

COACHING PHILOSOPHY



- MISSION STATEMENT -
- VALUES -
- GUIDING PRINCIPLES -

FOR
WEST LINN SOFTBALL
Scott Smith, Head Coach



School Mission Statement

West Linn High School is a place where all stakeholders, staff, students and parents are committed to excellence through development of academics, character and service and leadership. West Linn High School will be a place where we can learn, grow and dream together.

We believe:

- learning is a continuous, life-long experience.
- strong relationships create strong learning communities.
- integrity, courage and compassion must guide our actions.
- each individual is unique and these differences should be respected while honoring those characteristics which we share.
- every individual is capable of being a leader and we are committed to providing opportunities to lead.
- everyone has a responsibility to be actively involved in their community.
- that every voice needs to be heard and respected.
- our school should be a safe place to take risks and to stretch our capabilities.
- in ongoing reflection, research, discussion of teaching and learning strategies, and practices.

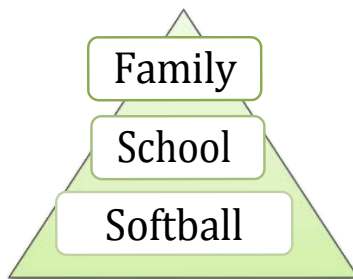
Mission Statement

(What is our purpose?)

The West Linn High School Softball program is committed to developing character in student-athletes through competitive sportsmanship, community service and team leadership.

Values

(What is our priority?)



Guiding Principles

*(What standards do we
expect?)*

Team ahead of self
Trust in each other
Accountable
Disciplined
Coachable
Compete fearlessly

Team ahead of self

The team should come first in all decisions. Players and coaches are expected to be unselfish in every role they play throughout the season. Every decision should be based on “what does my team need from me.” They believe that as a group they can accomplish more than any one individual.

Trust in each other

Each teammate must have faith in one another and in their coaches. That means they work with and for each other. They show a mutual respect for their teammates by offering positive reinforcement and encouragement. They trust their training and respect the instruction they receive.

Accountable

Accountability means being responsible to uphold your commitments. It is taking personal responsibility for your actions, and then holding teammates accountable to those same standards.

Disciplined

This requires focused attention and effort. Disciplined athletes do whatever is necessary concerning work habits, self-control, and sacrifices needed for maximum success. They accept fair discipline from their coaches and understand its importance to the team.

Coachable

Every athlete should develop a teachable spirit, constantly willing to learn and attempting to improve. They learn to accept correction as a compliment—that the coach believes in them and thinks they have the ability to improve. It involves respectful listening, tone, body language, facial expression, and quick attentiveness.

Compete Fearlessly

A competitive athlete is mentally tough. They love to win, but don't fear failure and recover quickly from mistakes. They play confidently, enthusiastically, and aggressively within the rules. They show a love for their sport with high energy putting their heart, body, and mind in their performance at practice and games.

"I wrote this philosophy to state clearly what I'm coaching toward—the type of season and product I want to produce. These principles are the very heartbeat of my coaching and will drive every decision I make. Winning, of course, is what I strive to do, and will always be my goal. But winning is more than a favorable scoreboard. It is also the successful teaching and execution of this philosophy. Winning is producing the complete student-athlete."

Scott Smith, Head Softball Coach



The Role of Parents in Athletics

According to Bruce Brown, Director of ProActive Coaching, there are **three times** where we can help our child's performance and create great memories:

1. Before the game
2. During the game
3. After the game

Before the first game

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Why do I want my child to play this sport?
- What goals do I have for him/her?
- If there are roles, what role do I want them to play?
- How will I decide if it's a successful season?

Then ask your child the same questions.

- Why are you playing?
- What goals do you have?
- What do you think your role will be on the team?
- What is a successful season?

If your child's answers are the same as yours, then great, support your child. If your child's answers differ from yours, then **drop your goals and accept theirs.**

The reality is that 75% of kids are out of organized sports by age 13 so it is important that parents, as early as possible, do what they can to facilitate their child's growth through athletics.

Bruce also made the point that it is important that kids have a passion. Sports are just one "flavor" of passion. Others might be dance, theater, chess, band, etc. - and these same lessons apply in those arenas. While my daughter is an athlete, my son's passion is theater and he has a coach (director), teammates (fellow cast members), spectators (audience) and a series of games (performances.) The only thing that's missing is a referee or official.

The next step that needs to happen early in the season is for you, the parent, to "release" your son or daughter to the game and to the coach. "This is your activity, not mine." Bruce made the point that sports (and other passions) are one of the only areas where parents today can safely "release" their kids. You can't release them to their friends, to culture (e.g. movies), to academics. Sports, however, are a great venue for risk-taking. You don't want them to take risks with substances, sex, driving - allow them to take risks in sports.

Here are the red flags that indicate that you haven't "released" your child:

- You continue to share in the credit when things go well. "We won." No, they won.
- You find yourself trying to resolve all the problems that will inevitably come up during a season. Most of these problems will be relationship problems.
- You catch yourself yelling at an official during the game.

- You try to continue to coach them when they know more about the sport than you do (about 9th grade.)
- They try to avoid you after the game or they're embarrassed by your involvement.

Still signs but less serious:

- You are more nervous before the game than they are
- You're still fretting about the game long after they're over it

During the game

Here are Bruce's recommendations for during the game:

1. **Be there.** However, if you've been to every practice and game since they were four, don't go sometime and see what your athlete wants to bring back to you.
2. **Model appropriate behavior.** Bruce videotaped himself early in his coaching career and found that what he thought of as intensity came off as scary ugly! He reformed. To develop kids who will be poised and confident under pressure, we must model the same.
3. **One instructional voice.** This needs to be the voice of the coach. Kids find it very confusing when they hear multiple people. Encouraging voices are OK.
4. **Focus on the team,** not on your little darling.

5. **Choose one role.** There are four roles - player, coach, spectator and official. Everyone gets to choose one.

After the game

When kids are asked about bad memories from athletics, the most consistent answer is **the car ride home with mom and/or dad after the game**. Here's how to make that car ride home a positive:

- **Save your analysis.** Don't analyze their play, the officials, their teammates, the coaching, the conditions, etc.
- **Give your athlete time and space.**
Kids need time and space to recover. Some need an hour, others a week.
- **Be a confidence builder** and not a confidence cutter. What can you say?
Things like
 - I love watching you play.
 - I love watching you be part of a team.
 - I love how you're such a great encourager of your teammates

Bruce Brown is the NAIA Special Presenter of the Champions of Character initiative. He speaks around the country to athletes, coaches, and businesses on the subject of character-based coaching and teamwork. He has written nine books, eleven other coaching booklets, and has taught and coached for over 35 years.

A Note to Parents From Your Coach

As the coach of your child, I am in partnership with you in developing the complete student-athlete. My role is specific to softball and the lessons in life your child can learn by participating in our program. That's why I freely ask for your participation and cooperation as I lead this program.

Participation by you is not coaching—that is my job. However, your role as a parent is crucial to our team's success. I need your support and encouragement because our goals are common: both of us are committed to developing character through competitive sportsmanship in a positive environment. I encourage open communication between us on any subject related to developing and advancing the goals of our program.

I consider it an honor and privilege to coach these young women. I take my role seriously and with optimistic enthusiasm. You have my pledge that I will treat your daughter with all the respect she deserves and provide a competent softball program.

Scott Smith
Head Coach