

# **Harwinton Youth Sports Association**

## **Little League Baseball Safety Manual**



**Revised April, 2006**

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# Harwinton Youth Sports Association

## OUR MISSION

**HARWINTON YOUTH SPORTS ASSOCIATION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CREATED TO PROMOTE, COORDINATE AND ADMINISTER YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS IN THE TOWN OF HARWINTON. IT IS HYSA'S GOAL TO PROVIDE A FUN, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CHILDREN OF OUR COMMUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN FRIENDLY COMPETITION IN A WAY THAT WILL BE A POSITIVE, HEALTHY, AND SELF-ESTEEM BUILDING EXPERIENCE.**

# HYSA CODE OF CONDUCT

No Board Member, Manager, Coach, Player, or Spectator Shall:

- At any time, lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten to strike an official.
- Be guilty of heaping personal verbal or physical abuse upon any official for any real or imaginary belief of a wrong decision or judgment.
- Be guilty of an objectionable demonstration of dissent at an official's decision by throwing gloves, helmets, hats, bats, balls, or any other forceful unsportsmanlike-like action.
- Be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of a game against the body of an opposing player.
- Be guilty of physical attack upon any board member, official, manager, coach, player, or spectator.
- Be guilty of the use of profane, obscene, or vulgar language in any manner at any time.
- Appear on the field of play, stands, or anywhere in the vicinity of the field in an intoxicated state at any time. Intoxicated will be defined as an odor or behavior issue.
- Be guilty of gambling upon any play or outcome of any game with anyone at any time.
- Smoke while in the stands or on the playing field or in any dugout at any time.
- Speak disrespectfully to any manager, coach, official, or representative of the league.
- Challenge an umpire's authority. The umpires shall have the authority and discretion during a game to penalize the offender according to the infraction up to and including expulsion from the game.

# HYSA SAFETY CODE

The board of directors of the Harwinton Youth Sports Association has mandated the following safety code. All managers and coaches will read this safety code and then read it to the players on their team.

- Responsibility for safety procedures belong to every adult member of the Harwinton Youth Sports Association.
- Each player, manager, coach, and umpire shall use proper reasoning and care to prevent injury to him/herself and to others.
- Only league approved managers and coaches are allowed to practice players.
- Only league approved managers and coaches shall supervise batting cages.
- Managers and coaches will have mandatory training in first aid.
- No games or practices will be held when weather or field conditions are poor or when lighting is inadequate.
- Play area will be inspected before games and practices for safety concerns including holes, damage, glass, etc and any safety issues will be rectified before the start of the practice or game.
- All team equipment will be stored inside the dugout during games.
- Only players, managers, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the playing field or in the dugouts during games and practices.
- During practices and games, all players should be alert and watching the batter on each pitch.
- All pre-game warm-ups should be performed within the confines of the field and not in areas that are frequented by spectators (playing catch, etc.)
- Equipment will be regularly inspected for damage and safety concerns.
- Batters, base runners, and player base coaches must wear little league approved helmets that bear the NOCSAE seal during batting practice and games.
- Head first slides are not permitted unless returning to a previously occupied base.
- At no time, will horseplay be permitted on the field.
- On-deck batters are not permitted.

- Catchers must wear a cup. Managers should encourage all players to wear a cup.
- All catchers must wear chest protectors with neck collar, throat guard, shin guards, and catcher's helmet, all of which must meet little league specifications and standards.
- All catchers must wear a mask with dangling type throat protector and catcher's helmet during practice, pitcher warm-ups, and games.
- Shoes with metal spikes are not permitted.
- Players will not wear jewelry of any kind. (Exception for medical alert type jewelry).
- Managers will never leave an unattended child at a practice or a game.
- No children under the age of 12 are permitted in the concession stand.
- Never hesitate to report any kind of present or potential safety hazard to the league safety officer.
- No alcohol or drugs are allowed at any of the fields, including stands and concession stand at any time.
- No playing on or around lawn equipment, machinery at any time.
- No climbing of fences
- No climbing on dugouts
- Players and spectators should be alert at all times for foul balls and errant throws.
- All gates to the fields must be closed at all times.

