

ASAP news



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

Three Reach 100%!

Across U.S., leagues top 71% making it 'safer for the kids'

Oregon and Maryland have joined West Virginia as the only states with *all* leagues to submit a safety plan. This marks a new milestone for ASAP: Three states with 100 percent participation!

From the top down, individual leagues are stepping up to improve on safety preparedness in their states. For the entire country, Little League® Baseball and Softball has now reached 71 percent of leagues submitting a safety plan, with eight states topping 90 percent.

In 2004, West Virginia became the first state to reach 100 percent of its leagues creating qualified safety plans. Now Oregon and Maryland have made it! It is this kind of dedication to safety across the U.S. that has reduced injuries in all of Little League by over 75 percent!

States Hit Heights

The top states for safety planning are:

	2006	2005
West Virginia	100%	100%
Maryland	100%	64%
Oregon	100%	90%
Virginia	98%	95%
Delaware	97%	69%
Washington	94%	92%
Rhode Island	93%	89%
Idaho	91%	79%
California	89%	83%
Wisconsin	89%	86%
Florida	86%	73%
Montana	86%	85%
Alaska	81%	66%
Indiana	81%	79%
New Hampshire	81%	67%

Are is your league helping put your state in this elite group? If not, why?

Over 4,400 safety plans submitted!

Over seven out of every ten leagues across the country are adopting safety plans to help provide a safer environment for their players, volunteers and spectators. This is another big jump from last year's 65 percent level of participation for leagues throughout the country who are demonstrating their commitment to keeping the Little League program at the high level of excellence parents and communities have come to expect.

Unfortunately, eight states had a drop in safety participation this year, and three areas — Oklahoma, Washington, D.C. and Utah — again had zero percent, keeping the overall participation level from rising even more.

Prepare NOW for Next Year!

Please act before your league slows down for the off-season; make copies — electronic and paper — of your safety plan. Distribute it to several people who will remain with the league, even if you intend to continue in your role. The effort you and other volunteers have put into your league's safety program should not be lost to your league's children next year due to a computer crash, lost paperwork or a change in the board during elections this fall.

One of the most difficult areas to implement for any safety plan is the on-going training you offer. However, this by far has the greatest impact on your players' safety, as well as their overall playing ability. So start planning now for quality experiences in both your fundamentals clinics and first aid training for coaches.

If you aren't providing new or relevant

training opportunities to your volunteers, they WILL resent the time requirement. Look at what you offer and make sure it's worthwhile. Are you going beyond the basics? Are you finding qualified and knowledgeable trainers to provide the clinics? Are you offering information that will help coaches more effectively manage practice time and help their players develop? Are you building the volunteers' understanding of Little League's philosophy and core values?

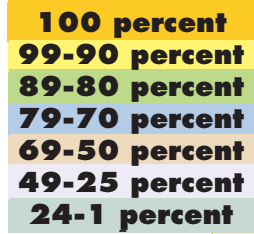
If you answered "no" to too many of the above questions, you should look at the training your league is offering. Volunteering isn't easy, and for those people "thrown in" to it without good preparation, it can be a decision they decline next year.

Keeping quality volunteers in your program not only benefits the children, it allows the development of future board members who can continue your program's commitment to your community.

Who Makes Good Trainers?

Universities or colleges have excellent sports teams. In addition, high school coaches have a vested interest in developing local athletic talent.

Often these people are happy to pass on their knowledge and passion for the game to others committed to developing future players. Talk with people in the off-season and plan clinics accordingly.



NO

Place for 'Smokeless'



When people think about Little League, they think of fun days spent out playing ball under clear blue skies, with cheering crowds and happy smiles. And the National Spit Tobacco Education Program (NSTEP) wants to keep the smiles in baseball.

Think tobacco isn't a problem for Little Leaguers? Think again. Gruen Von Behrens, a national spokesperson for NSTEP, first tried using spit tobacco at 13 to "fit in" with his friends. He probably saw no harm in emulating his Major League heroes who use smokeless tobacco products in the dugout and on the field.

