



# ASAP *news*

October 2001

Volume 8 Number 9

Continuing the Little League tradition of making it "safer for the kids."

## Safety Planning Season

# New Safety Manual Near

## Ready for 2002? Look for the Safety Officer Manual soon!

League elections are either underway or over, and leagues across the country are looking ahead to 2002. We're doing our part to get you ready by moving the schedule up on distributing your new material.

The new 2002 League Safety Officer Manual will soon be in the mail, and you can begin work on building your safety plan for next season. Or if you do Fall Ball, you should look at safety issues right now.

### First Things First

If you are league president reading this, you need to appoint a safety officer, and report that person's name and contact information to Little League HQ in Williamsport (570/326-1921). This position is crucial to developing and implementing a safety plan in your league. This will not only qualify your league for a 20 percent credit on your CNA Little League Insurance, it will also make your league a more safe environment for youngsters to develop life skills, not only in baseball, but in teamwork and proper social adjustment.

### What's New in 2002?

The requirements for a qualified safety plan will remain largely the same, with ONE exception. In 2002, all leagues will be required to use the Little League Volunteer Application Form to evaluate the qualifications of potential coaches, managers, board members and umpires. (See page 4 for the Volunteer Application Form.)

All leagues wanting to qualify for the 20 percent player accident insurance credit on their CNA Little League Insurance will have to use this form. Leagues are NOT

required to do background checks based on the Volunteer Application Form, but are encouraged to do so. Leagues are only required to have all potential volunteers fill out the form as part of the screening and qualifying process prior to appointing and approving these volunteers by the league president and board.

A restricted group of Board of Directors members should be formed into a review board who will be the only league members to view the information on the Volunteer Application Form. No one else should have access to these documents, nor should the review board discuss why any applicant is turned down as a volunteer.

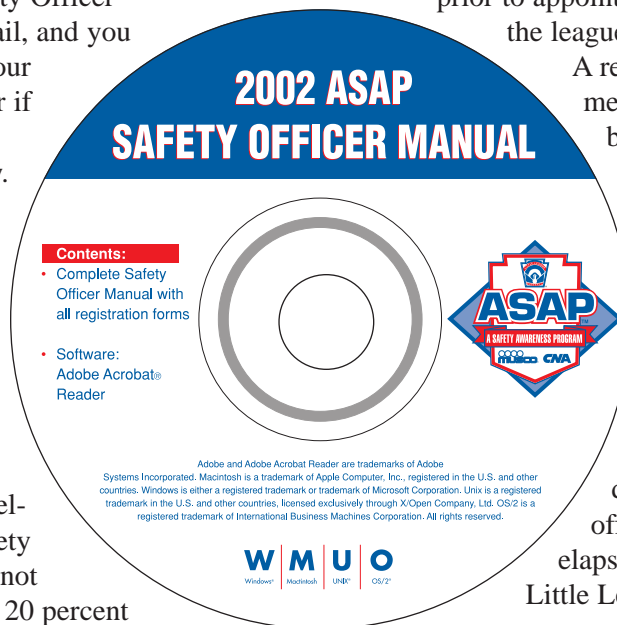
Leagues need to determine what criteria the board will use to determine fitness of volunteers, such as drug offenses, violence, or alcohol offenses, as well as the time period elapsing since any offense was committed.

Little League's national policy is not to allow any person with a history of child abuse to serve as a volunteer, period.

### Other Requirements Unchanged

The other 12 requirements are the same (see pages 2-3 for full requirements). As noted on the form, document when training is held and who is required to attend, with a minimum of at least one coach/manager of each team.

**Leagues still need to submit a safety plan this year, even if they qualified for the insurance credit last year. Leagues need to re-submit their updated safety plan and annual facility survey each year to qualify.** Work toward improvement, and report any changes you have made to make your league a more safe environment, in facilities, activities and equipment. Highlight the best ideas on page four of the registration form for use in the ASAP News.



# Qualified Safety Plan Requirements



*Making It "Safer For The Kids"*

(The following two pages contain the 13 minimum requirements for your safety plan to qualify for the 20 percent premium credit on your Little League CNA player accident insurance. Please note league volunteers are required to fill out the Little League Volunteer Application Form this year to qualify. Please give dates when training was held and list where each requirement can be found in your plan.)

