

On June 6, 2006 all communities of GBMSL approved a code of conduct for all coaches, parents & players within GBMSL. The document was signed by all 12 active communities within the league with their pledge to enforce it.

The code below was drafted by Keith Chapman (President) and Pat Rodgers (UIC) and as such translation or interpretation of any content can be explained by them if requested. Draft versions of this document were sent out for editorial review to all communities prior to signing and publication. All 12 active communities responded and revisions were made, the final document of June 6 was accepted and signed by all 12 active member communities.

References to winning below are not intended to stop a team from playing at their full potential but are also directed to the team that is losing in a hope that they will continue to play hard, learn the game and strive to become better players. Our constitution states that we are to learn to take losing in stride with winning. It is also directed at the winning team who are pushing their players beyond reasonable expectations and as such their players are not enjoying the game.

GBMSL is a competitive league and as such we award teams that win their season, tournament's and playoff's. Tie breaker formats are based on run spreads and as such a team may need to play hard, to stay competitive with another team in the league, right to the end of the game. The league has implemented mercy rules for all teams and as such it isn't fair to expect that a team should play poorly simply because another team is down in runs. It is expected that they should be courteous, be good sports and continue to applaud the other team for their efforts but still continue to play ball.

GBMSL Code of Conduct

Coaches:

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember players are involved for fun and enjoyment. Explain this goal and objective of GBMSL to your parents & players.
- Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity. Remember you are a role model whether you are being a positive experience to your players or not.
- Be alert to the physical safety of the players. Coaches should err on the side of caution when it comes to the safety of all players.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent, honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; don't yell at players
- Adjust to the personal needs and problems of your players, be a good listener, never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and self esteem; teach them the basics
- Familiarize yourself with this years rules, they may not be the same as last years. Before you question or protest a rule/ruling make sure you know the rule yourself. Encourage your team members to play by the league rules and respect the rights of other players, coaches, fans and officials.
- Respect umpires doing your games, especially those of a Junior age/status. They will improve as you encourage and motivate them. Don't blame the umpire for your game results, generally the errors on any team far outweigh the errors by any umpire. When your players hear you putting blame on the umpire they will start to blame their game performance on the umpires as well
- Be an example – strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct, show dignity, patience and a positive spirit
- Greet your opposing coach and exchange greetings to set the proper tone for the game. After games, coaches should meet and congratulate each other in a sportsmanlike manner.
- Coaches will completely refrain from verbal dissent during a game with an opposing coach's bench and with the coaching staff at 1st and 3rd base
- Major concerns in regards to the game, conduct of another coach or official, etc. will be dealt with following the game and following the proper protocols
- Provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and abusive language and refrain from their use.
- I will try to communicate with my players parents to attempt to better understand what I can do to improve myself and the game for the players

Players – I will:

- Have fun
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat
- Be a good sport and applaud all good plays whether they are made by my team or the opposition
- Treat all players, as I would like to be treated.
- Not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor
- Genuinely thank the opposition and officials at the end of the game.
- Never argue with an official.
- Always play by the rules and make an effort to understand the rules.
- Politely appeal if possible, but will respect the overall decision of the official(s)
- Respect the rights of others regardless of their gender, ability, or culture
- Control my temper. I understand that verbal abuse of officials and of other players is an unacceptable practice at any time.
- Work equally hard for myself and for my team. I realize that this is a team sport and my actions both good and bad affect my community as a whole
- Respect my coaches and do my best to listen to them
- Make every effort to be on time for both practices and games
- Cooperate with my coach, other helpers and my team members. I understand that sometimes I will have to sit out to allow others to play and will do it graciously.
- Not arrive at the field with alcohol or cigarettes or other drugs

Parents/Spectators – I will:

- Encourage my child to play by the rules.
- Applaud the efforts of all players on both my child's team and the opposing team
- Not embarrass my child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. I understand that by showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of the participants my child will benefit.
- Always play by the rules and make an effort to understand the rules.
- Not accuse a umpire of being biased
- Understand that criticizing officials only hurts the game and that it has a negative effect on the game
- Recognize coach's and volunteers and thank them for their help in working with my child
- Genuinely thank the opposition and officials at the end of the game.
- Not be a sideline coach or umpire and I will not openly question their judgment or honesty
- Show good hospitality to visiting teams to my community
- Remember that it is my child playing the game and not me. I understand that my child's goals may not be my goals.
- Not impose my child to unreasonable demands because of my competitiveness
- Respect all players regardless of talent, race, creed, color, or gender
- Remember that my child is not playing ball for my entertainment but rather for theirs
- Place the children's/players well being ahead of my desire for a win
- Never use bad language, nor will I harass umpires, coaches, players or other spectators

- Remember that I am not the coach, therefore I will let my child's coach be the coach and will trust in their ability to coach my child.
- Remember that there is a correct forum for everything. A game or tournament setting is not the correct forum to complain about or question how an event is being run.
- Take any issues to my Community contact who in turn can deal with it at the league level.

This code of conduct is that of the Georgian Bay Minor Softball League. Contravention of this code may result in you being asked to leave a GBMSL event. For any who would continue to break this code it could result in a game forfeit being called. Please help respect everyone who contributes to this organization and make this our best year yet!

The good news is that laying out this code of conduct isn't necessary for the vast majority of our coaches, parents or players. It is for but a handful that on occasion would attempt to destroy the integrity of our game.

So play hard, but above all have fun and remember the motto- "It's for the Kids"-

Signed by all GBMSL executive members and communities as we pledge our commitment to this code, JUNE 6th, 2006

Alone At The Plate

**He pulls on a helmet, picks up the bat,
and walks to the plate, "gotta hit and that's that."**

**The crowd starts to yell, the game's on the line,
last inning, two outs, the score's nine to nine.**

**Dad yells, "Go get it," Mom wrings her hands,
coach hollers, "hit it," but alone there he stands.**

**Heroes are made in seconds such as this,
but he's just a little boy, what if he should miss?**

**Years after this game's ended and he's little no more,
will he remember the outcome or even the score?**

**No he'll have forgotten if he was out, hit, or a run,
he'll only look back on his friends and the fun.**

**So cheer this boy on, alone with his fate;
help him remember with fondness this stand at the plate.**

**Spend your time wisely and help in his quest
to be a hitter with confidence and always his best.**

**And when the game's over, this boy can stand tall,
for you've helped him prepare to give it his all!**

-author unknown-

