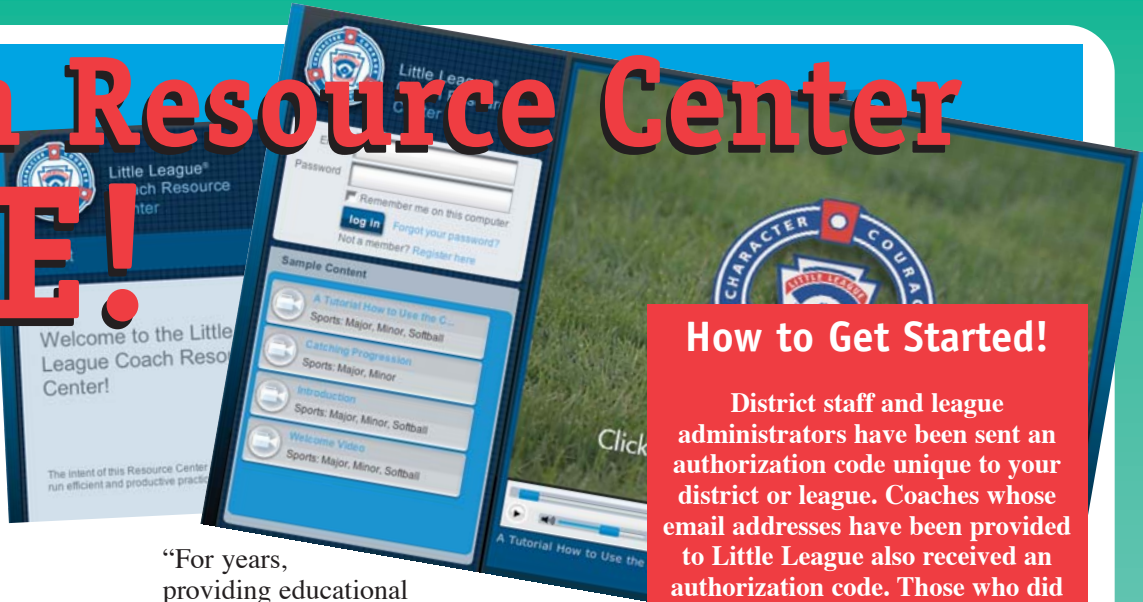


ASAP news



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

Coach Resource Center LIVE!



Little League provides tools to help your volunteers do it better.

Whether you have coaches who've been at it for a decade, or are just starting out, there is ALWAYS something new to learn: How to keep it fun, keep it moving, keep it safe, keep it competitive.

That's why Little League International has created a free online service, the Coach Resource Center, to help managers and coaches with skills development, drills ideas, planning assistance, and more. All to help you train and develop the best volunteers in a task, which while undoubtedly rewarding, is also challenging on many levels.

"Being a Little League coach is no easy task," said Stephen D. Keener, President and Chief Executive Officer of Little League Baseball and Softball.

"For years, providing educational resources and materials for our organization's volunteers has helped to maintain and grow the program.

"It is our expectation that The Little League Coach Resource Center will enrich the experiences for both the adults and the children," Mr. Keener said. "Coaches and managers will now have the full educational resources of the Little League program behind them, which will breed confidence in what they're teaching, and give the players the opportunity to excel through better instruction."

This resource center provides online articles and interactive videos to promote the goals of youth development, both individually and as through teamwork, and the Little

How to Get Started!

District staff and league administrators have been sent an authorization code unique to your district or league. Coaches whose email addresses have been provided to Little League also received an authorization code. Those who did not receive an email may simply contact their league president to obtain their league's code. Once the code is obtained, the user simply visits www.LittleLeagueCoach.org to sign up and get started! Anyone who signs up will receive a 20 percent discount on selected apparel at the Little League on-line store at www.LittleLeagueStore.net through April.

League philosophy of keeping it positive, fun, and safe for all players. Go to www.LittleLeagueCoach.org for more information on this exciting new opportunity.

