



2023

Safety Plan

Rutherford Little League, Inc.

League ID 0230 05 13

League Safety Officer

Dennis Gentile

Safetyofficer@Rutherfordlittleleague.com

(201) 376-6594

In 2004, the Rutherford Little League Board of Directors voted unanimously to make the Safety Officer a position on the Board. This assignment is recorded with Little League International. Effective 2007, every team shall assign a person on their staff to handle the safety issues on their team.

[The Safety Officer for 2023 is Dennis Gentile \(201\) 376-6594](#)

Introduction

While every athletic activity entails the risk of injury, baseball consistently show fewer injuries per capita than many other sports. It is the duty of the Local League to focus on reducing injury rates to as close to zero as possible, as well as to promptly treat those injuries that do occur so that players may safely return to action.

To that end, Rutherford Little League annually updates this manual, which incorporates hours of research and procedures on all the facets of safety. This manual is then distributed to all Managers and Coaches and made available to anyone who would like a copy. A copy is kept in the concession stand as well as being posted on our Website www.Rutherfordlittleleague.com. This plan takes into consideration any incident reports from the previous year; the Board of Directors then takes action to prevent that same type of injury in the future. The safety plan is also reviewed by the District Administrator.

The purpose and scope of this publication is first and foremost to make clear that safety is an ongoing concern. The only way we can protect our players and adult members is to be ever vigilant in the pursuit of a safe atmosphere to enjoy the games of baseball and softball with our children.

The second lesson in this publication is the understanding that a complete team effort is necessary to implement the safety program that we have spent years formulating.

With the total commitment from the league, managers, coaches, players and parents, we can continue to enjoy the comforts of a safe season, knowing that the planning and forethought presage a safe and enjoyable experience.

Child Protection

Rutherford Little League has always placed a high priority on child protection. In 2003, we implemented mandatory background checks for all managers, coaches, umpires, and volunteers in our program. New and returning volunteer applications must be completed and background searches are conducted **through JDP on a yearly basis.**

Defibrillator

We have two portable AED defibrillators one in the clubhouse and one for remote fields and CPR training available to all members. Annual training classes are administered by local Police, Fire and/or EMS staff for all managers, coaches, and other volunteers, with dates and times prior to Opening Day to be determined by the League.

Concussion Training

Starting with the 2013 season, all volunteer personnel have been required to submit a certificate for the online concussion training class “Heads Up to Youth Sports” which is found on the Center for Disease Controls website.

A certificate demonstrating satisfactory completion of an online concussion training course is required along with their completed Little League Volunteer application.

Protective Equipment

Rutherford Little League’s Board of Directors has always been committed to the safety of its players. Several measures have been taken in recent seasons to ensure we minimize the risk of injury.

Since 2009, pitchers at all levels have been, and will continue to be, required to wear an approved form of heart protection during practices, scrimmages, and games.

In 2016, we took this measure a step further and mandated that all players in Major Baseball must wear an approved form of heart protection during practices, scrimmages, and games.



Since 2011, all players at the Major level and below have been, and will continue to be, required to wear helmets with a protective face guard while batting, running the bases, or coaching the bases.

