



BillERICA Softball Association Coaches Kickoff Meeting



Agenda

- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Spring Ball Timelines, Dates and Teams
- ▶ Rules and Umpire payment
- ▶ Practice times and fields
- ▶ Coaching Requirements, Core Coaching Principles and Skills by Age
- ▶ Field Cleanup and Equipment Pickup
- ▶ Q and A

THANK YOU!!!

- ▶ Volunteers run Youth Sports Organizations and YOU are the Ambassadors of the Organization
 - ▶ Don't be afraid!!! it's FUNNNN!!
- ▶ Be our Friend!
 - ▶ Find us on Facebook
 - ▶ visit <http://www.billericafastpitchsoftball.org>
 - ▶ Email us at billericagirlssoftball@gmail.com
- ▶ Here to support you - store these numbers now so you have them for any in the moment field/umpire issues
 - ▶ Coaching: John Femia 978-804-3071
 - ▶ Umpires: Mike Donati 978-314-5962
 - ▶ Uniforms: Jayme Laurenza 617-710-4212





Welcome to Billerica Softball where we seek to provide girls opportunities to:

- have fun and make friends
- learn the game of softball, and,
- promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, loyalty and responsibility

Billerica Softball has opportunities for girls from kindergarten through high school to play in leagues in the Spring, Summer and Fall as well as on tournament teams.

Spring Softball

Traditionally our largest recreation league, most girls begin by playing spring softball which runs from late April to mid-June.

U8 – Instructional league for K and 1st grade

U10- 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade

U12 – 6th grade

U14 – 7th 8th and 9th grade



Summer Softball

U10, U12, U14, U18

Girls can register to play on Billerica Teams in the MiddleEssex Summer Softball League which runs from late June to early August. Once registration closes, teams are compiled and entered into the league. Games are Monday to Thursday, twice a week, typically one home and one away.

Fall Softball

U10, U12, U14, U18

Girls can register to play on Billerica Teams in the Billerica Fall Ball League which runs from early September to mid October. Once registration closes, individually registered girls are placed onto a team and entered into the league. There are over 50 teams in this league. Each team plays 2 games on Saturdays for 6 weeks with time limits of 1.5 hours per game. Registration options include by team or per person. The organization supplied all umpires, balls and individual registrations get a tee-shirt. All ASA rules.

Spring Ball Timelines, Dates and Teams

- ▶ Excited to Continue our Engaging 8U League
- ▶ Super Excited about the Return of In-Town 10U League
 - ▶ 10U will all be played in town this year due to the leadership and help of Jeff Paquette and a team he pulled together; 5th graders joined this year in line with USA Softball changes
- ▶ Merrimack Valley Softball League
 - ▶ In order to promote and grow the sport of girls fastpitch softball at a recreational and competitively balanced level, in 2016, Billerica and Tewksbury Girls' Softball Leagues began to play inter-league games at the 10U, 12U and 14U Divisions.
 - ▶ The collaboration was a success and in 2017, with assistance from the Greater Lowell Umpires Association, teams from other towns were added and ***The Merrimack Valley Girls Softball League*** was established.
 - ▶ Since then interest continues to grow - this year Wilmington, Tewksbury, Bedford, Carlisle, Concord, North Reading have joined
 - ▶ For 2023, 12U and 14U only
 - ▶ Allows enough teams for a rebalance of teams after 4 weeks in case there is a discrepancy in dominance of teams

Spring Ball Timelines, Dates and Teams

▶ Leagues

- ▶ U8 - grades K and 1
- ▶ U10A and B - grades 2, 3 (B - Coach pitch) 4 and 5 (A - Kid pitch)
- ▶ U12 - grades 6
- ▶ U14 - grades 7, 8, 9

▶ 8U Instructional

- ▶ Sessions run on Tuesday and Thursday nights 6-7:30 at the Ditson Elementary School Fields
- ▶ The U8 Instructional level is operated as a clinic that starts with teeball / coach pitch with half practice of needed skills and half games (head coaches will be provided a tee to transport)
- ▶ 45 minutes of drills and skills, 45 minutes of game play

▶ 10U to 14U

- ▶ 10U B will be Coach pitch
- ▶ Umpired games (with ASA patched official umpires) begin at the U10A level
- ▶ Games start week of 4/24; 2 to 3 games a week
- ▶ Schedules will be out and finalized hopefully end of next week