"The tobacco companies call it smokeless tobacco. That's a nice warm, fuzzy word that sounds harmless. Smokeless does not mean harmless! That's why I call it spit tobacco," explained NSTEP National Chairman Joe Garagiola. "I've watched friends die because nobody told them the whole story about spit tobacco."

The whole story for Gruen is that by 17 he had been diagnosed with oral cancer, just four years after starting using spit tobacco. Now, in his mid-20's, he's had over 30 disfiguring surgeries just to save his life. In just one surgery, doctors had to remove half his neck muscles, lymph nodes and half his tongue. After these life-changing experiences he is still dealing with today, he campaigns on behalf of NSTEP to get the truth out to young people about the dangers of spit tobacco and how "un-cool" it really is.

"If I had known then what I know now, I never would have put a dip in my mouth. Spit tobacco seemed harmless, but it has ruined my life," said Gruen.

Why did Gruen, along with so many others, think using spit tobacco would help him "fit in"? The idea comes from the macho and rugged advertisements that try to make spit tobacco look like "the thing to do." The tobacco companies try to hook young users by pushing sweet-flavored products that are more appealing and easy to use for beginners. NSTEP's goal is to help youngsters not be fooled by the tobacco companies.



Gruen Von Behrens, diagnosed with oral cancer at age 17, now teaches the dangers of spit tobacco.

Gruen will be the first to tell you that just because it's smokeless tobacco, that doesn't mean it's harmless or less addictive. Actually, the amount of nicotine in one dip or chew can be 1 to 5 times the amount found in one cigarette!

Do you know what's in that stuff?

Spit tobacco contains over 28 known cancer-causing agents. Here are just a few:

- Formaldehyde (embalming fluid)
- Cyanide (gas chamber chemical)
- Arsenic (rat poison)
- Polonium-210 (nuclear waste)

You should know that spit tobacco is bad news! How? Your body gives you signs:

- Bad breath
- Yellow or brown-stained teeth
- Gum disease
- Rotting teeth
- Pre-cancerous and cancerous lesions in the mouth

Tobacco in Little League®



This is Matt. He dipped tobacco because he thought it would help him 'fit in' and look COOL.

Here's how spit tobacco made Matt look after it gave him cancer. Yep, Matt sure ended up looking COOL all right.

(Courtesy of Oral Health America — National Spit Tobacco Education Program and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

'Use Spit Tobacco — You Lose the Game'

Isaac Mastalski, a 10-year-old Little Leaguer from Indiana, Pa., understands that spit tobacco is a losing game. His slogan, "Use Spit Tobacco — You Lose the Game!" was last year's winner of Oral Health America's National Spit Tobacco Education Program (OHA/NSTEP) and Little League's annual slogan contest. Isaac won an all-expenses-paid trip to the 2005 Little League World Series that took place in August, 2005, where he was honored for his winning slogan.

Unfortunately, not all children know the truth about spit tobacco. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control, 14.8 percent of all boys in U.S. high schools — and 1.9 percent of all girls — currently use spit tobacco products. To help end spit tobacco use in America's children, Oral Health America (OHA) and its innovative education program, NSTEP, have joined forces with Little League International to work in all areas of the Little League community to spread the word that spit tobacco is dangerous to the health of children. The slogan contest is just one component of a year-long campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of spit tobacco use.

"This partnership with Little League International is a major step for NSTEP," said Robert Klaus, president and CEO of Oral Health America. "OHA is honored to have the opportunity to teach so many Little Leaguers just how dangerous spit tobacco really is and positively influence the lives of children."

Look for the 2006 winner to be announced at this year's Little League World Series in Williamsport. During the Series, representatives from OHA and NSTEP talk to Little League players and fans about the dangers of spit tobacco. For more on NSTEP and Little League, visit Little League's website: <http://www.littleleague.org/programs/nstep.asp>.

Funded in part by Sunstar Butler, the Academy of Sports Dentistry and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, NSTEP works with Little League International, Minor League Baseball and the Professional Baseball Athletic Trainers Society (PBATS) to educate Americans on the dangers of spit tobacco and to help users to quit.

