretching and contracting of muscles just before an athletic activity improves general control of movements, coordination and alertness.

2. Such drills also helps develop the strength and stamina needed by the average youngster to compete with minimum accident exposure.

These warm-up skills are most effective when the motions are patterned after natural baseball movements such as reaching for a ball, running and similar footwork. This is also a good place to “drive home” the basic safeguard of keeping the eye on the ball.

The subject of warming up before a practice session or game is being covered as a means of safeguarding youngsters, at least to a degree, from poor physical condition and lack of limbering up.

AVOIDING INJURY DURING PRACTICE AND PLAY

SAFE BALL HANDLING

1. Misjudging the flight of a batted ball may be corrected by drilling with flies that begin easy and made more difficult as a player’s judgment and skill improves. Everyone should eventually be able to handle balls that go overhead.
2. In addition to a player never losing sight of a ball from the time it leaves the bat, the player should keep the glove positioned and the body relaxed.
3. An infielder can best be protected by an aggressive short-hop fielding play by always keeping the “nose pointed at the ball” and the eyes glued on it. Also, if moving forward, the player is in a better position to make a throw.
4. It is safer for the player to knock a ball down and recover than to let the ball determine the play.

COLLISIONS

Collisions result in more injuries than is the case with most other types of accidents. They are usually caused by errors of judgment or lack of teamwork between fielders. It is important to establish zones of defense to avoid collisions between players. It is particularly important when players are chasing high fly balls. Once the zones are established, play situation drills should be held until these zones and patterns become familiar to the players. The responsible player should call out the intentions in a loud voice to warn others away. Here are some general rules to follow:

1. The fielder at third base should catch all balls which are reachable and are hit between third and the catcher.
2. The fielder at first base should catch all balls reachable which are hit between second and the catcher.
3. The shortstop should call all balls reachable which are hit behind third base.
4. The fielder at second base should catch all balls reachable which are hit behind first base.
5. The shortstop has the responsibility for fly balls hit in the center of the diamond and in the area of second base. Since the glove is on the left hand it is easier for the shortstop than the fielder at second to catch fly balls over second base.
6. The centerfielder has the right of way in the outfield and should catch all balls which are reachable. Another player should take the ball if it is seen that it is not reachable by the centerfielder.
7. Outfielders should have priority over infielders for fly balls hit between them.
8. Priorities are not so easy to establish on ground balls, but most managers expect their base player to field all ground balls they can reach, cutting in front of the shortstop on slow hit grounders.
9. The catcher is expected to field all topped and bunted balls which can be reached except when there is a force play or squeeze play at home plate.

WARNING TRACK

In addition to collisions between players, occasionally a player chasing a fly ball will crash into the fence. These accidents also can be controlled by suitable drill work. In this case it is simply a matter of giving the outfielders an opportunity to practice getting the feel of the warning track under their feet.

They must learn to judge their distance from the fence and the probable point where the ball will come down. It would be worse than futile to not only miss catching the ball by a wide margin but also be injured by a collision with the fence.

KEEP GROUNDS CLEAR

Another duty that should be given in turn to substitute players is the picking up of bats and proper placement in the rack. The clearing up of other loose playing equipment should be included in this assignment.



SLIDING SAFETY

****Head-first sliding has been eliminated for ages 12 and below, except for when returning to base.***

TEACH THE DANGERS!

As is the case with other baseball fundamentals, a correct slide is also a safe one. It is well advised to guard against the accident of a collision and the possibility of a player being struck by a thrown ball as that player “hits the dirt.” It goes without saying that steel spikes are not being worn. The following can make the learning period safer:

1. Long grass has been found to be better than a sand or sawdust pit to teach sliding.
2. The base must not be anchored down.
3. Sliding pads are recommended.
4. The player should make approaches at half speed and keep constantly in mind that hands and feet should be in the air. Once committed to slide, the player must not change strategy. Last minute hesitation causes most sliding injuries.
5. Tennis shoes are suggested for beginner sliding and tagging practice to avoid injury to the defensive player.
6. If the ground along the baselines becomes soft on a rainy day, such weather offers an excellent opportunity to have sliding drills.
7. It should be kept in mind that head-first sliding* is not allowed except when returning to a base.



BATTER SAFETY

A batter's greatest accident exposure is from the unsafe acts of others, namely wild pitches, which account for a major portion of all accidents. Again, the best defense is an alert, confident concentration on the ball. This type of injury is more prevalent in Regular than in Minor League play. Since the danger is increased as pitchers learn to throw with greater force and as more games are played, it is doubly important to take whatever countermeasures necessary to offset this exposure. Other sports use face shields ... I guess we don't need them!

1. A well-fitted, NOCSAE approved helmet is the first requirement.
2. The development of the novice batter's ability to take evasive action can be improved by getting the player to relax and concentrate on the ball from the time the pitcher starts delivery until it lands in the catcher's mitt. Players with slow reflexes can also be helped by stimulated batting and ducking practice with a tennis ball.
3. The unsportsmanlike practice of crowding the plate or jumping around to rattle the pitcher must not be tolerated. This could endanger the batter if it causes the pitcher to lose control. Umpires should stop such actions.
4. Painful finger and hand injuries can be reduced by making sure the batter holds the bat correctly when bunting. Youngsters have a tendency to lean too far over the plate and not keep the ball well out toward the end of the bat. This should be corrected.
5. When the batter becomes a base runner, that player should be taught to run outside the foul lines when going from home plate to first and from third to home, to reduce the chance of being hit by a thrown ball.

