

2023

Groton Little League Safety Plan



**“USING THE POWER OF YOUTH BASEBALL TO
TEACH LIFE LESSONS THAT BUILD STRONGER
INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES”**

-Little League International Mission Statement

League Identification Number 207-10-02

P.O. BOX 365

Groton, CT 06340

Welcome Managers, Coaches, Volunteers, and Parents,

The attached packet is our Little League's Safety Plan for the upcoming season. It has been formulated and approved by the Board of Directors. By submitting this approved plan to Little League Headquarters, we are entitled to numerous incentives to make our program run more efficiently. We hope that as the years go by; this plan can be revised and updated for the better. The safety of everyone involved with Groton Little League, especially the kids, is of utmost importance. This plan discusses specific guidelines and criteria that insure the safe operation of Little League Baseball in Groton.

Reading and acknowledging this plan is mandatory. All managers and coaches must familiarize themselves with the plan and it must be adhered to. This plan will also be made available to the parents, umpires and concession stand workers. By having this plan, Groton Little League can maintain the highest possible standard of safety attainable.

Each year Groton Little League will submit a Safety Plan to ensure a safe and efficient baseball season. Your feedback and suggestions are an important part of this. If anyone feels they can contribute by suggesting or recommending ways to improve the safety of Groton Little League, please feel free to contact any Board Member. Have a safe, exciting and fun Little League season.



Nicholas J. Sylvia

Groton Little League Safety Officer

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Introduction

For Groton Little League to be “A Safety Awareness Program” (ASAP) compliant, we must file an approved Safety Plan that meets certain criteria with Williamsport at the start of each spring season. Managers and coaches must use this Safety Plan, and a copy of the 2023 Safety Plan will be made available to all parents on the Groton Little League website.

Goals

We will provide the opportunity for our children to participate at their own level in order to help them develop:

- Physically: Learning and improving their athletic skills and physical condition while avoiding injuries.
- Psychologically: Learning to control their emotions and develop positive feelings of self- worth and confidence.
- Socially: Learning the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, and observance of the rules.

Groton Little League Safety Plan Mission Statement

The purpose of the Groton Little League Safety Plan is to introduce and enforce guidelines for a safe playing environment. This is achieved through educating and informing. This safety plan includes the Conduct Code and Safety Code for both parents and players. All participants, volunteers, employees, spectators and guests are bound by the guidelines set forth in these documents.

The Role of the Little League Safety Officer

The League Safety Officer is a member of the Groton Little League Board of Directors. This person acts as the main contact for any and all safety issues and is responsible to review, change and communicate the League’s Safety Plan each year. The plan is presented to the Board each year for approval. It is then submitted to Williamsport and is on file with Little League Headquarters.

The League President and Safety Officer have primary responsibility for ensuring the entire league complies with the safety plan; however, the entire Groton Little League Board of Directors and all Team Managers and Coaches share the responsibility for promoting the awareness and its compliance as well.

For 2023, our Safety Officer is Nicholas J. Sylvia. Nicholas is the league’s primary contact for any safety related issues.

Groton Little League Board of Directors

President Dave Franco – 203-675-8047	Vice President <i>VACANT</i>
Player Agent Erika Santrock – 757-897-0340	Treasurer Freddie Pizarsz – 860-912-0018
Secretary Aimee Lee – 860-857-4246	Safety Officer Nicholas Sylvia – 802-461-8790
Coaching Coordinator Marcus Cogman – 401-207-7682	Tee Ball Coordinator <i>VACANT</i>
Concession Manager Kathryn Illvento – 860-884-8985	Equipment Manager Dave Franco – 203-675-8047
Senior Division Coordinator <i>VACANT</i>	Marketing Kathryn Illvento – 860-884-8985
Marketing Erika Santrock – 757-897-0340	Minors Coordinator <i>VACANT</i>
Majors Coordinator <i>VACANT</i>	

Contact & Communication

The Groton Little League Board of Directors are committed to making themselves accessible to the entire league. For the league to function effectively, communication is imperative. Feel free to contact anyone on the Board by calling the numbers listed above. A Groton Little League board member will return your call ASAP.

Groton Little League Web Site

Groton Little League maintains a website and Facebook Page. These are the league's primary media outlets and have a wealth of information including upcoming events and dates, contacts and links to other little league sites. The website may be found at:

www.grotonlittleleague.com

Groton Little League encourages all parents & guardians to subscribe to Little League E-news to find out all the latest in Playing & Safety tips to help young players develop safely. Sign up at:

www.littleleague.org

Reporting EMS, Fire & Police Incidents

All GLL Board of Directors, members, managers, coaches, parents, umpires and volunteers should use the following procedures for reporting injuries:

- In the event of a medical emergency on the playing field, please clear the field of all non-essential people.
- Players should go to their respective dugouts and remain there until the situation is cleared. *There is to be absolutely no playing or practicing while an injured player is being attended to.*
- Dial 9 - 1 - 1
- When it is answered, in a calm and controlled voice, respond:

“We have a Medical Emergency at the Groton Little League Field Name Baseball Field”.

- Explain the nature of the emergency (i.e., “We have a medical emergency at the Groton Little League Calvin Burrows Baseball Field”).
- Explain to the dispatcher the location of the Groton Little League Field you are at. Include street names and addresses if known.
- If you are at a location with multiple fields, inform the dispatcher which field you are on.
- Assign one parent or volunteer to contact a GLL Board of Directors member to inform them of what & where the incident has occurred.
- Have one parent or volunteer stand at the parking area or the roadside to direct Fire/Rescue/Ambulance.