**Please List  
Page Number(s)  
Where Item Is  
In Your Plan**

- 1. Have an active safety officer on file with Little League HQ** **1. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2. PUBLISH and distribute a safety manual to coaches, managers** **2. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Include all relevant material for coaches, including these minimum standards.
  - Keep copies in common areas for all volunteers. The intent is to print and distribute the safety plan to all staff: Concession manual to concession workers, equipment policies to facilities crew, first aid to managers and coaches, etc.
  - Keep a copy for your league. Send a copy to your DA or District Safety Officer. Little League Headquarters does not keep copies for leagues' future use.
  - Samples can be found in the example safety manuals on the CD or LLB website.
  
- 3. Post and distribute emergency and key officials' phone numbers** **3. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Include emergency procedures for handling injuries and who to contact to track/report them (see requirement 10).
  - Include emergency phone numbers for ambulance, police, fire department, etc.
  - Include league president and safety officer, consider head umpire, board members.
  
- 4. Use Little League Volunteer Application Form for volunteers** **4. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Must have key volunteers fill out application form — managers, coaches, league officers and all elected members — and recommended for all.
  - Background checks based on forms, while recommended, are not required.
  - Form or its contents must be used in gathering information on volunteers.
  - Form is available on CD, or through Little League's website.
  
- 5. Provide fundamentals training for all coaches and managers (i.e. hitting, sliding, fielding, etc.)** **5. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date(s) Held:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 6. Require first-aid training for coaches and managers** **6. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date(s) Held:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 7. Require coaches/umpires to walk fields for hazards before use** **7. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - Recommended that leagues have a form to track that this is being accomplished and documenting any facility issues needing to be addressed.
  - Common sense activity — look for rocks, glass, holes, etc.
  - Specify who is responsible for doing this — home coach, visitor, umpire?

# Qualified Safety Plan Requirements



*Making It "Safer For The Kids"*

**Please List  
Page Number(s)  
Where Item Is  
In Your Plan**

**8. Complete the ANNUAL Little League Facility Survey**

**8. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- A requirement each year, can help leagues find and correct facility concerns.
- Provided with mailing to League Safety Officers, also available from website — <http://www.littleleague.org/manuals/asap> or email [asap@musco.com](mailto:asap@musco.com)
- Excel spreadsheet included on CD for easy filing and recording for future use.
- Keep a copy on file; Little League does not maintain copies of surveys.

**9. Written safety procedures for concession stand; concession manager trained in safe food handling/prep and procedures**

**9. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Local restaurant operators are good resource for training assistance.
- Training should also cover safe use and care of equipment.
- See concession suggestions: April and June, 2000 issues of ASAP News available on Little League's website and Safety Officer Manual CD.

**10. Require regular inspection and replacement of equipment**

**10. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Inspect equipment before each use by coaches and umpires
- Don't just discard bad equipment, destroy it or make it unusable to stop children from attempting to "save it" from waste
- Recommend use form to remind coaches and to track equipment needs

**11. Implement prompt accident reporting, tracking procedure**

**11. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Accident forms to safety officer within 24-48 hours of incident is common
- Forms are available through Little League and now on CD
- Track "near-misses" as a proactive tool to evaluate practices and avoid potential future accidents and injuries
- Use ASAP incident tracking form for internal tracking available on CD
- Share information on accidents and "near-misses" with District staff

**12. Require a first-aid kit at each game and practice**

**12. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Many leagues have a complex, but each team needs some form of first aid kit for off-site practices or travel games
- Local hospitals and medical supply companies are good source
- If necessary, fund through special drive

**13. Enforce Little League rules including proper equipment**

**13. Page:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Most Little League rules have some basis in safety — follow them
- Ensure players have required equipment at all times, even catchers warming-up
- Enforce rules at practices as well as games
- Remind managers and coaches they are not allowed to catch pitchers (Rule 3.09); this includes standing at the backstop during practices acting as an informal catcher for batting practice.