SAFE HANDLING OF BATS

A review of the batter's potential for causing injuries to others points up the following:

1. The most easily prevented type of accident is the too frequent fault of beginners throwing the bat while running to first base. This unthinking act may be corrected through individual instruction to drop the bat safely by:
 - (a) Having the player drop the bat in a marked-off circle near where running starts.
 - (c) Counting the player "out" in practice whenever the player fails to drop the bat correctly.

(d) Ensuring bat grips are not slippery.

2. Coaches and umpires should be on the alert to correct batters that have a tendency to step into the catcher as they swing.

BATS IN MOTION

Little League's rules bar any batting warm-ups before stepping to the plate during game (through majors). This means that there is no "on-deck" circle for warm-ups.

Additionally, WSLI has adopted rules prohibiting any swinging of bats on game day unless (a) the player is up to bat and is in the process of stepping into the batter's box or (b) the batter is in a batting cage with the door closed and no other teammates in the same cage.

A DANGEROUS WEAPON

We use this heading to note the seriousness of an accident exposure that may sound impossible but one which has caused several very serious accidents on several occasions. The preceding precautions apply to the actions of individuals who should have control over the bat they are using.

A more serious injury is waiting for the absent-minded youngster who unconsciously walks into the swing of the coach's bat when the coach is hitting flies or another player who is warming up. These situations demonstrate the need for everyone to become safety-minded, not only for their own good but also for the safety of others.

Make sure when hitting warm-up balls to fielders, coaches are far away from players, other coaches, or spectators. A player on the field assisting a coach by catching incoming balls **MUST** wear a helmet.

CATCHER SAFETY

1. ***The catcher has more accidents/injuries than any other player.*** Statistics show the severity of injuries is less in Majors level play than in Minor League play. Again, this bears out the fact that the more proficient the player, the less chance of injury. Assuming the catcher is wearing the required protection, the greatest exposure is to the ungloved hand. The catcher must learn to:

(a) Keep it relaxed.

(b) Always have the back of the throwing hand toward the pitcher when in position to catch.

(c) Hold all fingers in a cupped position near the mitt, ready to trap the ball and throw it.

2. The catcher should also be taught to throw the mask and catcher's helmet in the direction opposite the approach in going for a high fly.

3. As the catcher learns to play this difficult position, a good habit is to keep a safe distance back from the swinging bat. Estimate this as one foot farther from the batter than the ends of the outstretched fingers.

4. To repeat, the best protection is keeping the eye on the ball.



GENERAL INATTENTION

Going one step back to the “whys” of most ball handling accidents, it appears that inattention due to inaction or boredom is an underlying accident cause with which we must deal. This situation can be partly offset by using idle time to practice basics of skillful and safe play, such as:

1. Otherwise idle fielders should be encouraged to “talk it up.” Plenty of chatter encourages hustle and enthusiasm.

2. Players waiting for a game or practice to start can pair off and play catch to improve their basic eye-on-the ball technique.

3. Practice should include plenty of variety in the drill work.

4. Put a time limit on each drill and do not hold the total practice for more than two hours, if interest begins to lag.

5. Idle players along the sidelines can be given the job of studying the form of other players to improve their own techniques. They may then report on what they have learned to improve their own form on running, ball handling, throwing, batting and sliding.

OVERUSE INJURIES

Overuse injuries are on the rise in little-league aged players, especially among pitchers. Proper arm care and rest are paramount to maintaining healthy players.

Be sure to review Little League's Pitch Smart program online for some tips on preventing overuse injuries.

<https://www.littleleague.org/partnerships/pitch-smart/>

Of course, the simplest way to prevent overuse injuries is rest. We all want to compete, but we should not do so at the cost of long-term harm to growing little leaguers' arms. Pitch count limits are *maximums*. If your pitcher is tired or sore, make sure they get the proper amount of rest before throwing again.

SAFETY INSPECTIONS – FIELDS AND EQUIPMENT

Regular safety inspection of the field, permanent and temporary structures, ball playing equipment and personal protective equipment is the best way to determine which unsafe conditions require correction. The managers and grounds keepers should work together to ensure serious accident exposures are corrected promptly!

The following list will be of assistance in determining conditions that cause accidents.

Prompt action must be taken on all serious hazards.

Some examples are:

1. Unsafe field conditions such as holes, ditches, rough or uneven spots, slippery areas and long grass.
2. Foreign objects like stones, broken glass, old boards, pop bottles, rakes, etc.
3. Incomplete or defective screen, including holes, sharp edges and loose edges.
4. Wire or link fencing (and protective tops) should be checked regularly for similar defects which could injure a participant.
5. Board fences should be free of protruding nails, loose boards, and splintered wood.



6. Forty (40) feet in the center section of the outfield fence should be painted a dark color and kept free of signs to provide a contrast with balls thrown toward home.
7. The warning track should be well defined and not less than 10 feet wide.
8. The backstop should be padded and painted green for the safety of the catcher.
9. The dugout should be clean and free of debris.
10. Dugouts and bleachers should be free of protruding nails and wood slivers.
11. Home plate, batter's box, bases (disengage-able) and the area around the pitcher's rubber should be checked periodically for tripping and stumbling hazards.
12. Material used to mark the field should be a nonirritating white pigment (not lime). White plastic marking tape has proved better and less expensive than other methods of marking.
13. Loose equipment such as bats, gloves, masks, balls, helmets, etc., must be kept off the ground and floor of the dugout.
14. Constant attention must be given by managers, coaches and umpires to the possible lack or poor fit of personal protective equipment. This would include helmets, masks, catcher's pads and safe shoes. ***Plastic cup supporters are required for regular and reserve male catchers and are highly recommended for all male players in the field of play.***
15. Personal jewelry, badges, pencils, etc., can be a hazard to the wearer and should not be permitted.
16. Corrective glasses should be of the sports type and equipped with "industrial" safety lenses. Most children's glasses come with safety lenses as a standard.
17. Shatterproof, flip-type sunglasses are good protection against losing a fly ball in the sun.
18. Bats should be inspected for orderly storage, secure grips and freedom from cracks. Cracked, broken or distorted bats should never be used.
19. Safety should be the major factor when making a decision on canceling a practice or game because of bad weather or darkness.



