

Team Impact

Player/Parent Handbook

TEAM IMPACT ORGANIZATION

The Team Impact organization was originally formed as the Metro Express softball organization by Zach Green in 1986.

As President, his charge is to help direct the development of all players and coaching staff. A great communicator of game situations and developing player skills, Zach currently oversees all teams structure, development, and personnel. He is also the Head Coach of our 16u team. A tireless proponent women's athletics and is a true leader in the community, Zach has been helping promote girls fast pitch softball throughout the tri-state area and teaching young athletes that with great fundamentals and a love of the game, anything is possible.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Team Impact LLC softball organization is a non-profit corporation organized under the IRS laws encompassing 501(c)(3) entities, and is committed to providing opportunities for young athletes to engage in quality, competitive softball and related experiences. Team Impact is dedicated to the idea that any athlete, regardless of race, creed, religious affiliation, or socio-economic status should be given that opportunity. A competitive athletic experience can instill a good work ethic, enhance social development, contribute to mental and physical health, and teach values of personal responsibility, self-discipline, self-motivation, and teamwork. Participation in fast pitch softball also improves the athlete's opportunity to realize the goals of:

- ◆ **Improving individual skills and ability to play and contribute as a member of a team and the community.**
- ◆ **Earning and/or keeping a position on the team**
- ◆ **Continuing their education at the college level**

Each of the above goals involves individual player growth. This includes improvement in skill level and in the mental outlook necessary to be a successful member of a select softball team and an outstanding member of the community.

PHILOSOPHY

The most important consideration in forming a organization is developing a philosophy. What is the motivation behind forming the Team Impact organization? Will it be a “participation organization” where everyone gets equal playing time, or, an “select performance organization” where playing time must be earned? Team Impact is most definitely a “select performance organization”. Another critical component of organization philosophy includes “how are new players found and included as regular team members”? The answer to this question is not as easy.

Excess turn-over in any organization is very corrosive; no turn-over means the team is possibly not growing. Every player must tryout each season. Tryouts are typically held in August of each year. Making the team in August only qualifies a player for the team for that season. It is not a guarantee that they will be on the team for the next season or future seasons. Additionally, other players may be added throughout the season as needed. Successful endeavors attract top talent and Team Impact has been fortunate to have some of the best players in the tri-state on its rosters.

TEAM IMPACT BOARD

The purpose of the Board is to provide direction for the organization. The Board will aid in the decision making of the organization, provide ideas, structure and assistance in team structure, tournaments, uniforms, hotels and promotion of Team Impact. The Board has no authority on the softball field.

A successful team and organization requires communication. It is imperative that the player, parent or coaches relate concerns to each other. Parents and players may discuss concerns or problems with the coaches. If satisfaction is not achieved then the player, parent or coach can discuss the situation with Zach Green and/or Duane Miller. If there is still a problem or concern, the player, parent and/or coach can request a hearing with the full Board. The Board's decision will be final in all cases.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

There is a lot more expected of our players other than their softball skills. Players are expected to participate in all scrimmages/practices as scheduled. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary activities and/or less playing time in the next tournament. It is the player's responsibility to notify the coach if you must miss all or part of practice, prior notice and permission from your coach is necessary. Please call your coach in advance.

Players are expected to participate for the full “season” and to make all practice sessions, games and tournaments.

All players will be given ample playing time in tournaments – especially during pool play. However, during tournament play where the objective is to advance as far into the playoffs as possible players will be played at the discretion of the coach based on skill level, performance during pool play and team needs.

Players are expected to consistently work on their own to raise the levels of their physical condition and skill.

All players will sign a code of conduct form as part of their membership with the team. The following standards must be observed for one to continue as an active member of Team Impact; violation of standards marked with (*) mean suspension. Standards marked with (**) will result in the immediate dismissal from the organization.

