



***Excellence on and off the field***

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**Parent & Player Handbook – Revised August, 2014**

### **Gamers' Mission & Philosophy**

***Our mission is to develop passionate and skilled baseball players to compete at the highest level nationally, while using baseball as a platform to teach important life lessons to young men in a team environment that is positive, challenging and fun.***

After decades in the game, at literally every level of competition, the Gamer's directors and coaches believe that ***baseball can be a superb teacher of important life lessons***. Trophies get stored away in dusty closets, scores are forgotten and statistic records are swapped for taxpayer records. But, the baseball experience can teach lessons far beyond the chalk lines.

Our coaching perspective is that undue importance is placed on winning and individual success in our sporting culture, particularly at the youth level. While we recognize that winning adds to the experience of playing the game, we also are aware of how its over emphasis can cripple the development of young ballplayers. We see too many coaches and programs with shortsighted goals.

We believe that winning is the by-product of a team-oriented developmental process in which individuals commit themselves to the pursuit of excellence - both in effort and performance. Competing against yourself to improve every day, to master mental and physical skills, is the essence of competitive greatness. Excellence knows no opponents. Excellence is its own reward.

We are interested in developing young student-athletes whose most noticeable attribute is their desire to play hard and work harder. In the baseball world, this is the definition of a "Gamer." When Gamers are gathered together in an environment that stresses the pursuit of excellence, special things can happen. We will win games, but as a by-product of this developmental approach. We anchor our philosophy on these principles.

## **Gamers Program Goals**

Our program has five goals that we use to measure our success:

1. To challenge each student-athlete at levels he has yet to experience athletically, while simultaneously giving each ballplayer a fun and unforgettable athletic experience.
2. To develop and push each player to the limit of his baseball potential and help players realize their baseball dreams.
3. To develop a style of play that is unique -- a "Gamer" style of play that emphasizes "the pursuit of excellence" and "effort over outcome."
4. To aid in the emotional and personal development of each of our Gamers - to help them understand:
  - The importance of commitment
  - The value of relationships & thinking outside of themselves
  - The need to take responsibility for their own actions
  - The benefit of a disciplined work ethic
5. To develop a Gamer Culture, shared by players, coaches, parents and fans, that is grounded in the principles of The Positive Coaching Alliance and builds a positive atmosphere of support before, during and after all team events.

## **Baseball Program Overview**

High level baseball instruction, from the best instructors in the region, is at the core of the Gamers Program. The baseball part of our program is significantly greater than any other program in the region. It is for players that love baseball and includes the following important components:

Winter Program (note: 10&11u program has modifications to this core program)

- Twelve 2 1/2 indoor practice sessions taught by Gamers lead instructors. These sessions cover pitching skills, catching skills, defensive skills and hitting skills.
- Twelve 60 minute performance training session. These sessions cover core strength, speed, quickness and agility.
- Twelve 2 1/2 hour "rep sessions" on weeknights that repeat key elements from the prior practice.
- Fitness testing and Weightlifting program for high school age players.

- Clinics that cover important topics like sports nutrition, mental skills, hitting skills, arm health, and college baseball recruiting.
- Video clinics, presented through the Gamers website, that cover pitching, hitting and fielding fundamentals.

Spring/Summer Program

- Outdoor “mini-camps” to teach team defensive plays and situations.
- 3 day “Spring Training Camp” to cover all aspects of baseball fundamentals to all age groups. This is run like a major league camp.
- Weekly “day practice” sessions with Gamers lead instructors during the summer.
- Weekly team practice sessions with team coaches.
- Open cage time at All-Star Performance for extra work.

Spring/Summer Game Schedule:

<b>Age Group</b>	U10-12	U13	U14	High School
<b>No. of Games*</b>	40-55	50-60	50-60	40-50
<b>Length of Season</b>	17 weeks April 1 - Aug 1	17 weeks April 1 - Aug 1	17 weeks April 1 - Aug 1	10 weeks May 21 - Aug 1

\* Depends on the cooperation of local weather.

11u-14u teams are coached by a combination of either volunteer coaches or professional coaches. We play in the most competitive tournaments that we can find and travel about 3 times per year within a 4-8 hour drive (12u teams go to Cooperstown also)

High School age teams are professionally coached by experienced coaches that are carefully selected to meet our program goals. Our HS age teams play in the best tournaments in the country. Unfortunately, this means a lot of travel, ranging from 5-8 weekends,

All Gamers coaches have extensive training in the Gamers system and are certified as a “Double Goal Coach” by the Positive Coaching Alliance.

