

Little League International Statement: Children as Managers, Coaches and Umpires

Some leagues that have requested to use child umpires, managers or coaches, in order to develop them as volunteers, and to augment the volunteer base at the local league.

It has always been the policy of Little League that managers, coaches and umpires should be adults, because it is unwise to put children in charge of other children in a competitive activity such as baseball and softball. The reasons for that policy should be obvious to anyone.

A person designated as a manager, coach or umpire is, in fact, acting as a parent of sorts on a baseball or softball field. In that capacity, the manager, coach or umpire has certain leadership as well as legal responsibilities for the safety and well-being of the children in his/her care.

Placing a child in charge of other children in that capacity, without the benefit of an adult present and in the same capacity, is grossly unfair to the child, and to the children and adults they are supervising. Also, it places the adults – who would allow such a situation to occur – in a potentially dangerous position legally.

With respect to allowing only children to umpire a game, it means they are responsible, by rule, for maintaining the discipline of the adult managers and coaches. Regardless of a league's opinion of its current adult managers and coaches, anyone can see that such a situation also is grossly unfair to the child umpires in such a game.

Little League International has developed new rules allowing child coaches (age 16 or 17 only), provided an adult manager is present at the game or other activity, and provided another adult coach is on the roster.

We also have developed new rules for 2010 that provide for a child umpire (of any age), but only if an adult umpire is present on the field for that game, in the capacity of umpire-in-chief.

These changes in the rules still permit the development of children as volunteers, but require adult support for the obvious reasons noted above.

Also, while the umpire-in-chief is usually the home plate umpire, we are allowing the designated umpire-in-chief to be a base umpire, if the league wishes to do so. That would allow a child to be the plate umpire in a game, provided an adult who is a base umpire is designated as the umpire-in-chief for that game.

These new rules allow children to gain the experience of being a volunteer coach or umpire, while not putting those children or the children in their care, in legal danger.

END

Dan Kendall

From: Gemmell, David [dgemmell@borough.kenai.ak.us]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 1:04 PM
To: wiljon@gci.net; willis lyford; Rob Gambill; dmontagna1987@gci.net; Caron, Paul R Civ USAF PACAF 3 FSS/FSFY; slforrest@gmail.com; polarbears@alaska.net; jclark@positiveplaceforkids.com; Oliver Amend; Dan Kendall; julieacoyle@hotmail.com; David and Susan Smith; NVLL Chuck Thompson; jack.campbell@wwt.com; tadow227@gmail.com; Seward Little League; Jerry Holgramm; watson@gci.net; Linda Lane; Annette Hutton; Bartlett Softball - Robert Posma; AK District 1 - Mike Mitchell; Leo Thompson; Jason Palmer; Brian Hoisington
Subject: FW: Waiver Request for Adult Umpire Requirement
Attachments: Child_umps_managers_coaches_11-5-09.doc

Hi Everyone

I need to pass this on to everyone.

David W. Gemmell, DA
Alaska District 01

PS Mike Mitchell please post.

From: Brent Stahlnecker [mailto:bstahlnecker@LITTLELEAGUE.ORG]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 12:51 PM
To: Gemmell, David
Subject: RE: Waiver Request for Adult Umpire Requirement

The Charter Committee is not allowing any waivers for this rule. The rule has been out since October/November 2009. You can use the attached info to provide to the league.

The below is an additional statement from Lance Van Auken from Little League International in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

As a longtime Little League volunteer umpire at the local league level, I completely understand your league's reasons behind using children to umpire games. However, it would be irresponsible for us to ignore the legal realities of the situation that exists. Doing so would be to the detriment of you, the other volunteers in your league, and the children who play in it.

Also, please understand that we did not arrive at this decision lightly, or without regard for the consequences. To that end, we have developed a position statement that explains the reason we placed a longstanding policy (that all volunteers should be adults) into the rules for 2010. But the new rules do allow children to continue to serve as umpires, provided there is an adult also assigned as an umpire to that game.

Sincerely,

Brent W. Stahlnecker
Western Region Assistant Director
Little League Western Region Headquarters
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You can receive the latest news from Little League, e-mailed right to your computer. Signing up is easy at: http://www.littleleague.org/Learn_More/About_Our_Organization/Enews.htm

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To stop receiving emails from Little League International, please reply to this email with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

-----Original Message-----

From: Gemmell, David [mailto:dgemmell@borough.kenai.ak.us]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 1:36 PM
To: Brent Stahlnecker
Cc: Dan Kendall
Subject: FW: Waiver Request for Adult Umpire Requirement

Hi Brent

I approve this request. This is my largest league and do to the amount of games being played its impossible to guarantee an adult umpire at each game.

David W. Gemmell, DA AK D1

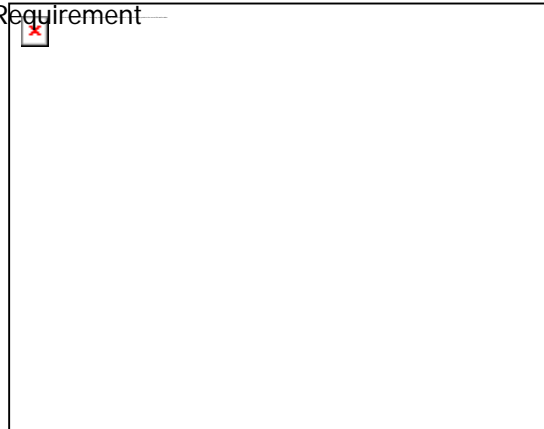
From: Dan Kendall [mailto:president@kniklittleleague.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2010 7:52 AM
To: Dave Gemmell; Gemmell, David
Cc: Eugene Cyrus; peyton@mtaonline.net; psfbrown@aol.com; kendall@alaska.net
Subject: Waiver Request for Adult Umpire Requirement

Knik Little League
PO Box 771384
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Date: April 24, 2010

To: Dave Gemmell
District 1 Administrator

Re: Waiver as described below



Knik Little League is requesting a waiver for the requirement for an adult umpire to be present at each game:

Section 9.01(a) states that "Non-adult umpires may be used to supplement the umpire crew but the umpire-in-chief must always be an adult." Generally this means a person who is not an adult (no age limit) may serve in a game as an umpire, including as plate umpire, provided one or more other adults are also umpires for that game. However, that non-adult umpire cannot be designated as umpire-in-chief for that game. The umpire-in-chief is not required to be the plate umpire.

Justification:

Knik Little League over the years has developed an extensive training program for umpires. The Knik umpire group consists mainly of the youth age 12 to 18 who have

also participated as players. Very few adults are active participants with the umpire program. The rule was brought to my attention in March 2010. This gave Knik very little time to train and recruit adult umpires. Knik Little League requests a waiver from this requirement given the fact that there are not enough adult volunteer umpires available at this time to fulfill this requirement.

Dan Kendall
President
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