

EXPECTATIONS OF CHALLENGER BUDDIES

BE THERE

Your presence is VERY important! Your player will need you and expect to see your familiar face weekly. Please do everything possible to attend all games and practices.

BE ON TIME

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before game time. Most games last about 45 min.

KNOW YOUR PLAYER

Talk to the player's family about his/her personality. Talk with your player-find out what he/she likes, what elicits a smile, what he/she can do if encouraged and supported, and what the cues are for you to back off.

PROTECT YOUR PLAYER

Your role as a Buddy involves being a friend, cheerleader, coach, and helper, but above all, you must be a protector. Be alert at all times to the location of the ball and the base-runners so you can do what is necessary to ensure the safety of your athlete.

BRING A GLOVE

Be sure to bring a glove to all practices and games, You will sometimes need to protect your player by deflecting balls that are hit toward the two of you. Your safety is important too!

ENCOURAGE YOUR PLAYER'S INVOLVEMENT AND INDEPENDENCE

Remember...it is THEIR game! Do everything possible to encourage your athlete to be involved at his/her level of ability. Focus on what your player is able to do and recognize all positive efforts. You may also have to "reel-in" your player who goes everywhere on the field to get the ball as this could intimidates other players or keep them from even trying to get the ball.

MODEL AN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND ACCEPTANCE FOR EACH PLAYER

Encourage and support the development of friendships among players. Some will know each other, but for others, everyone and everything will be new. Let the coaches know if you observe teasing or comments that may cause hurt feelings.

BE OPEN

Sometimes the coaches or other adults will make suggestions on how you can be more helpful to your player. Don't take this as criticism. We are all learning together.

SHARE YOUR CONCERNS

Don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Talk with the coaches if you have concerns or problems.

BE CONFIDENT

Some of the athletes express themselves easily, but for many this is very difficult. It may be hard sometimes to know how your athlete is feeling if he/she appreciates the help you are trying to provide. All of us, including your player, appreciate your patience and your best effort to be helpful, even if this cannot be expressed.

BE FLEXIBLE

In some situations, your player may be absent and you may be asked to be a Buddy to another player.