**Fall Game Schedule:**

Fall baseball is an optional part of the Gamers program. But, given the short baseball season in St. Louis, we recommend that players participate in Fall baseball if they are not playing football or soccer.

<b>Age Group</b>	U11&12	U13	U14	High School
<b>No. of Games</b>	15-20	15-20	15-20	25
<b>Length of Season</b>	6 weeks Sept-Oct.	6 weeks Sept-Oct.	6 weeks Sept-Oct.	6-8 weeks Sept-Oct.

**Life Lesson Program**

The Gamers life lesson program is as structured and detailed as the baseball program. It includes the following key elements:

- Twelve week program on the Gamers Pyramid of Success (during Winter workouts).
- Mental skills program, through a combination of clinics and online training.
- Academic Review Program, which happens two times per year.
- Tools for team coaches to use in post-game and post-practice talks to emphasize key life lesson themes.

**College Baseball Process**

Most of our high school age Gamers want to play baseball in college and potentially beyond. Currently, there is an “information gap” in the youth baseball community about how to pursue college baseball opportunities. A number of organizations and businesses have formed to take advantage of this “information gap” for profit, and sell the dream of college baseball to un-informed parents and players. The St. Louis Gamers is a non-profit organization; we don’t sell dreams.

Our goal is to close this information gap for our players/parents. The simple fact is that your college baseball opportunities will largely be determined by three things that you have control over:

- Physical baseball skills and athleticism
- Academic performance in high school
- Mental make-up and attitude

The Gamers College Baseball Process is built on the following core principles:

- Academics and a college degree are the number one priority in this process. Your playing career will eventually end. A college degree is something you will always have.
- The most important challenge is finding the right “fit” with a college baseball program.

The “right fit” includes:

- Baseball skills and athletic ability
- Academic skills and goals

- Personal interests
- Social and geographic interests
- It is essential that the student-athlete be proactive in the college baseball process. It takes initiative, desire and some extra work. This is a process that you need to take ownership of – it is not something that someone else can do for you.

There are six fundamental elements in the Gamers College Baseball Process

1. Physical development – you must develop the baseball skills and athleticism to compete in advanced baseball. Physical tools are the starting point of this process.
2. Mental development – you must continue to build and develop the personal characteristics, maturity and mental skills required to succeed in advanced baseball.
3. Academics – good grades and good test scores open up lots of doors in college baseball.
4. Research – what colleges are potentially the “right fit”
5. Communication – college coaches want to focus their time on players that express a strong interest in their program. They want you to communicate with them.
6. Exposure – coaches/scouts need to see you play. This requires a combination of:
  - Exposure tournaments (Perfect Game, DiamondSports, etc..)
  - College camps
  - Showcase events
7. Marketing – players need an active marketing program that includes letters, player profiles, videos, etc...

The Gamers program provides training in this process for players and parents.

Finally, the Gamers program has a very strong network of relationships throughout college baseball and professional scouting. This is built on the decades of professional baseball experience in our lead instructors and directors, combined with direct experience in coaching college baseball, running showcase events, and interacting with literally hundreds of college coaches on an annual basis. We have the credibility and relationships to reach every college program in the country.

### **Player Eligibility**

A prospective player becomes a Gamer upon:

- Try-out - to establish baseball skills, athleticism and potential
- Understanding and committing to the Gamer mission and goals
- Agreement to contribute to Gamer culture & atmosphere and adhere to Gamer rules, policies and style of play.
- Payment of fees

Gamers players are continuously being evaluated by the coaching staff and program directors – both for baseball skills and “Gamer Qualities”. This evaluation process is continuous; it starts

with the first day of Winter practice and does not end until the last game of the season. We use the following criteria to evaluate players:

#### Baseball Attributes

- Athleticism to compete nationally at the highest level of youth baseball
- Above average or potential for above average baseball skills
  - Throwing
  - Fielding/Catching
  - Hitting
  - Running
  - Pitching

#### Gamers Attributes

- Passion for baseball (and commitment to put in the time required)
- High level of energy and enthusiasm
- Ability and willingness to learn and apply baseball instruction
- Leadership/communication skills
- Mental toughness
- Competitive fire =>intensity and desire
- Willingness to work hard

Towards the end of each season, we will assess each player in the program and determine whether or not the Gamers program remains a good fit. In some cases, we may determine that the player's baseball skills will not allow him to compete at the highest levels nationally. In other cases, we may determine that a player does not have the mental make-up required to be a Gamer.