# Little League Volunteer Application

(Use any paper to complete if additional space is required)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Special professional training, skills, hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Community Affiliations (Clubs, Service Organizations, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Volunteer Experience \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

(Including Baseball/Softball Experience) Year \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children in the program?  Yes  No If Yes, at what level? \_\_\_\_\_

Special Certification: i.e. CPR, Medical, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid Driver's License?  Yes  No

Accident or Traffic Violations?  Yes  No If yes explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of any crime(s)?  Yes  No If yes, describe each in full: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been refused participation in any other youth programs?  Yes  No If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

In which of the following would you like to participate? (Check one or more.)

- League Official       Coach       Umpire       Field Maintenance
- Manager       Scorekeeper       Concession Stand       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for the Little League organization to conduct a background check on me which may include a review of criminal and child abuse records maintained by governmental agencies. I understand that if appointed, my position is conditional upon the league receiving no inappropriate information on my background. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability the local Little League, Little League Baseball, Incorporated, the officers, employees and volunteers thereof, or any other person or organization that may provide such information. I also understand that regardless of previous appointments I may not be appointed to a volunteer position. If appointed I understand that, prior to the expiration of my term, I am subject to suspension by the President and removal by the Board of Directors.

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Please Print)

**NOTE:** The local Little League and Little League Baseball, Incorporated will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex or sexual orientation, or disability.

# Background Protects Players

## Follow Little League Child Protection Program for kids' sake

### Little League Child Protection Program

As your league prepares for a new season, have you done everything you can to give them the safest experience possible? Checking your volunteers' backgrounds is just as important as checking for holes in fences or fields.

Volunteers are the greatest resource Little League has in aiding children's development into leaders of tomorrow. But some potential volunteers may be attracted to Little League to be near children for abusive reasons.

The Little League Child Protection Program emphasizes education/prevention to provide a safer environment for children in Little League. The program can be found in the 2002 Operating Manual, pages 22-26.

### Defining Child Sex Abuse

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America defines child sexual abuse as "the exploitation of a child by an older child, teen or adult for the personal gratification of the abusive individual." So abusing a child can take many forms, from touching to non-touching offenses.

Leagues must also be aware that *anyone* can be an abuser, and it could happen *anywhere*. By educating parents, volunteers and children, you can help reduce the risk it will happen in your league.

### Education/Prevention of Child Abuse

Educating adults and children is the most important tool to prevent child abuse. Here are some suggestions:

- Meet with volunteers, parents and players regularly to talk about the dangers of child abuse.
- Make Little League's "no tolerance" position clear.
- Use "buddy system" to reduce opportunity for abuse.
- Stress adults' role. Children have an active role in protecting themselves, but adults are ultimately responsible. (See further *General Guidelines in the 2002 Operating Manual.*)

### Rooting Out Child Abuse

Another aspect of prevention is a screening process.

Little League suggests a three-step process for selecting caring, competent and safe volunteers.

- **Application** — Include residence information, employment history, three personal references from non-relatives.
- **Interview** — Make all applicants aware of the policy that no known child-sex offender will be given access to

children in Little League.

- **Reference Checks** — Make sure applicant's information is corroborated.

### Enforcement/Reporting

In the unfortunate case that child sexual abuse is suspected and/or reported, you should take specific steps to deal with the situation. Child abuse reporting laws vary from state to state, but all carry the general intent to encourage reporting suspected child abuse to child protective services, including law enforcement agencies. If anyone suspects someone of sexually abusing a child in your league, they should

report their concerns to the league president and district administrator, who will forward them to the proper law enforcement agency. Volunteers should not attempt to investigate suspected abuse on their own.

### Immunity From Liability

According to Boys & Girls Clubs of America, "Concern is often expressed over the potential for criminal or civil liability if a report of abuse is subsequently found to be unsubstantiated." However, Little League wants adults and Little Leaguers to understand they shouldn't be afraid to come forward in these cases, even if it isn't required and even if there is a possibility of being wrong. All states provide immunity from liability to those who report suspected child abuse in "good faith."

(For more information, see 2002 Operating Manual.)

### Child Abuse: A Five-Step Review



#### 1. Know what it is, and where to look.

Defining child abuse, and separating the truth from the myths, better enables us all to spot potentially dangerous situations.



#### 2. Educate parents, volunteers and children.

They need to be supplied with the information necessary to protect everyone. Let the children know that it's never their fault.