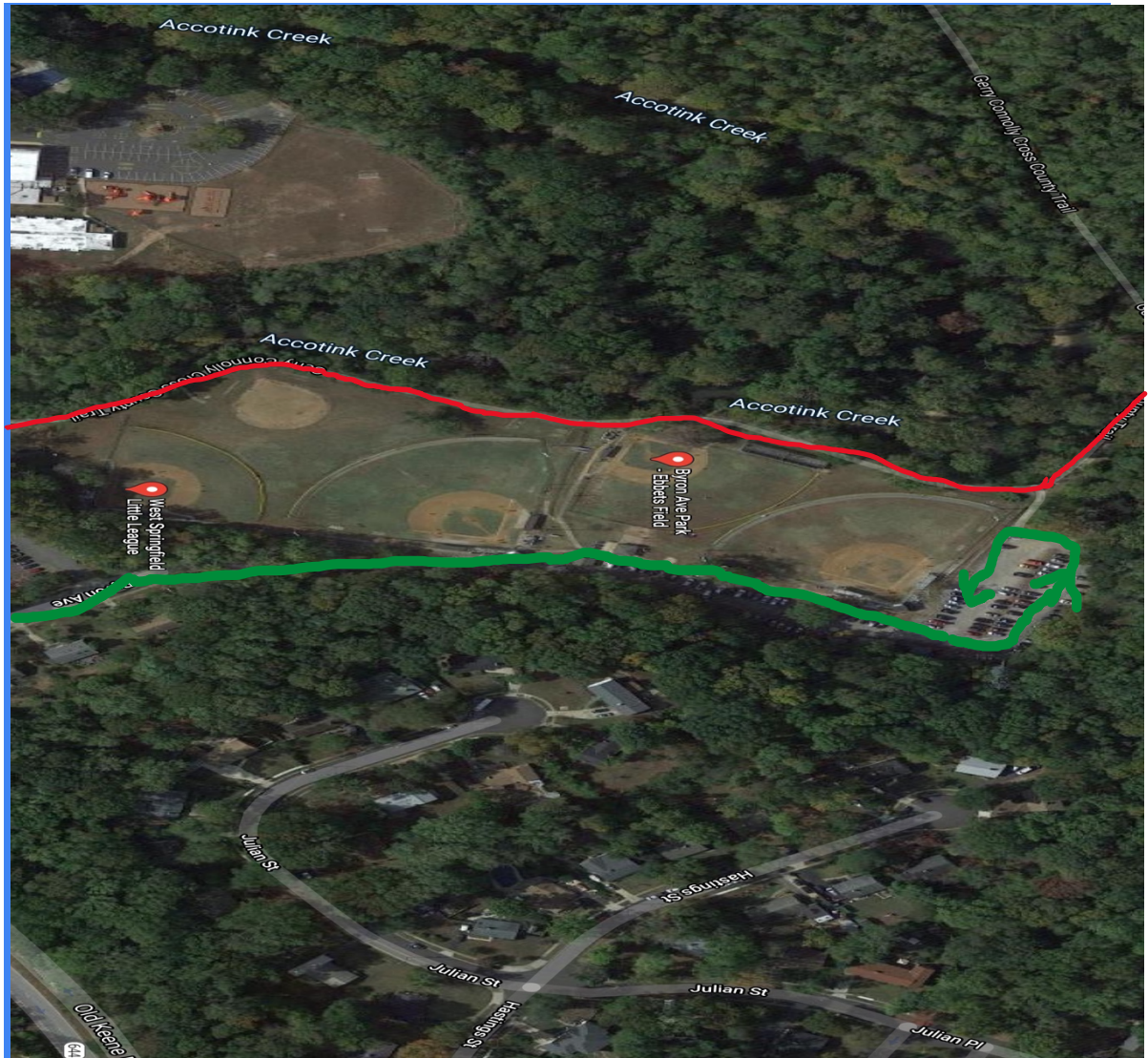
TRAVEL HAZARDS

Although Little League traffic accidents involve only one or two cases for every hundred injuries from all accidents, the average severity of these accidents far exceeds those from other causes.

In Little League we have not only an opportunity but an obligation to take organized action for the protection of our own interests. Let's do something about it together.

The speed limit at Byron is 5 mph. All traffic entering the field must proceed to the rear parking lot on the far side and proceed in a counterclockwise route before parking. Drivers must not take the first left into the parking lot between the rows of cars and must not turn around on Byron Avenue.

Below is a map of Byron and the routes cars should take in green. Trails on the far side of the field, which are marked in red, can be used as emergency exit points should the roads become hazardous.



WEATHER HAZARDS

WSLL LIGHTNING AND THUNDER POLICY

Lightning is very dangerous! Get all players and spectators out of harm's way immediately when lightning is close!

Managers and coaches should ensure their players gather all gear and prepare to evacuate the fields due to threatening weather and/or lighting

Play (or practices) will immediately be suspended when any of the following are observed by any League Official:

- Lightning is observed
- Lightning detector indicates lightning within 10 miles or less. Lightning detector takes precedence over observed weather to suspend play and vacate
- Thunder is heard suspend & vacate

In suspension - fields will be cleared of all players, managers/coaches, umpires, and spectators. Everyone moves to a vehicle for a minimum of 30 minutes.

