



BUCKS COMMITMENT TO COACHING

The word *coach* was first used in the 16th Century in England. A *coach* was a horse-drawn carriage used to transport a person of importance from where he or she **is** to where he or she **wants to be, could be, needs to be, or ought to be going**. As **coaches**, we take seriously our responsibility to use our power to reach and teach young people about issues and ideas that will carry them not only through a season but a lifetime.

We, as coaches, will relentlessly strive to uphold the following ideals:

1. **Start on time, end on time.**

Timeliness is a lifestyle. Players and their parents shouldn't feel like they are being kept over. We won't run practices late.

2. **No profanity.**

Patterns of language affect your biochemistry—words influence the substances individual cells in your body actually produce! If you can't motivate without using profanity, you aren't motivating anyway.

3. **Instruct by building up, not tearing down.**

Be someone who can give correction without causing resentment. Young people need models, not critics.

4. **Model good body language.**

Patterns of posture and body language have also been shown to alter your biochemistry. Said another way, what you display on the outside *literally changes* what goes on inside of you. Feelings of failure and depression take root from a foundation of poor body language. Seek to always model *good* body language. Our players are always watching.

5. **Set appropriate expectations.**

Umpires will make calls that go against us. Players will miss ground balls, make throwing errors, walk batters, and get called out on strikes. These things will happen *every* game. Therefore, we, as **coaches**, must **expect** these things to happen. And, when they do, we must refrain from looking surprised, frustrated, or disgusted.

6. **Don't over-coach during games.**

Teaching players during practice is what *coaching* is all about. But during games, we are less about *teaching* players and more about **not distracting** them while on the field. We want players to trust their training and not over-think high-pressure situations, so we must not over-coach them ourselves. Verbally getting Little Johnny's attention between every pitch to tell him to relax, or to explain what mechanics he needs to adjust with his swing, is futile for Little Johnny's performance at that moment. Even cheering for Little Johnny (although your heart may be in the right place) *while* he is hitting won't help. We must learn to show our support *after* Little Johnny's at bat is over. We must recognize that using our voice always has the potential to distract, even in situations where it may not be our intent. Coaching cues that remind Little Johnny of constantly changing situations (e.g. "There are two outs," "Be prepared to tag up on a fly ball," "You must cover home on a passed ball.") will be the majority of our communication during active play.