TIPS FOR QUITTING SPIT TOBACCO

Six Steps to a Healthier You:

- Step 1:** Decide to quit.
- Step 2:** Set a quit date.
- Step 3:** Cut back on your spit tobacco use and change your routine.
- Step 4:** Build a support team — Let family and friends know that you're trying to quit.
- Step 5:** Your quit day — Stay busy and active all day. Remember the urge to chew only lasts 3 to 5 minutes.
- Step 6:** Stay off spit tobacco — Don't give up! Nicotine withdrawal symptoms decrease dramatically after the first two weeks.

(Information courtesy of OHA-NSTEP)

Common Sense Makes

Simple Steps for Safer Play



- Any player recognizing an unsafe condition and finding ways to better our safety program is given a certificate to the refreshment stand;
- Mark McGuire safety baseball cards are given to teams exemplifying league safety policy;
- Poster contests to create a safer playing environment are held throughout the season.

Par Troy West LL, New Jersey

Safe kids know whom they can ride with. The magic word is a code that you share with your parents. No one is to know this word other than you and your parents. It's used as a code word in special ways. If your parent can't pick you up from ball practice, they may send someone else to bring you home. You should only go with that person if he or she knows the magic word. If a person tries to pick you up who doesn't know the magic word, you should run from them, find help and call 9-1-1.

Tucson International LL, Arizona

The Unicoi County Little League is continuing the "Outfield Angels" program. Under this program, any adult volunteer who has passed an approved background check will wear a yellow or other highly visible T-shirt with a vest. This "Outfield Angel" will patrol the Little League complex, moving around watching for anyone who may need assistance. This person will be equipped with a two-way radio to call for help if the need arises. The vest will also be equipped with basic first aid supplies and deterrent spray for dogs in case of a dog attack. The 2-way radio will be monitored during all game times by a league official in the press-box who can then provide additional assistance or call for additional help.

Unicoi County LL, Tennessee



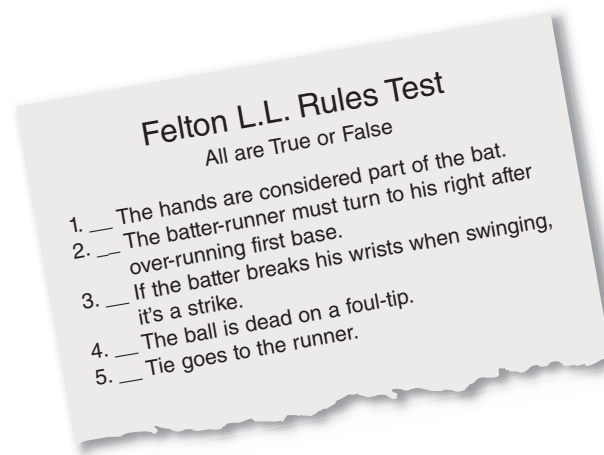
Each coach will be given coupons to the concession stand to hand out to players during the season. These are to reward the players for coming to the coach with a safety concern or "good catch." Either the coach or the team mom will need to fill out the back side of the coupon explaining how the player contributed to our Safety First goal. All the coupons that are turned in to the concession stand will be saved for a grand prize drawing at the end of the year for a \$100 gift certificate to a sports store. The more you practice safety, the more chances you have to win.

Fulton LL, New York

Activities: Compliance

Each coach has to take a 40 question rule book test that must be turned in on or before tryout day. If they aren't turned in by then, the coach will be suspended and the Player Agent will draft their team.

Felton LL, Delaware



- Felton L.L. Rules Test**
All are True or False
1. ___ The hands are considered part of the bat.
 2. ___ The batter-runner must turn to his right after over-running first base.
 3. ___ If the batter breaks his wrists when swinging, it's a strike.
 4. ___ The ball is dead on a foul-tip.
 5. ___ Tie goes to the runner.

Activities: Education

We have a safety mascot, Safety Sam the safety gorilla, who promotes safety to all our leagues. We have the "Safety Sam Club" where:

- *Pamphlets about bicycle safety, drug awareness and dangerous situations are distributed throughout the season;*

Little League® Safer

We instituted a “No Show-You Must Call” policy. This instructs all players that if they are not going to make a game or practice they must call their coach. If a player is a “no show” and does not call, the coach should call the player’s home. A child who is sent to a game or practice alone and never makes it there could be located faster this way.

