

STEWARTVILLE YOUTH BASEBALL COMMITTEE

The Stewartville Youth Baseball Committee is a sub-committee of the Diamond Club. The committee will consist of a Director, Secretary, Equipment Manager, Umpire and Field Coordinator and a Fundraising Coordinator along with any members of the community who wish to participate. Key decisions will be made by vote at committee meetings and all persons in attendance will have equal vote.

GUIDELINES

The following are general guidelines Stewartville Youth Baseball will follow for the summer traveling program. While the plan is to follow these guidelines as if they are rules, every attempt will be made to do what is right for the youth baseball program and the Diamond Club in situations that are not outlined below.

PHILOSOPHY:

The youth baseball program believes that baseball is a fun game and should always be fun. The program is committed to developing players, teams, and the Stewartville baseball program in a fun and safe environment.

All players will contribute to the team's success and will be treated with respect. Players are expected to work together as a team in order to reach the players and team's highest potential.

In order to improve and maintain consistency between age levels, the program could seek guidance from the Stewartville Varsity Baseball coach and his assistants. These recommendations could be outlined prior to each season. The goal is to create and maintain solid, core fundamentals at an early age that benefit the players, teams, and Stewartville Baseball program.

COACHES:

Being a youth coach can be very rewarding yet challenging in many aspects. The following are a list of guidelines for coaches:

- Pleasing every player and parent can be difficult. Do your best and do what is right for each player, the team and the overall program.
- Coach with a positive attitude, positive talk and positive feedback. Negative criticism of players, parents, umpires, etc. will not be tolerated. Understand that there is a difference between constructive criticism and negative criticism. Stay positive while providing constructive criticism.
- Require all players to be respectful and courteous toward each other, coaches, other players and umpires. Profanity, arguments or negative behaviors are not acceptable. Players are expected to represent themselves, the team and the program in the highest regard. Be a good person (sportsmanship) on the field and off the field.
- Take time to plan practices and game strategy in advance of each event. Be organized and communicate well with your players and parents.
- Focus on teaching vs winning. Coach sportsmanship, self-control, self-discipline, game preparation, and respect for self and others. Everyone wants to win, however, teaching these lessons will improve the player for the future and also for life.
- Be a good role model and demand this from your players and parents as well.
- Consumption of alcohol/drugs and/or being intoxicated is strictly forbidden for all Head Coaches and all Assistant Coaches prior to / during practices and prior to, during, and in-between league and tournament games. Any coach, head or assistant, if found violating this rule will NOT be allowed in the dugout and/or on the field. Violations should be reported to the Committee immediately.
- Coaches are encouraged to provide written feedback to the players throughout the year and also at the end of the season.
- Coaches will be evaluated by survey at the end of the season. This allows players and parents to provide feedback on what we are doing right or wrong in order to improve the program.
- Coaches must undergo and pass a background check in order to participate as a coach in the Youth Baseball Program.
- Coaches must complete Concussion Testing Training and provide the committee with copies of the certificate of completion.

In the event there are multiple coaches that strongly desire the head coach position, the committee may hold interviews to pick the best candidate.

PLAYERS:

- Have Fun!!!
- Do your best. Baseball is a team sport and if you do not try your best you are not only hurting yourself but also your entire team.
- Be prepared for practice and games (mentally and physically).
- Be respectful to everyone and practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Encourage your team mates and cheer them on. Support them when things may not be going as planned.
- Ask questions if you do not understand.
- Be on time and communicate (ASAP) to your coach if you will be late or cannot make a practice or game.
- Learn the fundamentals and practice on your own (very important for pitchers and catchers).
- Must reside in Stewartville or be enrolled in the Stewartville School District
- Have Fun!!!

LEAGUE TEAMS:

- Teams will be formed by grade:
 - 9U - anyone completing 3rd grade
 - 10U - anyone completing 4th grade
 - 11U - anyone completing 5th grade
 - 12U - anyone completing 6th grade
- When the number of players warrants 2 or more teams, teams will be divided evenly by skill, as agreed upon by coaches.
- Pitchers and catchers will be identified and split evenly between teams.
- Every attempt should be made to provide equal playing time. Specific games or game situations may require adjustment to line ups and rotation as the coach best sees fit.
- Each team will be allotted a specific allowance to participate in the ZVL end-of-season tournament. The money can only be used to participate in this tournament and cannot be used in any other fashion.
- Each team may participate in as many or few tournaments, outside the ZVL tournament, as the team/coaches determines is appropriate. Any expenses for these tournaments will be split evenly between each player on the team. The team, on its own, may seek out sponsorship dollars.

TOURNAMENT TEAMS:

- Each grade/age group shall have the ability to create a "Tournament Team".
- Teams will be created by specific grade and age group first. (Age as of April 30)
- Only players participating in the Stewartville Youth Baseball program are eligible to play on the team.
- Expenses endured by the team are to be split evenly by each player. There will be no allotted money available for a "tournament team".
- A "Tournament Team" should not interfere with regular team practices or league games.
- In general, a "tournament team" consists of players who wish to play at higher level and against stronger competition. These teams will typically play in larger, more competitive tournaments. Playing time on these teams may not be equal, but will be fair/earned based off skill, attitude and effort.
- Teams may consist of 10-16. Based on the number of players, "try outs" may be needed for certain grade/age groups. These tryouts will be coordinated by the specific coach(es) with the guidance of the committee. Every attempt will be made to use outside, unbiased evaluators.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

- Always use the 24 hour rule (wait at least 24 hours before addressing the conflict or issue).
- Discuss issue with head coach, player or parent and other appropriate parties in private.
- As a last resort, bring the issue to the attention of the Director. A meeting may be held to discuss and determine a solution.
- Obviously, any issue resulting in the danger of any individual should be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

FEES

- All registration fees must be paid by the deadline or the player will not be allowed to practice and will not be placed on a roster.
 - Exception: The player is new to the district
- Refunds are based on expenses already incurred

VOLUNTEERING:

- Stewartville Youth Baseball depends on volunteers. All players' parents are expected to volunteer in some capacity (coach, assistant coach, help out at practices, field maintenance, concessions help at tournaments etc.).

PLEASE VOLUNTEER

OTHER:

- This committee is made up of volunteers to support and grow the game of baseball in the community of Stewartville. The committee will make every effort to do what is best for the players, program and community. We encourage everyone who has an invested interest to attend any and all Committee meetings and share comments and questions with the group. The Committee will consider any and all changes which will benefit the program.
- Registration will be sent out 1st week in February and will close 1st week in March.
- Once teams are set, teams may practice in an "optional" format up to May 1st.
- Regular practices may start May 1st. 1-2 practices/week May through July.
- School fields may not be available until school spring sports are complete.
- Practices must be planned and coordinated by each coach until the school fields become available.
- Coaches, Players and Parents will be expected to read and sign the Code of Conduct document prior to the beginning of the season.
- Games will be called 15 minutes after the scheduled sunset time.
- Youth Diamond Club will follow the MSHSL weather guidelines.
 - <http://www.mshsl.org/mshsl/news/WeatherPolicies.pdf>