"From the first Little League season in 1939, until today, Little League managers and coaches have used good intentions and their childhood experiences to teach children the games of baseball and softball," Nick Caringi, Senior Director of Operations and Education for Little League International, said. "The information and video presentations available at this site are time-tested and relevant for anyone coaching Little League. It's our intent that the Little League Coach Resource Center serve as a first-class educational tool for managers and coaches at the local league level."

SEND IN YOUR SAFETY PLAN!

The final deadline is May 1 for all safety plans to be postmarked for delivery to Little League International, for your league to be eligible for the league cash award. This is an **annual** requirement: Just because you sent your plan last year does not cover your league this year.

Submit a copy of your entire safety plan that you distributed to your volunteers, plus the filled-out registration form and facility survey. Make sure you reference somewhere the type of background

checks you do on volunteers (npsor.org, ChoicePoint.com, etc.), including the 2008 Volunteer Application Form (or state that you use the 2008 form). You can go online to check your plan's status at <http://www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/plans.asp?cid=5>.

The mailing address is:
Little League International
539 US Route 15 Hwy.
PO Box 3485
Williamsport, PA 17701-0485

With Choice Comes Responsibility and Accountability

Is your league doing the most it can to protect your players and volunteers?

Choice on Background Checks

By now you've heard how Little League has given local leagues the choice of how to conduct the required background checks for the protection of the children in your league.

Leagues may use the minimum requirement of conducting a nationwide check of each state's Sex Offender Registry (SOR) like the Department of Justice's National Public Sex Offender Registry check at www.nsopr.gov. Or leagues may choose to go beyond the minimum check by using a service that looks at all states' SORs and includes criminal background information as well.

Little League feels so strongly that leagues should go beyond the bare minimum that it has worked with a national database company, ChoicePoint, to provide 80 free checks through this service to all leagues and districts across the country. It has also negotiated a low price of just \$1 for any additional checks beyond the first 80, and continues to work with ChoicePoint to improve the experience of leagues, making the service easier and quicker.

Why? Because what your league chooses matters.

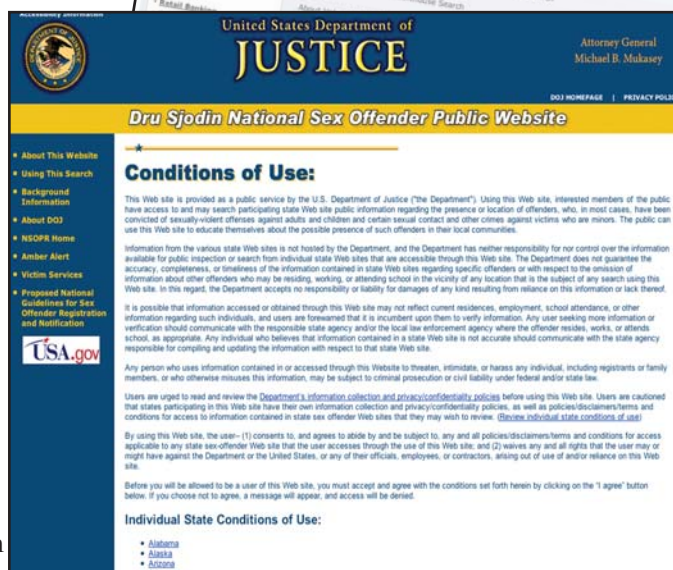
Responsibility for Coaches

Leagues can choose which route they follow, but have responsibility for that choice. Leagues must verify that they have conducted a

background check on all coaches, managers, board of directors, and any volunteers or others who "provide a regular service to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players and teams."

Your board then must use the information from the background checks to decide who you will entrust with your community's children.

Does your league want to trust the minimum requirement? The NSOPR only checks 1.7 million records, while the ChoicePoint database checks against 200 million records. Over 100 times the criminal records to check against means a more thorough background check, so your league can make the most informed decisions. You are responsible for selecting the best people as volunteers in your league. Are you using the best tools to do the best job of this?



Accountability for Checks, Choice

Leagues must always use the official Little League Volunteer Application, and require volunteers to fully complete the form as well as submit a government-issued photo ID, to verify the accuracy of the supplied information.

No matter what background check you use, it will only check the information you supply. If a potential volunteer even just misspells his name, the background check can't find any crimes for the proper spelling of the name. Double-check the spelling of the name, address and birth date provided, to make sure it matches the government-issued photo ID.

