

TEAM PARENT HANDBOOK



Welcome to East County Softball and thank you for volunteering your time and effort for the players and families. We appreciate you! The following contains important information, dates, as well as tips to help you with your duties as Team Parent. If you have any ideas to add to this handbook for future use, please let us know. We wish you a fun and successful season!

Visit www.eastcountyyasa.org or www.facebook.com/eastcountyyasa often to keep up to date on the latest news, events, and happenings!

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** See our website for a complete list of all board members under the tab "Coaches and League Staff". **

NOTES

A Team Parent is an extremely important position on a team – one who facilitates all communication between the league and coach to the player and families. Managers and coaches rely on Team Parents to facilitate all of the collections, events, and general administrative duties. The key to a successful Team Parent is communication!

INTRODUCTION: The first step in being a successful Team Parent is introducing yourself to the entire team. Managers usually have a parent meeting at the beginning of the season and this is always a good time for you to let everyone know who you are and how to contact you. You may want to hand a flyer out with important contact information, important dates, and any other team information you want parents to know about. Having a meeting with the manager prior to this meeting regarding his/her expectations of a Team Parent on their team is recommended so that you are always on the same page. A good Team Parent is ALWAYS accessible to parents whether it be in person, over email, or phone. This includes a good response time.

IMPORTANT INFO TO COMMUNICATE TO PARENTS: There are a few VERY key items that need to be communicated to parents right away...

- Dogs: There are ABSOLUTELY NO DOGS allowed at Melody field (with the exception of documented service dogs). This is the school district's rule and since this field is on their property, we must abide by all of their rules and regulations. Failure to comply could possibly result in East County Softball not being able to use Melody Fields in the future. There are dogs allowed at Cactus Park but please be considerate!
- Parking: There is ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING in the red fire lanes or in the dirt at Melody Field! Failure to abide by those rules will result in cars being towed. Please inform your parents of the large parking lot next door at the adult school where there is a gate and easy access to our fields.
- Kids: PLEASE keep an eye on your kids! Our fields are where we all come to have fun but we also must be safe in order for that to happen. There is no climbing trees or structures, no playing in bathrooms, no digging up dirt on the fields, etc. These mishaps can all be avoided by parents checking on their kids periodically.

TEAM BANNER: Every team is encouraged to have their own team banner to hang outside the dugouts during games. These can be handmade if you feel crafty, or purchased from a vendor (screen-printed vinyl or airbrushed). The total cost of the banner should be divided by all team members. This is something that needs to be discussed with all parents beforehand.

Some local vendors that specialize in team banners include:

- Al's Sport Shop: 9250 Mission Gorge Road, Santee, CA 92071 (619-562-4263)

There are also many online sites that you can purchase from. Recommended sites include:

- www.bannersusa.com
- www.allstarbanner.com
- www.rebelsportsfx.com
- www.fasteambanners.com

TEAM SOCKS: The girls really love having “crazy” socks to wear. These socks can be anything you want them to be ... a logo or mascot of your team, a name, or just a funky design. These can be found online by Googling “crazy softball socks” or they are also available to be ordered through local shops like Sportland. The other option would be purchasing a solid color sock to match the uniform. This is another item to be paid for by each player’s parent. Don’t forget to check sizes before ordering!

DUGOUT BASKETS: For the younger divisions (6u-10u), dugout baskets are a great help in keeping everything organized in your dugout. These should be large enough to hold a glove, facemask, drink, and batting gloves. They can be purchased at any dollar store and marked with each player’s name and/or number. Coaches will appreciate these! It is recommended that you keep these and bring them to games instead of giving them to each family to carry back and forth as many of them won’t bring them.

AFTER GAME SNACKS: After game snacks are traditionally done in the younger divisions (6u-8u) by parent volunteers. Each family is assigned a game to bring an after game drink/snack. Snack bar tickets (available to purchase at the snack bar) can also be handed out to players as an alternative to bringing snacks from home (or in the case of a last minute bail out for a parent who forgot it was their day to bring snacks). If tickets are used and you are the last game of the day, just make sure that the snack bar will be open when your game has finished.