For Non-Emergency Situations please use one of the numbers below:

- Town of Groton Police Department (Calvin Burrows Field): 860-441-6712
- City of Groton Police Department (Washington Park): 860-445-2451
- Lawrence and Memorial Hospital 860-442-0711

Groton Little League Codes of Conduct

The Board of Directors has mandated the following Code of Conduct. The Board, league managers and umpires enforce this code. All league officers, participants, members, parents and volunteers are required to abide by this code. Each year the league Safety Director will consider revising or modifying this Code of Conduct to insure smooth baseball/softball operations and safety. *Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in expulsion from the Little League Complex.*

We must all remember, to get respect we must first give respect. We take pride in the fact that WE ARE GROTON LITTLE LEAGUE. Therefore, let us, both children and adults set the example to one another.

General Code of Conduct

- Observe all posted signs.
- Players and spectators must be aware of foul balls at all times. Do not climb onto fences or dugouts.
- Mandatory 5 mph speed limit around the Little League fields. Watch out for small children at all times.
- Park vehicles to allow emergency vehicles the Right of Way.
- No alcohol allowed at or near any Little League Fields.
- No smoking within twenty feet of the dugouts or spectators.
- Only players, managers, coaches and umpires are allowed on the fields and in the dugouts during the game.
- Use of profanity will not be tolerated.
- After each game, each team must clean up trash in the dugout and around the seating areas. After each game, each team is responsible for raking the fields and taking the bases in.
- Only authorized personnel are allowed in the concession stand.

Parent's Code of Conduct

One of the many challenging aspects of coaching is to play the part of role model to our players. Behavior of our players on the field, for the most part, is extremely favorable. In the heat of the game, it isn't hard to get emotional. Nevertheless, we have an obligation to our players to reinforce teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Sometimes behavior of individuals off the field raises eyebrows. Like coaches, parents also must be the role models our children need to set a positive example.

These guidelines will help provide an enjoyable experience for our players and other spectators.

- Set an example for sportsmanship for our children to follow.
- Retain perspective, there are no major league scouts in the stands.
- Do not criticize the umpires and always treat them with respect.
- Do not criticize an opposing team, it's players, coaches or fans by words or gestures.
- Do not be a "Grandstand Manager".
- Remember that Coaches, Managers, and League Officials are unpaid volunteers.
- Do not promote slanderous or hurtful gossip.

Player's Code of Conduct

The following guidelines will provide an environment that is sure to create an enjoyable experience for all our players, coaches, and parents.

- Any player using foul or abusive language or gestures to any other player, coach or umpire can be ejected from a game.
- Fighting is an automatic ejection from a game.
- All players are to treat their co-players, coaches, umpires, and fans with respect.
- Players will not taunt, yell at or in any way try to distract players on the opposing team.
- Players will shake hands with the opposing team after the game.

Player Bill of Rights

We will provide the opportunity for our children to participate at their own developmental level in order to help them to develop physically, psychologically, and socially. Most importantly, we want our children to have fun playing sports. Listed below is our BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES.

- The right to participate in sports.
- The right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability.
- The right to have qualified adult leadership.
- The right to play as a child not as an adult.
- The right of children to share in the leadership and decision making of their sports participation.
- The right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
- The right to equal opportunity to strive for success.
- The right to be treated with dignity.
- The right to have fun in sports.

Safety Code

The Board of Directors has approved the following Safety Code. All participants, league officers, volunteers, and members are required to abide by this code. It will be mandatory during all practices and games that team managers and umpires take the necessary actions to comply with this code. The League Safety Officer will monitor compliance and make revisions as needed. This Code will be reviewed each season. Parts of this Code appear in the schedule book as well. You, as a League, are welcome to suggest ways in which we can make our baseball program safer.

- All volunteers (Board of Directors, managers, coaches, and parents on the field and in the dugout) are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form.
- Each application must be signed and a copy of a government issued photo ID must accompany the form.
- Each application form will have a background check completed through a national registry.
- All managers should have current Little League Rule Books.
- All teams should have access to a cellular phone in the event emergency medical personal are needed. It is explained further in this manual how to contact Police or Fire.
- Equipment must be in good shape and be inspected regularly & kept in an equipment bag.
- Batters at all levels of play must wear Little League approved batting helmets. It is recommended that faceguards be used.
- All equipment should remain off the fields during practices and games.
- There is no on deck area. Only one batter should have a bat in his hands. Batters are not allowed to practice swings.
- During warmups, utilize the entire playing field. Maintain ample space between players to avoid being struck by errant throws or missed catches.
- Catchers must wear Little League approved protective equipment at all times during practices and games. This includes catchers' helmet, mask **with throat guard**, chest protector, shinguards and protective cup with athletic supporter (male). ***NO EXCEPTIONS.*** All other players are encouraged to wear protective cups, supporters and for practices and games as well.
- Catchers must wear catchers' helmet and mask with a throat guard while warming up pitchers. This applies between innings and in the bullpen during all games and practices.
- Managers and coaches may not warm up pitchers before or during a game.
- Headfirst slides are not permitted while *advancing* to a base. Runner will be called out.
- Batter may not square to bunt, then pull the bat back and swing. Batter will be called out.
- Players who wear glasses are encouraged to wear "safety/sport glasses".

