



# COACH'S HANDBOOK

Updated March 2024

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<a href="#"><u>Welcome to HGSL Softball</u></a>	2
<a href="#"><u>Current Board Members</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>Who to call if...</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>Zero Tolerance Policy</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Coach Dress Code</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>HGSL Coach Expectations</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Objectives By Division</u></a>	5 & 6
<a href="#"><u>Season Expectations</u></a>	7
<a href="#"><u>Season Events</u></a>	7
<a href="#"><u>Available Fields</u></a>	8
<a href="#"><u>Lock Box Codes</u></a>	8
<a href="#"><u>Equipment</u></a>	8
<a href="#"><u>Thunder &amp; Lightning</u></a>	9
<a href="#"><u>First Aid &amp; Emergencies</u></a>	9
<a href="#"><u>Concussion Action Plan</u></a>	10
<a href="#"><u>Abuse Reporting Requirements/Policy</u></a>	11
<a href="#"><u>Practice Drill Ideas</u></a>	12

# Welcome to HGSL Softball!

Enclosed you will find all of the up-to-date information you'll need for this season! When game schedules are released, we recommend you to put them in this binder, so all of your information will be in one safe place, along with a copy of your roster with team contact info and medical information about each player. You'll also be able to find copies of the following documents on our [website](#).

- **Division Playing Rules**: HGSL follows USA Softball rules and regulations. This document outlines all exceptions, clarifications, or modifications that we have implemented as a League. This is very important for you and all your Coaches to be familiar with, and keep it with you always!
- **Coach Sportsmanship Agreement**: This is something you should already be familiar with! Live by it!
- **Player/Parent Agreement**: Every player/parent is required to review and accept this agreement during the online registration process. Please see No Tolerance Policy for more information.
- **\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*** *Should a coach observe a player or parent that is not adhering to the Player/Parent Agreement, please notify the Board of Directors immediately. Coaches reserve the right to reprimand players who are not adhering to the Agreement in an appropriate manner and provide a reasonable consequence (i.e. loss of playing time). Coaches also reserve the right to make an attempt to calmly and safely request a spectator to leave the premises.*

If you have any questions/concerns about anything this season, including any of these documents, please reach out to any Board member – our contact information can be found on the website!

[www.HGSLNH.com](http://www.HGSLNH.com)

HAVE A GREAT SOFTBALL SEASON!

# CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Board Position	Term	Year of Vote	Name	E-Mail	Member Since
Director	2	2024	Becky Radziewicz	hgsl.becky@gmail.com	2014
Assistant Director	1	2023	Mandy Powers	hgsl.mandy@gmail.com	2019
Treasurer	2	2024	Mike MacDonald	hgsltreasurer603@gmail.com	2022
Secretary	1	2023	Sammie Fay	hgsl.sammie@gmail.com	2023
Equipment Manager	2	2024	Amy Simberg	amysimberg@gmail.com	2023
Coach Representative	1	2023	Lisa Censabella	lmarie1212@yahoo.com	2022
Fundraising Coordinator	2	2024	Megan Radziewicz	hgsl.fundraising@gmail.com	2015
Umpire-in-Chief	1	2023	Stacy Freitas-Ducharme	hgsl.uic@gmail.com	2022
Travel Team Representative	1	2023	Lori Bowen	coachloribowen@yahoo.com	2023
Field Maintenance Coordinator	2	2024	Pete Radziewicz	hudsonheatsoftball@gmail.com	2014
Player Development Coordinator	1	2023	Daphne Harne	hgsl.daphne@gmail.com	2022
Communications Coordinator	2	2024	Tricia Jette-Gonthier	t.jettegonthier@gmail.com	2019

## Who to call if...

It's raining- Becky Radziewicz or Mandy Powers

The other team doesn't show up- Becky Radziewicz or Mandy Powers

The umpire doesn't show up- Stacy Ducharme or Mandy Powers

## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

HGSL has a no tolerance policy for unsportsmanlike/poor behavior from both spectators and players. Coaches are to be reminded that their role is to coach the athletes and provide a safe environment for them to play softball. If a parent/spectator becomes an issue, the coach may address the immediate situation in a calm and respectful manner, however, they must notify the Board of Directors of the incident. HGSL will not tolerate such behavior towards/from players, coaches, other spectators and/or officials.

