

TBALL COACHING: PROCESS OVER OUTCOME

I. Core Philosophy & Coach's Job

The primary JOB of a TBALL Coach is **DEVELOPMENT**: preparing children for the next level (Coach Pitch). This focus must remain on the big picture at all times. The guiding principle is “**PROCESS OVER OUTCOME**”; winning is fun but holds no significance in the grand scheme.



II. Coaching Methodology & Feedback

Coaches must consistently emphasize the **process** and **reward the positives**.

- **Praise the Objective:** Praise them when they attempt the objective correctly. Coaches should react the same way regardless of the outcome—whether the throw is perfect or lands well wide (or short) of the target.
- **Avoid Negatives:** Do not use discouraging phrases like “you gotta catch that!”, “should’ve gotten that ball”, or “Don’t miss”.
- **Keep it Simple:** Don’t over coach. Once a player is in the batter’s box or fielding a ball, it is too late for detailed instruction.

III. Skill Checkpoints & Objectives

Skill Area	Primary Objectives	Coaching Details & Key Phrases
CATCHING	1. Learn to track the baseball. 2. Get a glove on the ball.	Focus on the process, not the outcome. It is difficult enough to get one hand on the ball, so do not focus hard on catching with two hands. Reward the Process: e.g., “great job getting a hand on that ball!”.
THROWING	1. Throw to a target 2. Step straight to their target. 3. Make good, aggressive throws	Encourage players to put effort into their throws. Reward the Process!.

FIELDING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach a good fielding position (feet wide, palm of glove toward hitter). 2. Teach “Alligator Chomp” once the ball enters the glove. 3. Funnel hands to the belly button. 4. Move side-to-side to field the ball in the middle of the body. 5. Attack the baseball (go to it vs. sitting back and waiting for it). 	<p>Reward the Process: e.g., “Great job going after that ball!”.</p>
HITTING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Line up correctly in the batter’s box. 2. Take a good, aggressive swing. 	<p>Do not get too mechanical; that is a waste of time. Players need to learn to ‘let it fly’ and coaches must accept that kids will miss, spring in a circle, or even fall down swinging. Swinging with effort is just as important while they learn to control the swing path.</p>
BASERUNNING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach them when and why they are running to 1st Base. 2. Run hard through 1st Base. 3. Listen to base coaches. 4. Run on contact! 	<p>Reserve advanced information, such as going back on a pop up, for the next level to avoid confusing young players. Phrase to Use: “When the ball is hit, Run Hard!”.</p>

IV. In-Game Coaching Objectives

1. **Infield Play (Throwing to 1st):** Infielders should always make the throw to 1st Base once they field the ball.
 - o **Rationale:** This teaches kids where to go with the ball (forcing pre-pitch thought) and allows the first baseman to learn how to catch throws.
2. **Baserunning Decisions:** Coaches are encouraged to only allow runners one base at a time at this age.

Credit: portions of this document have been included from the Pearland Little League (TX) website materials