TEAM APPS/WEBSITES: A great tool to help you keep track of your roster, practice days, game days, snack schedule and any other important information is a team website. This can be the center of communication and information for your team. There are many sites out there to choose from, ranging from free to quite expensive. For example, Shutterfly has a simple and FREE site you can create that will email reminders while a site like Team Snap charges a minimal fee but also includes group texts. Another great tool that can be used is a Facebook page for your team where you can post reminders, photos, etc. Other options are Groupme and Band. Whatever form of communication you may use (whether website, FB, email, or text)

please make sure every parent has access.

FIELD DAY: Every player is responsible to have at least one family member present at Field Day. Families are encouraged to bring their rakes, shovels, trash picker-uppers, gloves, etc to pitch in and help at the Field Day. Each team will be assigned a location... watch for an email the week before and don't forget to sign in when you arrive to receive your task. The more hands on deck, the faster it goes!

LEAGUE FUNDRAISER: Every player had the option when registering to participate in the league fundraiser or to buy out. If they chose to participate, they will be required to sell fifty (50) \$1 raffle tickets to family, friends, co-workers, etc for cash prizes. Team Parents will be given enough raffle tickets for each of their players that chose to sell. If a player would like to sell more than fifty, please contact the Fundraising Director. It is the Team Parent's responsibility not only to hand them out to each family but also to collect ticket stubs (separated) and money for each ticket. The Fundraising Director will provide specific days and times to turn in your team's stubs and money. If you are having trouble collecting from a parent, please contact the Fundraising Director BEFORE the last due date so she can resolve any issues. If for some reason you cannot make the drop off dates provided, you must contact the Fundraising Director to set up another time to meet.

PADRE NIGHT: Every spring season, the Padres host a softball night at Petco Park where all USA registered players are welcome to walk around the infield during a pre-game parade. Game tickets are sold in advance at a discounted rate for players and their family and friends. This is a fun night where the girls can take in some great baseball and hang out with their friends. Don't miss out on this! Tickets can be purchased on the East County website or players can turn in their orders to their team parent. More information will be handed out by the Treasurer at the Team Parent meeting.

PICTURE DAY: Picture day will be held during the beginning of the season. A free league portrait package is included as part of each player's registration fee, however larger packages can be purchased. There may or may not be a make-up day this year but either way, NO team pictures can be taken at make-up picture day – only individual pictures.

TEAM NIGHT: Each year East County Softball hosts a Team Night for players and their families. This is an extremely fun time to spend with friends as well as an important fundraiser for the league. There is food to purchase, raffles to enter, and baskets to auction. Team Parents are also in charge of creating a basket to be raffled on Team Night. This basket usually consists of 12 items that can be saved for a team party or team gifts for the end of the season. Team Parents must collect enough money from each parent to make the basket as well as enough money to buy another basket. Be as creative as you want or ask a board member for ideas or what last year's baskets consisted of.

OPENING DAY CEREMONIES: The ceremony will take place the morning before our first games. Each team is announced by division, the previous summer's All Star teams are announced, and we welcome the start to a new season. Vendors will be on site as well as entertainment for players and families. More details will be announced as the date gets closer.

END OF SEASON ACTIVITIES: Every team is responsible for deciding how they want to celebrate the end of the season. It could be as simple as bringing cupcakes to the last game and handing out participation pins/medals or as big as a bowling or movie theater party. This decision is left in the hands of the team parent and coaches. The league does provide trophies for the TOC finalists (1st & 2nd place) and participation trophies for our 6u division.

It might sound like a lot of work to be Team Parent but remember... you are not alone!! Feel free to reach out to any board member at any time for assistance or to answer any question you may have. If you are having trouble collecting money, order forms, etc., it's perfectly acceptable to have an assistant parent to help you out. Your duty as Team Parent is not necessarily to do everything but to make sure everything gets done. We wish you a great season and have fun!! Thanks again for your help in making your team's season at East County enjoyable!