## COACH DRESS CODE

Coaches are provided a uniform shirt to be worn for games and/or practices. If a coach chooses an alternative shirt to wear, it must be 'school' appropriate and without profanity, crude words or images. Coaches should be dressed in appropriate attire that represents the league and the Town of Hudson with dignity and respect. Should a coach wear a shirt deemed to not fit the dress code, they will be required to turn it inside out.

## HGSL COACHING EXPECTATIONS

HGSL expects...

- ...all coaches (head/assistant/volunteer) to maintain an appropriate level of respect with players and their families.
- ...players to be treated fairly regardless of their relationship to the coaching staff.
- ...all coaches will familiarize themselves with Concussion, Emergency Protocols and Abuse Reporting Policies listed in this handbook.
- ...all coaches will communicate needs and concerns to the Coach Representative or appropriate Board Member(s) via email, phone or in person.
- ...all coaches ensure that Kiwanis Field is raked after each practice and home game. (parents may be asked to assist).
- ...all coaches ensure that Kiwanis Field dugouts (home & away) are cleared of trash and debris upon leaving. This includes the team's dugout when visiting another town.
- ...all coaches ensure that equipment is properly stored upon leaving.
- ...all coaches will ensure that bins and sheds are secured and locked upon leaving.
- ...all coaches will communicate clearly and regularly with player's families with regard to practices, games, progress etc. This may be done via email, website or GameChanger app. For your protection, a coach should never communicate with a player via phone, email or text without including a parent directly in the conversation.
- ...all coaches should refrain from personal cell phone use while coaching.

## OBJECTIVES BY DIVISION

HGSL seeks to ensure the game of softball is coached in a manner that provides athletes a seamless transition from one level of competition to the next. This requires the coaches of each division to focus on teaching the athlete the fundamentals necessary to transition to the next level. Each athlete is unique and will develop at their own pace. As girls advance, practices may appear to be the same, but the level of demand will and should increase. HGSL offers the following guidelines to assist in the construction of effective practice plans to develop the athlete for the next level of competition.

### 6U:

The 6U division focuses on instruction and development for beginner players. At this level players will learn the basic mechanics of throwing, catching, fielding and hitting in a fun and dynamic environment. Players will learn defensive positioning, how to run the bases, where to throw the ball and how to stand when up to bat with a focus on having LOTS of FUN. Typically the season starts with all players hitting off the tee with the goal of progressing to coach pitch by the end of the season.

*Throwing – how to hold the softball, basic throwing mechanics*

*Fielding – how to catch the ball, how to field the ball (alligator chomp), body positioning & footwork, where to throw the ball*

*Hitting – How to hold a bat, basic stance, know the areas of the batter's box, keep terminology simple, lots of tee work & stations*

The 6U division generally meets 1 time per week, typically on Saturdays. The season usually starts with 1 hour practices and progresses to a practice/game (30min practice/1 hr game max).

### 8U:

The 8U division begins with reinforcing the skills learned in 6U. Players will build on the mechanics of throwing, catching, fielding and hitting in a fun and dynamic environment. There is an emphasis on learning the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) while building CONFIDENCE and having FUN. Runs are counted, outs are recorded and the education around the strike zone begins. The season begins with coach pitch.

*Throwing – how to hold the softball, basic throwing mechanics, footwork*

*Fielding – how to catch the ball, how to field the ball (alligator chomp), body positioning & footwork, where to throw the ball, how to catch a fly ball, situational play (basic concepts)*

*Hitting – How to hold a bat, stance review, batters box education, keep terminology simple, working on the live pitch, tee work, soft toss, stations*

*Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading (basic concept), sliding*

The 8U division generally meets 1 time per week for practice and 1 time per week for games. Games and practices typically run 1hr 30 mins.