Your league is ultimately accountable for the decisions you collectively make. If you allow a volunteer access to your community's children and something happens, you may have to explain why you didn't check the identification more thoroughly, or why you didn't pursue the most comprehensive background check possible. Especially when it's free, or for larger leagues a very low cost.

80 Free Checks per Charter!

Remember, your league has 80 free background checks through ChoicePoint already paid for by Little League International.

If you are a large multi-managed league with more than one charter, Little League is supplying you with 80 free background checks per league chartered. Don't miss out on this valuable

Little League benefit!

Financial Safety: Make Funds as Safe as Your Kids

Embezzling is Big Time Crime

- In March, a sixty-year-old woman pleaded guilty to embezzling over \$300,000 from the Scottsdale, Ariz., school where she worked. Reports stated the woman had stolen the money to pay off gambling debts. It was only discovered after auditors found checks depositing school funds into the woman's bank account. She worked in the school district's risk management office.
- A 43-year-old Saginaw, Ore., City Hall worker pleaded guilty in March to embezzling over \$72,000 in taxes and destroying the receipts to cover it up. The city reportedly has put improved procedures in place to keep this from happening again.
- A 53-year-old Connecticut bookkeeper was being investigated for a third time in March, with another organization whose accounts she handled claiming money is missing. The woman is serving an eight-month jail term for embezzling \$152,000 from a local agency, and was to be sentenced an additional term for embezzling over \$14,000 from a local cemetery association. An alumni association now has discovered it is missing at least \$5,000 in funds the woman oversaw.
- An Arlington, Texas, non-profit housing agency director was sentenced in March to one year in federal prison for embezzling \$35,000 in grant money for personal cars and boats.
- A University of Georgia Extension Service secretary was charged in March with embezzling over \$52,000 from her employer. The 10-year employee is alleged to have forged checks and tampered with evidence to cover up the funds' theft.
- A county Economic Development Council in Washington state is suing its former bookkeeper, alleging the woman embezzled over \$180,000 in a two-and-a-half year span. The council's executive director reported that the theft exceeded the group's insurance coverage.

Implement financial safeguards now to protect against embezzlement.

When it comes to your local League, volunteers can be scarce; so is money.

Do you have good controls in place to ensure your league's funds are secure? If you do even a quick search on Google under "embezzlement", you will see organizations and businesses from California to Connecticut are seeing long-time volunteers or staff be charged with helping themselves to funds. Most by people you would never suspect. (See side bar.)

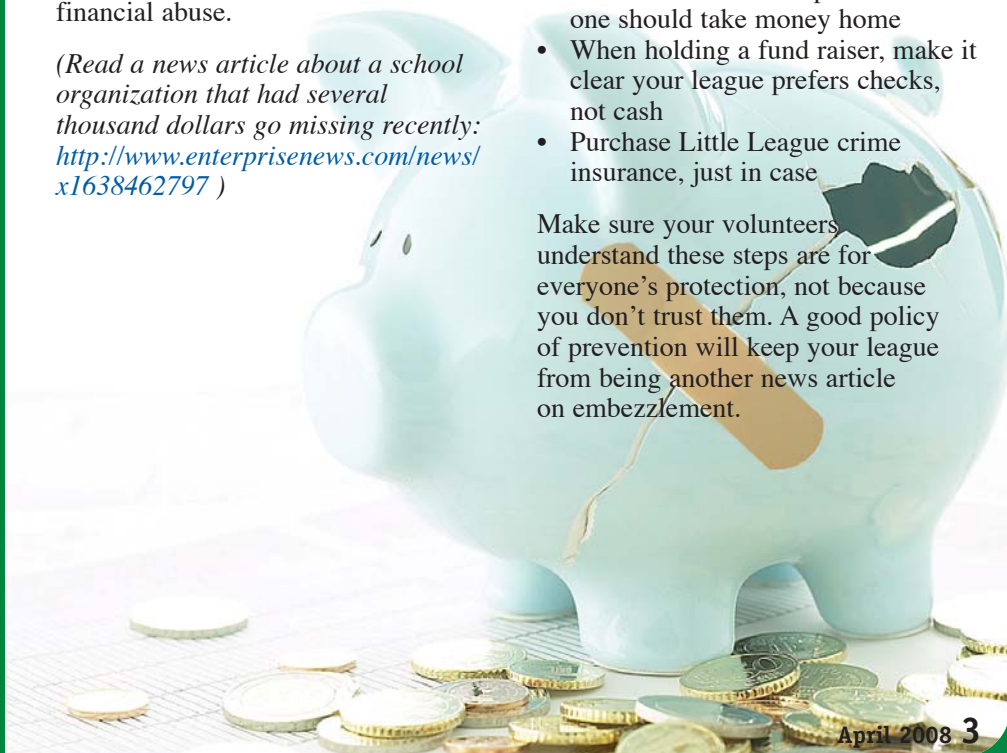
How do you know your league won't be in this situation? Who currently sees your financial statements and how often? If you have an ATM or debit card tied your league account, what are the rules for its use, and who oversees the withdrawals? If you don't have more than one person both writing checks or making debit purchases and overseeing the bank statements, your league is ripe for financial abuse.