In suspension (exception) - within hard shelter equipment shed or concession stand at Byron or Burke, Gray Hat Officials and Umpire could gather inside to evaluate conditions. All other spaces will be closed and remain closed upon/during suspension of play.

If lightning/thunder is observed or the detector indicates lightning again then play is suspended for another 30 minutes from the subsequent observance.

Games will be cancelled if the suspension will result in delay more than 45 minutes.

- When a game (or practice) is suspended on one field, it is suspended on all local fields.

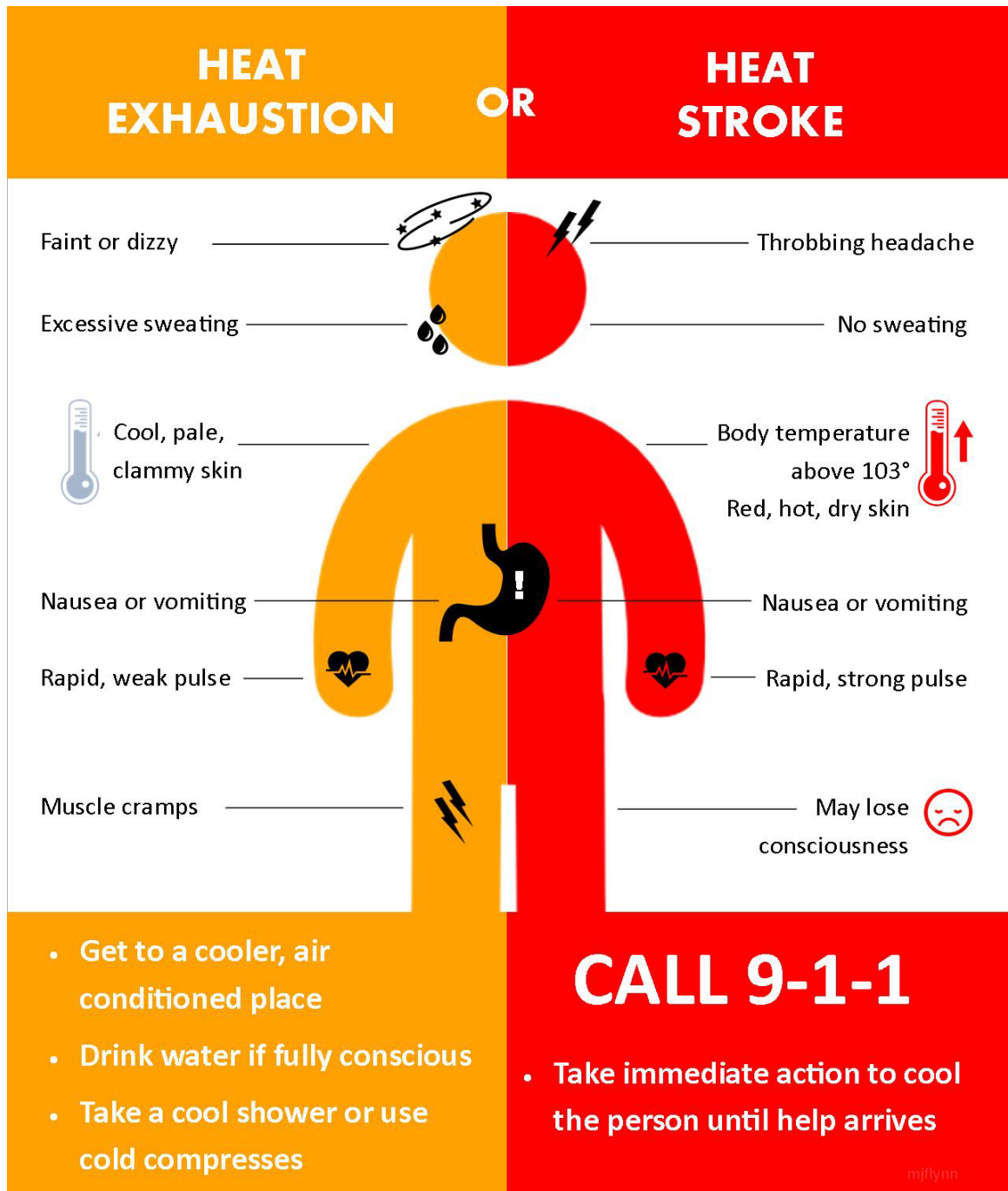
West Springfield Little League advocates that each Manager and Coach get the Weather Bug App on their iPhone or Android, and use Washington Irving MS, Springfield, Virginia, as their reporting station.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

Heat-related illnesses range from mild, such as sunburns, to severe, including heat stroke, a deadly condition. Knowing the symptoms of the most severe illnesses can prevent long-term damage and, in some cases, death of a player or spectator.

Players should come to practice or games well hydrated, sun-screened, and with plenty of water to last the entire session. Keep a close eye on players, especially on warm and hot days, and look for signs of dehydration or more severe illnesses. Make sure to hydrate often. It is important to incorporate water and rest breaks into every practice plan to ensure they are not forgotten.

Refer to the chart below for some tips on recognizing heat exhaustion, a dangerous illness, and heat stroke, a potentially deadly condition.



CHAPTER SIX:

WHEN INJURY STRIKES

There will come a time when you, as a volunteer, will have to tend to an injury, and so it is important that you are prepared to deal with the situation when the time comes. The following are some ways to be prepared and how to act if an injury occurs.

ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

When in doubt, call 911!

CALL 911 – Any injury that causes a player to lose consciousness, or visibly broken bone, call 911.



If you believe someone has ingested a poisonous or toxic substance, call the National Poison Control Center at (800) 222-1222



If you encounter a downed power line or other power-related hazard, leave the scene immediately and contact Dominion Energy's emergency line at (866) 366-4357.



(866) 366-4357

WHAT AND WHEN TO REPORT

Any incident that causes a player, manager, coach, umpire, or volunteer to receive medical treatment and/or first aid must be reported to the league safety officer within 48 hours of the incident. This includes even passive treatments such as the evaluation and diagnosis of the extent of the injury or periods of rest that results. Report all accidents to WSL's Safety Officer, **Matt Spitzer**, at 978-302-5825 or matt.spitzer@gmail.com. All Accidents should also be report to your league director. Their contact information is included in **Appendix A**.

WHY MAKE A REPORT

Accident Tracking serves two purposes. (1) It's used to document injuries, track insurance claims and the recovery period. (2) It's also used by our league to track all incidents – those requiring medical attention and those not requiring medical attention.

Little League calls these 'Close Calls'. Doing this tracking will help our league determine if additional training is needed for specifics like sliding (if several players in a division are hurting their legs or ankles, but not enough to go to the hospital); or if players are getting hurt on a specific field from bad hops, the field may need dragging or other work, etc. It's just another mechanism to help pin-point problems before someone needs medical attention or first-aid treatment.

HOW TO MAKE THE REPORT

Reporting incidents should be done by a manager/coach or parent filling out the **Accident Reporting Form** (attached as **Appendix B**) and sending it to the league Safety Officer. The Safety Officer may complete the necessary form, and then follow up to verify all information.

At a minimum, the following information must be given:

- Name and phone number of the person injured or involved in the incident
- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Provide as detailed a description of the incident as possible
- Preliminary estimation of the extent of any injuries
- Name and phone number of the person reporting the incident

SAFETY OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Within 48 hours of receiving an incident report, the Safety Officer will contact the injured party through Parents and/or Team Manager to:

- (1) Verify the information received;
- (2) Obtain additional information if necessary;
- (3) Check on the status of the injured party; and
- (4) In the event the injured party requires other medical treatment (i.e., Emergency Room visit, doctor's visit, etc.) will advise the parent or guardian of Little League's insurance coverage and the provisions for submitting any claims.

If the extent of the injuries is more than minor in nature, the Safety Officer shall periodically call the injured party to:

- (1) Check on the status of any injuries, and
- (2) to check if any other assistance is necessary in areas such as submission of insurance forms, etc. until such time as the incident is considered “closed” (i.e., no further claims are expected and the individual is participating in league activities).

WHICH ACCIDENTS TO REPORT

Good judgment must be used in deciding which accidents to analyze. The severity of an injury should not be the only basis of deciding to determine reasons for an accident and what can be done to reduce the chances of its reoccurrence. The possibility of a similar and more severe accident occurring should be our main reason for getting at the causes and taking suitable corrective action.

Examples of cases that probably would not require detailed checking would be a “raspberry” from sliding or minor strains and bruises, not associated with serious unsafe acts or conditions.

FURTHER FOLLOW-UP ON ACCIDENT

Even after corrective measures have been put into effect, responsible adults should continue to check back to make sure unsafe habits have not been resumed and conditions are not allowed to slip. We advise youngsters to keep their eye on the ball. Let’s do the same with safety precautions.

FIRST AID

ANNUAL FIRST AID TRAINING

WSLL’s annual **Fundamentals of Safety and First Aid Training** is tentatively scheduled for early March 2023 by online session. We ensure all teams are represented by managers and coaches. This manual will be available to all teams and is present at all times for reference on the league’s website.

- **For emergencies** - Teams/Managers must have quick access to a phone and cellular phone coverage is available at every WSLL practice and playing field. In addition, WSLL fields have first aid kits at each playing field at Byron Park and Fenway.

In addition to Safety Training, WSLI pays for interested coaches to attend organizations affiliated with our Districts Little Leagues. WSLI coaches are encouraged to attend the clinics provided by Metropolitan Baseball Academy, 8190 Newington Road, Lorton, VA, 22079, or other similar baseball academies.

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

First aid kits are available at all WSLI fields at Byron Park and Fenway in the home team dugouts. The first aid kits include:

2x Instant Cold Packs	10x Adhesive Band-aids (0.4" x 1.5")
2x Conforming Bandages (3" x 15')	1x Foil Emergency Blanket (130" x 210")
2x Conforming Bandages (2" x 15')	3x Non-adherent pads (3" x 3")
2x Triangular Bandages (38" x 38" x 53")	2x Knuckle Fabric Strips (3" x 1.5")
1x Crepe Bandage Roll (3" x 15')	2x Fabric fingertip strips (2.2" x 1.8")
1x First Aid Tape Roll (0.5" x 15')	10x Antiseptic wipes
3x Wound Dressing (4" x 4")	12x Safety pins
2x Sterile Eye Pad (2.5" x 3")	2x Medical gloves
30x Adhesive Band-aids (0.8" x 1.5")	1x Plastic Tweezers
1x Medical Scissors	2x Instant cold compresses

AEDS

Automated External Defibrillators are located in the concession stands at Byron and Fenway

FOLLOW-UP ON FIRST AID CASES

Care of an ill or injured individual must always be the first consideration. In concern for their welfare, however, do not neglect the following:

1. A thorough investigation should be made to find the cause(s) of an accident, and action started to prevent reoccurrence.
2. An insurance claim should be filed when outside medical attention is required. Do not wait for medical bills to arrive. They can be submitted as they become available. They must be identified by including the person's name, league name and number, date of injury, and city and state of residence. Bills should be itemized to show dates and type of treatments.
3. Any player under the care of a doctor would be required to bring a note from the doctor to the Team Manager releasing the player to resume play.

