

## Conducting Parent Meetings

This is without question, the most important meeting your team will have for the entire season. So, plan it carefully; get organized; and do your best to make an excellent first impression.

1. **When to have your Meeting** - It is strongly suggested that you plan for and have your parent meeting on or before the first day of practice. This can easily be accomplished by having a plan for when to hold the meeting prior to calling the players on your roster. This will enable you to notify the new player that he/she is on your team and then to speak to mom or dad and let them know that there will be a parent meeting, when, where etc. Many coaches conduct the meeting on the first day of practice. The players can get to know each other and can be started warming up etc, while the coach's conduct the parent meeting.
2. **What to Cover at the Meeting** – Introductions of yourself and assistant coaches should be first. Most parents want to know who has the reigns of their child's development, so share your experience and your coaching "**philosophy**", with them. You should have the parents introduce themselves as well, since there may be some who do not know each other. Ask them to point out their child to you and the other parents.
  - \* **Discuss disciplinary situations** – Discuss your expectations and rules such as unexcused absences etc. Discuss "Team Rules", which might include actions in the dugout, field maintenance, care of personal and team equipment and most importantly "Respect for the Game". Thoroughly discuss your expectations of both players and parents.
  - \* **Practice Schedule** – Hand out your practice schedule, discuss how long you will practice and when parents should pick up their kids.
  - \* **League Rules** – Hand out and discuss league rules, parents in the dugout, playing time requirements etc.
  - \* **Parent Code of Conduct** – Hand out/discuss and receive back the Parent Code of Conduct forms. Make sure that parents know that if they have a problem, question or concern that they go to you the coach, directly and in an appropriately constructive manner. Be a role model for your players, which is especially important in times of potential conflict. Make your parents aware that you expect them to behave the same way and to model good sportsmanship at all times. Make yourself available to your parents.
  - \* **Hand out/discuss parent volunteer forms** – You should try to find interested parents who might have either the skills or the desire to help you with your practices. This comes in real handy when you are running late and need to get things started, or when you need help coordinating a meeting, or league fundraising event for your team etc. No person can be on the field or work with the players without having first completed the volunteer form and successfully passing the background check.
  - \* **Conclusion** – Let your parents know that you look forward to a good season, which is not necessarily measured by wins and losses. Your focus and measuring stick for success is when the players you have worked with have grown and shown improvement. Wins and losses tend to take care of themselves when you have good coaching, stressing fundamentals of the game and a respect for the game.