- There is to be no jewelry worn during games (except medic alert bracelet).
- It is recommended that coaches or parents provide ample nourishment during games and practices.
- During practices and games, all players and coaches should be alert and watch the batter on each pitch.
- All bats and equipment should be secure and out of the way. It is recommended that players use bat racks provided and that the number of bats brought to game be kept at a minimum.
- No games or practices will be held when weather, inadequate light or poor field conditions will pose a safety risk for the players.
- Pre-game warm-ups should be confined to the playing field. There will be no throwing, catching, or swinging bats in areas that are frequented by, and thus, endangering spectators.
- A survey shall be conducted each year for all fields and concession area with the results documented on approved forms provided by Little League Baseball.
- A fully stocked First Aid kit is available in the Concession Stand for use. Access to this kit is available during all games and practices.
- Contact the Safety Director if additional supplies are needed due to previous use. An ample supply of ice packs is in the concession stand.
- Managers, coaches, and umpires will be provided with training in first aid, proper mechanics and fundamentals of Little League Baseball and sound Little League philosophy.
- Managers and umpires should walk the fields prior to each game to inspect for potential safety hazards i.e., holes, rocks, broken glass and other foreign objects. Report any hazards to any Board Member.
- This entire Safety Manual will be enforced at all league activities.
- Only authorized personnel are allowed in the concession stand. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Clinics & Training

Managers & Coaches Clinic

Groton Little League will provide training for managers and coaches for the upcoming baseball season. At least one manager/coach must attend training. Each Manager/Coach will attend training at least once every three years. Coaching clinics will be held in conjunction with Groton Little League Winter Clinic. Additional opportunities for coaching clinics, such as conferences, district clinics, and outside experience will be evaluated. The coaching clinic will include coaching techniques, proper warm-up exercises and proper instruction on hitting, fielding, and throwing techniques. There will be no cost to attend the Coaching Clinic held during the Groton Little League Winter Clinic. Other trainings will be case-by-case.

Safety, CPR, & First Aid Training

All managers, coaches, and volunteers will review the contents of this safety plan and sign an acknowledgement of their review (Appendix D). Questions or concerns with regards to this plan may be addressed to the Groton Little League Safety Director or any other Board Member.

CPR & First Aid training will be provided prior to the beginning of league practices. At least one manager / coach from each team must attend the training and all managers / coaches must have attended the training in the last year. CPR & First Aid training classes are limited to 6 people per session. The CPR & First Aid training will include training on the use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED).

Concession Stand Safety Training

All Concession Stand volunteers must review the concession stand safety rules and sign the acknowledgement of their review (Appendix D). A list of authorized concession stand volunteers will be maintained in each concession stand. Only personnel who have reviewed and signed the training are authorized to prepare and handle food.

Injury Prevention

Medical Release Form

Part of keeping a player safe from injury or worsening an injury that is sustained is having the past & present medical history and related social history of the player. These important medical conditions that he/she may have (such as ADD/ADHD, asthma, diabetes, drug, environmental, food or insect allergies etc.) will help the managers & coaches deal with each situation properly. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not around when an incident occurs, the managers & coaches may be the only person around to give potentially life-saving information. This information is included on the *Little League Baseball and Softball Medical Release* form which is completed during the registration process. The Groton Little League Safety Director will maintain the originals of all medical release forms. Copies of the appropriate medical release forms will be distributed to each team manager and shall be kept in their team binder.

Note: Due to federal HIPPA regulations, parents have the right to withhold this information

How to Prevent or Reduce Baseball Injuries

To reduce the risks that your child will be injured playing Little League Baseball, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Consumer Product Safety Commission, American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, and other sports and health organizations recommend the following:

Make sure players are in proper physical condition to play baseball

Conditioning-related injuries occur most often at the beginning of a season when kids are most likely to be out of shape.

- Many injuries can be prevented if your child follows a regular conditioning program before the season starts that incorporates exercises designed specifically for baseball, and for the position they play (for instance, catchers, because they have to squat continuously, should do exercises, such as leg extensions, leg curls, and toe raises that develop strength and flexibility of the muscles around the knees, especially those of the thighs and calves).
- Encourage your child to train to get ready to play baseball. A month before the season begins, they should run or engage in some kind of physical exercise once or twice a week. They should gradually increase the number of workouts to three or four times a week by the time team practices begins.
- All players, but especially pitchers, should incorporate conditioning and stretching exercises for the shoulder into an overall conditioning program. The muscles in the front of the arm are naturally stronger. Because many shoulder injuries result from weaker muscles in the back of the arm that are used to stop the pitching motion, the conditioning program should emphasize building up those muscles.

Teach proper throwing mechanics

If your child is a pitcher, make sure they learn how to properly position their throwing arm during all phases of the pitching motion. Researchers found that "pitcher's arm movements during different phases of the pitching motion, if performed incorrectly, can cause injury." They identified four problem areas:

- Maximum shoulder rotation: A pitcher needs to rotate his body more to avoid placing too much stress on the arm and shoulder which occurs when his arm is positioned too far behind his body.
- Improper elbow angle: The pitcher's arm needs to be away from their body when the ball is released; the closer the arm is to the body, the more potential for injury.
- Arm lagging behind the body. When a pitcher gets tired, their arm tends to lag behind their body, placing undue stress on the shoulder.
- Excessive ball speed. Trying to throw too hard can be harmful, especially for young players.