*Brooklawn Athletic Association,
New York*

Microwave popcorn is used in place of conventional popcorn as it is much more sanitary and yields a safer method of preparation as there are no hot warmers, butter or oil which to be concerned.

Fort Belvoir LL, Virginia

Each manager is given a list of “eligible” volunteers so they know who can help and who, for lack of being on the list, cannot. This list is updated and redistributed as needed throughout the season. A copy of the list is posted at the concession stand.

Dr. Phillips LL, Florida

We provide food, free of charge for any ambulance personnel who comes and parks at our facility during their standby time.

Baytown North LL, Texas

Activities: Reporting

When giving out our Emergency Numbers for cell phone users, we give our local police’s number instead of 911, because 911 goes to the state police, so the local number is faster for emergencies.

Falmouth LL, Maine

We use an automated injury database to track our injuries. Injury reporting can be done electronically through this database.

Fairfax LL, Virginia

The Port St. Lucie American Little League has established a Safety Committee made of concerned individuals. Their role is to express ideas and to plan, implement and report on the status of current safety program at PSL American.

Port St. Lucie American LL, Florida

Equipment: Education

We have a TV and VCR in our clubhouse, and we have a library of 6 videos that children as well as coaches are encouraged to watch. This is a great substitute for practicing on a rainy day.

Naval Base LL, Virginia

There is a mandatory training for all users of the batting cage and pitching machine. The cage will be locked and a key will be needed for entrance. Keys are only issued to those certified to use the cage.

Hermosa Beach LL, California

The Virginia Beach Little League Safety Pro-Shop sells baseball safety equipment and home safety equipment. The purpose of the Safety Pro-Shop is to educate players and parents on available safety equipment and make the equipment accessible and affordable.

Virginia Beach LL, Virginia

We purchased an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The clinic trained volunteers on the use of the AED.

Several Leagues

Equipment: Compliance

To help protect our children from the consequences of ultraviolet ray exposure

we provide sunscreen with SPF 15 at our concession stand, free of charge for use at any time.

Penokee Range LL, Michigan

To keep ice packs from breaking in the team bag, we put them in old Tupperware® containers or a semi-disposable Glad® Ware container. This is also a convenient place to keep player’s telephone numbers and parents’ cell phone numbers.

*Penfield American/National LL,
New York*

We have created a baseball cleat recycling program to help provide cleats to less fortunate children. This program will help to prevent skidding and falling injuries on the base paths and infield clay surfaces.

*Northeast Garden Grove LL,
California*

Players are responsible to provide a change of clothes and a large plastic bag at all practices and games in case clothing becomes bloodstained. Players in bloodstained clothing will not be allowed to participate.

Southridge LL, California

Continued on page 6



Common Sense...continued from page 5

All managers will be provided a “Safety Top Ten” luggage tag to attach to each equipment bag. This tag will ensure easy access to the most important safety information for HWLL and will follow the team to every practice and game. Managers shall cover the information with their team at the start of season.
Hampton Wythe LL, Virginia

HWLL “Safety Top Ten”

1. Have first aid kit and be familiar with all items. Keep the “Injury Prevention” booklet in kit.
2. Have access to telephone or cell phone at practices and games.
3. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
4. Check field for hazards.
5. Players: Be alert! Keep eyes on the ball at all times.
6. Catchers wear helmet and mask with throat protector when warming up pitcher or catching fielding practice.
7. Majors and below: Only one player with a bat at any time! (Bat only used at the plate! (Exception: Coach-supervised batting drill.)
8. Majors and below: No head-first sliding, except when returning to a base.
9. Never leave kids unattended after practice or game.
10. Emergencies: Call 9-1-1!

HWLL Safety Officer — Randy Parrish
(123) 456-7890 (H); (987) 654-3210 (cell).
If emergency, include “911” after phone #.

All non-issued equipment brought to the park by managers, coaches or players must be checked and approved by the Equipment Director before it can be used in practice or a game.

Mishawaka Southwest LL, Indiana

Coaches are encouraged to use RIF balls at the first few practices, especially in Minor League, to allow players to learn proper fielding fundamentals and increase player’s confidence before using hard balls.

