**Week 2**

**Practice Goal**: The players should be able to identify positions (if not the actual position, the idea of being responsible for an area), attempt catching with two hands, and successfully run to first base after a hit/swing.

**Materials and Equipment:**

 -whiffle balls, game balls, batting tee, cones

**Practice Sequence**:

Gather and welcome players. Review coaches’ names and players’ names. Review purpose for being at the field and show enthusiasm to start the practice. Verbally review the stance for hitting and the cues/rules. Discuss the PCA tip of the week. (5 minutes)

Positive Coaching Alliance Talking Points for Instructional League Coaches

Week 3—Filling Emotional Tanks (Winners' Circle)

• To be the best team you can be have your athletes’ help each other get better. One way to do that is to have them fill their teammates’ Emotional Tanks.

• The Emotional Tank is like a car’s gas tank. When it’s empty, you can’t go far, but when it’s full you can go almost anywhere. Teams with full Emotional Tanks usually do better than teams whose tanks are drained.

• Your athletes can fill each other’s Emotional Tanks by noticing people who help them or the team and thanking them for it.

• They can also fill Emotional Tanks by cheering for their teammates, giving them high-fives, smiling at them and telling them that they are glad they are on the team.

• To fill each other’s Emotional Tanks, you can get into a “Winners' Circle” after each game and give your athletes the chance to tell their teammates the good things they did during the game.

**Position Fitness:**

**Left, Center, Right**: take players into the outfield to explain/demonstrate the game. Have a cone set in right, center and left field. All players stand in left field. When the coach yells, “center field,” the players have to run to that cone trying not to be last. When the coach yells, “left field,” they have to go back. The coach can call out either field while the players are on their way and they must change direction to go back. Repeat using center field and right field. Try to “trick” the players by calling the position quickly (agility). (5 minutes)

Call players to coach to discuss the positions that they were running to and that it makes up the “outfield”. Next we are going to learn about the “infield.” Walk players to the dirt. (2 minutes)

**Infield Positions**: players follow along with coach during the activity. Go around the field beginning at the catcher position, announce what position it is, have the players repeat and then do squats (exercise that tries to coordinate with position). Run to the pitcher’s mound and do arm circles, run to 1B and do high and low reaches, run to 2B and do windmills, run to SS and do fast feet (running in place) and run to 3B and do pushups. Repeat. (10 minutes)

**Defensive Setup:** Call players in and have them stand behind home plate. Review all positions with the players, calling out a position and asking the players to point to its location. Place several coaches in the field to instruct players where to go when you assign them a position. One player at a time, assign them a position and have them run as fast as they can to the spot. Once they get in position they should go into a defensive stance. Once all players have a position, call them all back to home plate and assign each player a different position. Repeat, making sure each player has been assigned one outfield and one infield position. (8 minutes)

**WATER BREAK** (3 minutes)

**Catching with two hands:** Have players find a friend (no gloves). Have the players stand so that their noses are facing each other. Each player takes 4 giant steps back. Give each pair a whiffle ball to practice throwing. Discuss catching with two hands, watching the ball the whole way and cradling it in softly. \*Make sure to use whiffle balls, the first time players are catching and to stress using two hands. Have the player without the ball get into an athletic position square to their partner. When the player looks at the ball being held by the other partner he/she says “ready.” Upon hearing this, the ball is tossed in an underhand motion. Each player making the catch must watch the ball from release and through the air. Stress watching the ball all the way into the hands using both hands to secure the ball. Players should be encouraged to give slightly with the ball to promote soft hands. Eyes on the ball and the success of the catch is what we are striving for in this segment. (10 minutes)

**Hitting and Running the Bases:** Assign three players to a team and have them get ready to bat. Position all other players at a position. A coach should be positioned in the field to teach proper fielding techniques and another coach should be the first base helping the players run the bases. Players will bat twice and practice running to first base after hitting the ball. On the first at bat, the runner will run through first base and then return to the base. The player at first will advance to second base when the next batter hits the ball. After the third batter hits the ball, allow the runners to run all the bases. Players in the field will practice fielding the ball and throwing it to first base if hit in the infield and second base if hit in the outfield. On round 2, have the players advance to second base if they hit the ball in the outfield. The coach at first base should instruct the player to either stay at first or go to second. Finish off the batting, having each player run the bases after the third batter hits the ball. Assign three other players to bat and repeat the game. The goal of this drill is to emphasize hitting the ball and running the bases, less emphasis should be placed on fielding at this time. (15 minutes)

Gather players and have them give another player a high five. Talk about what they learned today and how it will help them be great baseball players. Give the PCA tip of the week. Remind the parents to work with their kids on the skills they learned in practice today and remind them of the next event. (5 minutes)

**Dismiss**