1. **Alcohol and drugs are prohibited at all times.
2. **Smoking is prohibited.
3. *Excellence in academic performance is required. All players must meet the minimum requirements of the NCAA for participation in a college sport.
4. *As a representative of Team Impact, no actions that will hinder the player's performance, game, or scholastics will be tolerated. The player's actions and behavior should always be such as to reflect positively on the player and their team.
5. Players must be on time for all team commitments. Violations will result in disciplinary activities and/or loss of playing time.
6. Players must call their team coach when they are going to be late or absent from a practice.
7. All players are required to pursue all physical conditioning activities and drills unless excused by a doctor or the coach.
8. Players must report all physical injuries or illness to their head coach immediately.
9. Players prohibited from supervised practice or games are expected to attend the activity and actively pursue physical conditioning and skill improvement on their own.
10. Players are required to take proper care of all equipment, keeping in mind that the equipment is the property of the Team Impact.
11. Each player will keep their uniforms clean and neat.
12. Each player is expected to treat all other players, teammates, coaches, umpires, and fans with courtesy and respect.
13. If players are involved in a dispute, they must immediately work out problems between them. If they are unable to resolve their problem immediately, they must meet with the coaches until their problems are resolved. Problems between players must never be left unresolved.
14. *During any overnight travel the coach will determine curfew. Players will inform the coach prior to leaving authorized team areas of the hotel. Violations will result in suspension for games. Consistent violations will result in dismissal from the team.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Team Impact has expressed a desire for the organization to perform community service in order to give something back to the community. It is felt that this will improve the player's self-esteem and generate respect throughout the tri-state area off the softball field. Therefore, all players are expected to participate in any community service activities that Team Impact performs. This community service can also be used toward the player's community service requirement. Additional community service may be assigned for disciplinary reasons.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

Because the length of softball matches can be unpredictable and tournament formats and management varies it is difficult to pinpoint the time a tournament may end. Also, exact tournament schedules or final confirmations are often not available until just before the tournaments begin (often the night before play starts). This is partly due to late entries, withdrawals or team changes, all of which impact the actual tournament playing schedule and match-ups.

Team Impact has no control over the administration of these tournaments, but we do make suggestions, as do other clubs, to those who run the tournament for incorporation in their next one. Since team entry fees must be paid months in advance, and the large amount of planning required for travel and lodging, it is mandatory that all players attend all tournaments.

Parents and players should closely review the tournament schedule provided (also listed on the website).

PLAYING TIME

Playing time is very important to everyone. It is important to apply the skills and fundamentals taught in practice in a game situation. Only then can a coach and player truly realize which skills the player is proficient at and which skills require more training. Nevertheless, every player should have an opportunity to play during tournament pool games. Your team fees go toward practice time and instruction by qualified, experienced coaches and does not guarantee a set amount of innings or games started or played in any tournament.

More playing time is earned by being at practice and working hard to improve, as well as, executing the skills when given the opportunity to play. The coaches are advised to give everyone opportunities to contribute their individual skills and abilities to the team during pool play matches.

OUT OF TOWN TRIPS

All regulations previously listed above, under "Standards of Conduct", apply to out of town trips. Board members are to assist coaches in enforcing these requirements.

Players are representing the Team Impact Organization at all tournaments and will not do anything to embarrass themselves or the organization. As noted above, the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco is prohibited at all times. Use of any illegal substance will result in the player being suspended from the tournament, sent home at her parents' expense, and dismissal from the team.

Any Team Impact player caught in a boy's room or with a boy in a team room will be suspended from the tournament, sent home at her parents' expense, and will be dismissed from the team.

Any Team Impact player caught doing any illegal activities will be suspended from the tournament, sent home at her parents' expense, and may be dismissed from the team.

PRACTICE RULES

- ***Players are required to be ready to begin practice 15 minutes prior to the designated start time.*** Begin practice mentally prepared. Have personal goals for all practices. A good time to think about goals is during warm-up.
- ***Each practice session is very important to the development of our athletes.***
- ***Attendance at all fall and spring practice sessions is mandatory.*** Participation in fall or spring games that are scheduled for Saturday and/or Sunday is mandatory. Missing any games will result in the loss of playing time or dismissal from the team. Exceptions only for major ***immediate family*** milestone events such as your or a sibling's graduation, your own school prom, family death.
- A player who misses more than a 25% of the team's scheduled winter practice sessions may be dismissed from the team.
- ***Only players who are current in their dues will be allowed to take part in practices or tournament play unless prior arrangements have been made and approved by Zach Green.***
- **Parents are strictly forbidden to enter the dugout or go onto the field during practice or games unless instructed by one of the coaches to do so.**
- ***Miscellaneous items.*** We will always encourage our teammates, and respect the decisions made by the coach.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Insurance Coverage

As part of their individual membership fees, all players are covered by a **supplemental** insurance policy from Bollinger Insurance-the preferred carrier for ASA softball. This is a five (5) million dollar liability policy that covers all club activities and injuries that may occur during an event. An event can be either practice or a tournament. The policy also insures players against any loss that may be incurred while traveling to or from an event. Please note that this is a *supplemental* policy to your own hospitalization policy. Specimen policies can be found on the web at the Amateur Softball Association website.

Uniforms & Equipment

Team Impact players will be provided two sets of team uniforms, equipment bag, helmet and spirit wear. All uniforms and equipment is the property of the organization and must be returned at the end of the season. Players will be charged the replacement cost for any items that are lost or not returned.