Make sure that your players take the time to warm-up and stretch

Research shows that cold muscles are more injury prone. While a proper warm-up is important for all youth athletes, it is particularly critical during a growth spurt, when your children's muscles and tendons are tight. Experts, including the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, recommend that your children warm up by:

- Doing jumping jacks, jogging, or walking in place for 3 to 5 minutes to get the blood moving through the muscles and ligaments.
- Then slowly and gently stretching, holding each stretch for 30 seconds. Have your children do stretches for the position they play: for instance, pitchers should concentrate on stretching their arms, shoulders, neck and wrists, in addition to stretching their legs; catchers should concentrate on stretching their legs, knees, feet and back.

Protective Equipment

Recommend mouth guards

Mouth guards not only protect the teeth, but the lips, cheeks, and tongue and reduce the risk of such head and neck injuries as concussions and jaw fractures.

Make sure all players wear all required safety gear every time they play or practice

Protective equipment is one of the most important factors in minimizing the risk of injury in baseball. According to a June 1996 study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), baseball protective equipment currently on the market may prevent, reduce, or lessen the severity of more than 58,000 injuries, or almost 36% of the estimated 162,100 baseball-related injuries requiring emergency-room treatment each year. Because most organized sports-related injuries (62%) occur during practices rather than games, children need to take the same safety precautions during practices as they do during games.

Checks to perform prior to taking the field

- **Inspect the playing field:** The playing field can pose a risk of injury. Before every game or practice, a manager, coach, an umpire and/or parent should check for holes, ruts, glass, or any other unsafe conditions. Protective fence tops where equipped must be on proper condition. Players should be reminded to bring any holes that they encounter on the field to the attention of the coach or umpire. A Field and Equipment Safety Checklist is provided in the appendices of this plan.
- **Baseballs:** Tee-Ball, Coach-Pitch & Minors divisions are to use soft reduced impact balls only. All teams are only to use Little League approved balls!
- **Baseball Bats:** No cracks or chips in bats & hand grip is in place & not damaged. All bats in T-Ball, Coach-Pitch, and Minor Divisions shall meet USABat standards and shall be marked with the USA Baseball logo. Senior League bats shall be marked with the BBCOR certification mark. In all cases, solid wood bats are not required to have these markings.
- **Catcher's Gear:** When catching, your child must always use a catcher's mitt and wear a helmet, face mask, throat guard, long-model chest protector, protective supporter (Male) and shin guards.
- **Clean Uniform:** Don't let your child leave his or her dirty uniform in a locker at school or on the floor of a room. Wearing unsanitary clothing poses a risk of staph-infection, not only to your child but the rest of the team.
- **Gloves & Mitts:** Make sure that your player's check their baseball gloves or mitts prior to taking the field for a practice or game. Ensure that all stitching & webbing are in good condition and not in danger of breaking and possibly causing injury.
- **Helmet:** A player should wear a properly fitted, certified helmet when batting, waiting to bat, and running the bases. It is recommended that helmets should have face guards that attach to the sides of a batting helmet and cover the chin to the tip of the nose. These devices can help reduce the risk of a serious dental, facial or eye injury if a ball hits your child in the face. According to the CPSC, batting helmets with face guards may prevent,

reduce, or lessen the severity of about 3,900 facial injuries suffered by batters in organized youth baseball.

- **Protective eyewear:** For kids who wear glasses, you should obtain protective eyewear from an eye-care professional who is aware of sports-safety standards. Prescription glasses should be fitted with shatterproof lenses and sports frames that hold the lenses tightly in place.
- **Shoes with molded cleats:** Little League prohibits the use of shoes with steel spikes (Major division and younger). Instead, wear molded cleat baseball shoes. Make sure the shoes fit properly. Poorly fitted shoes, particularly those that allow movement side-to-side, are a major cause of injuries to the feet, knees, and ankles. Avoid hand-me downs, which are likely to fit poorly, and may have worn down cleats. Check the laces frequently for wear.

Practice

Batting Practice

- Use The Batting Cages when it is possible.
- Do not conduct batting practice until everyone on the field is ready and paying attention. Especially with younger players, who are easily distracted, it is very important that, when they are in the field, they are paying attention to the batter at all times, so they are prepared to field a ball hit in their direction.
- Make sure that players stand out of harm's way. When a team is batting, players should stand or sit behind screens or fencing inside of the dugout so wild pitches, foul balls, and flying bats don't hit players. Also, make sure that equipment (bats, balls, helmets) is placed where players can't trip on it, keep the dugout areas neat and organized.

Fielding Practice

- All Players and Coaches on the field must keep their eye on the ball in the practice area, as a ball may hit him/her if they are not paying attention.
- If more than one fielding drill is being conducted simultaneously, all persons on the playing field must be aware of any activities taking place on the field. Watch for errantly hit or thrown balls. If a ball is hit errantly, those who are aware of the situation should YELL, "Heads Up"!

Game Time

Throwing Limits

To decrease shoulder and elbow problems from excessive pitching, rules for pitch count have been developed and implemented for baseball by Little League International. In addition, a pitcher who delivers one or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

Pitch Counts: Pitch counts will be monitored by a coach or their designee. A pitch is any ball thrown towards home plate from the pitcher's mound that an umpire defines as a pitch.