League Responsibilities

Buildings and Grounds

Submit a completed safety plan registration form with your ASAP plan

Submit League Player Rosters and Coach data

- **Complete and submit a completed Little League Facility survey**
 - **Keep grass trimmed and warning track raked**
 - **Use break-away bases on all fields**
 - **Keep warning track free of weeds and properly maintained**
 - **Maintain protective covering on top fence rail**
 - **Maintain all padding on top fence rail**
 - **Maintain side rails and back guard rails on tall bleachers**
 - **Make sure all chemicals used on grass are non-toxic**
 - **Proper clay mixture for infield use keeping clay loose and soft by constant maintenance and moisture**
 - **Keep pitchers mound and home plate free of holes**
 - **Inspection of fields by Safety Officer daily and managers prior to games**
 - **Maintain a supply of tools and equipment to keep field and clubhouse in proper repair and clean. Replace or repair broken or defective equipment immediately**
 - **The area outside the fence must be kept free of garbage and debris. Teams at the end of games are responsible to clean up trash generated by that game so it does not build up**
 - **Keep all fences in good repair and on inspection list to prevent:**
 - ☐ **Injury to players due to broken or loose fence wires**
 - ☐ **Unauthorized persons from entering**
 - **The clubhouse must be kept neat and clean:**
 - ☐ **No build up of unused material and /or equipment**
 - ☐ **Floors kept swept clean and mopped on a regular basis**
 - ☐ **Garbage containers must be emptied daily**
 - ☐ **Rest rooms kept clean and free of excess water**
 - ☐ **No running through clubhouse**
 - ☐ **No bikes, roller blades in clubhouse**
 - ☐ **No ball playing or warming players in spectator area**
 - ☐ **No swinging of bats anywhere except at home plate**
 - ☐ **Protective padding on fence rails.**
 - **All electrical outlets in kitchen and outside building must be GFCI protected**
 - **All outside faucets or hose type faucets must be backflow protected.**
- Keep Field lighting properly maintained: Use little league safety lighting audit**
- ☐ **Properly adjusted**
 - ☐ **Lenses clean**
 - ☐ **Aging bulbs replaced on a regular basis to insure peak performance**
 - ☐ **Check with light meter, prior to and throughout the season**
 - ☐ **Have circuit breakers, grounding and wiring checked annually**

- ☐ **Keep a supply of extra bulbs in inventory, for speedy replacement of bad bulbs**
- ☐ **Yearly lighting audit**
- ☐ **Ensure managers and coaches get a copy of safety manual yearly**
- ☐ **Complete a facility survey yearly**
- ☐ **Inspect bleachers and back and side rails regularly for fatigue**
- ☐ **Post the names and phone numbers of league officials along with emergency numbers in the clubhouse.**
- ☐

It is the League's responsibility to ensure all Little League rules are closely adhered to regarding all aspects of the game, equipment usage, and safety practices.

The most effective way to accomplish this goal is by training all managers, coaches and umpires so that everyone is aware of the rules and the interpretation of the rules.

Additionally, parent orientation meetings are held prior to the start of the season and as needed during the season to let parents know what they should expect from the League and what the league expects from them.

Rutherford Little League insists on proper conduct by all players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators at all times. No exceptions are made to policies governing acceptable behavior or to the corresponding penalties for violations of league policies.

<u>Concession Stand</u>

A new fire suppression system was installed and approved by the Fire Sub Code official in 2007, as well as all necessary controls and warning signs. New Class B fire extinguishers were purchased to further enhance concession stand safety.

The league's auxiliary committee operates the concession stand at Rutherford Little League. The executive staff is trained through the Board of Health and other visual means on health and safety procedures. It is their responsibility to ensure all placards (i.e. choking, hand washing etc.) are in place. It is also their responsibility to advise the Board of Directors of any safety or other equipment necessary to operate a safe and healthy food establishment.

- **Concession stand must be kept clean and neat constantly; wet slippery floors will undoubtedly cause slips and falls.**
- **No one under 18 years of age is allowed in kitchen or concession area without an adult present.**
- **Staff must be properly trained in the use of all equipment and report faulty or defective equipment immediately.**
- **All refrigerators must maintain a temperature of 32°-40°F; all freezers must maintain a temperature of -10°F or below**
- **Domestic hot water must be kept at a temperature to guarantee proper sanitation of utensils and regulated to a temperature not to exceed 110°F in hand washing areas to avoid a scalding hazard.**
- **Properly charged and rated fire extinguishers on site at all times.**
- **Floor must be kept clean and grease free to avoid slipping hazard.**
- **All soda equipment secured for safety.**
- **Pest control prevention on a regular basis.**
- **Regular inspections of facility by league and Board of Health.**
- **Any or all spray type bottles shall be clearly marked with the contents.**