One of three outcomes will result from this player assessment:

1. The player will be invited back to the program the following year, without the need to tryout.
2. The player will be invited to go through the tryout process again.
3. The player will not be invited back the following year.

In most cases, we expect Gamers players to remain in the program for multiple years. But, there are no promises. Our goal is to maintain at least 75% of the players in the program as they advance from one year to the next.

## **Rules, Regulations and Policies**

### **Our Gamer Culture**

We are extremely proud and protective of the positive culture we have created around our program. We have high expectations – of each other, our players, our coaches and are parents.

### **Commitment**

One of the greatest lessons we can teach our Gamers is a proper sense of commitment. We expect that playing for the Gamers will be a substantial commitment of time and resources — one that we intend to match with our pledge to develop each ballplayer. We also know that many of our players are heavily committed to school and extracurricular activities. While we support these activities, we expect Gamer commitments to be a priority over non-crucial activities in each player's life. This commitment level will increase as the ballplayer gets older and rises through the ranks of our program.

### **Priorities**

The Gamers teams will compete at the highest level. To do this, baseball needs to be a high priority to Gamer players and parents. Not the highest priority – certainly Family, Church and Academics are higher priorities than baseball. During baseball season, baseball needs to be the number 1 sports priority for Gamers players. And, to develop and excel as a baseball player, baseball needs to take precedence over many activities that currently compete for the attention of teenage boys. As a Gamer player, baseball needs to be a higher priority than “hanging out” with friends, video games, Facebook and chatting, and other similar activities that do not contribute to overall athleticism and physical health.

### **Timeliness**

We will emphasize the importance of being on time for all scheduled events. We realize that, in many cases, the players will not be driving themselves and that the demands placed on parents are enormous. So we need to work together to teach the importance of timeliness. Those that arrive late, stroll in with shoes untied or shirts un-tucked will be considered in violation of Gamer rules.

### **Winter Workouts & Multi-sport Athletes**

Winter workouts are a fundamental part of the Gamers program. The winter is a time when we are able to focus on individual skill building and mechanical adjustments. It is also a time for players to develop the athleticism required to compete in advanced baseball. While we encourage players to play multiple sports as long as possible, winter and preseason workouts for baseball are essential and players need to make the time available to continue to improve.

During our Winter program, we will arrange for alternative times for multi-sport athletes to continue to develop baseball skills in the offseason.

## **Communication**

It is our policy that each Gamers player communicates directly to coaches whenever possible. Gamers (of all ages) will be expected to communicate issues involving missed events, team-related topics (including playing time & assignments), uniform problems, etc. directly to coaches. The chain of command for dealing with these and other issues is as follows:

1. Player speaks to assistant or head coach
2. Player speaks to Gamers' Director (Mark Gallion, Matt Whiteside, Scott Cooper or Dave Pregon)
3. Parent speaks to assistant or head coach
4. Parent speaks to Gamers' Director (Mark Gallion, Matt Whiteside, Scott Cooper or Dave Pregon)

While lines of communication between families and our coaching staff and directors will remain open at all times, this chain of communication must be used first – especially on matters relating to playing time and on-field behavior. We want players to learn to take the responsibility for communicating directly with their coaches – this is an important life lesson.

## **Uniforms**

For both indoor and outdoor practices, there will be a strict dress code outlined in detail. The specified uniform is required to be worn properly and treated with respect. For both practices and games, Gamers are to take responsibility for their uniform and equipment. Uniform violations are subject to sanctions.

## **Pre-Game and Post-Game Activities**

The Gamers pre-game routine is run like a 90 minute practice session and is a critically important part of our program. Over the course of the season, the extra reps, ab work, throwing program and other elements of our pre-game practice will help separate our players. All players are expected to arrive on time for this pre-game practice. If you are going to be late, please let your coach know in advance.

Similarly, the post-game routine is an important part of our program. A lot of conditioning work is done following the game. Pitchers have a special post-game conditioning program that must be completed either following the game or the next day.