YOU'RE IN CHARGE AND THERE'S AN INJURY – WHAT NOW!

The role in an emergency situation for Managers and Coaches is to:

- Stop all play to protect the player from further injury – as well as those not being closely monitored due to the focus being on the injured player.
- Check player's Breathing, Pulse and Alertness to immediately judge the seriousness of the injury:
 - If necessary, send someone to call 911 to get an ambulance or EMS help immediately.
 - Call the player's parents (or ask another adult standing near-by).
 - Send an adult to nearest intersection to direct emergency services.
 - Review the Medical Release form for important information/warnings about medical conditions the player may have.
- Evaluate the injury:
 - Can player be moved off field?
 - If 'NO' – clear area around player and begin examination;

- If 'YES' – move the player to sideline and make as comfortable as possible while attending to the injury;
- Determine if the player can return to play or needs first aid.
- If it's a minor impact injury, remember '**RICE**': **Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation**

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

Managers and coaches of record will complete a WSLI-approved concussion training class required by the State of Virginia. The State of Virginia has accepted a requirement for Interscholastic Sports Coaches to have Concussion training. WSLI "Concussion Awareness" Training. WSLI managers, coaches, and board members will take a free course option, provided by VA District 9 that meets the training requirements as well as the newly implemented states requirements. (Course can be found at: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html). WSLI requires this course because it is what is mandated by Fairfax County Public School, whose grounds we use for our activities. Other school districts mandate different training regimes, which sometimes require additional training before using their grounds. This most frequently occurs for all-star tournaments.

GIVE THE APPROPRIATE FIRST AID FOR THE INJURY

Coaches and Managers should understand the specific techniques to determine whether injuries are **mild**, **moderate** or **severe**, and should understand how to address each type. The evaluation includes classifying injuries using symptoms and signs, with appropriate looking, listening and careful feeling and, if appropriate, moving of the injured part.

In evaluating fresh injuries, remember there are three types of motion:

- **Active Motion** – Player is able to move the injured part themselves
- **Active Assistive Motion** – Player is able to move with a little help from you; watch for warning signs like the player telling you it hurts to move
- **Passive Motion** – the player's injured part can only be moved by someone else; be especially cautious to not make the injury worse

Look for disability (the player can't use injured part); this is the most serious injury. If a player sprains his ankle, but can still limp around, it may be mild or moderate; if he can't get up, it is probably severe. Look for swelling, the more immediate and large the swelling, the more serious the injury, because swelling on outside means bleeding on inside. Also, a noticeable deformity means a serious injury. If the body part doesn't look the way it did before the accident, get help.

Consider unconsciousness or any eye injury as a serious situation, in the category of severe injuries, until you are assured otherwise by a medical professional.

"I would vote for using a little common sense on this one" – get help!

And remember, **if in doubt to the nature or seriousness of an injury**, you should NOT attempt treatment; a health care professional should be consulted immediately. ***Make the call!*** ((**CALL 911**))

1. Administer the appropriate First-Aid
2. Turn over care to professionals when they arrive and help as directed.
3. If parents are not available, go with player to treatment center in ambulance; turn the team over to an authorized coach.
4. **Do not forget to carry the player's medical release with you (to all events).** You need to have each player's form with you at all official gatherings.
5. If emergency medical treatment isn't immediately required, urge player and parents to see a doctor for a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.
6. Record the injury on an injury report. Your Safety Officer will provide all assistance needed.
7. Follow up with the player (and parents) until injury is healed and player can return to play.
8. Get medical release prior to allowing a player to return for practice or game play when formal treatment was required.



Appendix A

LEADERSHIP ROLES

PRESIDENT	Todd Harding	703-543-8696
EXECUTIVE VP	Matt Waggoner	618-521-2846
PLAYER AGENT	Todd Harding (interim)	703-945-8219
SAFETY OFFICER	Matt Spitzer	978-302-5825
SECRETARY	Matt Way	336-341-5287
VP BASEBALL OPS	Chris Ridge	732-691-7009
TREASURER	Karyn Schneider	703-644-0969

LEAGUE DIRECTORS

Majors	Dave Pollack	703-628-6447
AAA	Ryan Sheehan	703-587-4209
AA	Mundo Berona	703-283-4629
1A	John Ellison	571-393-7346
T-Ball/5-T	Rebecca Price	703-994-8045