Catchers: No one on the field throws the ball more than the catcher. Monitor the catcher's arm and how it feels as well as your pitcher.

Batting

No "On-Deck" batter is allowed at any time, **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Fielding

Glare from the sun: Use only shatterproof sunglasses that are designed for sports.

Darkness: Games can be called due to darkness when it becomes a safety factor.

Weather Considerations

Hot Weather

Baseball is a summer sport therefore hot weather is a reality of the game. Coaches, players, parents, and volunteers must be prepared for hot weather and constantly monitor players for symptoms of heat-related illness.

Hydration

Make sure that players drink enough fluids: As parent or coach, you are responsible for taking precautions to prevent heat illnesses in exercising children and making sure they drink enough fluids. Always encourage players to drink between every inning and schedule a drink break every 15 to 30 minutes during practices.

Water, sports drinks, juice: During any activity, water is an excellent fluid to keep the body well hydrated. Offering flavored fluids like sport drinks or fruit juice can help encourage children to drink. If the carbohydrate levels are higher, the sports drink should be diluted with water. Fruit juice should also be diluted (1 cup juice to 1 cup water).

Protection from the sun

Shade: Players should always wear their uniform ball cap on game day. During breaks in practice or games, provide a shaded place for players to take their break.

Sunscreen: Apply an SPF level 15 or higher sunscreen on a child's face, neck, and arms before going outside and reapply if they are sweating.

Cool & Damp Weather

Games will be played in cool, damp weather, as well as, in light rain as long as the fields are draining and there is no lightning. Watch your local weather forecast so you can be prepared to dress properly. During these conditions we suggest sweatshirts or a base layer be worn under uniforms to keep players warm. Windbreaker type coats or rain slickers may be worn between innings or if the weather worsens.

In the event of inclement weather, the Board will make every attempt to call the games as early as possible.

Lightning Evacuation Procedure

Upon seeing or receiving a report of lightning in the area:

- Immediately stop the game or practice.
- Go to the nearest shelter or car (NOT INTO DUGOUTS!).
- Stay away from metal fencing.
- Do not hold a metal bat.
- Stay in your shelter or vehicle until a decision is made to cancel or resume the game / practice.

Handling of Incidents

Definition of Incident

All incidents must be reported with an incident/injury tracking form to the League Safety Officer within 48 hours of the incident.

Incidents are defined as:

- Any event requiring that warrants the notification of police, fire, or EMS.
- Any injury sustained by a player, manager, coach, umpire or volunteer that requires medical treatment and/or first aid or any event that has the potential to require the medical assistance of a physician for evaluation and diagnosis and causes him/her to miss any practice or game time.

Emergency Incidents

In the event of an emergency follow the instructions located on the Manager's Emergency Reporting Quick Reference and the section of this manual titled ***Reporting EMS, Fire & Police Incidents***

Blood borne Pathogen Protocol

In the event of any injury that involves bleeding the following protocols shall be followed:

- Use gloves when contact with blood or other bodily fluids is expected.
- Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated with blood.
- Use a mouthpiece when performing emergency mouth-to-mouth.
- Clean all blood contaminated surfaces and equipment using bleach.
- Properly dispose of all blood contaminated waste.
- Bleeding must be stopped, open wounds covered, and the uniform changed if there is any blood before the athlete may continue participating.
- Managers, coaches, and volunteers with open wounds will refrain from all direct contact until the condition is resolved.
- All concessions volunteers **MUST** cover any open wounds or sores prior to working in the concession stand.

Parental Notification

Parents/Guardians must be notified of any incident be it medical, or involving police or fire departments. Generally, a parent is on scene, but when this is not the case, the manager or a member of the Groton Little League Board of Directors shall contact the parents/guardians using the information contained on the participant's medical release form.

If anyone is transported from a sponsored Groton Little League event the following information should be gathered and left with a Manager/Coach, GLL Board member or with the person in charge of the concessions stand:

- Persons Name
- Injury Sustained
- If Transported by Police due to legal matter - Violation Committed
- Where Transported to
- Agency Transporting

Insurance Forms

Insurance forms must be filled out for all injuries. The form will be completed by the Parents / Guardians with the assistance of the League Safety Officer. The injury will be reported to District by the League Safety Officer or President within 48 hours of notification.

First Aid Kits & AEDs

Prior to beginning any game or practice, all managers are expected to be cognizant of the nearest fully stocked First Aid Kit and AED.

Each team manager is provided a basic first aid kit with their team equipment bag. In addition, the concession stands will have a first aid kit, ice packs, and Automatic External Defibrillators (AED).

Immediately contact the League Safety Officer to replenish any used supplies.

Equipment and Facilities

Equipment Manager

The Groton Little League Equipment Manager is responsible for maintaining, issuing, and replacing all equipment used for baseball by Groton Little League. Equipment will be inspected and inventoried prior to issue and upon return from each team manager. Any equipment that is defective will be replaced.

Equipment Inspections

All managers, coaches and players should inspect all playing equipment regularly and report

any damaged or defective equipment to the Equipment Manager as soon as possible for replacement to ensure the safety of all players.

Managers and Coaches

Inspect all equipment prior to and following each game. Some things to look for:

Bats: Hand grips intact, no cracks or dents. A ball should make a “ping” when hit off an aluminum bat. If the ball makes a dead sound, remove it from use and return to the Equipment Manager for inspection / replacement.