(Read a news article about a school organization that had several thousand dollars go missing recently: <http://www.enterpriseneews.com/news/x1638462797>)

Here are some tips to help keep your funds working for your league's kids.

- Implement and require two approved board members' signatures on all checks
- Look for a qualified league member (accountant or bookkeeper) and ask that person to be league treasurer
- If the league has an ATM/debit/credit card, make sure the authorized individual to use it is different than the person who records/oversee statements
- Ask local accountants for best practices to follow in your area for financial safeguards
- Create an audit committee to review all bank statements and transactions
- Have a board member not approved to sign checks review all transactions/statements
- When counting money, either from the concession stand or a fund-raiser, make sure at least two people are present to count it at the same time and see that it's deposited
- Implement a strict policy of all deposits being made the same day, even to a 24-hour drop box – no one should take money home
- When holding a fund raiser, make it clear your league prefers checks, not cash
- Purchase Little League crime insurance, just in case

Make sure your volunteers understand these steps are for everyone's protection, not because you don't trust them. A good policy of prevention will keep your league from being another news article on embezzlement.



First Aid Kits for All Teams?

"I would like to know if there are any Little League rules relating to first aid kits that must be available during practices and games. In particular, our league puts a first aid kit in each equipment bag. We are now replacing some items from last year and I am wondering if we must have a standardized first aid kit or if the Costco (or Sam's Club) special would work."

– Karen Mitchell, via email

The requirement for having a qualified safety program and earning the league cash award is to provide a first aid kit for each team, but not a specific type or brand. It's up to your league to determine the necessary contents for the health of your players. The reason each team must have a kit is that often coaches will take the opportunity to practice somewhere (open field or school play yard) there isn't a formal complex building, like a concession stand, maintenance shed or other place a "large" first aid kit would likely be kept for everyone to use.

The main goal with any first aid kit is to make sure what it contains is adequate for the majority of injuries the team would experience. These would include the bumps, bruises, skins, and scrapes with instant ice packs or actual ice, bandages, gauze and wraps; clean water, or something to clean out a cut or scrape; and similar items.



If you provide a minimum kit for each team, it does make sense to have a main place for more advanced requirements (eye wash stand, tooth saver liquid for knocked out tooth, splints, etc.). Of course in most situations your volunteers are going to call for an ambulance if a player or adult is hurt so severely they exceed the contents of the first aid kit.

ASAP has published some examples of good first aid kits in the past, and have a sample provided in the ASAP section of Little League's web site:
www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/requirements.asp