There are three things that need to be accomplished after the game. Players are expected to quickly move between these activities:

- Conditioning – sprints and/or poles.
- Cleaning up the dugout and packing up equipment.
- Post-game talk



## **During Games**

The dugout and surrounding areas are for players and coaches only. Please provide your ballplayer with all he needs before the game and allow us our time and space. Gamers will carry their own equipment bags at all times. Seemingly innocent interactions between ballplayers and parents/fans often disrupt the team concept that we are trying to create. Gamers will be allowed to check-in with families in between games of doubleheaders and we will encourage them to engage during the rides home from games.

In the Gamers Program, parents will be parents and fans only. There will be no coaching from the stands allowed. We consider it immaterial whether the coaching tips are correct or not, all tips are considered in violation of Gamers rules. We are aware of the danger of over-coaching and cannot possibly correct every mistake made on the field. Parents are welcome to ask questions about something their child is doing or should be working on, but these questions should never be asked during practices or games. Questions like these are always welcome after the scheduled event.

Basic rules of behavior will be strictly enforced during games:

- The Gamers Style of Play list will be posted in the dugout.
- When a coach is addressing the entire team, either before or after the game, all players will be on one knee with eyes locked onto the coach.
- After the game, shake hands with the opposing team and the umpires. Make eye contact with opposing team and umpires when shaking their hand.

## **Playing Time Expectations**

We intend to handle playing time in a way that is fair and consistent with our program goals. We want every one of our players to develop and have fun. We understand the multiple time demands that are pulling at our players. We support extracurricular activities that are school-related and family-related and have designed provisions to manage these challenges. These provisions include:

- Rosters will be made up of 12-14 players for age levels up to U14; more players for high school levels.
- Flextime program for high school age players will be used to relieve the time and travel pressure of both family and team. (Note: This Flextime measure is a rotation system that provides days off for use on other activities. Specifics will be different at each age group.)
- All players are expected to have the ability and willingness to play multiple positions and hit in various parts of the batting order.

Most players can expect to participate in most games he attends, but will not necessarily play a substantial role in every game. This is the reality of playing baseball at a competitive level. We

expect every player, whether in the game or not, to be actively engaged. Those not in the lineup play important roles like keeping pitching charts, keeping score, warming-up outfielders, bullpen catchers and more.

### **Schedules and Schedule Changes**

We will keep you informed using the Gamers website, email, Gamerchanger notifications and Twitter. E-mail will be the standard means to communicate program activities. Please check your email regularly. Everyone will be responsible to keep informed.

### **Parent Expectations**

The Gamers program would not be possible without the strong and active support of parents. We appreciate and respect your commitment to your son's success. If there is anything we can do to help out, or improve your son's experience in the Gamers program, please let us know. The Gamers Directors are committed to your son having a good experience.

Parents play an important role in helping us achieve our program goals, including building a positive and supportive culture that honors the game and is respectful of rules, opponents, officials, teammates and others. We ask parents to be active participants in this process through meeting the following expectations:

- All parents are required to sign the Positive Coaching Alliance Parent Pledge.
- Three simple rules for parent behavior at games and practices:
  - No coaching from the stands
  - No umpiring from the stands
  - Be positive and supportive to players, coaches, opponents, umpires and league/tournament officials
- **DO NOT BRING ALCOHOL TO GAMERS GAMES, EITHER IN THE PARK OR IN THE PARKING LOT. IF BEER IS SOLD AT THE GAME, PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY. GENERAL RULE IS THAT ALCOHOL AND YOUTH SPORTS ARE A BAD COMBINATION!**
- Please follow the Gamers Communication Policy, and help teach our players to take responsibility for communicating with their coaches

### **Travel Tournaments**

Travel tournaments are an exciting part of youth baseball. When a team travels, they are representing not only themselves, but also the entire Gamers program and, to a certain extent, the entire St. Louis youth baseball community.

During out of town trips, we expect players to be respectful and behave according to the high standards of the Gamers program. Coaches will put team curfews in place. Players and parents are reminded that the #1 priority during out of town trips is to play baseball. So, players need to be well rested, properly nourished and focused on playing baseball. Ultimately, it is each player's responsibility to be ready to play.

There will be no tolerance for inappropriate or disrespectful behavior in or around team hotels, or during team meals at restaurants.

In the high school program, there will be a number of team bus trips. On these trips, players will travel with team coaches and stay together in team hotels. On these specific trips, the coaches will be responsible for the players. The players will be closely supervised and strict curfews will be put in place. There will be no tolerance for inappropriate or disrespectful behavior.