Helmets: No cracks or dents visible. Inside padding intact and not compressed.

Catcher’s Gear: No fabric tears, helmets are intact, all straps maintain elasticity & fit properly.

Players

Players should inspect their equipment every time they pick it up to use. If any of the above issues are found they should immediately report it to their coaching staff.

Players are also encouraged to use the following equipment not provided by the league:

- Athletic Supporter / Protective Cup
- Mouth Guard

Facilities

The Groton Little League Board of Directors, in an effort to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for participants and spectators, continually inspects and makes an effort to correct any facility concerns. If you have any concerns regarding any of the Little League Facilities feel free to notify any member of the GLL Board of Directors, manager, or coach.

Every manager / coach is responsible for inspecting the facilities prior to their game. Use Appendix B as a guide for what to inspect. If any unsatisfactory conditions are identified the HOME manager/coach will be responsible to report them to the league safety officer.

The GLL President and Safety Officer will be responsible for reporting any conditions requiring maintenance or repair to either the City of Groton Parks and Recreation Department (Washington Park) or Town of Groton Parks and Recreation Department (Calvin Burrows and all other practice fields).

Annual Little League Facilities Survey

Prior to the start of each season the GLL Safety Officer will inspect each of the facilities being used by the league. This inspection will be reported on the Annual Little League Facilities Survey. The survey shall be completed using the form in Appendix B.

Driving & Parking

All posted and non-posted driving rules are to be followed including the following:

- Obey all posted signage (i.e.; NO PARKING sign, Handicap signs).
- Speed Limit: 5 MPH.
- Handicapped Parking spaces need appropriate stickers/license plates.

- Leave enough room for Police, Fire & EMS apparatus to respond when parking.

Concession Stand Rules

To maintain a safe environment and promote proper food handling, only authorized people will be allowed in the concession stands.

Inspections

Prior to the beginning of the season, the Groton Little League Safety Officer will schedule an inspection of the concession stands by the Ledge Light Health District.

The people who open and close the concession stand each day will perform an inspection of the stand looking for any safety or health hazards. Appendix C includes a checklist for inspecting the concession stands. If any deficiencies are identified, they should immediately notify a member of the Groton Little League Board of Directors. The Board will take the necessary actions to address the issue.

Food Handling Practices

Cooking

Use a food thermometer to check on cooking and holding temperatures of potentially hazardous foods. All potentially hazardous foods should be kept at 41° F or below (if cold) or 140° F or above (if hot). Ground beef and ground pork products should be cooked to an internal temperature of 155° F; poultry parts should be cooked to 165° F. Most food-borne illnesses from temporary events can be traced back to lapses in temperature control.

Reheating

Rapidly reheat potentially hazardous foods to 165° F. Do not attempt to heat foods in crock pots, steam tables, over sterno units or other holding devices. Slow-cooking mechanisms may activate bacteria and never reach killing temperatures.

Cooling and Cold Storage

Foods that require refrigeration must be cooled to 41° F as quickly as possible and held at that temperature until ready to serve. To cool foods down quickly, use an ice water bath (60% ice to 40% water), stirring the product frequently, or place the food in shallow pans no more than 4 inches in depth and refrigerate. Pans should not be stored one atop the other and lids should be off or ajar until the food is completely cooled. Check the temperature periodically to see if the food is cooling properly. Allowing hazardous foods to remain unrefrigerated for too long has been the number ONE cause of food-borne illness.

Serving / Handling Food

Avoid hand contact with raw, ready-to eat foods and food contact surfaces. Use an acceptable dispensing utensil to serve food. Touching food with bare hands can transfer germs to food.

Ice

Ice used to cool cans/bottles should not be used in cup beverages and should be stored separately. Use a scoop to dispense ice; never use the hands. Ice can become contaminated with bacteria and viruses and cause food-borne illness.

Health and Hygiene

Only healthy workers should prepare and serve food. Anyone who shows symptoms of disease (cramps, nausea, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, etc.) or who has open sores or infected cuts on the hands should not be allowed in the food concession area. Workers should wear clean outer garments and should not smoke in the concession area. The use of hair restraints is recommended to prevent hair ending up in food products.

Hand Washing

Frequent and thorough hand washing remains the first line of defense in preventing food-borne disease. The use of disposable gloves can provide an additional barrier to contamination, but they are no substitute for hand washing!

Since the staff at concession stands may not be professional food workers, it is important that they be thoroughly instructed in the proper method of washing their hands. The following may serve as a guide:

- Use soap and warm water.
- Rub your hands vigorously as you wash them.
- Wash all surfaces including the backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails.
- Rinse your hands well.
- Dry hands with a paper towel.
- Turn off the water using a paper towel, instead of your bare hands.

Wash your hands in this fashion before you begin work and frequently during the day, especially after performing any of these activities:

- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms.
- After using the restroom.
- After caring for or handling animals.
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue.
- After handling soiled surfaces, equipment or utensils.
- After drinking, using tobacco, or eating.
- During food preparation, as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross-contamination when changing tasks.
- When switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food.
- Directly before touching ready-to-eat food or food contact surfaces.
- After engaging in activities that contaminate hands.

