

So I'm coaching one of my son's baseball teams in a regular season game. It's early in the season, and I want to see what one of my younger pitchers can do in a game situation. My assistant at the time was borderline freaking out, saying "Ugh, I just don't trust him." My immediate response was, "The kid is 10-years old. He's not dating your daughter, he's pitching in a regular season game! You don't need to trust him, you need to develop him!"

Sometimes we forget that our job as coaches is to allow players to fail. Especially at the younger age groups, we sometimes forget part of the learning process is learning from our mistakes. Coaches have to be prepared to allow their players to fail, to learn from failure, and to understand that failure is part of the game.

There are numerous times I would tell my 18U team that I know they will make mistakes during a game. The goal is to minimize mistakes. Whether it's swinging at a bad pitch, missing a cut, missing a sign, it's going to happen. The main thing is to learn from your mistakes and not make the same mistake twice.

I would have girls apologize after making mistakes. I would constantly tell them that I am not looking for apologies, just don't let it happen again. Our team mantra became "Don't say your sorry, just fix it!"

I've always firmly believed that if a player knows that they are not going to be yelled at for making a mistake, they will not be as tight in the field. Playing loose is playing better. Because, after all, it is still just a game.