### **Academic Review Program**

Academics are a high priority in the Gamers Program for several reasons. First, the important life lessons that we teach through baseball are directly transferable to the classroom (and vice versa). Second, while our focus is on baseball, we recognize that academics are more important than baseball. We want Gamers to be well-rounded young men. A lot more of our players will end up as successful businessmen, teachers, doctors and lawyers than professional baseball players. And finally, good academic performance in high school will open up doors for Gamers to play college baseball.

The Academic Review Program is in place to help ensure that each player is achieving his academic potential and is placing a high priority on academics. An awareness of academic performance will also assist in the process of helping Gamers players get recruited into college baseball. We strongly suggest that Gamers players participate in the Academic Review Program and submit report cards for review. Report cards and academic review forms will be collected twice per year – in November and in April.

### **Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policies**

Gamers players are not allowed to use tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco. No exceptions.

Gamers players are not allowed to use or be physically close to the use of alcohol or drugs by underage minors. If a player finds himself in a situation where other underage minors are using alcohol or drugs, we expect him to immediately leave the area. This policy is in effect 12 months a year, not just during the Gamers baseball season. If a Gamers player violates this policy, then **he will be suspended from the program.**

## Sanction Schedule

We believe the best working relationships are grounded in clearly stated and understood expectations. While we hope for total cooperation to achieve our goals, we understand human nature and we know mistakes can be made. In an effort to gain fairness and consistency, we intend to adhere to the following sanctioning schedule:

<b>Rules Violation</b>	<b>Sanction Guidelines</b>
Violation of Style of Play	Entire teams runs two timed poles for each violation  Repeated violations may lead to player suspension.
Ineffective communication relating to missing or being tardy for scheduled events	1st Offense: miss one game. 2nd Offense: 2 game suspension 3rd Offense: 3 game suspension
Being out of uniform or mistreating uniform (as specified in rules and regulations)	1st Offense: miss one game 2nd Offense: 2 game suspension 3rd Offense: 3 game suspension
Negative behavior relating to teammates, coaches, umpires or opponents (dishonoring the Gamer Culture)	1st Offense: 2 game suspension 2nd Offense: 3 game suspension 3rd Offense: removal from team
Parent violation of the PCA Parent Pledge.	1st Offense: warning 2nd Offense: 1 game suspension 3rd Offense: 3 game suspension
Behavior inconsistent with good citizenship (criminal or otherwise)	Multi-game suspension with potential removal from the program



## **Gamers Style of Play - Expectations**

- 1. Know the number of outs.**
- 2. Pick up signs – in the batters box, on the bases and in the field.**
- 3. SPRINT on ALL balls in play, until coach holds you up or play is over.**
- 4. When you strikeout or make an out, jog quickly back to the dugout.**
- 5. Pick up the 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach EVERY time.**
- 6. Get in front of the baseball.**
- 7. Hit cutoff men, EVERY time.**
- 8. Catch fly balls with two hands whenever possible.**
- 9. SPRINT from batter's box to first base EVERY time.**
- 10. Pitchers cover first base on ALL balls to the right side.**
- 11. Back up bases on EVERY play.**
- 12. Make an attempt to block ALL balls in the dirt, whether or not runners are on base.**
- 13. SPRINT on and off the field every inning. You have 10 seconds to get on and off the field**
- 14. Wear your uniform properly and with respect. Look like a Gamer.**
- 15. Dugout is for players and coaches only – no talking with parents or friends.**
- 16. Every player will participate in chasing foul balls promptly.**
- 17. Be on time. If you are going to be late, let us know.**
- 18. Every player will participate in cleaning up the dugout, throwing away trash and carrying team equipment after games and practices.**
- 19. Behave like a Gamer – support and respect your teammates and coaches, respect opponents, umpires and fans (sanction is immediate removal from game).**



## Gamers Winter Program Expectations

1. The Gamers winter program is not optional. Notify your coach if you have a conflict.
2. Be on time. If you are going to be late, notify your coach.
3. Wear Gamers workout shorts and shirts, with shirts tucked in. Shoes tied like athletes.
4. The winter program is heavy on instruction. We expect players to be attentive and focused on the coaches.
5. Players will maintain eye contact when coaches are talking.
6. We will have fun by working hard and doing things the right way. We will not have fun INSTEAD of working hard.
7. We expect full effort during drills and rep sessions
8. It is your responsibility to be adequately hydrated and fueled.
9. We want drills done the right way, every time. We do everything with a purpose. Do not just go through the motions.
10. We expect you to ask questions at the appropriate time.
11. We expect teammates to enforce these expectations with each other. Learn to be a leader.