# **Section 1 – Responsibilities**

## **VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS AND BACKGROUND CHECKS**

As a condition of service to the league, all managers, coaches, members of the Board of Directors, and any other persons, volunteers or hired workers, who provide regular service to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with players or teams, must complete and submit an official “Little League Volunteer Application” to the local league president.

A copy of a valid driver’s license or other valid photo identification must be submitted with the application.

A copy of the volunteer application can be found in Appendix A of this document.

The league will conduct a search of appropriate government entity of the statewide sex offender registry on all volunteer applicants. In addition, the league may conduct a nationwide background check on the criminal history of volunteer applicants.

Once approved, the league will issue the volunteer an identification card that shall be valid for a period of 1 year as proof that the volunteer has been approved by the league. Coaches and league officials should carry the card with them for all league sponsored activities.

Any person refusing to complete a volunteer application will not be eligible to be a league member.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**League President** – The Harwinton Youth Sports Association President is responsible for ensuring that the policies and regulations set forth in this manual by the league Safety Officer are carried out by the entire membership to the best of his/her abilities

**League Safety Officer** – The league safety officer is responsible for the development and implementation of the Harwinton Youth Sports Association Safety Program.

The league safety officer is the link between the HYSA board of directors and the managers, coaches, umpires, players, spectators and parents in regards to safety matters, rules, and regulations.

*Specific Responsibilities Include:*

- Development, review, and modifications to the HYSA Safety manual as necessary.
- Act as a liaison between the insurance company and any individuals that may file and insurance claim including assisting with paperwork, explaining benefits, etc.
- Keeping a first aid log that documents all accidents and injuries to players, coaches, managers, or spectators during official league sponsored events, practices, and games.
- Insure each team receives a copy of the first aid manual and a first aid kit as prescribed in this manual.
- Restocking first aid supplies as necessary.
- Make Little League's "no tolerance with child abuse" clear to all.
- Periodic inspections of the concession stand to insure safety procedures are being followed including inspecting fire extinguishing equipment.
- Performing initial and periodic field safety inspections.
- Scheduling a first-aid / safety clinic for all managers, coaches, and umpires before the start of the season.
- Acting immediately to resolve unsafe or hazardous conditions once a situation has been brought to his/her attention.
- Making "spot checks" at practices and games to insure that all managers, coaches, and players are following all safety rules. Infractions are to be reported to the board of directors.
- Making a report to the board of directors on a monthly basis to keep safety fresh in everyone's mind.
- Assist parents/guardians in completing an Insurance Claim Form (Attached in Appendix A) if an accident / injury requires medical attention beyond first aid.

**Managers** – The manager is the person appointed by HYSA to be responsible for the team's actions on and off the field.

*Manager's General Responsibilities Include:*

- The manager shall always be responsible for the team's conduct, observance of safety rules, and the rules of the game.
- The manager is responsible for the safety of his/her players.
- The manager is responsible for the safety and actions of his/her fellow coaches and spectators.
- If the manager is not present for a practice or a game, he/she shall appoint a coach to temporarily assume the manager's position. The substitute manager shall assume the manager's responsibilities.

*Manager's Pre-Season Responsibilities:*

- Read the HYSA Safety Manual and refer any questions to the HYSA Safety Officer.
- Have parents complete "Emergency Medical Treatment Consent and Contact forms" and a "Medical History Form" and return them to you. These forms should be kept confidential and with the team equipment at all times. Copies of these forms shall be sent to the HYSA Safety Officer. (Attached in Appendix A)
- Take possession of a first aid kit and make sure it is properly stocked.
- Attend a mandatory training session on first aid and safety.
- Discuss little league philosophy and safety regulations with the parents of his/her players.
- Discuss safety regulations with all players.
- Inspect all equipment issued to their team to insure there are no safety issues, missing equipment, or equipment needing repair / replacement.

*Manager's Responsibilities During the Season:*

- Insure that telephone access is available in case of emergency for each practice and game.
- Enforce that prevention is the key to reducing accidents and injuries.
- Always have access to a first aid kit and safety manual.
- Use common sense.