Incident Forms Improve Safety

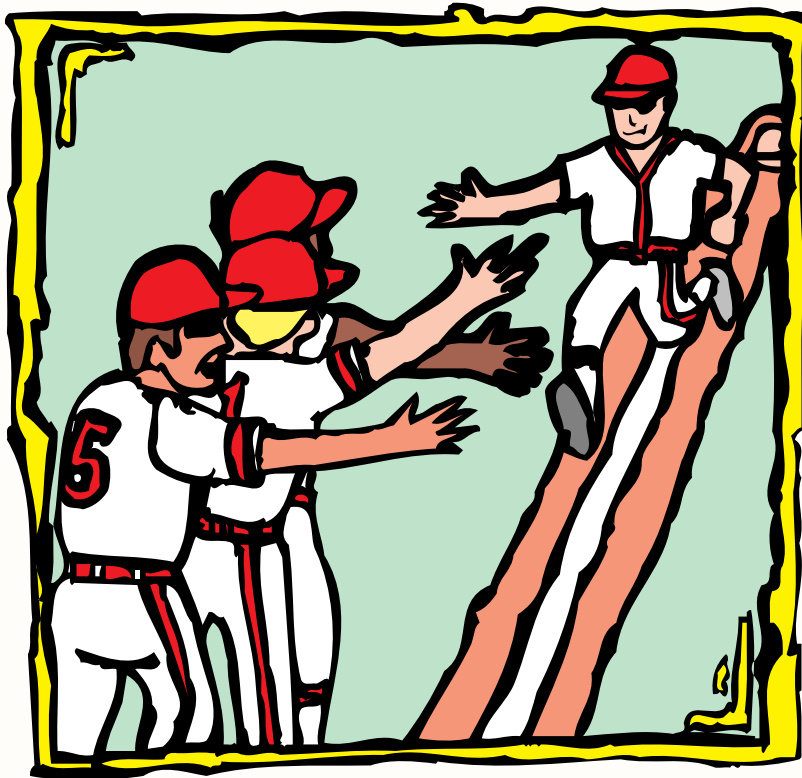
In general, the safety officer should write up an Accident Notification Form and file it with Little League International any time someone is injured enough they have to see a doctor, either in an emergency setting or office visit. Sometimes accidents don't appear to cause damage, but later the child (or adult volunteer) develops problems that stem from that earlier injury. If you don't document the original incident, you won't have records to use.

If it is a near-miss or other incident (bumps and bruises note), you can file those for your own league's use in tracking where and how incidents are happening. The Injury Tracking Form is for this internal league use. Then over time you can look to see if a certain field has more than its share of injuries and needs some maintenance, or if a certain division (or a certain coach) needs better training.

The information on the Accident Notification Form is on Little League's website at:
<http://www.littleleague.org/common/insurance/forms.asp>

The website has the official form mentioned above, as well as instructions on how to fill it out and where to send it. This allows the league to capture the original information, and not have to worry that someone is trying to use your Little League insurance for a non-Little League accident.

Keep It Clean!



REMEMBER:

"Use good sportsmanship in everything you do on the field: your attitude, your actions and your words!"

Regulation XIV – Field Decorum


- a) "The actions of players, managers, coaches, umpires and league officials must be above reproach . . ."
- b) "The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches or dugouts."

Make Safety Awareness an Overall Priority

Leave Playing to the Players

Here's a tip to pass on to your coaches, learned the hard way in a California Little League. Remind coaches that their job is to coach players, not to play themselves.

Alhambra American Little League Safety Officer Jack Holguin reported a coach broke his ankle this spring trying to demonstrate proper sliding to his players. The coach was wearing cleats, and while demonstrating sliding in the grass, the cleats of his leading foot became caught in the grass. The force of his body moving forward against his foot, halted by his cleats, was sufficient to fracture his ankle.



This injury, while unfortunate, could have been avoided if the adult had not tried to “show” how it is done. In similar situations around the country, adults put themselves at risk by attempting to replace players in practice drills, instead of explaining the technique and having the players

perform it. Make sure your coaches learn from this accident, and leave the playing to players.

“Common Sense” ideas from leagues like yours on this activity:

- “During sliding practice, bases should be located away from the base anchoring system,”
– District 3, Michigan, *Safety Code for Little League*.
- “Tennis shoes are suggested for beginning sliding and tagging practice to avoid injury . . .”
– several leagues.



Open with Safety!

Use Opening Day activities to promote safety.

This year, help advance your safety efforts with some training aimed at your players and their families. Invite the local police to conduct bicycle safety training, drug and alcohol resistance education or other age-appropriate information to your players on Opening Day.