If expectations are not met, the entire team will do extra conditioning in the last 20 minute rotation.

## **Required Forms and Agreements**

Gamers will not be allowed to participate in practices or games until all of the required paperwork and fees have been submitted to the Gamers office. Each Gamer family must submit the following:

- **Player Contact Form** – this will be done online at [www.stlgamers.net](http://www.stlgamers.net)
- **Player / Parent Agreement Form** – Attached
- **Liability Waiver** - Attached
- **Medical Waiver** - Attached
- **Positive Coaching Alliance Letter to Parents** - Attached
- **Positive Coaching Alliance Parent Pledge Form** - Attached

## Gamers Player/Parent Agreement

Player Name \_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT

We wish to participate in the Gamers Baseball Program. We understand the program's commitment is for one year and future involvement will be earned by:

- Continuing to develop baseballs skills and athleticism to compete at the highest level nationally
- Developing the mental make-up of a Gamer
- Working to help achieve team and program goals
- Complying with team rules, regulations and policies

We have read the Parent & Player Handbook, fully understand its content, and agree to support the Gamers program goals and policies.

We understand the fees payment schedule is as follows:

First Deposit/Commitment fee due when roster spot is accepted

Remaining fees based on payment schedule selected

Base program fees for each age group are set out in the attached table

We understand that the above payment schedule may be modified by mutual agreement with the Gamers program and will be adjusted based on our participation in the Media Guide and other fundraising activities. We also understand that the program fees do not cover travel costs, team bus trips, gate fees/admissions, recruiting videos and the stlgamers.lockerdome.com hosting service for player profiles and videos.

Player's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Gamers Program Fees – 2015

<u>Team/Age</u>	<u>Total**</u>	
17u	\$3,375	Financing Plan Available
16u	\$3,375	Financing Plan Available
15u	\$3,075	Financing Plan Available
14u	\$2,875	Financing Plan Available
13u	\$2,825	Financing Plan Available
12u	\$2,655 (excl. Cooperstown)	Financing Plan Available
10&11u	\$2,400	Financing Plan Available

**\*\* NOTE – This assumes full payment upfront. Payment plans available for slight additi \$50 additional fee. FALL BASEBALL IS OPTIONAL AND FALL FEES ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE BASE PROGRAM FEES.**

**\*\* PROGRAM FEES DO NOT INCLUDE TRAVEL COSTS, GATE FEES/ADMISSION FEES OR THE COST OF TEAM BUS TRIPS. FOR 17U PLAYERS, FEES DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR RECRUITING VIDEO.**

**\*\*\* EXCLUDES COOPERSTOWN COSTS, IF TEAM CHOSED TO PARTICIPATE IN COOPERSTOWN EVENT.**

**Minor Waiver/Release**  
**RELEASE OF LIABILITY FOR MINOR PARTICIPANTS -- READ BEFORE SIGNING**

IN CONSIDERATION OF \_\_\_\_\_, my child/ward, being allowed to participate in any way in the **St. Louis Gamers Baseball** related events and activities, undersigned acknowledges, appreciates, and agrees that: The risk of injury to my child from the activities involved in these programs is significant, including the potential for permanent disability and death, and while particular rules, equipment, and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious injury does exist; and,

1) FOR MYSELF, SPOUSE, AND CHILD, I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my child's participation; and,

2) I willingly agree to comply with the program's stated and customary terms and conditions for participation. If I observe any unusual significant concern in my child's readiness for participation and/or in the program itself, I will remove my child from the participation and bring such attention of the nearest official immediately; and,

3) I myself, my spouse, my child, and on behalf of my/our heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS the **St. Louis Gamers Baseball** program; its directors, officers, officials, agents, employees, volunteers, other participants, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event ("Releasees"), WITH RESPECT TO ANY AND ALL INJURY, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property incident to my child's involvement or participation in these programs, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

4) I, for myself, my spouse, my child, and on behalf of my/our heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS all the above Releasees from any and all liabilities incident to my involvement or participation in these programs, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THEIR NEGLIGENCE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

**I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE)  
Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

**UNDERSTANDING OR RISK**

I understand the seriousness of the risks involved in participating in this program, my personal responsibilities for adhering to rules and regulation, and accept them as a participant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Information**  
**EMERGENCY INFORMATION & CONSENT**

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Family Medical Insurance:

Carrier: \_\_\_\_\_ Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy #: \_\_\_\_\_ Group#: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Physician's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Phone:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (list): \_\_\_\_\_

Serious Medical Conditions (list): \_\_\_\_\_

I/we hereby grant consent to any and all health care providers designated by the **St. Louis Gamers Baseball Program** to provide my child \_\_\_\_\_ (name) any necessary medical care as a result of any injury/illness.