Marion LL, Virginia

Equipment: Reporting

Turn in any equipment found after the game and receive \$.05 worth of candy.

We have a large selection of \$.01-\$.05 candies to choose from.

Painesville Nat’l/American LL, Ohio

All of our Schutt one-size-fits-all helmets were sent to our supplier to replace all the inside foam padding. We experienced issues last year with the foam pads falling out of several helmets, so they have been replaced.

Bartlett National LL, Illinois

Facilities: Education

We have added “No Parking “ signs on our emergency gates and put marker flags on poles of emergency gates for ambulance and fire personnel to easily see in a crisis.

Cocoa LL, Florida

We have trained parents how to help the coaches groom the fields before each game, so that the fields will be safer.

Canyon View LL, Arizona

We have created a cross walk made up of chains with colored flags hanging on them. On the pavement below, painted in school bus yellow, are “walk” lines. This allows people to cross from one diamond to another without worrying about traffic.

Delta LL, Indiana

Facilities: Compliance

We have implemented the S.K.I.P. Plan (Safety “Kone” inspection Plan) for pre-game field inspection. Managers, coaches and umpires must walk the field prior to each game and pick up the 8 cones that have been placed on each of the bases and in the outfield positions. After each game, these cones must be replaced in the same spots.

Hillard LL, Florida

The parking lot is the most dangerous area for small children. The speed limit in the driveway entrance and all parking areas is not more than 5 mph and will be strictly enforced. The safety officer has purchased a radar gun and will be monitoring the parking lot.

Virginia Beach LL, Virginia

We have a First Aid Room that has been converted from an old equipment shed. It has running water, an extensive first aid kit, a backboard, and a cot for players experiencing heat exhaustion symptoms.

Arlington LL, Florida

Because most of our managers and coaches are Board Members, they are allowed to set a tab in the snack bar so that their players will always have drinking water available to them, even when they have forgotten their own at home. This account is paid monthly by the members.

Mt. Eden National LL, California

Each year during parent meeting day, the lightning detector siren is sounded so that parents and players can hear the siren and recognize the sound.

Braden River LL, Florida

We only allow water in our dugouts. Other food and drinks — for example: sports drinks, sodas, and candy — attract wasps and bees and can lead to stings and serious allergic reactions.

Several Leagues

Facilities: Reporting

We have arranged for field identification by global positioning. This gives each Little League participating in the project an assigned number for identification. When you call 9-1-1, give them your field number and they have your exact coordinates on file.

Exterior Lions LL, Pennsylvania

A “Requested Field Maintenance” list is posted at the complex and all interested parties are encouraged to make suggestions.

Abbott-O-Rabbit LL, Alaska

Whenever there is a question about the field conditions, the determining factors are the green and red flags flown at Borough Field:

Red flags — all fields are closed to play and practice;

Green flags — fields are open.

Florham Park LL, New Jersey



Safety Chatter

Q and A

Q “Would like to know what the minimum essential standard measurement for field lighting is and how this is measured, i.e., the device used and distance from light source or stanchion. We have a field that has a stanchion of lights that is under repair but the rest of the field is lighted where there appears to be sufficient lighting to conduct games. Need to know the measurement standard to determine feasibility of field.”

David Yanagihara

— via email

A The 2005 Little League Lighting Standards and Safety Audit will allow you to see if your lights meet Little League’s standards. Generally, lighting must be an average of 50 footcandles on the infield and an average of 30 footcandles on the outfield for lighting installed since July 1, 1992. Systems older than that, if they have 26 light fixtures, are allowed to continue to operate at an average of 30 footcandles on the infield and an average of 20 footcandles on the outfield, subject to NOT having been updated, as you are mentioning. Here's the exact reference: “Notice: Any upgrade or addition of lighting equipment to existing systems after July 1, 1992, must be done so that the systems will be in complete compliance with current standards.” In this case, current standards mean 50 fc/30 fc, which your field would now need to meet. This comes directly from the 2006 Little League Operating Manual (page 81) (See the entire “Artificial Lighting” section, pages 80-93).

