

EXPECTATIONS OF CHALLENGER BUDDIES

BE THERE

Your presence is VERY important! Your buddy will need you and your team will need you. Please do everything possible to attend all games and practices.

BE ON TIME

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before game time. Most games last approximately one hour.

KNOW YOUR PLAYER

Attend the buddy training. Read the written material on your player's condition. Talk with family members. Talk with your player—find out what he or she likes, what elicits a smile, what he or she can do if encouraged and supported, and what cues indicate you should back off.

PROTECT YOUR PLAYER

Your role as a buddy involves being a friend, cheerleader, coach, and helper, but, above all, you must be a protector. **Be alert at all times** to the location of the ball and the baserunners so you can do what is necessary to ensure the safety of your athlete.

BRING A GLOVE

Be sure to bring a glove to all practices and games. You will sometimes need to protect your player by deflecting balls that are hit toward the two of you. Your safety is important, too! Let your coaches know if you need to borrow a glove.

ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT AND INDEPENDENCE

Remember...it is THEIR game! Do everything possible to encourage your athlete to be involved at his or her level of ability. Focus on what your player is able to do and recognize all positive efforts.

SHARE YOUR CONCERNS

Don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Talk with the coaches if you have concerns or problems.

MODEL AN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND ACCEPTANCE FOR EACH PLAYER

Encourage and support the development of friendships among players. Some will know each other, but for others, everyone and everything will be new. Let the coaches know if you observe teasing or comments that may cause hurt feelings.

BE OPEN

Sometimes the coaches or other adults will make suggestions on how you can be more helpful to your player. Don't take this as criticism. We are all learning together.

BE CONFIDENT

Some of the athletes express themselves easily, but for many this is very difficult. It may be hard sometimes to know how your athlete is feeling or if he or she appreciates the help you are trying to provide. All of us, including your player, appreciate your patience and your best effort to be helpful, even if this cannot be expressed.

ARRANGE FOR YOUR OWN SUBSTITUTE

If you must miss a game, arrange for someone to take your place by contacting individuals on the substitute list. Email or call your coaches to let them know who will be coming. If you are unable to get a substitute, let the coaches know as soon as possible. You must have permission from a coach to contact someone who is not on the substitute list.

CHECK AVAILABLE SOURCES FOR CANCELLATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

When weather conditions make play questionable, check your email or the Bridgewater Challenger website at coe.jmu.edu/hutchisl. The coaches cannot call all players and buddies, so please assume responsibility for determining this information.

BE FLEXIBLE

In some situations, buddies will be assigned in pairs. If both are present, a coach may ask one to help in another way in order to avoid overwhelming the player or overcrowding the dugout.