Equipment

- **Guarantee all teams have been provided with proper safety equipment for their team, including a properly stocked first aid kit.**
- **Keep a large inventory of all equipment on hand to replace defective or worn equipment.**
- **Coaches must be trained to pay close attention to:**
 - ☐ **Proper fit and adjustment condition**
 - ☐ **Procedure to replace defective equipment**
 - ☐ **Coaches must inspect all safety equipment prior to each use.**
 - ☐ **Umpires to inspect equipment prior to games.**
- **Through training coaches, umpires and league officials must be made aware of and enforce all safety regulations in the Little League Rules as well as local rules and safety measures such as:**
 - ☐ **Cup for male catchers**
 - ☐ **Dangling throat protector**

- ☐ Proper batting helmet with face mask for Triple-A and below
- ☐ No jewelry (except medical alerts)
- ☐ Extended chest protector
- ☐ Heart protection as required
- ☐ Coaches should encourage the use of protective cups for all players

Paying close attention to these types of details will go a long way toward preventing injury.

- Managers and coaches must know that any equipment purchased by parents must be inspected by a league official to assure compliance
- A definitive plan for replacement of equipment so faulty equipment is expeditiously replaced.
- AAA minor league ages 9-12 must use RIF 10 ball.
- AA minor league ages 7-8 must use RIF 5 ball.
- T-Ball league to use Safe Tee ball.
- At all levels bats must comply with LL approved standards and are subject to inspection by coaches and umpires prior to each game.

Equipment Replacement Plan

Major League:

Managers must review contents of league provided equipment bag prior to the start of the season and remove any worn or defective pieces.

During the regular season, the Equipment Officer will replace any equipment that needs replacement on an as needed basis. You must turn in the old piece if possible to receive a new one.

Minor and T-Ball Leagues:

At the end of each season the equipment people will inventory and repair or replace any worn out or defective equipment.

Safety Training

Unlike many other leagues in our area, RLL has always required certification for all new members since 1990. Outlined below are the training methods utilized by Rutherford Little League.

This training, in effect, makes every coach on every team a safety officer. All coaches are required to be aware of safety issues and address them when possible or report the matter to the League immediately for resolution.

Facilitators: Rutherford First Aid Corp/Police Department

Baseball Fundamentals and League Policies on Safety: Jennifer Gioia, RLL President

Legal Issues: An Attorney to explain the Coaches Immunity Act.

Emergency Management: We rely solely on the advice of the Rutherford Police/Fire/Ambulance squads.

Training

Safety issues, fundamentals training, practice organization, and First Aid are discussed collectively and by guest presenters annually.

All volunteers must show that they've completed the Heads Up Concussion training offered through Rutgers University.

- ☐ Coaches and Managers are directed to the Little League Website to review Little League university videos on safety procedures and making baseball safe and fun.
- ☐ Annual Managers meeting with Board Member present to go over safety procedures/manual

Coaches' Responsibilities

- Follow all Little League rules and the safety rules set forth by Rutherford Little League.
- The Managers from each team shall always walk the field prior to any game or practice looking for any debris, foreign objects, or any other hazard.
- Keep team disciplined and organized.
- Keep equipment clean and maintained.
- Report all injuries immediately to the league on the incident form supplied.
- Make sure you always have ice, a first aid kit, and a cell phone available.
- Prior to all games, the umpires shall inspect the field for any safety issues
- Pay attention to weather conditions if there is ever a doubt regarding safety the game must be called immediately do not ever risk it. If you stop the game due to lightning do not resume unless it has been 30 minutes since the last bolt.
- Make parents aware of all safety measures we take to give their child a safe environment to play in.
- Medical history forms: 1 copy for you to keep and 1 copy for the leagues files.
- Every coach's primary responsibility is to the players. Providing our players with a pleasant and safe Little League experience is our top priority.

