

# Youth Program

## Policy & Procedure 0039 I

**Sec. 1.** The Youth Program will be divided into the following age classifications:

**Any boy or any girl who on or before 1 January reaches the birthday listed below is not eligible to participate in that Division**

**Division**

Boys, Girls & Mixed 6 & Under Seventh Birthday

Boys, Girls & Mixed 8 & Under Ninth Birthday

Boys, Girls & Mixed 10 & Under Eleventh Birthday

Boys, Girls & Mixed 13 & Under Fourteenth Birthday

Boys, Girls & Mixed 16 & Under Seventeenth Birthday

Boys, Girls & Mixed 19 & Under Twentieth Birthday

**Sec. 2.** Any player can play in a higher age classification but cannot play in a lower age classification.

**Sec. 3.** Players cannot play in both age groups in the same area at the same time.

**Sec. 4.** The Youth Program is designed for Girls, Boys and Mixed and will feature both Competitive and Recreational Divisions; however, the Boys' Program, Girls' Program and the Mixed Program should be entirely separate from each other.

**Sec. 5.** Youth Program field dimensions:

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASE PATH	PLAYING FIELD RADIUS
Boys, Girls & Mixed 6 & Under	35'	55'	200'
Boys, Girls & Mixed 8 & Under	35'	55'	200'
Girls 10 & Under	40'	60'	200'
Boys & Mixed 10 & Under	40'	65'	225'
Boys, Girls & Mixed 13 & Under	46'	65'	225'
Girls 16 & Under	50'	65'	250'
Boys & Mixed 16 & Under	50'	65'	300'
Girls 19 & Under	50'	65'	250'
Boys & Mixed 19 & Under	50'	65'	300'

**Sec. 6.** A Team cannot be composed of more than 20 players.

**Sec. 7.** The Catcher must wear a mask and protective helmet (optional in Boys 18 & Under Program), and it is strongly recommended to wear a chest protector. In the Girls Youth Program, it is further strongly recommended that all participants utilize available protective equipment.

**Sec. 8.** The Youth Program will use an 11 inch blue stitch softball in all USSSA Tournaments. (Exception: The boys in Boys 15 and Mixed 15 and Boys and Mixed 19 & Under Program will use a 12 inch blue stitched softball in all USSSA Tournaments.)

**Sec. 9.** The Batter is out if he has three strikes.

A. He hits second foul after two strikes. Ball is dead.

**Sec. 10.** Numbers on all uniforms are required at World Tournaments. In the Girls, Boys and Mixed Youth Program, non-duplicating numbers on all jerseys are required at all World Tournaments. The numbers must be a minimum of 3 inches in size and clearly visible.

**Sec. 11.** The Batter is awarded First Base when four balls are called by the Umpire.

**Sec. 12.** In all Youth Programs, Offensive Players must wear a "NOCSAE" approved batting helmet with extended earflaps, which cover both ears and temples when in the live ball area.

**Sec. 13.** The Run Rule in the Youth Program awards a win to a Team that has a 15 run lead after 3 completed innings or 2 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead, or a 12 run lead after 4 completed innings, or 3 ½ innings if the Home Team is ahead, or 10 run lead after 5 completes innings or 4 ½ innings, if the Home Team is ahead.

**Sec. 14.** In the Youth Programs a minimum of 9 players can start a Game. However, an out shall be declared when the tenth position in the lineup is scheduled to bat. A tenth player may be added to the tenth position any time before the end of a Game. Any Team that starts a Game with ten or eleven players may drop to the minimum of nine players to finish the Game. All vacant spot(s) in the lineup will be declared an out every time that lineup position is due to bat. If a Team starts with 9 or 10 players they are not allowed to add the eleventh player at a later time. Any player that leaves the Game for any reason may not return to the Game. Exception: A player, who has left the Game under the blood rule, may return.

**Note:** The defensive team may walk the preceding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to having started with 9 players or having dropped to 9 or 10 players. There are no base appeals allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.

### **Run Rule and when to Flip/Flop**

Youth	15 after 3	After 2 <sup>nd</sup>
	12 after 4	After 3 <sup>rd</sup>
	10 after 5	After 4 <sup>th</sup>
Youth: Girls 8 & Under	10 after 5	After 4 <sup>th</sup>

**Sec. 15.** The following rules will be used in the Girls 6 & Under and 8 & Under Coach Pitch Program:

- A. The Game will consist of 6 innings, with a "Run Rule" being declared if a Team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 innings (3-½ if the Home Team is ahead), or 8 runs after 5 innings (4-½ if the Home Team is ahead).
- B. There will be no Infield Fly Rule in effect.
- C. Each position in the batting order will be allowed at bat a maximum of once per inning. The end of an inning will be declared when either 3 outs are made or all Batters have batted one time.
- D. Each Team will name a Coach to act as "Designated Pitcher" to pitch to their Team.
- E. The Designated Pitcher may be changed at any time during the Game as long as another Coach takes that position, and the change is made without excessive delay of the Game.
- F. The Designated Pitcher may carry a glove onto the field while pitching. It is to be used for his own protection only.
- G. While pitching, the Designated Pitcher may not coach his/her own Team in any way. The Designated Pitcher may not distract the Defensive Players in any way, either by action(s) or verbally. Violations of this rule will result in the Designated Pitcher receiving one warning from the Umpire, and should a second violation occur, he would be removed from the designated pitching position for the remainder of the Game.
- H. If the Designated Pitcher attempts to field/play the batted ball, or he is hit by the batted ball before it passes a Fielder a dead ball will be declared, the Batter Runner is called out, but the Runners may not advance.

I. Should the Designated Pitcher be hit by a thrown ball, the infraction constitutes interference. All play stops, the ball is declared dead, the most advanced Runner is called out, and remaining Base Runners must return to the last base touched unless forced to advance.

J. Before any pitch is delivered, a Defensive Player must be positioned parallel to the Pitcher's Plate, to the left or right of the Designated Pitcher, maintaining sufficient distance so not to interfere with the delivery of the pitch. Neither this Defensive Player nor any other Defensive Player in the Game, other than the Catcher, shall be positioned closer to Home Plate than the Pitcher's Plate. Any Defensive Player may move ahead of the pitcher's plate to field a ball once hit or thrown. There must be a line drawn in an arc from Foul Line to Foul Line at the pitching distance to indicate this distance.

K. Balls and Strikes will be called by the Umpire, although no base on balls will be awarded by the Umpire due to thrown pitches or intentional walks. The Batter will be allowed 3 strikes or 5 pitches to hit the ball in fair territory. If third strike results in a Foul Ball, the pitch is counted, but the Batter is not out. After 3 strikes or 5 pitches, the Batter is out.

L. Any pitch that does not meet the minimum 3 feet from the point of release requirement will be declared an ILLEGAL PITCH/DEAD BALL. The pitch counts as one of their 5 pitches.

M. If the Teams are tied after 6 innings of play, they will begin the next inning with the last Batter of the previous inning on second base and 2 outs.

**Sec. 16.** A Coach, Player, attendant, or bench personnel shall not use tobacco products in any form in the confines of the playing field. PENALTY: The Umpire shall issue a Team warning to the Team involved, any subsequent offenders on that Team shall be ejected.

**Sec. 17.** All playing rules not specifically covered in this rule shall be governed by the other Rules as outlined in Rules 1 through 10 of this book.