The Softball Season

The Softball Season for the Team Impact organization begins on September 1 and typically concludes in the end of August. The older teams will always attempt to play in college exposure tournaments as well as sanctioned ASA and/or NSA qualifying and National tournaments. In addition to this travel commitment, the team will play in other out of town tournaments that will require travel to tournaments in the fall and summer

COLLEGE SOFTBALL ASPIRANTS

It is expected that a number of players will continue their softball careers in college. The travel team experience is becoming a requirement in order to compete at the intercollegiate level, especially for those hoping to obtain an athletic scholarship. Participation in showcases tournaments, college camps and other exposure events is also a requirement if your daughter is to be "spotted" by college coaches. Our program will assist any players wanting to market themselves by helping with recruiting seminars, player profiles, sending letters to coaches and other related recruiting information. The team will assist in making sure we play in national qualifiers, national tournaments, and showcase tournaments.

HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE PARENT

Youth programs cannot be successful without the support of parents. The following guidelines are for concerned parents as they strive to be supportive of their young athletes without being pushy.

1. **Supportive parents** focus on mastering sport skills and strategies rather than competitive rankings. Sport mastery focuses on performance, which can be controlled by the athlete, while competitive ranking focuses primarily on winning and losing, an outcome, which is frequently outside the athlete's control. An overemphasis on competitive rank and an under emphasis on sport mastery is a primary cause of a dramatic dropout rate in competitive sports by 12 to 18 year olds.

2. **Supportive parents** decrease the pressure to win. **Supportive parents** realize that sports create pressure to succeed. Additional pressure from the parent is likely to be counterproductive, particularly, in the long run. **Supportive parents** avoid making the outcome of the game bigger than life. As a game or a competition becomes blown out of proportion, a youngster's self esteem can become tied to winning or losing. A child should not feel less valuable or less loved when a game is lost.

3. **Supportive parents** believe that sport's primary value is the opportunity for self-development. The probability of achieving lasting fame and glory via sport is low. Many outstanding athletes never achieve professional status. However, their sports experiences have allowed them to develop life-long values and self-respect.

4. **Supportive parents** understand the risks. Competition places the athlete on center stage. Anytime you attempt to succeed publicly, you risk failing where others can judge you. In the long run, competing is willingness to chance failure. Giving your best is what athletics is all about.

5. **Supportive parents** communicate their true concerns directly with the coach. A positive working relationship is based upon clearly communicated mutual goals among parents, coaches and athletes. While a parent cannot control the behavior of a coach, they can communicate with the coach on a regular basis about the overall development of their child.

6. **Supportive parents** understand and respect the difference between parental roles and coaching roles. Both parents and coaches need to understand their different roles in supporting the young athlete. While parents are ultimately responsible for their child's development, once they have chosen a program/coach they **must leave the coaching to the coach**. Even though **Supportive parents** often play sports with their child they avoid coaching "over the shoulder" of the coach and/or publicly questioning the coaching decisions.

7. **Supportive parents** control negative emotions and think positively. Few athletes wish to perform poorly. Negative reactions to poor performances only add to an athlete's pressures. **Supportive parents** realize that even the athlete who "chokes" is trying to succeed. In fact, part of the problem with many athletes is that they are trying too hard to succeed. Criticizing such athletes does little to enhance their performances.

8. **Supportive parents** avoid the use of fear. The use of punishment and withdrawal of love can pressure kids to perform better. Unfortunately, such strategies tend to trade short-term performance gains for long-term emotional risks to the youngster's health and well being. **Supportive parents** recognize that a love for sport is rarely fostered by fear of the consequences of failure.

9. **Supportive parents** avoid criticizing. Nagging parents often confuse support with constantly reminding the children that they need to practice, condition more and concentrate. Overly involved parents frequently lose their objectivity. They are unable to provide critical emotional support, which children often need before and during highly competitive contests.

10. **Supportive parents** recognize and understand expressions of insecurity. Youngsters who express high anxiety, more often than not, have parents who are insensitive to their symptoms. When children are nervous, uncertain, or feeling pressure, insensitive parents may trivialize the child's fears or see such concerns as signs of weakness. **Supportive parents** realize that such expressions are normal and are a call for emotional support.

11. **Supportive parents** avoid the use of guilt. "We've done so much for you," or "The family's given so much for you, the least you could do is take advantage of what we've provided for you" are typical remarks of **UN-Supportive parents**. They use guilt to manipulate the child to perform the way the parents desire.