Parents' Responsibilities

- Encourage your child to behave properly, show respect for his teammates, opponents, and coaches, and practice regularly.
- Ensure that the players have required safety equipment at all times, including approved heart protection for all Major Baseball players.
- Let the coach know what activities your child participated in prior to a RLL practice or game. (i.e. A coach needs to know if one of his players pitched in a travel game earlier in the day).
- Notify the coach if your child is injured. Under no circumstances should a player be persuaded by anyone to play through an injury.
- Any injury that needs medical attention requires a written note from the doctor releasing the player to return to play.
- Fill out and promptly return your medical history sheet. It is necessary to fill this out honestly.
- Do not interfere with coaching staff during games or practice, as this will distract the staff. If you have questions, wait until after game or practice when that person is free.
- Understand the Parents' Code of Conduct.
- Parents are never allowed on field unless specifically invited by a manager or umpire or Board Member.
- Positive cheering is encouraged but negative or disrespectful comments toward players, coaches or umpires may result in suspension.

Safety Code

- The Safety Officer of Rutherford Little League is responsible for safety procedures.
- Arrangements should be made in advance of all games and practices for emergency medical services. Managers, coaches, and umpires should have training in first-aid. First-aid kits are issued to each team manager and are located at the concession stand.
- No games or practices should be held when weather or field conditions are not good, particularly when lighting is inadequate.
- Play area should be inspected frequently for holes, damage, stones, glass and other foreign objects.
- All team equipment should be stored within the team dugout, or behind screens, and not within the area defined by the umpires as “in play.”
- Only players, managers, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the playing field or in the dugout during games and practice sessions.
- Responsibility for keeping bats and loose equipment off the field of play should be that of a player assigned for this purpose or the team’s manager and coaches.
- Procedure should be established for retrieving foul balls batted out of playing area.
- During practice and games, all players should be alert and watching the batter on each pitch.
- During warm-up drills players should be spaced so that no one is endangered by wild throws or missed catches.
- All pre-game warm-ups should be performed within the confines of the playing field and not within areas that are frequented by, and thus endanger spectators (i.e., playing catch, pepper, swinging bats, etc.)
- Equipment should be inspected regularly for the condition of the equipment as well as for proper fit.
- Batters must wear Little League approved protective helmets during batting practice and games.
- Catcher must wear catcher’s helmet, mask, throat guard, long model chest protector, shin guards and protective cup with athletic supporter at all times (males) for all practices and games. NO EXCEPTIONS. Managers should encourage all male players to wear protective cups and supporters for practices and games.
- Except when runner is returning to a base, headfirst slides are not permitted.
- During sliding practice, bases should not be strapped down or anchored.
- At no time should “horse play” be permitted on the playing field
- Parents of players who wear glasses should be encouraged to provide “safety glasses”
- Players must not wear watches, rings, pins or metallic items during games and practices, with the exception of medical alert medallions.
- The catcher must wear a catcher’s helmet and mask with a throat guard while warming up pitchers. This applies between innings, in the bullpen during a game, and during practices.

- Bullpen pitchers must be protected from foul balls during game (bench player guarding pitcher must wear helmet).
- On-deck batters are not permitted (except in Juniors Division).

See a need to add to the safety code?

<p align="center">Some Important Do's and Don'ts</p>

Contact: Use the suggestion box located in the clubhouse locker room or contact any coach or Board member.

Do...

- Reassure and aid children who are injured, frightened, or lost.
- Provide, or assist in obtaining, medical attention for those who require it.
- Know your limitations.
- Carry your first-aid kit to all games and practices.
- Keep your "Prevention and Emergency Management of Little League Baseball and Softball Injuries" booklet with your first-aid kit.
- Assist those who require medical attention - and when administering aid, remember to:
 - ☐ LOOK for signs of injury (*Blood, Black-and-blue deformity of joint etc.*).
 - ☐ LISTEN to the injured describe what happened and what hurts if conscious. Before questioning, you may have to calm and soothe an excited child.
 - ☐ FEEL gently and carefully the injured area for signs of swelling or grating of broken bone. Have your players' Medical Clearance Forms with you at all games and practices.
 - ☐ Have a cellular phone available when your game or practice is at a facility that does not have any public phones.