Clean-up

Dishwashing

Use disposable utensils for food service. Keep your hands away from food contact surfaces, and never reuse disposable dishware. Ideally, dishes and utensils should be washed in a four- step process:

- Washing in hot soapy water.
- Rinsing in clean water.
- Chemical or heat sanitizing.
- Air drying.

Wiping Cloths / Rags / Sponges

Rinse and store your wiping cloths in a bucket of sanitizer (example: 1 gallon of water and ½ teaspoon of chlorine bleach). Change the solution every two hours. Well-sanitized work surfaces prevent cross contamination and discourage flies.

Insect Control and Waste

Keep foods covered to protect them from insects. Store pesticides away from foods. Place garbage and paper wastes in a refuse container with a tight-fitting lid. Dispose of wastewater in an approved method (do not dump it outside). All water used should be potable water from an approved source.

Food Storage and Cleanliness

Keep foods stored off the floor at least six inches. After your event is finished, clean the concession area, and discard unusable food.

Abuse & Harassment – ZERO TOLERANCE!

What is Abuse?

Children are being abused when someone uses his or her power or position to harm them emotionally, physically, or sexually.

Emotional Abuse

It is a verbal attack on a child's self-esteem by a person in a position of power, authority, or trust such as a parent or coach. It occurs even if the attack is intended as a form of discipline or is not intended by the adult to cause harm. Takes many forms, including any of the following:

- Name calling ("Hey, Fatty!" or "Hey, Shorty" or "Hey, Mr. Klutz")
- Threatening ("If you don't win, you can forget about me buying that new game you want")
- Insulting ("You're stupid" or "You're clumsy" or "You don't deserve to wear that uniform.")
- Criticizing or ridiculing, ("I thought you were better than that. I guess I was wrong.")
- Intimidating ("Watch out kid, my son is going to break your nose")
- Yelling at a child for losing or not playing up to the adult's expectations
- Hazing
- Questioning ("Why didn't you win?" or "How could you let that guy beat you?")
- Shunning or withholding love or affection (not speaking to, hugging, or comforting your child after she plays poorly in a game or practice, or her team loses; showing obvious signs of disappointment)
- Punishing a child for not playing up to your expectations or when his team loses

What Kind of Harm Does Emotional Abuse Cause?

Perhaps because the damage caused by emotional abuse is not obvious, like sexual abuse, or immediately apparent, like a physical injury, its effect is often overlooked and minimized. But, experts say, the damage is no less real, and, in fact, may be much more damaging and long-lasting.

Children are deeply affected by negative comments from parents, coaches and other adults they look up to and respect.

Children are much more sensitive than adults to criticism: being yelled at, put down, or embarrassed is much more likely to have negative psychological consequences and to cause the child to feel humiliated, shamed and degraded and damage his / her feeling of self-worth and self-esteem.

If the abuse becomes chronic, a pattern of negative comments can destroy a child's spirit, motivation, and self-esteem. Over time, the young athlete will begin to believe what adults say about them. Comments intended to improve athletic performance are likely to have precisely the opposite effect.

As reported by Dr. Leonard Zaichowsky in the Fall/Winter 2000 issue of *Sidelines*, the newsletter of the National Youth Sports Safety Foundation (NYSSF) "research has substantiated that children who witness a violent act, such as parental aggression in sports, have negative and possible long-term consequences". In extreme cases, reports Dr. Zaichowsky, children who have strong reactions to viewing violence or aggression could develop post-traumatic stress disorder, which is characterized by such symptoms as nightmares or flashbacks, routine avoidance of reminders of the event, increased sleep disturbances, irritability, poor concentration, startle reaction and regressive behavior.

According to an NYSSF Fact Sheet on Emotional Injuries, abuse or witnessing parental misconduct:

- Could adversely affect a child's ability to learn.
- Increases the likelihood that the youth will engage in unhealthy behaviors, including suicidal behavior, and delinquent and aggressive behaviors, during adolescence.
- Has been linked to adverse health outcomes in adulthood, including mood and anxiety disorders and diseases.
- Will "turn off" the child to exercise and participation in sports, preventing the development of a healthy adult lifestyle.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any physical action taken to intimidate or harm a child. It takes many forms including:

- Slapping
- Shaking
- Kicking
- Pulling Ears
- Shoving
- Hazing
- Hitting
- Throwing Equipment
- Pulling Hair
- Striking
- Grabbing
- Punishing “poor” play or rules violations through excessive use of exercise or denial of fluids.

Sexual Abuse

Occurs when a person in a position of power, authority or trust engages in "sexualized" touching or sex with a child.

"Sexualized touching" is where touching, instead of being respectful and nurturing, is done in a sexual manner. Examples include:

- Fondling instead of a hug
- Long kiss on the lips instead of a peck on the cheek
- Seductive stroking of any area of the child's body instead of a pat on the back for a good play

All GLL volunteers are subject to a National Sexual Offender background check.

Harassment

A child is considered to be harassed when she/he is threatened, intimidated, taunted, or subjected to racial, homophobic, or sexist slurs.

Sexual harassment includes comments, contact or behavior of a sexual nature that is offensive, uninvited, or unwelcome.

Neglect

Neglect is a chronic inattention to the basic necessities of life such as supervision, medical and dental care, adequate rest, safe environment, exercise, and fresh air.

Neglect in a sports setting may take the following forms:

- Injuries are not properly treated.
- Athletes are forced to play hurt.
- Equipment is inadequate, poorly maintained, or unsafe.
- Road trips are not properly supervised.