**10U:**

The 10U division is designed to continue to build upon skills learned in 8U. Continued work on fundamentals. There is a continued emphasis on learning the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) while building CONFIDENCE and having FUN. Players are introduced to new skills such as leading from bases, stealing bases, a “live ball”, bunting and kid pitching. Players begin to understand the importance of the mental game. Upon graduating to 12U, players should know what constitutes a force play, which base is the correct base to make the play, how to round and run the bases, how to lead and steal a base and be able to catch a pop fly.

*Throwing –throwing mechanics, footwork, throwing toward/through to target, cutoffs*

*Fielding –body positioning & footwork, game situational play, bunt defense, fly balls, stealing- throw downs & covering home, live ball concept*

*Hitting – stance review, batters box education, strike zone awareness, working on the live pitch, tee work, soft toss, tennis ball drills, stations, mindset awareness, bunting*

*Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading, stealing, sliding*

*Pitcher/Catchers work – basic mechanics, lots of repetition & game like situations, live hitting*

The 10U division generally meets approx. 2 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)

**12U:**

The 12U division is designed to reinforce and build upon skills learned in 10U. Continued work on fundamentals. Strong emphasis on understanding the strategy and rules of the game (what to do and when) and a strong mental game (Focus in the NOW, “Reset” as needed, Belief in yourself, Bouncing back from errors, Motivation). Level of play is more competitive at this age level. 12” ball is introduced and pitching from 40’.

*Throwing –throwing mechanics, footwork, throwing toward/through to target, cutoffs*

*Fielding –body positioning & footwork, quick hands & release, game situational play, bunt defense, fly balls, stealing- throw downs & covering home, live ball concept*

*Hitting – stance review, working on live pitch, tee work, stations, mindset awareness, bunting, strike zone awareness*

*Base Running – where to go and when, running through the base, rounding the base, leading, stealing, sliding*

*Pitcher/Catchers work – mechanics, repetition, live hitting, working on their own away from the team*

The 12U division generally meets approx. 2-3 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)

**14U:**

The 14U division is an extension of 12U designed to continue the reinforcement of skills. This division should prep players for play on middle and high school softball teams and/or travel (club) teams. All rules and standards are the same as 12U.

The 14U division generally meets approx. 2-3 times per week for practice and 1-2 times per week for games. (Total of 3 times per week unless game rescheduling occurs)

## **SEASON EXPECTATIONS**

### **PRACTICES/GAMES**

- 4U Division will have one (1) activity per week.
- 6U Division will have one (1) activity per week, with a maximum of two (2) activities if the previous week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- 8U Division will have two (2) activities per week, with a maximum of three (3) activities if the prior week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- 10U, 12U & 14U Division will have three (3) activities per week, with a maximum of four (4) activities if the prior week's activity was canceled due to weather.
- Season begins with all practices. As the season progresses, some practices become games. Towards the end of the season, most practices may be replaced with games.
- Pitching/catching clinics available throughout the season with Coach Meg Radziewicz. Anyone interested in pitching should attend. A parent/family member is expected to catch for or at least stay with the player to observe proper technique to enable practice at home.

Meg Radziewicz- [hgsl.fundraising@gmail.com](mailto:hgsl.fundraising@gmail.com)

## **SEASON EVENTS**

- Field Clean Up Day
  - Traditionally held at the beginning of April. Coaches and registered families are encouraged to help rake, clean and prep the field for season play.
- HGSL Photo Day
  - Traditionally held toward the middle of the season.
- End of Season Celebration
  - traditionally held during the last weekend of games. All coaches, players and families are encouraged to attend this celebratory event.

- Trophies and medals are presented at this time.

## AVAILABLE FIELDS

- Kiwanis Field (behind SoHo) is our main field. Parking is NOT allowed at SoHo Restaurant or St. Mary's Bank. These establishments have requested their lots **not** be used for softball parking. Ample parking is provided at the field on Cross Street. Please remind your team families.
- Center Field (behind HMS) and Alvirne softball fields may be utilized with permission from schools. Permission must be requested through HGSL who will contact the schools. Coaches should **not** contact schools directly for permission.