Don't...

- 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 (i.e., CPR, etc.)
- Transport injured individuals except in extreme emergencies
- Leave an unattended child at a practice or game
- Hesitate to report any present or potential safety hazard to the Safety Officer immediately.

Board of Directors 2023

- **President: Jennifer Gioia** (201) 704-9238
- **Vice President, Majors: Brian Redington** (201) 321-0126
- **Vice President, Minors: Jim Spanarkel** (201) 978-4922
- **Secretary: Russ Snyder** (201) 370-0787
- **Treasurer: Jessica Byrne** (973) 865-8920
- **Player Agent: Matt Ventura** (201) 638-7205
- **Sponsorship/Fundraising: Mark Goldsack** (201) 780-1981
- **Equipment/Safety coordinator: Dennis Gentile** (201) 376-6594
- **Information Officer: Mike Bohn** (201) 919-1505
- **Coaching Coord/Umpire in Chief: Vinny Urgola** (201) 450-5818
- **Grounds: Tommy Barnes** (201) 206-7581
- **Grounds: Cormac Joyce:** (646) 235-9435
- **District 5 Administrator – Joe Brunacki** (973) 632-3845
- **Eastern Region Headquarters** (860) 585-4730
- **Little League International Headquarters** (570) 326-1921

Emergency: Dial 9-1-1

Rutherford Police Department (non-emergencies): (201) 939-6000

These numbers are all posted on the bulletin board at the entrance to the Rutherford Little League Clubhouse.

If anyone has a suggestion on how to improve our safety program, contact a Board member or place your suggestion in the suggestion box in the RLL clubhouse.

Rutherford Little League Code of Conduct

- **Speed Limit: 5 MPH in roadways and parking lots while attending any Rutherford Little League event. Watch for small children around parked cars.**
- **No Alcohol allowed in any parking lot, field, or common areas within a Rutherford Little League complex.**
- **No Playing in parking lots at any time.**
- **No Playing on and around lawn equipment.**
- **Use Crosswalks when crossing roadways. Always be alert for traffic.**
- **No Profanity, please.**
- **No Swinging Bats or throwing baseballs at any time within the walkways and common areas of a Rutherford Little League complex.**
- **No throwing balls against dugouts or against backstop. Catchers must be used for all batting practice sessions.**
- **No throwing rocks.**
- **No horseplay in walkways at any time.**
- **No climbing fences.**
- **No pets are permitted at Rutherford Little League games or practices.**
- **Only a player on the field and at bat, may swing a bat.**
- **Observe all posted signs. Players and spectators should remain alert at all times for foul balls and errant throws.**
- **During games, players must remain in the dugout area in an orderly fashion.**
- **After each game, each team must clean up trash in dugout and around stands.**
- **All gates to the field must remain closed. After players have entered or left the playing field, gates should be closed and secured.**

Failure to comply with the above may result in expulsion from the Rutherford Little League field or complex.

Communicable Disease Procedures

- 1. Bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered, and the uniform changed if there is blood on it before the athlete may continue.**
- 2. Use latex gloves to prevent mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated (provided in first-aid kit).**
- 3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surface if contaminated with blood.**
- 4. Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment.**
- 5. Managers, coaches, and volunteers with open wounds should refrain from all direct contact until the condition is resolved.**
- 6. Follow accepted guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and disposal when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards and other articles containing body fluids.**
- 7. Please refer to Rutherford LL website for Covid-19* guidelines and updates.**

Incident Reporting Procedure

What to report - Any incident that causes any player, manager, coach, umpire, or volunteer to receive medical treatment and/or first aid must be reported to the Safety Officer. This includes even passive treatments such as the evaluation and diagnosis of the extent of the injury or periods of rest.

When to report - All such incidents described above must be reported to the Safety Officer within 48 hours of the incident.