Spring Ball Timelines, Dates and Teams

- ▶ Teams have been formed
- ▶ Available in our management site - Sportsmanager - this is where you will find your roster, eventual schedule and score games

<https://www.sportsmanager.us/BillericaGirlsSoftball.htm>

▶ Dates

- ▶ Now - Contact Your Team and just say hello! Standby for Practice Times
- ▶ Saturday, April 8 - Equipment PickUp
- ▶ Saturday, April 22 - Field CleanUp
- ▶ Monday, April 24 - First Games
- ▶ Monday, May 29th (Memorial Day - late afternoon) - AllStar Games
- ▶ Week of June 7th- Last Regular Season Games - End of U8 is 6/7 pending any rainouts
- ▶ Week of June 12th- InTown Playoffs for U10-U14

Rules and Umpire Payment

- ▶ Umpires
 - ▶ We are awaiting final info from Umpire's Association but typically coaches give umpires checks before game - if this is still the case we will issue you enough checks for your home games
- ▶ Rules will be emailed
- ▶ Sportsmanager Overview
- ▶ Rainouts
 - ▶ If fields close due to inclement weather, games will be canceled in Sportsmanager by 4pm and you (and families) will receive an email
 - ▶ Rescheduling will be done by the league
 - ▶ We try and keep Friday nights light but with more in town games and one less field you could see some games scheduled - also those field slots are good times for rainout makeups and practices (as are weekends, but also rare)

Coaching Requirements, Core Coaching Principles and Skills by Age

► Coaching Requirements:

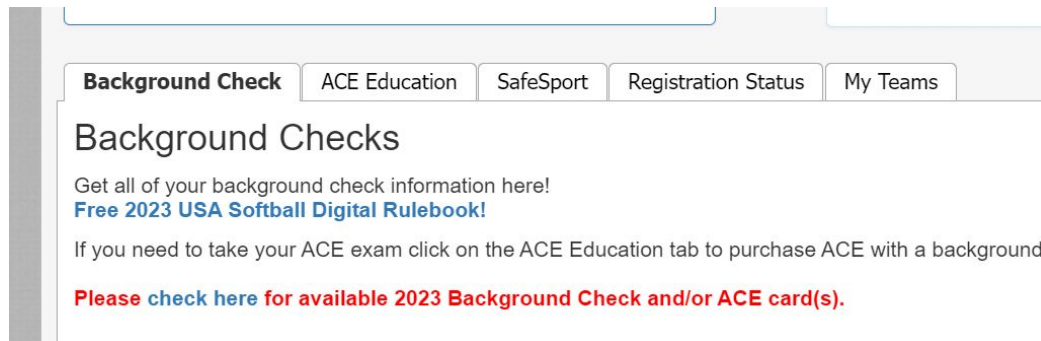
All **Head Coaches** register with USA Softball (which includes passing a Background Check and taking SafeSport Training). Here is how:

1) Create an account at RegisterUSA softball

<https://www.registerusasoftball.com/User/Default.aspx>

2) Initiate a background check

3) Complete the free Safesport training two tabs over from the Background Check



► **Assistant Coaches** must pass a background check <https://forms.gle/23J2tgK4hTsFWVng7> and must complete concussion training and submit proof to billericagirlssoftball@gmail.com (if you have taken any concussion training in the past year, you can submit that as evidence)

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/coach.html>

Billerica Softball Association: Core Coaching Principles

Volunteering to coach is both an honor and a great responsibility. Whether you have been coaching for 20 years or 2 weeks, the Core Coaching Principles should be reviewed at least once per season to continue to develop and grow as a Coach and leader.

#1 - Teach Love and Respect of the Game

#2 - Establish Trust and Pay Attention to Athlete's Feelings There is never to be any touching/physical contact between Coaches and Players.

#3 - Help Athletes Control Their Emotions Regulate your own emotions, demonstrating respect toward athletes, coaches and umpires especially when athletes ignore directions or make mistakes.

#4 - Promote Team Cohesion Encourage girls to encourage each other in a positive way.

#5 - Support Athletes to Make Responsible Decisions Do not share personal experiences with players other than those that are about sports (ex. drug use, relationships, criminal history).