This consent includes First Aid and transportation to/from health care providers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Father's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Mother's Signature

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## Parents' Letter

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**To: Parents**

**From:**

**Date**

***This is an important document about the upcoming season. Please take the time to read it carefully. Thank you.***

Our organization is committed to the principles of Positive Coaching Alliance and against a “win-at-all-cost” mentality. PCA calls a Positive Coach a “Double-Goal Coach.” A win-at-all-cost coach has only one goal – to win. A Positive Coach shares that goal (wants to win) but has a second goal that is even more important – to use the sports experience to help young people learn “life lessons” and positive character traits that will help them be successful throughout their lives.

Help us promote the three PCA principles which have the power to “transform youth sports so that sports can transform youth.” The three principles, explained in this letter, are:

- 1) ***Redefining “Winner,”***
- 2) ***Filling the Emotional Tank, and***
- 3) ***Honoring the Game.***

### 1 REDEFINING “WINNER”

In professional sports (which is entertainment), there is only one goal—to have the most points at the end of a contest. However, in youth sports (which is education), there is a **SECOND GOAL**: to produce young people who will be **WINNERS IN LIFE**.

To help our children get the most out of competitive sports, we need to redefine what it means to be a “winner.” Winners are people who:

- *Make maximum effort.*
- *Continue to learn and improve.*
- *Refuse to let mistakes (or fear of making mistakes) stop them.*

This is called a Mastery Orientation. PCA says that the Tree of Mastery is an **ELM** Tree where ELM stands for **E**ffort, **L**earning, and rebounding from **M**istakes.

If our athletes keep these things in mind, they will develop habits that will serve them well throughout their lives.

There is an added benefit. Athletes who are coached with a Mastery Orientation tend to have reduced anxiety and increased self-confidence. And when athletes feel less anxiety, they are more likely to have fun playing their sport and to do better!

*Here's how you can help:*

- 1) Tell your child that it's OK to make a mistake.
- 2) Let your child know you appreciate it when he tries hard even if unsuccessful.
- 3) Ask rather than tell. Try to get your child to talk about her play rather than telling her what you think about it. Ask open-ended questions to get her to talk (e.g., “What was the best part of the game for you?”)
- 4) Recognize that Mastery is hard work. Let the coaches criticize your child's play. Tell your child you are proud of him regardless of the outcome of the game.

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## 2 FILLING THE EMOTIONAL TANK

Research shows that the home team wins about 60% of the time because of the emotional support a team receives when it plays in front of its own fans. Like gas tanks in cars, athletes have “**Emotional Tanks**” that need to be filled to do their best.

There will be times when you need to correct and criticize. Research has shown that a “Magic Ratio” of 5:1 (praise to criticism) is ideal. Help us achieve this Magic Ratio with your child.

Here’s how you can help:

### 1) Your #1 job is to fill your child’s Emotional Tank.

Encourage him regardless of what happens in the game.

### 2) Try not to give your child a lot of advice

(which after a tough game can seem like criticism, which drains a person’s tank). Remember, it’s difficult to do well with a low tank. When she makes a mistake, you might say, “Don’t worry. Let’s get the next one. You can do it.” After tough losses, it’s often helpful to acknowledge feelings of disappointment. For example, you might say “I can imagine you must be disappointed to have lost.”

**3) Use the “3-Pluses-and-a-Wish” technique.** Before you give advice, find three good things about your child’s performance. Phrase the advice as a wish:

- *You really tried hard in the game today (Plus #1).*
- *I also saw you filling your teammate’s Emotional Tank after he made a mistake (Plus #2).*
- *And that play you made toward the end of the game shows how much you are improving (Plus #3).*
- *I wish you wouldn’t get down on yourself when you make a mistake.*

If you can’t come up with three pluses, don’t say the wish because then it may drain his emotional tank rather than fill it.