The Safety Officer for 2023 is

Dennis Gentile
(201) 376-6594

How to make the report - reporting incidents can come in a variety of forms. Most typically, they are telephone conversations. At a minimum, the following information must be provided:

- The name and phone number of the individual involved.
- The date, time, and location of the incident.
- As detailed a description of the incident as possible.
- The preliminary estimation of the extent of any injuries.
- The name and phone number of the person reporting the incident.

Safety Officer's Responsibilities - Within 48 hours of receiving the incident report, the Safety Officer will contact the injured party or the party's parents and

1. Verify the information received.
2. Obtain any other information deemed necessary.
3. Check on the status of the injured party.
4. In the event that the injured party required other medical treatment (i.e. Emergency Room visit, doctor's visit, etc.) will advise the parent or guardian of the Rutherford Little League's insurance coverage and the provisions for submitting any claims. If the extent of the injuries are more than minor in nature, the Safety Officer shall periodically call the injured party to (1) check on the status of any injuries, and (2) to check if any other assistance is necessary in areas such as submission of insurance forms, etc. until such time as the incident is considered "closed" (i.e. no further claims are expected and/or the individual is participating in the league again).

Summary

The preceding pages have outlined a league safety plan that will be vigorously enforced and maintained. This plan along with a detailed Facility Survey is being submitted to Little League Baseball for their approval as an appropriate program to protect the players, staff and spectators.

Note: Phone numbers for Rutherford Little League Board members are posted on the bulletin boards in the Little League clubhouse as well as within this Safety Plan. Additional numbers you may need are also listed, including District 5 Administrator Joe Brunacki, Eastern Region Headquarters, and Little League International Headquarters in Williamsport, PA..

Best Practices

1) **Heart Protection for all players:**

All players (pitchers and position players) participating at the Major Baseball level of Rutherford Little League are required to wear an approved form of heart protection during practices, scrimmages, and games. Rutherford Little League's Board of Directors approved this measure in 2016 to provide an extra layer of safety and confidence for all players, parents, coaches, and volunteers in our league.



2) **Safety Netting:**

To further enhance the safety of spectators (particularly our younger fans), Rutherford Little League has increased the height of the netting along the first base line. The additional 10 feet of netting will reduce the number of foul balls leaving the playing area, thereby creating a safer place for spectators to gather to watch the game while congregating near our snack bar area.

3) **Fencing:** The Board of Rutherford Little League has asked the Borough of Rutherford to procure and install fencing to separate the train track area from the Tom Melody Field grounds.

2023 Coronavirus Mitigation Guidelines and Protocol

Rutherford Little League remains committed to the health and safety of our children during the Coronavirus Pandemic. We will continue to follow State, Local and CDC guidelines throughout the season and make appropriate adjustments as information becomes available. Guidelines are as follows:

- 1. Players will be asked to provide their own bats, helmets and gloves to limit the possibility of cross contamination. Any shared or borrowed equipment (ie. catchers gear) shall be sanitized after each use with a non toxic disinfectant.**
- 2. All participants are asked to self monitor. If an individual is experiencing any symptoms or had close contact with a person infected with COVID-19, as outlined by the CDC, they will be required to quarantine in accordance with State, Local and CDC guidelines.**
- 3. Players will be asked to bring their own water bottles and sharing of water bottles is prohibited. Players should have their water bottle labeled so as to limit accidental cross contamination.**
- 4. Remind players to cough and sneeze into their elbow.**
- 5. Keep a neat and tidy dugout! Disposing of used tissues, water bottles and other garbage will help to limit exposure.**

We will do our best to monitor the frequent changes as it relates to the Pandemic, make any necessary adjustments and get the information out to the League. With everyone's cooperation, we are confident that 2023 will be a safe, fun and rewarding season.

**State:
covid19.nj.gov
800-962-1253**

**Local:
<https://www.rutherfordboronj.com/departments/health/>
201-460-3020**

**CDC:
coronavirus.gov**