

Chester Baseball and Softball Objectives:

- Offer a Competitive Baseball program that enables each participant (coaches & players) to attain maximum skills development, while learning to better appreciate and enjoy baseball.
- Provide opportunities for players to improve themselves through **excellent coaching and strong competition.**
- Provide a positive learning experience to enhance a player's overall personal development including the **enhancement of; self-confidence, fitness and leadership.**
- Provide opportunities for capable players to compete with athletes from other communities in higher level tournament style play

Goals:

- Establish a systematic approach to instructing Chester youth baseball players that is based on high quality instruction, universal engagement and dynamic/diverse methods for developing fundamental baseball skills.
- Create an instructional model for coaches that will be uniform according to age group, while being a part of a larger progressive framework of skills development.
- **Create the position of instructional supervisor:** this individual will observe each coaching staff at a minimum of two times during the course of a season and evaluate the observed practice plans, application of instructional methods, efficiency of the practice, engagement of the players, and then make recommendations for areas of improvement. Observation evaluations will follow a standardized form.
- Provide coaches with a practice plan template as recommended by the supervisor and board. The use of the plan template will be strongly recommended for all coaches. The intent is to maintain a cohesive, cumulative and universal baseball curriculum for all players in the Chester Baseball organization.

Expectations:

- **Each age group level will have a common curriculum for all players** playing at that particular level.
- It is the obligation of each coaching staff to ensure that every member of their team satisfies the required skills & baseball knowledge objectives by season's end for the level they are competing at.
- Each level has a number of prerequisite skills and core knowledge that all players must learn. **As players advance through the system they will build on prior skills and knowledge in a step-by-step process** that will provide them with the greatest opportunity for cumulative growth and success.
- The league board has the ultimate say in what should be the fundamental objectives focus for each age level.

Practice Plan (with recommended time increments)

1. Warm-up (10 minutes) including team jog, light stretching & at least 1 baserunning skill at the beginning of each practice. Coaches are encouraged to tell the players what the practice agenda is for the day during stretching. In the event that you choose not to have players stretch then inform the team of the agenda during throwing. (Remember – our players are used to an orderly structure for instruction which includes a degree of autonomy as learned in school, reinforce this process)

2. Throwing – including long-toss (5-10 minutes)

3. Skills Review (10 minutes) review of prior practices learning or lessons to be learned from previous game, be sure to have players physically engage in the skill you are reviewing, or allow players to participate in the demonstration of the knowledge that you are reinforcing.

4. Stations – (30 minutes) Be sure to have all players exceed the recommended number of repetitions in at least 2 of the following stations in each practice.

- Hitting – 40 rep's
- Infield – 30 rep's
- Outfield – 20 rep.'s
- Pitching – 20 rep's
- Baserunning – coaches discretion

5. Practice focus – (20-25 minutes) Practice 1 skill objective or 1 knowledge objective to focus on for the day (to be reviewed at next practice). All players should have a sufficient number of repetitions in order for them to complete the session with a near mastery of the skill. Be sure to break down what is being taught into individual components so that players are easily able to learn the skill or knowledge at a 50%-80% effort.

6. Wrap-up (5-10 minutes) employ an engaging method for reviewing what was learned today. You may want to reinforce the *practice focus* at game speed (100%) for each player or take the opportunity to build team morale with an interactive group discussion. Remember this is the most important moments of the practice. It is what they will remember most the next time they step on the field so prepare them for success not failure.