PLAYER/COACH/PARENT RELATIONSHIP

Softball can teach many good traits, such as the spirit of cooperation, and the regard for physical fitness; but it is difficult for these and other desirable traits to take root in young players when the adults around them fail to set a proper example. We ask that parents refrain from criticizing opposing players, other parents, coaches, officials, umpires, or teammates. In spectator enthusiasm we are often prone to issue several instructions to the players that may be contrary to those of the coach, leaving the players confused and upset. Please let these athletes follow their coach's instruction and **leave the coaching to the coach!**

It is the Team Impact organization's desire that player's parents understand the "value" of having independent professional coaching and playing in aggressive tournaments in venues showcase tournaments, and other national events.

The coaches are giving their time, energy, and best efforts to teach your child the sport of fast pitch softball and the Team Impact Organization will not tolerate condemnation of the coaches. Understand that you will not agree or like every coaching tactic, comment, or suggestion that is made by the coaches, but this does not warrant criticism or rudeness. This is certainly not intended to reduce spectator enthusiasm. Please continue to cheer and encourage the actions you like and ignore those you don't. Please do not interfere with your child's coach, especially during play, or do anything else that will detract from the enjoyment your child deserves to get from softball. **Parents are strictly forbidden to enter the dugout or go onto the field during practice or games unless instructed by one of the coaches to do so.**

Parents must ally themselves with the coach in teaching their children how to cope with the frustrations of being a member of a team. Sports provide an excellent opportunity to teach young women about the realities of highly competitive situations. They must be taught how to be a cooperative team member, how to make use of both positive feedback and constructive criticism, how to cope with adversity, how to achieve 'mental toughness', and how to be a gracious winner.

The most effective way to establish a rapport with a coach is to display a high level of commitment to the activity. Players need to learn to display their commitment by coming early and staying late, doing extra preparation, being enthusiastic about the activity, and actively and publicly supporting their teammates. A parent who is successful in teaching these skills will never have to worry whether the coach is giving their child a fair break. If a player has a concern with a coach, parents have the responsibility for teaching their child steps to remedy the concern.

The following steps **MUST** be taken if any player/parent has a concern with the coach:

Player should discuss the concern with the coach and try to arrive at a solution. The coach should not be considered unapproachable. He or she is willing to listen to a player's concern and try to arrive at a mutual solution. Until the coach is made aware of the concern nothing at all can be done to alleviate it. Do not wait until the end of the season to voice your concern.

If, after time, the concern is not resolved the player and parents may *make an appointment to **meet offsite*** to speak with the coach. **Please do not approach a coach in the dugout or on the field to discuss a concern at practice or a tournament. This could result in the immediate dismissal of the player.**

If satisfaction is not achieved then the player and/or parent or coach can discuss the situation with Zach Green and/or Duane Miller.

If there is still a problem or concern, the player, parent and/or coach can request a hearing with the Board. **The Board's decision will be final in all cases.**

TEAM IMPACT PLAYER FEES

The Team Impact organization remains a totally independent and self-funded organization. Funds are obtained through either player fees or through contributions and donations. Individual player fees cover coaches travel expenses, tournament registration fees, and umpire fees, supplies and ASA/NSA sanction fees. Team Impact obtains practice fields and an indoor training facilities outfitted with multiple pitching stations and batting cages and indoor pitching clinic facilities for use by all the players.

All fees noted on the Player Payment Schedule are due in full at the start of the season when a player is placed on a teams roster. As a courtesy Team Impact offers a payment plan consisting of 8 monthly payments due the 1st of each month. If not received by the 15th of the month, a player/parent will receive an email notice from the organization that they are late on payment. If payment is still not received by the 22nd of the month, a second email notice will be sent with a copy to the Board stating that if the outstanding balance, including the next months fees, are not paid by the 1st of the next month, the player will not be allowed to practice or play until all fees are current. If still outstanding on the 1st, the Board will inform and advise the coach of the situation and the player will not be allow to practice or play until all fees are current. Exceptions can be granted for extreme hardships or circumstances by request to Zach Green and will be kept confidential within the board.

The Team Impact budget for the season (Spring/Summer and Fall) is based on the previous season's travel and are subject to change depending on any extra unforeseen tournaments, tournaments running longer, Thursday thru Sunday vs. Friday thru Sunday, etc. The expenses may be front loaded due to the difficulties of collecting dues and/or coaches travel expenses at the last minute jeopardizing the various teams' trips. **All paid fees are non-refundable even if a player leaves the team or chooses not to attend a tournament and/or Nationals.**

Please complete and sign the related forms signifying the players and parent/guardian's acknowledgement and agreement to the rules, guidelines and stipulations put forth in this Team Impact Player/Parent Hand Book and submit them to the Team Impact office.

- 1) Player/Parent Agreement & Consent Form
- 2) Medical Release Form
- 3) Parental Waiver – Release of Liability Form
- 4) Player Roster Waiver Commitment Form