*Manager's Pre-Game and Practice Responsibilities:*

- Insure there is a safety manual and first aid kit available.
- Make sure players are healthy and alert before and during each game and practice.
- Make sure players are wearing proper uniforms and protective equipment.
- Make sure all equipment is in good working order.
- Inspect the playing field. Any safety issues must be rectified before the game / practice starts or the field will be deemed not playable and the game / practice will be postponed. In a game situation, if the coaches do not agree that the playing field is safe, the umpire will have the final say.
- Enforce proper stretching before each game and practice.
- Do not allow players to carry bats onto the playing field. Personal bats must be in a bat bag or carried by the parent and given directly to a coach.

*Manager's Responsibilities During the Game:*

- Insure that all equipment is properly stored in the dugout. No equipment shall be allowed outside the dugout during a game.
- Keep players alert
- Maintain discipline at all times
- Encourage everyone to think safety first.
- Observe the "no on deck" rule. No player should handle a bat until he/she is approaching home plate for an at-bat.
- Keep players off the fences.
- Encourage players to drink to avoid dehydration.
- Do not play children that are injured or ill.
- Attend to children that become injured or ill during the game.

*Manager's Responsibilities Following a game or practice:*

- Insure all players have been picked up before leaving the field.
- Notify parents if their child was injured no matter how small or insignificant the injury is. Document all injuries by completing an Incident/Accident Report (Attached in Appendix A) and contacting the league safety officer within 24 hours.
- Return the field to its pre-game (pre-practice) condition.

**Umpire** – The umpire shall have the final say in regards to any discrepancies before or during a game.

*Umpire's Pre-Game Responsibilities:*

- Inspect the field for safety issues. Any safety issues must be resolved prior to the start of the game. If the issues cannot be resolved, the game will be postponed.
- Spot check equipment being used by the teams to make sure they are in the proper condition and pose no safety hazards to the players. The umpire has the authority to disallow any piece of equipment if he/she suspects a safety issue.

*Umpire's Responsibilities During the Game:*

- Govern the game as mandated by Little League rules and regulations.
- Act as the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended or terminated during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field.
  - Any standing water on the field shall cause the field to be not playable.
  - As there is limited shelter facilities at our fields, the game shall be suspended should the umpire visualize lightning or hear thunder.
- Make sure catchers are wearing proper equipment.
  - Any player warming up a pitcher shall wear a catchers mask and protective cup.
- Continue to monitor the field for safety and playability.

*Umpire's Responsibilities Following the Game:*

- Report and safety violations or unsafe situations to the HYSA safety officer.

## **Section 2 - Injury & Accident Prevention**

### **FUNDAMENTALS TRAINING**

The league will provide, on an annual basis, fundamentals training for all managers and coaches. Each coach shall have attended fundamentals training within the last three (3) years and each manager shall insure that at least one (1) coach per team attends the training each year.

The fundamentals training shall include but not be limited to throwing, catching, hitting, running, and general safety guidelines.

### **CONDITIONING & STRETCHING**

Conditioning is an intricate part of accident prevention. Extensive studies on the effect of conditioning, commonly know as “warm-ups” have demonstrated that:

- The stretching and contracting of muscles just before an athletic activity improves general control of movements, coordination, and alertness.
- Such drills also help develop the strength and stamina needed by the average youngster to compete with minimum accident exposure.

The purpose of stretching is to increase flexibility within the various muscle groups and prevent tearing from overexertion. Stretching should never be done forcefully, but rather in a gradual manner to encourage looseness and flexibility.

#### Hints on Stretching

- Stretch necks, backs, arms, thighs, and calves.
- Don't ask the child to stretch more that he or she is capable of.
- Hold the stretch for at least 10 seconds.
- Don't allow bouncing while stretching. This tears down the muscle rather than stretching it.
- Have one of the players lead the stretching exercises.

Stretching Suggestions are shown on the following page.

# Suggestions for Warm-up Drills



## Heel Cord Stretches

Lean up against a wall. Reach one leg behind you. Keep the knee straight, heel on the ground, and toes pointed forward. Slightly bend the leg that's closer to the wall. Lean forward. You should feel the stretch along the back of your calf. Repeat with the other leg.



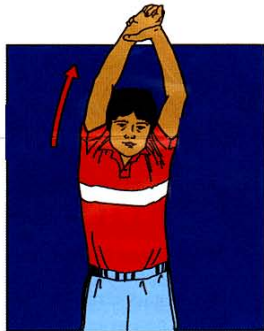
## Head and Neck Circles

Make a circle with your head, going around first in one direction five times. Then reverse and make five circles in the opposite direction.