- ▶ Always be the adult in the room (or on the field)
- ▶ Control yourselves - kids take lead from you
- ▶ Control your coaches & parents.
- ▶ Work together with other team to ensure a fun time. This is all about FUN
- ▶ As you go to higher divisions - know the rules and clarify any items at ground rules meeting
- ▶ If keeping score, keep a good “book” (can be an app these days) so to help track score
- ▶ Please make sure all kids have left field before you do
- ▶ Watch language - any signs of disrespect, hate or hurtful speech or actions from anyone inside or outside of field will not be tolerated and should immediately be reported to a member of the Executive Board
- ▶ Have at least 1 other adult with you to help manage the bench. Up to 4 coaches are allowed per team inside the fence
- ▶ NO alcohol, smoking, drugs, vaping are allowed at the field or surrounding facilities
- ▶ Keep an eye on girls treating one another poorly, foster inclusiveness; sometimes girls need support on how to healthy ways to deal with feelings of jealousy or hurt

Practice Times and Fields

- ▶ You will receive practice slots over the weekend
- ▶ For any future practice requests, please email mdonati@yahoo.com

General Guidelines

- ▶ Game Safety Rules & Conduct
 - ▶ Continuous batting order - all players in attendance bat
 - ▶ Playing minimum time: 9 defensive outs. Free defensive substitution. Track your time - no excuse not to get each kid a “full game” every three or so games
 - ▶ Everyone should be practicing good sportsmanship - no yelling at pitcher when he /she is in their windup
 - ▶ Slide or avoid on close plays
 - ▶ Base coaches have to be careful to not obstruct / impede players
 - ▶ Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers / catchers when 2 outs - always last batter to make an out 1
- ▶ Games:
 - ▶ Game shirt is required (any pants/socks fine - we prefer black pants)
 - ▶ NO jewelry of any kind (including earrings, chains) EXCEPT medical ID bracelets
 - ▶ NO shorts
 - ▶ Cleats are recommended - plastic molded cleats
 - ▶ Face masks are recommended
 - ▶ OK to wear layers under uniform shirt and to bring sweatshirts / coats

General Guidelines

▶ Arrival:

- ▶ Check field for any safety issues
- ▶ You may need to put out bases that are located in the blue bin
 - ▶ First base 60 feet from back of home plate to back of the bag - orange safety bag is in foul territory (bag splits the line)
 - ▶ Second base is 60 feet from 1st and 3rd and 84'10" from back of plate to middle of the base
 - ▶ Third base is 60 feet from back of home plate to back of the bag P
 - ▶ Pitching distance (back of plate to front of pitching plate):
 - ▶ U10 - 35 feet
 - ▶ U12 - 40 feet
 - ▶ U14 - 43 feet
 - ▶ ALWAYS check this distance - you have no idea what age played on the field before you
- ▶ Fields most of time will be ready to go, but if we have rain or town is shorthanded sometimes you need to prep field yourself (lining machines)

▶ Departure:

- ▶ Clean up field all equipment stored (i.e. bases, pitching plate, measuring tape)
- ▶ Equipment containers appropriately locked.
- ▶ Clean and empty trash from dugouts, stands, barrels etc.

General Guidelines

- ▶ If an Injury Occurs:
 - ▶ Icepacks & first aid kits are at every field in the blue bins (if you notice that they are missing, please let us know)
 - ▶ Do not immediately move an injured player - assess what happened and communicate with player
 - ▶ If ambulance required - call 911 and make sure large gate areas are open for ambulance to drive on field in necessary
 - ▶ Call Jayme Laurenza or Mike Donati as soon as possible

Field Cleanup and Equipment Pickup

► **FIELD CLEANUP**

- Saturday 4/22
- 8U - Ditson
- 10U - Locke
- 12U- Hajjar
- 14U -Locke

- Leaf blowers, loppers, rakes, gloves, barrels

► **EQUIPMENT PICKUP**

SATURDAY 4/8 - 3-5pm at Locke Middle School Container

- Returning coaches, please clean your garage, bags, sheds and return all catchers equipment that you're not using/ or donate personal
- Pick up - blue bin keys, score books, rule books, practice balls if needed (possibly game balls if they are in), bats and any new pants needed for players

Q and A