Many leagues use this family-oriented day to promote safety efforts, both for specific ball-playing injuries, and for general well-family education. Efforts to raise awareness of healthy eating habits, proper seat-belt use/not to ride in truck beds, and to tell a trusted adult if anyone acts improperly toward them or another child are just some ways leagues are making their entire league environment “safer for the kids.”

This is also a great time to recruit team safety parents, divisional safety coordinators or safety committee members.

Here are some ideas leagues have submitted on this:

“We made a community safety awareness opening day. We’re making it community-wide to get more people involved in our league.”

SW Norwalk LL, California

“The sheriff’s department talked about drug and alcohol abuse and what to do in emergency situations such as finding old needles.”

Nederland North LL, Texas

Promote Safety Empowerment

Make everyone feel part of your safety effort.

Disengage-able bases on non-league fields?

Q: “The question came up regarding the (new disengage-able) base rule on non-League owned fields? Are we responsible to mandate the use of disengage-able bases on non-league fields, such as school or privately owned fields? Please let me know whatever you can about this issue!”

*Rich Kellar, safety officer
South Snohomish Little League*

A: Yes, all fields you use must have bases that disengage from their anchors, whether your league owns the field or you just are allowed its use. This would include game sites and practice sites. The rule (page 46) states: Rule 1.06 ... “Leagues are required to ensure that first, second and third bases will disengage their anchor.” It does not specify the field’s ownership, and like all Little League rules, applies both to practice and games.

If you do not own the field, and are concerned that the school or other body may not see the value in replacing the bases with the disengage-able anchor style, I would use the material on Little League’s website and in past issues of *ASAP News* to help them see how much this is going to reduce injuries. And not just for your league’s players, but everyone who uses the fields. Here are some links to more information on disengage-able bases:

http://www.littleleague.org/media/disengage-able_base_10-03-06.asp

<http://www.littleleague.org/asap/tipdec05.asp>

<http://www.littleleague.org/asap/tipjul06.asp>

“One of our Little League players was swinging a bat outside of the backstop, outside of the dugout; the bat slipped out of his hand and hit a spectator in the head. The spectator’s left ear was lacerated, he had a blow to the head, and his glasses broke. He went to the ER and was treated there. Is the spectator insured by our Little League coverage or does he watch the game at his own risk? If he is covered, will you please let us know what we need to do to follow through with the claim?”


*Sara Speicher, District Safety Officer
Minnesota District 1*

From a safety standpoint, this is the reason Little League removed the on-deck position for the Little League (Majors), Minors and Tee Ball Divisions. Young children do not pay enough attention to people around them, and are not careful when swinging a bat. Leagues need to have policies that will keep situations like this from occurring.

You should report this injury on your Liability Insurance form. Unlike the player accident policy, each individual claim for liability is reviewed on the individual merits of the case. If the league did everything it could to stop this from occurring (volunteers keeping players on the field and not swinging bats), the league would not be at fault for the injury.

