**Some of the objectives we have for the program are:**

1. **To HAVE FUN. We want your kids to have a good time – we have several activities and games set up to allow this to happen. This program is NOT about competition.**
2. **To have the kids learn basic skills related to the game of T-Ball, many of which are transferrable to baseball and softball as they get older. These skills include: throwing, catching, hitting, base-running, and basic knowledge of a baseball diamond.**
3. **To participate in several games or versions of games of T-Ball with their peers in a positive environment.**
4. **To promote a fun, recreational game to play that promotes wellness and outdoor activity among peers, friends, and families.**

**Please keep these objectives in mind during the program. This is not about becoming a T-Ball star, it is not about competition – it’s about having fun!**

**We will be practicing some skills – catching, throwing, hitting and basic T-Ball knowledge – rules, field positions, etc. Hopefully by the last day, we will be able to play an inning or two!**

**If you are interested in getting involved, please let Recreation Supervisor- Jack Haye at jhaye@chippewafalls-wi.gov know – involvement from parents/guardians is encouraged and appreciated! – Coaches needed for all four teams.**

1. **Wear outdoor clothes.**
2. **Wear close-toed shoes; preferably sneakers or tennis shoes. This will help your children when base running and fielding properly.**
3. **Bring water to hydrate with during the program. It’s hot out!! Water is the best way to stay hydrated because it doesn’t add any empty calories from sugar.**
4. **Please go to the bathroom before the practice starts -- you can use the bathrooms in the Marshall Warming House.**
5. **All game times will be split into 30 minutes of practice and a 30-minute game.**
6. **For games, we will use incrediballs. Practice, we will use tennis balls.**
7. **During the 30-minute game:**
	1. **Each player bats for the team that is up before you switch teams in the field. We do not go by three outs.**
	2. **Each player swings until they hit the ball into fair territory. When they hit the T and the ball falls off, it is a foul ball.**
	3. **For the most part have players only go one base at a time when hitting and running. This makes it less confusing for everyone.**
	4. **Have the last player up in the half inning keep running all around the bases for a home run.**
	5. **Make sure to rotate players so that the same kids don’t hit first or last during the game.**
	6. **Defensively stress getting the force out. Talk to them and ask where they are going to throw the ball if they get it. Make sure they know what a force out is.**
	7. **Rotate kids defensively every inning so that they are not playing the same position.**
	8. **You do not need to have a player at the catcher position. Also, you probably do not want to have outfielders, just have more kids play the infield then what there normally is.**
	9. **For the first couple of games do not call kids out when they get tagged out or are out at first on a force out. Once they have played a few times then you can start to call them out.**
	10. **Make sure to talk to the kids a lot and ask them questions about where they are going to be running or throwing to.**
	11. **When your team is in the field, coaches should be out on the field with them to help the kids out and explain where to throw the ball.**
	12. **When your team is batting make sure to have a coach at the T to help with hitting.**
	13. **At the end of the hour bring both teams in to the middle and say “T-Ball”**
	14. **Make sure you start your game with at least a half hour left each time. Even if you don’t get as much practice time, make sure you get the half hour game.**
	15. **If the infield is muddy or wet, use the throw down bases and play in the outfield.**

**Coaching Tips**

1. Short Drills with many repetitions.
2. Demonstrate drills before having the players perform drill
3. Every child should be doing something at all times
4. End practice with a fun activity
5. Expect the unexpected
6. Set out the necessary equipment before practice. (Get there early!)
7. When talking to players, kneel down so that you are eye level.
8. Don’t display negative criticism, hostility, abuse or anger
9. Remember the 4 “P-words”:
	1. **Preparation** – Plan ahead and be ready!
	2. **Patience** – Take the time to build self-esteem and confidence in each player.
	3. **Poise** – Maintain your composure and remember that mistakes will happen.
	4. **Praise** – Recognize effort and performance verbally.

**Practice 1- July 18th**

**Team Meeting**

1. Introduce Coaches
2. Attendance
3. Ice Breaker

**Throwing and Catching Activities**

1. Ready to Throw: On the instructors call, all players quickly get into throwing position. Coaches go around to each player and check that they are holding the ball correctly. Also check their throwing stance (legs apart, foot on throwing arm side behind the body, throwing arm back and up, and front shoulder toward/pointing at the target). Relax without throwing the ball and repeat.
2. Throw to Me Coach: Line the player up on a line facing a coach. Throw to the first player, who catches the ball and throws back. Continue down the line, throwing to each player and each player throwing the ball back. After a few practice rounds, have the kids count the number of successful catches.

 **Fielding Activities**

1. Basic Fielding: Each player stands in various positions in the fielding stance. A coach slowly rolls a ball to various players. The player closest to the ball takes a few steps to the ball, fields the ball and throws it back to the coach. Rotate player positions throughout the drill.
2. Partner Pickup: Players partner up and stand 10 feet apart from each other. One player rolls the ball for his or her partner to field. Repeat back and forth.

**Running Activities**

1. Run to First: Line players up a few feet behind home plate. The first runner stands at home plate. On your call, the player runs to first base. Be sure the player is running with correct form.

**Batting Activities**

1. Practice Swing: Space the players out, each holding an imaginary bat. On your whistle or call, players should go through the batting sequence (stance, swing, follow through and dropping the bat). Coaches should watch and correct any bad habits.
2. Practice Swing 2: Each player swings a real bat at a tee without a ball. The batter should swing the bat where the ball would be. Players should go through the batting sequence properly and drop the bat. Coaches should watch and correct any bad habits. If you want have the players run to first base after they complete the swing.
3. Practice Swing 3: Each player should get at least 5 hits off a tee. A coach should help adjust the tee for each player and make suggestions for improvements after each swing. On the last hit, have the batter run to first base.

**Breakdown and Thank Parents and Kids**

**Practice 2- July 20th**

**Team Meeting**

1. Re-Introduce all coaches
2. Attendance/Ice-Breaker
3. Review the baseball/softball field and all the positions.

**Stretching Exercises**

**Throwing and Catching Activities**

1. Throw to Me Coach: Line the player up on a line facing a coach. Throw to the first player, who catches the ball and throws back. Continue down the line, throwing to each player and each player throwing the ball back. After a few practice rounds, have the kids count the number of successful catches.
2. Bounce to the Bucket: Place a large bucket on a base. Players try to throw the ball into the container from a distance. 3 points for getting it in the bucket, 2 points for hitting the bucket, and 1 point for being within 1 yard of the bucket.

**Fielding Activities**

1. Left or Right: Throw or hit the ball to one side of a fielder, who has to run to get in front of the ball. Have the players throw the ball back to you and go to the back of the line.

**Batting Activities**

1. Home Run: Set out cones or markers in 5-foot increments from the batting tee. Each “zone” is worth a certain amount of points, 1-5. Give each player 5 hits to score as many points as possible. A ball may be hit on the ground or in the air to receive points.

**Running Activities**

1. Run to First: A player swings a bat, drops it and then runs from home plate to first base. The next player does the same with the first runner running from first base to second base after the swing. Teach your players that they can only overrun first base. They must stop on all the other bases. Continue the batting and running sequence with the entire group.

**Breakdown and Thank Parents and Kids**