How Common Are Abuse, Harassment, and Neglect?

Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions, and at all levels of education. According to a 2016 report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association – Pediatrics*, abuse rates in a youth sports setting is relatively rare (0.8%) when compared to abuse rates from family members (11.4%). The majority of the cases were verbal abuse (63.2%) and physical abuse (34.6%) with sexual abuse being relatively small (6.4%).

However, even one case of abuse is unacceptable in our organization. To protect the children, we are entrusted with the league has implemented the following abuse prevention & reporting protocol.

Abuse Prevention & Reporting Protocol

All volunteers with Groton Little League to include; Coaches / Managers, Board of Directors, Umpires, and any other official volunteers are **REQUIRED** to undergo a background check.

No one-on-one interactions with children will be permitted behind closed doors or in any other out of sight areas.

Actions taken in the event that any volunteer commits an act of abuse will result in a suspension or expulsion from the league based on the severity of the abuse. In addition, notification of the proper authorities will also occur based on the circumstances of the situation.

Any person who suspects that abuse may have occurred shall report such suspicions to a member of the Board of Directors immediately. This does not supersede the requirement to contact law enforcement if necessary based on the witnessed abuse.

The Board of Directors shall initiate an investigation into allegations of abuse within 24 hours of notification. Appropriate notification of authorities shall be made immediately upon any report of abuse!

Conclusion

It is a tremendous undertaking to run a Little League program the size of Groton Little League. Safety is not taken lightly, especially when it comes to our children. This Safety Program is thorough. For it to be effective everyone must be involved. One Safety Officer cannot enforce it. The Board Members cannot enforce it. You must help enforce it! Communication and compliance are the keys to keeping Groton Little League safe. If you see something that isn't safe, report it. If you have any ideas or suggestions that can make it better, tell any Board Member. This Safety Plan is the foundation for years to come. With your help, it can only get better. Have a safe and rewarding baseball season.

Appendix A – Ten Commandments of Coaching Safety

- I. BE ALERT!**
- II. Be Organized**
- III. Check the playing field for hazards**
- IV. Wear proper equipment**
- V. Ensure equipment is in good shape**
- VI. Ensure a First Aid Kit is available**
- VII. Maintain Control of the situation**
- VIII. Safety is a team sport**
- IX. Maintain Discipline**
- X. HAVE FUN!**

Appendix B – Annual / Pre-Game Inspection Checklist

A copy of this checklist shall be maintained in each team's coaching binder for reference

Item	SAT	UNSAT	Item	SAT	UNSAT
Facilities & Dugouts			Outfield		
Fences, Gates, Backstop			Surface Conditions		
Bleachers			Grass		
Dugout Roof & Walls			Scoreboard		
Bat & Helmet Racks			Foreign Objects		
Cleanliness			Sprinkler Heads		
Infield			Player Equipment		
Pitcher's Mound			Batting Helmets		
Bases Secured			Bats		
Surface Conditions			Uniforms (Belts, Shoes)		
Home Plate & Batter's Box			Gloves		
Grass			Glasses		
Coach's Box			No Jewelry		
Foreign Objects			Catcher's Gear		
Sprinkler Heads					

Document any deficiencies below: (continue on back if necessary)

Person Performing Inspection &

Date:

Appendix C – Concession Stand Inspection

Completed inspections forms will be left with the Concessions Authorizations Lists.

Item (Opening)	SAT	UNSAT	Item (Closing)	Complete
Cleanliness			Cleanliness	
Bags in Garbage Cans			Garbage Emptied	
Utensils			Utensils Cleaned & Stored	
Food Prep & Handling Surfaces			Surfaces Cleaned	
Floors			Floors Swept	
Pest Control			Service Windows Locked	
Equipment			Equipment	
Cooking Equipment (Grills, Fryers, Coffee Maker)			Cooking Equipment Clean & Unplugged as necessary	
Coolers, Refrigerators and Freezers			Fryers & Grills Secured	
Sink (Hot Water)			Food Service Items Stocked	
Food Service Items (Plates, Baskets, etc.)				
Food Storage			Food Storage	
Drink Coolers Stocked			Drink Coolers Stocked	
Refrigerated Foods Stocked			Refrigerated Foods Stocked	
Frozen Foods Stocked			Frozen Foods Stocked	
Other Food Items Stocked and Stored Appropriately			Other Food Items Stocked and Stored Appropriately	

Document any deficiencies below: (continue on back if necessary)

Person Closing Stand & Date: _____

Appendix D – Acknowledgement of Training

All Volunteers

I, _____, have reviewed the rules contained in this safety plan. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of Groton Little League and Little League International. I agree that the safety of all participants will be my number one concern and I will take action to immediately address any safety concerns that come to my attention.

In the event of an emergency I will follow the guidance contained in the Groton Little League Safety Plan and I will immediately report any injuries or safety concerns to the Groton Little League Board of Directors.

I acknowledge that Groton Little League has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy with regards to abuse of any kind. I will strive to provide a positive example and learning environment for all participants through my actions as a member / volunteer of Groton Little League.

Signature & Date

Concession Stand Volunteers

I, _____, have reviewed the rules for safe food handling and operation of Groton Little League concession stands. I agree to follow the guidelines contained therein and will report any concerns I may have to the Groton Little League Board of Directors.

Signature & Date