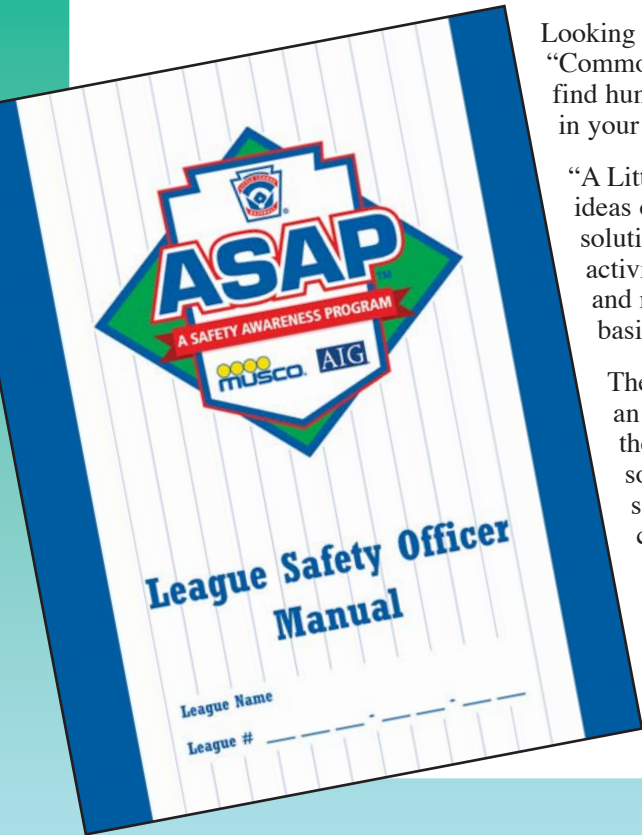


This injury provides an opportunity to raise safety awareness on this issue. Awareness and empowerment are key. Work with everyone to be aware of the potential for injury when someone is allowed (even through inobservance) to break the rules. Empower volunteers and parents to step in and stop unsafe actions. A poster on this topic is online (“Don’t Swing It”): www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/signs.asp.

<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>• ATHLETIC FIELD LOCK COMBINATIONS/KEY TO OR OTHER INFORMATION:</p>	<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>• ATHLETIC FIELD LOCATIONS/DIRECTIONS: Names/addresses and directions of athletic field locations</p>	<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>• ATHLETIC TEAM MEDICAL HISTORY CONDITION REPORT: Names of athletes with possible medical conditions (parent contact information – conditions, allergies & medications)</p>
<p>• COACHES ROLE IN EMERGENCY: CHECK – CALL – CARE</p> <p>1. Approach, but do not move injured person – maintain position.</p> <p>2. Immediate CHECK of athlete or spectator. Airway – Breathing – Circulation – Bleeding)</p> <p>3. CALL emergency phone number & give proper directions to site. (Police – EMS – Fire)</p> <p>4. Make sure you have someone in charge of directing emergency vehicles to field.</p> <p>5. CARE for injured person. (CPR – Rescue Breathing – Control Bleeding – Immobilize)</p> <p>6. NEVER leave an injured person alone. Stay until EMS arrives to the scene.</p> <p>7. EMERGENCY SUPPLY NEEDS: First Aid Kit – Phone – Blankets for Warming – AED Unit</p> <p>Important Note: All athletic league coaches should be required to be trained and certified in CPR & First Aid. AED training should be required for those athletic leagues with AED units on property.</p>	 <p>Coach Emergency Action Card</p>	

The National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) provides a Coach Emergency Action Card to help coaches know exactly what to do in an emergency. Use this as a guide to create your own card, or download it from the **Resources for Parents and Coaches** at <http://www.nata.org/consumer/index.htm>.

Find Ideas in 'Common Sense' and 'Play It Safe'




Looking for a good idea to improve safety at your league? Have you checked out the “Common Sense” and “Play It Safe” sections of the Safety Officer Manual? You’ll find hundreds of even one and two line ideas and suggestions for improving safety in your league.

“A Little Common Sense About Safety” section is packed with hundreds of great ideas originating from leagues just like yours, who saw a safety need and found a solution to it. With sections on improving your league’s safety in the areas of activities, equipment, and facilities, through heightened education, compliance, and reporting, it’s not about new rules, it’s getting everyone to understand the basics of safety underlying so much of the Little League approach.

The “Play It Safe” section is a practical approach to leadership responsibility in an effective Little League safety program. This guide walks volunteers through the ideals of safety awareness and Little League, and why the two are joined so firmly. The information includes practical information on assessing unsafe situations, and working with your volunteers to resolve these in a constructive way for the league. While everyone has a role to follow in a league, everyone must work together for the league to be successful in its efforts to continually monitor and improve on safety.

These resources are located at <http://www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/index.asp> under the 2008 ASAP Safety Program header, “A Little Common Sense About Safety” and “Play It Safe.”

PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DES MOINES, IA
PERMIT NO. 4053



539 US Route 15 Hwy
PO Box 3485
Williamsport, PA 17701-0485

ASAP News
ASAP News is a service of
Little League Baseball®
and Softball
facilitated and published by
Little League®,
© April 2008,
and Musco Lighting

24 Hour Hotline:
800/811-7443

Fax: 641/672-1996
E-mail: asap@musco.com
All materials in the ASAP
News may be reprinted by
chartered Little Leagues
without prior permission.