## Low Back Stretches

Lie on your back, bring one knee up, and pull the knee slowly toward your chest. Hold and repeat three times. Switch legs and repeat.



## Shoulder Stretches #1

Stand or sit, holding your throwing arm at the wrist with your other hand. Put your arm over your head and pull gently, feeling your upper arm against your head. You should feel the stretch inside your shoulder.



## Shoulder Stretches #2

Stand or sit, holding onto the elbow of your throwing arm with your other hand. Gently pull your throwing arm across your chest. You should feel the stretch inside your shoulder, especially at the back.



## Shoulder Stretches #3

Stand or sit with your pitching arm out to the side and your elbow bent. Move your arm back until you feel the stretch in the front of your shoulder.



## Thigh Stretches #1

Sit on the floor. Stretch both legs out in front of you. Reach forward, touching your toes. Eventually, you want to lean forward far enough to put your head on your knees. You should feel the stretch along the backs of your legs.

## Thigh Stretches #2

Sit on the floor with one leg stretched out in front of you. Bend the other knee and put your foot behind you. Lean backwards. You should feel the stretch along the front of your thigh.



## PITCHING

Pitch count does matter. In the major leagues, most pitchers are removed after about 100 pitches. A child cannot be expected to perform like an adult.

Little League managers and coaches are usually quick to teach their pitchers how to get movement on the ball. Unfortunately, the technique that older players use is not appropriate for children under fourteen years of age. The snapping of the arm used to develop this technique will most probably lead to serious injuries to the child as he/she matures.

Arm stress during the acceleration phase of throwing affects both the inside and the outside of the growing elbow. On the inside, the structures are subjected to distraction forces, causing them to pull apart. On the outside, the forces are compressive in nature with different and potentially more serious consequences.

The key structures on the inside aspect of the elbow include the tendons of the muscles that allow the wrist to flex and the growth plate of the medial epicondyle (knobby bone on the inside of the elbow). The forces generated during throwing can cause this growth plate to pull away from the main bone. If the distance between the growth plate and main bone is great enough, surgery is the only option to fix it. The growth plate does not fully adhere to the main bone until age 15.

Similarly, on the outside of the elbow, the two bony surfaces can be damaged by compressive forces during throwing. This scenario can lead to a condition called Avascular Necrosis or Bone Cell Death as a result of compromise of the local blood flow to that area. This disorder is permanent and often leads to fragments of the bone breaking away which float in the joint and cause early arthritis. This loss of elbow motion and function often precludes further participation.

Studies have demonstrated that curveballs cause most problems at the inside of the elbow due to the sudden contractive forces of the wrist musculature. Fastballs, on the other hand, place more force on the outside of the elbow. Sidearm delivery, in one study, led to elbow injuries in 74% of pitchers compared with 27% in pitchers with a vertical delivery style.

Data from studies of youth pitchers have shown the following:

- A significantly higher risk of elbow injury occurred after pitchers reached 50 pitches per outing.
- A significantly higher risk of shoulder injury occurred after pitchers reached 75 pitches per outing.
- In one season, a total of 450 pitches or more led to cumulative injury to the elbow and to the shoulder.
- Throwing curveballs increases risk of injury to the shoulder more so than the elbow.
- The pitchers who limited their pitching repertoire to the fastball and change-up had the lowest rate of injury to their throwing arm.

Based on the data, a recommendation has been made to reduce the number of pitches per outing to 50 - 60 for 8 – 12 year olds.

## **HYDRATION**

Good nutrition is important for children. Sometimes, the most important nutrient children need is water – especially when they are physically active.

During practices, coaches should schedule a drink break every 15 – 30 minutes based on the level of activity and air temperature.

During games, players should be encouraged to drink when not in the field. Catchers can loose up to a quart of fluid during a game. They need to be encouraged to drink as much and as often as possible.

## **Section 3 - First Aid**

First aid means exactly what the term implies. It is the first care given to a victim. It is usually performed by the first person on the scene and continued until professional medical help arrives. At no time should anyone administering first aid go beyond his/her capabilities. Know your limits.

