

## WSR Go-Hawk Youth Baseball Program Expectations and Playing Time / Position Guidelines

The WSR Go-Hawk Youth Baseball Program is a recreational baseball program that focuses on improving the baseball skills of each of the players through practice and game situations. We are focused on the process of teaching all kids to be their best regardless of the result. It is the goal of WSR Youth Baseball that all levels of play provide a fun experience, develop character through teamwork and help players develop baseball skills.

Volunteer coaches are key to the success of WSR Go-Hawk Baseball. The program could not run without the many hours they contribute. Coaches should strive to keep all players engaged during the season and be excited to participate in baseball the following season.

### Expectations for all ages:

- Player expectations are as follows
  - Players should maintain a positive attitude and represent themselves, family, community and WSR Go-Hawk Youth Baseball in a positive manner.
  - Always show up to practices and games on time.
  - Always hustle.
  - Refrain from unsportsmanlike gestures, talk, language or profanity.
  - No player should throw a bat, helmet, glove or any other object in disgust on or off the playing field at any time.
- Parent expectations are as follows
  - Recognize the value and importance of volunteer coaches. Respect all coaches, umpires, players and other parents. Set a good example and always demonstrate good sportsmanship. Children learn best by example.
  - Refrain from giving the children instructions during the game – allow the coaches to manage the team and game.
  - Do not ridicule or yell at your child or any other child on the team for making a mistake or for losing a game.
  - Do your best to get your child to practice and games on time.
  - Do not publicly question an umpire's judgment and never their honesty. Accept the umpire's decision as final and respect the fact that they too make mistakes.
  - If you have a problem/conflict with the Manager or Coaches, do not approach them during or after a game. Call / email the coach to discuss the matter or set a meeting with a board member or coach to discuss the matter.
- Coach expectations are as follows
  - Coaches should respect opposing coaches, players, umpires, parents and community.
  - Coaches should facilitate one parent meeting to start the season.
  - Coaches should provide practices that include:
    - Fundamental skill development in ALL aspects of the game of baseball including Infield, Outfield, Batting, Pitching, Catching, Base Running.
    - ALL players should have the opportunity to take part in learning these skillsets in practices. As players grow and develop pitching and catching become more specialized and/or some players may not wish to work at those positions.

### Playing Time

This is a developmental program. Keeping the process (player development) over the product (winning and losing). Equal playing time is encouraged at all ages. All players are to be given equal opportunity to play similar defensive innings. Coaches are encouraged to avoid sitting a player more than two innings, outside of injury or discipline reasons. Playing time can be adversely affected by actions such as missing practices, failing to take direction, or being disrespectful to umpires, coaches, or teammates. Coaches should communicate with players and/or parents as necessary in those situations. Additional recommendations for position/playing time opportunities based on age group are outlined below.

## **9- & 10-Year-Old (3rd & 4th Grade)**

Coaches are encouraged to distribute playing time evenly and mix up the batting order each game to provide an equal number of at bats (not including missed games). All players should experience a variety of positions and receive some playing time at those positions including infield and outfield. Some players may need to focus on a single infield position while learning it. If the coach feels safety is a concern for a player at certain positions, this should be discussed with the parent(s) and player. There is no coach pitch at these ages. A pitcher is allowed to pitch three innings per game/day; one pitch in an inning constitutes an inning. Once a pitcher is removed from that position, player may reenter as pitcher only once later in the games as long as that player has not pitched more than three innings. Players may need to demonstrate the ability to throw strikes in practice before pitching in games.

## **11- 12- 13- Year-Old (5th, 6th, 7th Grade)**

Position play will begin to become more specialized. All players should experience some time at infield and outfield positions. Coaches are encouraged to attempt to distribute defensive playing time evenly. Players who are skilled at important positions may sit out less frequently but all players should sit out some. If the coach feels safety is a concern for a player at certain positions, this should be discussed with the parent(s). Batting order may be set based on player skill and production, but coaches should also seek to mix up the batting order in some games throughout the season. A pitcher is allowed to pitch three innings per game/day; one pitch in an inning constitutes an inning. Once a pitcher is removed from that position, player may reenter as pitcher only once later in the games as long as that player has not pitched more than three innings. Players may need to demonstrate pitching skills in practice before pitching in games.

## **Additional Pitching Expectations**

Please plan to designate a coach to handle pitch counts of ALL players for ALL games.

- For every pitch thrown, a player should get an hour off after the completion of their outing (no throwing off a mound, positional play or throwing is not a part of this count). For example, Lloyd pitches 48 pitches, he should not pitch again for 48 hours.
- Exception - If a player throws less than 30 pitches in an outing, he would be available the next day. Example: Lloyd starts game and throws 25 pitches and isn't out of the first inning, the next day in a tournament, he could pitch. The pitch count for rest should continue from the day before. If he were to throw 25 pitches on Sat and 25 on Sunday, he should have 50 hours rest.
- As a program based on development, a pitcher throwing 30 pitches in an inning should shut the pitcher down for the rest of the game and day of play on the mound.
- Number of pitches thrown and pitches caught in a game needs to be considered when making a line up for the following games in those positions. If a kid catches an entire game, he probably has made 100 throws back to the pitcher. Keep that in mind.
- Percentage of innings pitched during the season needs to be balanced between pitchers as best as possible.
- Pitching rules / expectations may change based on league or tournament rules. The more conservative approach should be taken when league / tournament rules are different than what is presented here.