**Week 6**

**Practice Goal:** The players will be able to call for the ball before they catch it or field it. They will be able to recognize a team effort by encouraging and being attentive to others’ actions on the field. They will be able to understand how to the run the bases and listen for cues from the coach when running the bases.

**Materials and Equipment:**

-whiffle balls, game balls, batting tee

**Practice Sequence:**

Gather and welcome players. Talk about what the players liked most about the last game, what they had the most fun doing and the PCA tip of the week. (5 minutes)

Positive Coaching Alliance Talking Points for Instructional League Coaches

Week 6—Teachable Spirit (WAG)

• You want your athletes to learn and get better every week this season. That means they need to have a Teachable Spirit.

• People often stop learning because while they are learning something new, and they are not yet good at it, they don’t want to look foolish. But the really foolish person is the one who stops learning.

• When it’s time for your team to learn, you can WAG! The letters W-A-G help us remember how to learn.

• W is for Watch. Your athletes can learn a lot just by watching someone do something that they want to know how to do.

• A is for Ask. Many people don’t ask questions because they think it makes them look silly. But the opposite is true. It’s smart to ask questions!

• G is for Get coaching. Your athletes can get a coach to help them learn what they want to learn.

**Shuffle**: Separate players into four groups and have each group line up at each base. Instruct the first player at each base to get in the ready position and shuffle to the next base. The key is to ensure they stay low and shuffle quick and fast. On “go,” the first player from each group shuffles to the next base. When they get to the end, they tag the next players hand and go to the end of the line. The next player goes. Repeat until each player takes a turn. Reverse directions and repeat. (5 minutes)

**Hitting:** designate 2 players to hit and the rest of the players should be assigned positions in the field. 1 player will be stationed at the batting tee while the other player gets ready to hit from home plate. One coach will pitch while another coach is in the field instructing players on proper fielding mechanics. Each player will hit 10-12 balls and then rotate into the field. The player at the batting tee will then go to home plate to bat. Players should rotate to the batting tee and then live pitching. Players should move between positions in the field. Players in the field should roll the ball to the pitcher’s mound after properly fielding the ball. (20 minutes)

**WATER BREAK** (3 minutes)

**Pop-ups**: separate players into 3-4 groups for fly balls. Each coach should take a group and begin with a small tosses to each player (like pepper - players are not in a line, but spread out in a semi-circle). The coach should call the player’s name (whoever is being tossed to) and that player then calls the ball. After a few tosses to each player, have the players back up a few steps and the coach should now make higher tosses. After a few rounds, then progress to one player catching as many as they can in a row. Use cues. Catching is perhaps the most difficult skill for these young players to learn. Begin with no glove and allow players to catch a whiffle ball in a “basket catch” method with fingers facing the coach. Gradually move to catching the whiffle ball above the head with the fingers up. Once the player has a comfort level with catching the whiffle ball, graduate to a game ball and have players put on their gloves. Begin with the basket catch and move to the proper technique of catching the ball with fingers up and thumbs together. Stress two hands by having players cover the ball with their bare hand each time it goes into the glove. (15 minutes)

**Run the Bases Relay**: review running the bases. Create two teams. Each team lines up behind a specified base (i.e. second base and home plate) and have them stand behind (about 3 feet behind) the base.  On “go,” the first player of each team begins to run the bases with a whiffle ball in hand (like a baton), tagging each base and returns to the base where they started. When they get back, they hand the whiffle ball to the next player and go sit down at the end of the line. The next player begins to run the bases when they get the ball and it repeats through the line. The first team done wins. Repeat. (5 minutes)

**Running the Bases:** have all players line up at home plate. One coach should be at home plate while the other coaches are at first and third base. On “go” the first player runs through first base and returns back to home plate. The first base coach should instruct the player to run through the base and turn to foul territory after touching the base. Players should run back to home plate in foul territory. On round 2, players should round first base and run to second base with cues from the first base coach. Player will stay at second base and run to third base when the next player is instructed to “go”. The third base coach should instruct the player to round the base and run through home plate. Finish off with each player running the bases. (10 minutes)

**Coaches Choice:** (10 minutes)

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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**