The thing to remember about your eyes is that they are far better lenses than even the best camera’s. So what may appear to be “sufficient lighting to conduct games” to you standing on your field, may be far short of the standards, which have been set for the safe play for all players in Little League.

Q “What is the story about RIF baseballs? Are these Little League approved? Are they safer, and do they promote sound fundamentals?”

Scott Tessler

- via email

A Yes, reduced impact or soft core baseballs and softballs are approved for Regular Season use, as long as they meet the weight and dimensional standards of the official ball (see Rule 1.09 for these measurements). It is up to the league to determine what equipment they choose for the different age divisions of play. These reduced impact balls are only approved options for Regular Season (RS), and not Tournament (T).

As for promoting sound fundamentals, does flinching from a hardball grounder hit to a player promote sound fundamentals? Does jumping out of the box from fear of being hit by an inside pitch? Softer core balls help players increase their abilities due to better confidence, because of reduced fear of the pain and injury from being hit. This allows them to stand in and field a grounder when their instinct is to pull up and get out of the way, or to watch to see how close an inside pitch will be to determine if they should swing, rather than just jumping out of the batters box.

ASAP highly recommends the use of reduced impact balls. As studies have shown, they reduce both the likelihood and severity of injuries, from batted balls, pitched balls and thrown balls. Please see the July, 2005 issue of the *ASAP News* for more on these kinds of balls (<http://www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/newsletters.asp>).

Q “Does Little League have a list of approved breakaway bases? Brand names and model numbers? We need to get two new sets of bases this year so we wanted to get the right kind of breakaway’s so we are in compliance with the 2008 mandatory change.”

Valarie Walton

Redrock Little League NV D-4

A The specifications haven't changed from the regular bases as far as size goes. The specific style or model would be up to your league, as long as they meet the size requirements for any bases. Little League recommends getting started now with the conversion process. Rogers® Break-Away Bases® are the brand that Little League International uses at Lamade Stadium for the Little League World Series (<http://www.rogersusainc.com/>). These type have a bottom portion that fits into the ground brackets of the existing Hollywood-style permanent bases, allowing easy conversion to the break-away style bases. Two other bases, Soft Touch Bases and Magnetic Super Base are also approved for use. For information on these, go to: <http://www.littleleague.org/common/equipment> and click on “Plates and Bases” in the left navigational bar. The 2006 rules changes highlight exactly what standard the breakaway bases must meet in the 2008 season (<http://www.littleleague.org/leagueofficials/forms.asp>).



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Reviewing national safety plans

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First-hand account of one young man's personal campaign

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Locals make their Little Leagues safer

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Your calls and emails answered

Prepared for an Injury? Use ICE: 'In Case of Emergency'

Cell phones are in use every day, attached to people everywhere they go. So, it makes sense if a person is injured, their cell phone would be nearby. With that in mind, a British paramedic has come up with a plan called ICE — In Case of Emergency — which puts your emergency numbers in your cell phone. So if you're hurt, emergency personnel would know how to contact family members.

It's a great idea, especially to allow emergency responders to know whom to contact if the person is unconscious.

The ICE campaign was born after a paramedic in Cambridge become frustrated when he couldn't find a patient's next of kin. The promotion took off after the London terror bombings and e-mails about ICE began to circulate on the Internet.

Although most U.S. hospitals do not have a policy about utilizing a patient's cell phone, many say it's a practice that could be helpful.

*- submitted by Bill Schaeffer, ADA
California District 4*

No Camera Phones Allowed in Changing or Rest Rooms

Cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDA's) can now carry cameras as a part of the device. These allow users the ability to secretly photograph areas in front of them, while appearing to those around them only to be dialing a number.

The ability to snap photos without others knowing has raised concerns for local leagues, where bathrooms, showers or changing rooms can create an opportunity for people to photograph others, including young children, in partial or full undress. The popularity of these camera phones and PDA's makes it a good idea to create policies and signage restricting phone use in sensitive areas.

Some recommended sign wording: "Prohibited — Use of cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDA's) or cameras in all recreation facility change-rooms."

*- idea drawn from an
Ontario Recreation Facilities
Association (ORFA) Facility Alert*

Non-Profit Org.
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