APPENDIX B

ACCIDENT TRACKING FORM

Activities/Reporting	A Safety Awareness Program's Incident/Injury Tracking Report			
League Name: _____ League ID: ____ - ____ - ____ Incident Date: _____				
Field Name/Location: _____ Incident Time: _____				
Injured Person's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____				
Address: _____ Age: _____ Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female				
City: _____ State _____ ZIP: _____ Home Phone: () _____				
Parent's Name (If Player): _____ Work Phone: () _____				
Parents' Address (If Different): _____ City _____				
Incident occurred while participating in:				
A.) <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball <input type="checkbox"/> Softball <input type="checkbox"/> Challenger <input type="checkbox"/> TAD B.) <input type="checkbox"/> Challenger <input type="checkbox"/> T-Ball (4-7) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor (7-11) <input type="checkbox"/> Major (9-12) <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate (50/70) (11-13) <input type="checkbox"/> Junior (12-14) <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (13-16) <input type="checkbox"/> Big League (15-18) C.) <input type="checkbox"/> Tryout <input type="checkbox"/> Practice <input type="checkbox"/> Game <input type="checkbox"/> Tournament <input type="checkbox"/> Special Event <input type="checkbox"/> Travel to <input type="checkbox"/> Travel from <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Describe): _____				
Position/Role of person(s) involved in incident:				
D.) <input type="checkbox"/> Batter <input type="checkbox"/> Baserunner <input type="checkbox"/> Pitcher <input type="checkbox"/> Catcher <input type="checkbox"/> First Base <input type="checkbox"/> Second <input type="checkbox"/> Third <input type="checkbox"/> Short Stop <input type="checkbox"/> Left Field <input type="checkbox"/> Center Field <input type="checkbox"/> Right Field <input type="checkbox"/> Dugout <input type="checkbox"/> Umpire <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				
Type of injury: _____				
Was first aid required? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, what: _____				
Was professional medical treatment required? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, what: _____ (If yes, the player must present a non-restrictive medical release prior to to being allowed in a game or practice.)				
Type of incident and location:				
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> A.) On Primary Playing Field <input type="checkbox"/> Base Path: <input type="checkbox"/> Running <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Sliding <input type="checkbox"/> Hit by Ball: <input type="checkbox"/> Pitched <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Thrown <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Batted <input type="checkbox"/> Collision with: <input type="checkbox"/> Player <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds Defect <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> B.) Adjacent to Playing Field <input type="checkbox"/> Seating Area <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Area C.) Concession Area <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Customer/Bystander </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> D.) Off Ball Field <input type="checkbox"/> Travel: <input type="checkbox"/> Car <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bike <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking <input type="checkbox"/> League Activity <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </td> </tr> </table>		A.) On Primary Playing Field <input type="checkbox"/> Base Path: <input type="checkbox"/> Running <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Sliding <input type="checkbox"/> Hit by Ball: <input type="checkbox"/> Pitched <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Thrown <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Batted <input type="checkbox"/> Collision with: <input type="checkbox"/> Player <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds Defect <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	B.) Adjacent to Playing Field <input type="checkbox"/> Seating Area <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Area C.) Concession Area <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Customer/Bystander	D.) Off Ball Field <input type="checkbox"/> Travel: <input type="checkbox"/> Car <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bike <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking <input type="checkbox"/> League Activity <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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Please give a short description of incident: _____				
Could this accident have been avoided? How: _____				
This form is for Little League purposes only, to report safety hazards, unsafe practices and/or to contribute positive ideas in order to improve league safety. When an accident occurs, obtain as much information as possible. For all claims or injuries which could become claims, please fill out and turn in the official Little League Baseball Accident Notification Form available from your league president and send to Little League Headquarters in Williamsport (Attention: Dan Kirby, Risk Management Department). Also, provide your District Safety Officer with a copy for District files. All personal injuries should be reported to Williamsport as soon as possible.				
Prepared By/Position: _____	Phone Number: (____) _____			
Signature: _____	Date: _____			

APPENDIX C

WEST SPRINGFIELD LITTLE LEAGUE

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

[Adopted April 10, 2023]

I. Introduction:

West Springfield Little League (“WSLL”), in order to ensure that its facilities and activities are safe for all children, and to maintain compliance with Little League International’s Child Protection Program, adopts the following Child Protection Policy. This policy supplements administrative rules and regulations previously adopted and memorialized in WSLL’s Local Rules and Administrative Regulations.

II. Background:

In 2018, the “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017,” also known as the SafeSport Act, became Federal Law. This national law increases the standard of care and makes it a crime for an individual involved in a national governing body sports organization, including Little League, to ignore, or not report to law enforcement, any reasonable suspicion of an act of child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours. The law applies to all employees, volunteers, or hired workers of Little League and makes all indicated Little League individuals’ mandatory reporters in the eyes of the law.

Little League International, following enactment of the SafeSport Act, requires all chartered Little League programs to adhere to the following requirements:

- Learn to recognize the signs of child abuse.
- Conduct annual background checks on volunteers and hired workers.
- Prohibit anyone with any offenses that would disqualify them as a participant in any Little League activity.
- Report Child Abuse, including sexual abuse involving a minor, to the proper authorities within 24 hours.
- Adopt a policy that prohibits retaliation against “good faith” reports of child abuse.
- Adopt a policy that limits one-on-one contact with minors without being in an observable and interruptible distance from another adult.
- Volunteers and/or hired workers who have contact with minors complete the Abuse Awareness Program training, provided by USA Baseball, or comparable training.

III. Recognizing Signs of Abuse

WSLL volunteers shall take steps to recognize, prevent, and report about the following types of child abuse of league athletes. Reports of suspected child abuse shall be made in the manner described, *infra*, in Section V of this policy.

- **Neglect:** negligent failure of a minor's caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision which threatens harm to a minor's health, safety, or welfare.
- **Physical Abuse:** any non-accidental, intentional, deliberate act that results in physical injury.
- **Emotional and Psychological Abuse:** any act that diminishes the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth by humiliation, intimidation, verbal assault, and emotional deprivation.
- **Sexual Abuse:** any type of maltreatment, violation, or exploitation that refers to the involvement of the child in sexual activity to provide sexual gratification or financial benefit to the perpetrator.
- **Bullying:** the intentional, repetitive harmful act, words, and behavior that makes the victim feel hurt, scared, and/or ashamed. Bullying can also be an imbalance of real or perceived power between the bully and the victim. Different types of bullying include, but are not limited to, physical bullying, verbal bullying, emotional bullying, harassment, and hazing.
- **Grooming:** the process where an individual creates a relationship with a minor or the minor's family to gain trust so he or she can take advantage of a minor for a sexual purpose.