**4) Remember the Magic Ratio\*** Praise your child about 5 times for every time you criticize. If you do, she will be better able to hear your criticism without becoming defensive.

\* It’s called the Magic Ratio because great things happen when we get close to it with our children.

## 3 HONORING THE GAME

Honoring the Game gets to the **ROOTS** of positive play, where ROOTS stands for respect for

**Rules,**  
**Opponents,**  
**Officials,**  
**Teammates,** and one’s  
**Self.**

- **Rules:** We don’t bend the rules to win.
- **Opponents:** A worthy opponent is a gift that forces us to play to our highest potential.
- **Officials:** We treat officials with respect even when we disagree.
- **Teammates:** We never do anything that would embarrass our team on or off the field.
- **Self:** We live up to our own standards regardless of what others do.

Here’s how you can help:

**1) Let your child know that you want him to Honor The Game.** Discuss the meaning of each element of ROOTS with your athletes.

**2) Be a good role model.** Honor the Game when you attend games. Cheer both teams when good plays are made. If, in your opinion, an officiating mistake is made, be silent! Use this as an opportunity to think about how difficult it is to officiate a game perfectly.

**3) Encourage other parents to Honor the Game.**



## **PCA Parent Pledge**

Please read, initial each item, sign and return to the coach or appropriate official.

1. I pledge to get my child to practice and games on time. I understand that it can be embarrassing for my child to be late and that I may be putting him/her at risk by not providing adequate time for warm up. I will be on time to pick up my child from all games and practices. This shows respect for the coach, and it tells my child that he or she is my top priority. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I pledge to use positive encouragement to fill my child's Emotional Tank because athletes do their best when their "Emotional Tank" is full. I understand that fewer than 1% of youth sports participants receive college scholarships and that the top three reasons kids play sports are a) to have fun, b) to make new friends, and c) to learn new skills. I understand that the game is for the players, and I will keep sports in the proper perspective. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I pledge to reinforce the ELM Tree of Mastery with my child (E for Effort, L for Learning and M for bouncing back from Mistakes). Winners are people who make maximum effort, continue to learn and improve, and do not let mistakes, or fear of making mistakes, stop them. I understand that mistakes are an inevitable part of any game and that people learn from their mistakes. I understand that children are born with different abilities and that the true measure is not how my child compares to others but how he/she is doing in comparison to his/her best self. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I pledge to "Honor the Game." I understand the importance of setting a good example for my child. No matter what others may do, I will show respect for all involved in the game including coaches, players, opponents, opposing fans, and officials. I understand that officials make mistakes. If the official makes a "bad" call against my team, I will Honor the Game and be silent! \_\_\_\_\_
5. I pledge to refrain from yelling out instructions to my child. I understand that this is the coach's job. I understand that games are chaotic times for children trying to deal with fast-paced action and respond to opponents, teammates and coaches. I will limit my comments during the game to encouraging my child and other players for both teams. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I pledge to refrain from making negative comments about my child's coach in my child's presence. I understand that this plants a negative seed in my child's head that can negatively influence my child's motivation and overall experience. \_\_\_\_\_

I will honor the PCA Parent Pledge in my words and actions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Child's Name

PCA.2001.09.15

## Appendix

### Positive Coaching Alliance

Gamers' Baseball will be adhering to, and asking parents to promote the themes in the PCA. Our players will get the message more thoroughly if it is delivered consistently by coaches and parents. To learn more about the PCA go to there website at: [www.positivecoach.org](http://www.positivecoach.org). Please see the Positive Coaching Alliance Parent Pledge Form in the appendix. A signed pledge form will be expected from each of our players' families.

### American Sports Medicine Institute

We will follow the ASMI's guidelines with regards to pitch selection and pitch limits at each age level. Pitchers will be limited to two appearances per week and will be allowed to throw the following number of pitches per outing (and these types of pitches):

U12: 70 pitches (Fastball & Change-up)

U13: 75 pitches (Fastball & Change-up)

U14: 80 pitches (Fastball, Change-up & Curveball)

U15: 90 pitches (Fastball, Change-up, Curveball and Knuckleball)

U16 and up: 90 pitches (Fastball, Change-up, Curveball, Knuckleball, Slider & Forkball)

You can learn more about the ASMI by going to there website at: [www.asmi.org](http://www.asmi.org).