### **FIRST AID KITS**

Each major and minors team will be issued a first aid kit at the beginning of the season. The manager of the team will sign for the kit and be responsible for the kit and its contents. It will also be the responsibility of the team manager to contact the HYSA safety officer when supplies are needed to replenish the kit.

The first aid kit should be kept with the teams equipment at all times.

Kits will also be stored in the shed at the Locust Road fields and the shed at the Harwinton Consolidated School field for use by the instructional and T-ball teams. These kits will be checked periodically by the HYSA safety officer for replenishment.

### **AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)**

HYSA has an AED in the shed at the Locust Road fields and mandates that at least one (1) coach from each team is trained in its operation.

### **TRAINING**

Each manager will be required to have a team representative (manager or designated coach) attend a league sponsored safety / first aid training class. The content of the class will include a review of the safety manual, general safety guidelines, and basic first aid procedures. In addition, each coach and manager shall have attended a league safety / first aid class in the last three (3) years in order to participate.

Each manager/coach will be required to be certified in child and adult CPR with AED by either the American Heart Association, the Red Cross, or another agency approved by the League Safety Officer. The league will offer said training to the coaches on at least an annual basis.

## **GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS**

There are laws to protect you when you help someone in an emergency situation. The Good Samaritan Laws give legal protection to people who provide emergency care to ill or injured persons. When citizens respond to an emergency and act as a reasonable and prudent person would under the same conditions, Good Samaritan immunity generally prevails. This legal immunity protects you, as a rescuer, from being sued and found financially responsible for the victim's injury.

Good Samaritan laws were developed to encourage people to help others in emergency situations. They require that the "Good Samaritan" use common sense and a reasonable level of skill, not to exceed the scope of the individual's training in emergency situations. They assume each person would do his/her best to save a life or prevent further injury.

## **PROVIDING FIRST AID**

First things first:

1. Take care of yourself. Communicable diseases are more prevalent than ever. Before you begin to provide first aid, take every precaution possible to eliminate contact with any blood or other body fluids.
2. Is the patient conscious? If not, call 9-1-1 immediately.
3. Is the patient breathing? Look for the chest to rise and fall. Listen for air moving from the patient's nose and mouth. If not, send someone for the AED (if available) and continue to assess for the necessity of CPR if you are trained.
4. Is there major bleeding? Major bleeding can cause shock very quickly. Control bleeding with direct pressure with a dressing from the first aid kit and call 9-1-1.

When an injury or illness occurs, the decisions made in the first few minutes often have a large impact on the outcome for the patient. When you encounter an injury or a sudden illness:

## **FIRST AID DO'S AND DON'TS**

### DO:

- Access the injury. If the victim is conscious, find out what happened, where it hurts, watch for shock.
- Know your limitations
- Call 9-1-1 immediately if person is unconscious or seriously injured. The most important thing that you can do for a victim who is seriously injured is to call for professional medical help. Make the call quickly, preferably from a cell phone near the patient. If this is not possible, send someone else to make the call from a nearby telephone.
- Look for signs of injury (blood, black-and-blue, deformities, etc). Control major bleeding by applying direct pressure.
- Listen to the injured player describe what happened and what hurts. Before questioning, you may have to calm and soothe an excited child.
- Feel gently and carefully the injured area for signs of swelling or broken bones.
- Talk to your team afterwards about the situation if it involves them. Often players are upset and worried when another player is injured. They need to feel safe and understand why the injury occurred.

### DON'T

- Move any patient complaining of head, neck, or back pain.
- Administer any medications
- Provide any food or beverages (other than water).
- Hesitate in giving aid when needed.
- Be afraid to ask for help if you're not sure of the proper procedures.
- Transport injured individuals except in extreme emergencies.

## **CALL 9-1-1 VS DON'T CALL 9-1-1**

Always call 9-1-1 if:

- The patient is unconscious
- Has trouble breathing or is breathing in a strange way
- Has chest pain or pressure
- Is bleeding severely
- Has a pressure or pain in the abdomen that does not go away.
- Have seizures, a severe headache, or slurred speech.
- Has injuries to the head, neck, or back
- Have possible broken bones.
- Victims that cannot be moved easily
- If you are unsure – Always call and let the professionals help to determine if additional treatment is required.