IV. Volunteer Background Checks

Per Little League Regulation 1(c) 8 & 9, every volunteer is required to complete a volunteer application every year before the applicant assumes any of his/her duties for the current season. The volunteer is also required to consent to a background check during the volunteer application process. WSLL must conduct, review, and verify that the background check process is completed.

Exclusion of Certain Individuals. WSLL shall not permit any person to participate in any manner whose background check reveals a conviction for, guilty plea, no contest plea, or admission to any crime involving or against a minor. An individual is also prohibited from participating as a volunteer or hired worker if they appear on the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Centralized Disciplinary Database and/or Little League International Ineligible/Suspended List. A local league may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer or hired worker if the league deems the individual unfit or inappropriate to work or volunteer. If a potential volunteer appears on the National Sex Offender Registry, the league must contact Little League International (570-326-1921) before appointing the volunteer to participate in any capacity in the league. Little League International will advise of the next steps and provide assistance to the decision-maker in the process.

Background Check Vendor: WSLL shall use Little League International's preferred background check provider, JD Palatine (JDP) to conduct background checks on its volunteers. WSLL's Safety Officer shall be in charge of providing names and contact information to JDP, which will in turn provide volunteers with a link to fill out an online questionnaire. The Safety Officer shall ensure that all volunteers have completed a background check through JDP at least once a year and monitor the results of the background checks. The Safety Officer shall maintain the confidentiality of volunteer background check results except in the case where the check reveals a potentially disqualifying record. In such event, the Safety Officer shall consult with WSLL's President and/or Little League International regarding the volunteer candidate's suitability. Should the Safety Officer and President determine an event disqualifies a candidate, they shall present the issue to WSLL's board of directors to vote on denial of the volunteer's application.

V. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

When an allegation of child abuse is made against a WSLI volunteer, WSLI must protect the child from any further potential abuse by keeping the alleged abuser away from all children in the program until after the incident is reported to one or more of the below outlets and completely investigated.

Investigating Suspected Abuse. Once a report of abuse has been made, the league shall promptly notify the alleged abuser that they are temporarily suspended until the investigation is completed. West Springfield Little League shall consult a lawyer to advise them about the rights of an alleged abuser. If the investigation substantiates the allegations, WSLI must assure that the individual will not have any further contact with the children in the league.

All information and statements received from the parties involved with the incident (suspect, victim, witness, etc.) must be passed onto the proper authorities as explained below. WSLI officials should not attempt to investigate suspected abuse. Law Enforcement and child services professionals should conduct the investigation.

Within 24 hours of any volunteer witnessing suspected child abuse, the volunteer must notify the WSLI President and Safety Officer *and* contact Virginia's Department of Social Services' Child Protective Service, using one of the following hotlines:

Toll-Free: (800) 552-7096

Local (toll): (804) 786-8536

More information regarding the report of abuse in Virginia is located on the Virginia Department of Social Services' website, which can be accessed at <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/index.cgi>.

VI. Non-Retaliation for Reporting

WSLI strictly prohibits any form of retaliation for good faith reporting of child abuse. Any suspected retaliation for reporting suspected abuse shall be referred to WSLI's Disciplinary Committee for potential suspension or termination from WSLI activities.

Immunity for Reporting: In Virginia, any person making a complaint or report of child abuse or neglect shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection therewith, unless it is proven that such person acted in bad faith or with malicious intent pursuant to § 63.2-1512 of the Code of Virginia.

VII. One-on-One Contact with Minors

As a general matter, a WSLI volunteer should not allow themselves to be alone with a minor (who is not their child) and should always position themselves in an area where they can be observed by others. Minors must always be supervised by appointed volunteers and/or hired workers who have completed the mandated background check. If an adult participant finds himself or herself alone with a child, he or she should remedy the situation by removing themselves to an area within an observable and/or interruptible distance of another adult over the age of 18.

Prohibited One-on-One Contact: The following are prohibited practices at WSL.

- A minor athlete shall not be left unattended or unsupervised at any time. The minor athlete should always be within the sight of an approved adult volunteer.
- WSL volunteers or hired workers are prohibited from being alone with minor athletes unless:
 - There is an emergency.
 - There is written permission from the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian.
 - The volunteer or hired worker is the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian, sibling, or personal care assistant.
- WSL volunteers or hired workers must not interact one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside the regular scope of the official Little League program (e.g. the volunteer's home, a restaurant, a vehicle, or through personal communications including electronic communication).
- Minor athletes may not reside with unrelated volunteers or hired workers for the purpose of participation qualification.

VIII. Annual Training

Little League International requires annual training for all volunteers regarding child abuse and protection. Little League has provided Abuse Awareness training videos available to all Little League individuals through USA Baseball's Pure Baseball initiative and the SafeSport Organization. The free Abuse Awareness for Adults courses provide resources to create a positive and safe environment for all athletes, coaches, parents, legal guardians, and umpires by understanding how to recognize misconduct and abuse of all types. Topics covered include how to identify and report incidents and what abuse awareness policies should be in place. The free Abuse Awareness for Minors course provides resources to identify what abuse is and what to do if someone is being abused. WSL requires all volunteers to complete one of the trainings listed below on an annual basis. Training is available at the following links.

[Pure Baseball Development](#)

[SafeSport Reporting Training](#)