#### 3. Follow safety procedures.

Employing basic rules, such as the "buddy system," can keep child abuse from happening in the first place.



#### 4. Screen applicants carefully.

An effective three-step plan can keep potential child abusers out of our Little League programs, and keep our kids safe. (See *main story.*)



#### 5. Don't be afraid to speak out.

Both Little League children and adults need to feel safe to come forward. If an individual honestly feels something is wrong, the laws are in place to protect them.



# 'What are specs for helmets?'

**Q:**

*"Could you please provide the specifications for catchers and batters helmets for Little League players?"*

**Cindy Calhoun, safety director  
Venice, Fla.**

**A:**

All batting and catchers helmets must meet Little League requirements and be NOCSAE approved. So they should have a NOCSAE stamp and a "Little League approved" label on them for them to be approved (Rule 1.16). On catchers helmets, the same regulations apply (Rule 1.17). If you have any specific questions about what individual item may or may not be approved, please check either Little League's web site for the approved equipment section or see the Approved Equipment List which would have been sent to your league president at the start of last season.

**Q:**

*"I would like to know if there is a website where I can find out about any recent rule changes? I would also like to know what levels of Little League the new maximum bat differential (-3) affects."*

**Bob Quarte'**

**A:**

At <http://www.littleleague.org>, Little League Baseball's web site, a feature called E-News allows you to sign up for information on all the latest rules changes, safety issues and news releases. You will be notified by email of all changes and new information as it is available. On your second question, currently, including for 2002, no regulation restricts bat differentials for any level of Little League play. Please contact Little League Headquarters if you would like further information about rules changes: 570/326-1921.

**Q:**

*"My son's mom recently told me about a conversation that she had with another mom regarding several children that have been hit with a baseball in the chest (either one thrown or one hit by a bat) which has, over the years, resulted in several children dying. The alleged reason for this is that these children have been hit in the diaphragm in a way that restricts and eventually cuts off the child's ability to breathe. I've been playing baseball for more than 30 years and I have coached Little League for the past two years. I have never heard of this. Can you verify whether there is any truth to this and, if so, what precautions (i.e. safety equipment) may be available to prevent injury?"*

**Richard Golubow**

**A:**

We haven't heard of this injury. Isolated instances of children hit in the chest have caused sudden heart failure in healthy children. This is rare, and in a study in the July 2001 The Physician and Sportsmedicine journal, a study of Little League concluded safety equipment for these rarities isn't merited, as only six children died this way (of 13 total) in the study's decade review. Commotio cordis is caused, at as low as 30 mph speeds, when a ball strikes the chest at precisely the needed moment to disrupt the electric signal of the heart. The report, however, noted while chest guards or vests are available, the occurrence is so low, and the cost for all batters or infielders so high, the authors did not recommend these devices. They recommend proper techniques being taught to children (watching the ball at all times, keeping your glove in front of you between you and the ball in the field, or curling your lead shoulder back toward your body so if you are hit on inside pitches it is your back or side which is hit, etc.) in order to keep children safe from ball/chest impacts.

Have a question or tip to share?  
Call the ASAP Hotline:  
800-811-7443,  
or e-mail: [asap@musco.com](mailto:asap@musco.com)



Or write to us at:  
ASAP  
100 1st Ave. West  
Oskaloosa, IA 52577



# Catchers — not coaches — catch



*“Please explain something for me. Your Q&A section of The ASAP News for August 2001 had a question that referred back to a June 2001 chatter. The question was: ‘The ASAP*

*News Safety Chatter on page 5 clarifies the rule on COACHES catching pitchers but states that only a helmet and face guard are required to warm up a pitcher while the actual catcher is getting on his equipment. This should be amended to include a metal, fiber or plastic type cup as stated in rule 1.17. Please correct this in a future issue.’ Your response was: ‘Thanks for catching that omission. Rule 1.17 does state, in part, male catchers must wear a ‘metal, fiber or plastic type cup.’ Nothing in Rule 1.17 mentions a coach. Please explain how rule 1.17 applies to coaches catching warm up pitchers.”*