## **Section 4 – Facilities Safety**

### **FIELD SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

Prior to each practice and game, each coach and umpire shall be responsible for inspecting the playing field to insure there are no safety issues including but not limited to holes in the field, large rocks, glass, etc. The safety hazard must be repaired or removed before play shall be allowed on the field.

At the start of each season, before any practices or games can be held on a field, the league safety officer will be responsible for completing an annual field inspection. All safety issues shall be reported to the field maintenance chairman and the president of the league. No practices or games shall be held on the field until all hazards have been corrected and the league safety officer has approved the use of the field.

### **CONCESSION STAND SAFETY**

The following policies and procedures regarding the use of the concession stand shall be followed.

- Children under the age of 12 years shall not be allowed to be in the concession stand unless a parent/guardian is present.
- People working in the concession stand will read the concession stand policy and procedure manual that will include procedures for the safe use of equipment and basic food preparation practices as advised by the Torrington Area Health District.
- No food shall be prepared in the concession stand without a valid food preparation permit from the Torrington Area Health District.
- All cleaning chemicals must be stored in a locked cabinet.
- A certified fire extinguisher must be in place in the concession stand at all times.

## **Section 5 - Equipment**

All league equipment is inspected at the time of purchase to make sure it complies with quality standards and is in good working condition. It is the manager's responsibility to inspect the team's equipment at the start of the season and periodically during the season to make sure it is in good repair.

Many players like to have their own gear rather than use the gear supplied by the league. The manager must inspect any non-league supplied gear to make sure it conforms to the standards and is in good repair. If the manager is unsure if a piece of equipment should be allowed, he/she should contact the league vice-president for conformation.

All batters, base runners, and player base coaches must wear a helmet with a face shield. Minors and majors players may substitute a mouth guard for the face shield if they so wish.

All male catchers must wear a metal, fiber, or plastic type cup.

Catchers must wear a mask with throat protector and a catcher's helmet during practice, pitcher warm-ups, and games. Skullcaps are not permitted.

Bats with loose or missing grip tape will not be allowed.

Bats with dents, or that are fractured in any way will not be allowed.

Only official little league balls will be used during games and practices. Instructional teams will use a leather quality "safety ball". T-ball teams will use a "cloth type" safety T-ball.

Encourage players who wear glasses should have "safety glasses".

Players are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind.

Pitching machines and any other motorized equipment are only to be used by managers, coaches, or other approved HYSA members that are at least 16 years of age.

### **FIELD MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT**

All chemicals or organic materials are to be stored in the garage at the Locust Road fields. Materials must be properly labeled, in the original containers.

All chemicals shall be used in well-ventilated areas only.

Wear proper protective clothing, such as gloves and masks as indicated when handling hazardous chemicals.

Prior to operating any power equipment, the operator must have read the operating procedures for the said piece of equipment and fully understand the operation of the equipment.

Only managers, coaches, league officials, and league members that have been authorized shall operate motorized equipment. The operation of any motorized equipment by any person under the age of 18 is prohibited.

Equipment that is not in use should be kept in the garage as to discourage children from climbing and playing on the equipment.

## **Section 6 - Accident Reporting Procedures**

Any incident that causes any player, manager, coach, umpire, or volunteer to receive medical treatment and/or first aid must be reported to the HYSA Safety Officer within 24 hours.

All incidents shall be reported by completing an Incident/Accident Report (located in Appendix A of this document).

Within 24 hours of receiving a completed Incident/Accident Report Form, the HYSA Safety Officer shall:

- Verify the information received
- Obtain any other information deemed necessary
- Check on the status of the injured party
- If the injured party received any medical attention (emergency room, doctor's visit, etc) will advise the parent or guardian of HYSA's insurance coverage and the provisions for submitting claims. (Claim forms attached in Appendix A)

## **Section 7 – Appendix**

**APPENDIX A – DOCUMENTS**

**APPENDIX B – GUIDELINES FOR FOOD PREPARATION**

**APPENDIX C – LITTLE LEAGUE “PLAY IT SAFE” GUIDE**

**APPENDIX D – LEAGUE CONTACT INFORMATION**