## LOCK BOX & GATE CODES (not available online)

## LEAGUE PROVIDED EQUIPMENT

- Bases
- Score book (suggest using free GameChanger App)
- Equipment bag containing:
  - 2 sets catcher's gear
  - 1 extra bat
  - 1 bucket of balls
  - 1 case game balls
  - First aid kit and ice packs
  - Emergency medical information for each player to stay with coach at home and away games

## PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY

- Glove
- Cleats (recommended)
- Batting helmet with cage
- Fielder's Facemask (10U and up) required for all pitchers and 1<sup>st</sup> base (helmets may be worn as alternative)
- Softball pants (recommended) especially 10U and up
- Water

**\*\*PLAYERS SHOULD CLEARLY LABEL ALL GEAR including water bottles\*\***

## **THUNDER AND LIGHTNING**

- Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect outdoor athletics. Within the United States, the National Severe Storm Laboratory (NSSL) estimates that 100 fatalities and 400-500 injuries requiring medical treatment occur from lightning strikes every year. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can, and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike. Additionally, thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment, and its distance from the observer.

**WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTNING, SUSPEND ACTIVITIES AND REMAIN IN A VEHICLE UNTIL COACH TELLS YOU OTHERWISE. "IF YOU CAN SEE IT (LIGHTNING), FLEE IT (TAKE SHELTER). IF YOU CAN HEAR IT (THUNDER) CLEAR IT (SUSPEND ACTIVITIES)." WAIT UNTIL 30 MINUTES AFTER THE LAST OBSERVED LIGHTNING OR THUNDER BEFORE RESUMING ACTIVITIES.**

[Click here for National Federation of State High School Association Guidelines](#)

## **FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES**

- All 6U, 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U Coaches will have First Aid kits available in their team equipment bag. Coaches are required to take First Aid kits with them to all away games as well as players' Medical Consent Forms.
- A separate First Aid kit is available inside the green bin at Kiwanis Field (code 1991). 4U coaches may utilize this First Aid kit.
- When items are used (especially ice packs), coaches must notify the league equipment manager for replenishment.
- Coaches are permitted to provide essential and emergent first aid ONLY until a parent/guardian or emergency services arrive. (i.e. ice packs, band-aid etc.) Coaches are not permitted to splint, wrap, tape or provide non-emergent medical care to players.
- If 911 must be called, be aware of your location (address on fences) and designate another adult to meet the ambulance and direct medics to the scene.
- **If there is a suspected head, neck, or back injury, DO NOT MOVE THE PLAYER! Do not remove a player's helmet or other gear.**

## CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

**\*\*This action plan attempts to provide guidance to ensure all athletes a safe return to play, however, is under no circumstances a plan to diagnose and/or treat a suspected head injury. HGSL takes no responsibility in the diagnosis or treatment of any injury to a player. \*\***

### **Concussion Evaluation:**

The diagnosis of an acute concussion typically involves the assessment of clinical symptoms, physical signs, behavioral changes, balance and coordination, sleep, and cognition. An athlete may experience some or all of the following symptoms (reported by athlete).

1. Headache
2. Fatigue
3. Nausea or vomiting
4. Double vision or blurry vision
5. Sensitivity to light (photophobia) or noise
6. Feels sluggish
7. Feels “foggy”
8. Problems concentrating and remembering

Common signs (observed by evaluator or others) found with concussion include:

1. Athlete appears dazed or stunned
2. Confusion
3. Unsure about game, score, opponent
4. Altered coordination
5. Balance problems
6. Personality change (aggressive behavior)
7. Responds slowly to questions asked
8. Forgets events prior to trauma
9. Forgets events after trauma has taken place
10. Loss of consciousness (any duration)

**Any player suspected of a head injury must be pulled from play immediately.** The player may either be released to parent/guardian or emergency services (if necessary). Any player being evaluated by qualified personnel (i.e. EMT/paramedic, physician etc.) for a suspected concussion or head injury will not be eligible to return to play until the league receives documentation from the evaluating physician clearing the player to return. Documentation of medical clearance may be emailed to [playhgsl@gmail.com](mailto:playhgsl@gmail.com).