**Ted Aurig, District Safety Officer,  
NJ District 13**



Sorry, the answer wasn’t intended to refer to coaches catching pitchers. Coaches MAY NOT catch pitchers, but that is a separate issue (see below). Bill Stewart’s note mentioned catchers must always wear a metal, fiber or plastic cup when catching. This had been left out when I used just the information on catching equipment required “during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up and games,” for the answer from the June 2001 Q&A. Rule 1.17 states: “All male players must wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear chest protectors with neck collar, throat guard, shin guards and catcher’s helmet, all of which must meet Little League specifications and standards. All catchers must wear a mask, ‘dangling’ type throat protector and catcher’s helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up and games. NOTE: Skull caps are not permitted.” The Q&A on coaches catching follows:



*“I have a question regarding the rule for a coach catching (or not catching) a pitcher during practice. Is this a rule, or just something that is recommended? If it is a rule, please help me by locating it in the rule book.”*

*please help me by locating it in the rule book.”*

**Jim H.  
— by email**



Coaches aren’t supposed to act as players. According to Rule 3.09, “... Managers and coaches must not warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bull pen or elsewhere at any time. They may, however, stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bull pen.”

This rule underscores the desire of Little League to let players play, and have coaches do the instructing, mentoring and coaching which is their role. One of the main reasons coaches give for doing it themselves is a lack of equipment or a lack of experienced players to catch. Safety is a real concern with having coaches catch pitchers; if they don’t have equipment for the players to wear, they certainly don’t have any for themselves. This doesn’t remove the need for safety equipment. Each year coaches are injured while catching their pitchers. Remind coaches that developing other players in the catcher’s position helps their team, and that full equipment is only necessary when a batter is ready to hit. A helmet and face guard will allow a player to warm up a pitcher while the actual catcher is getting on his/her equipment. While this rule specifically addresses game situations, coaches are likewise restricted from this in practices. Reminder: Please use common sense in applying this rule. Should coaches warm up pitchers? No. Will it occasionally occur at practice? Unfortunately, yes. Should it be the standard? Never. Just make sure coaches understand the intent of allowing players to play, developing all players’ abilities and their risk in catching without proper equipment.

**To sum up:** Do catchers need to wear all equipment all the time? No. Rule 1.17 notes the catcher must wear “a mask, ‘dangling’ type throat protector and catcher’s helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up and games.” The careful reader had pointed out the beginning of Rule 1.17 noted that catchers **MUST** wear a “metal, fiber or plastic type cup,” and the rest of the equipment (shin guards and chest protector) are required before a batter may step in the box. So even for a fill-in catcher, a cup is required. Full equipment is not required for warm-ups because no batter is in place, and it is the batter who may foul tip the ball. So a player — with a cup — may wear the catcher’s helmet and warm up the pitcher while the regular catcher finishes putting full equipment on.



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## What's Inside

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**2002 IS READY!**  
**League Safety Officer Manual to you soon**



PAGE

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✓ **VOLUNTEERS**  
**Use Volunteer Application Form for all**



PAGE

**7**

**SAFETY CHATTER**  
**Catchers — not coaches — catch for pitchers**



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## HOTLINE TIPS

## FROM READERS

*“We have amended our local rules to include that all umpires, coaches, managers and parents on the field have to conform to the same rules as the children (for basic safety issues), to simplify and unify this rule. Basically, we had a problem last year with coaches and umpires wearing dangling ear rings, and we had to address that. We just wanted to pass that on, and we suggest everyone try this.”*

**Bill Parker, president**  
Pleasanton, Texas, Little League

*“This is the third year we’ve held a district safety clinic for managers and coaches. We’ve had very good success with our leagues responding. We utilize the LL (AOSSM rep) physician to come and go over the EMTP booklet, as well as we have a sports rehab therapist present, and a softball and baseball high school manager present at our safety clinics. We offer the clinics twice in the same month, usually on a Wednesday and a Saturday, and it runs for three hours. Like I said, we’ve had good success with this and this is our third year that we’re holding a district-wide safety clinic for managers and coaches.”*

**Jim Malone, district safety officer**  
Wisconsin, District 6

**ASAP HOTLINE**  
**24 HOUR TOLL-FREE**  
**800-811-7443**

### ASAP News

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