## **ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR COACHES/VOLUNTEERS**

### **CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

All coaches/volunteers must be aware that they are required by law, RSA 169-C:29, to report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Coaches/volunteers who report suspected cases are also protected by the law, which provides them with immunity from civil prosecution. Coaches/volunteers must follow the referral procedures described herein to facilitate the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect.

RSA 169-C:3 II defines an abused child as any child under the age of 18 years who has been

- sexually abused; or
- intentionally physically injured; or
- psychologically injured such that the child exhibits symptoms of emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect; or
- physically injured by other than accidental means.

RSA 169-C:3 XIX defines a neglected child as a child under the age of 18 years

- who has been abandoned by their parents, guardians, or custodian; or
- who is without proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for their physical, mental, or emotional health when it is established that their health has suffered or is very likely to suffer serious impairment; and deprivation is not due primarily to the lack of financial means of the parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- whose parents, guardians, or custodians are unable to discharge their responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization, or other physical or mental incapacity.
- However, no child who, in good faith, under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by a duly accredited practitioner thereof shall, for that reason alone, be considered a neglected child.

### **Referral Procedures**

Coaches/volunteers will report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director, who will be responsible in assisting coach/volunteer for notifying the Hudson Police Department immediately.

### **BULLYING**

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual in nature. It is defined as insults, taunts, or challenges, whether verbal or physical in nature, which are likely to intimidate or provoke a violent or disorderly response from the athlete being treated in this manner. Bullying may rise to the level of harassment or child abuse if severe or pervasive.

In accordance with RSA 193-F, HGSL will not condone athlete bullying, will take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying, and will report incidents of bullying to the appropriate law enforcement agency if necessary. It is the obligation of the coach/volunteer who is present at or otherwise has knowledge of any athlete bullying to report such acts immediately to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director.

### **HAZING**

Athlete hazing is any act directed toward an athlete or any coercion or intimidation of an athlete to act or to participate in or to submit to any act when

- such an act is likely or would be perceived by a reasonable person as likely to cause physical or psychological injury to any person; and
- such an act is a condition of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in, or association with any organization.

In accordance with New Hampshire law, RSA 631:7, HGSL will not condone athlete hazing, will take all reasonable measures to prevent athlete hazing, and will report all instances of such misconduct to law enforcement authorities. It is the obligation of the coach/volunteer who is

present at or otherwise has knowledge of any athlete hazing to report such acts immediately to the HGSL Board Director and/or Assistant Director.

## PRACTICE DRILL IDEAS

Coaches are strongly encouraged to review these drills. Many techniques have changed in the last 15-20 years and often coaches will teach older techniques that may have been learned previously. Please feel free to reach out to Player Development Coordinator, Daphne Harne @ [hgsl.daphne@gmail.com](mailto:hgsl.daphne@gmail.com) at any time with questions.

- Proper throwing techniques <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZhjYIHKoEI>
- Hitting drills <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEKDXHoqtCE>
- Fielding drills
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0J-ZDZzetU>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwqlj4sey8o>
- Quick feet/hands <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gr8pqOu73Eo>
- "Crow Hop" throw <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T73E3jZLa-M>
- Baserunning <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDGW8yymfiE&t=33s>
- Sliding <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBeU3dcnhyE>
- [FOR COACHES | hudsonsoftball \(hgslnh.com\)](http://hgslnh.com)
- [Pregame Stretches To Prepare To Throw - YouTube](#)
- [How To Catch A Softball/Baseball For Beginners - YouTube](#)
- [2 Backhand Drills - YouTube](#)
- [Hitting Drill To Work On Hand Path/Barrel Control - YouTube](#)
- [How To Hit A Softball - YouTube](#)
- [Softball Workout #2 - 5 Drills - YouTube](#)
- [Softball Infield Drill- Quick Hands with Flat Glove - YouTube](#)
- [2-Day Infield Camp with Coach Steinman - YouTube](#)
- [RHYTHM, TIMING, & POSTURE DRILLS - YouTube](#)
- [Softball Workout - 10 Drills - YouTube](#)
- [Drill For Youth Players - YouTube](#)