

As a parent whose child is participating in a PONY Baseball organization in your community, you may be interested in the type of program to which your children are devoting their time.

PONY is an acronym for “Protect Our Nations Youth.” Founded on the premise that leagues should be comprised of players within a two year age span; the maturity, ability, size and skills are comparable. Likewise age-specific diamonds permit the game to be played within physical capabilities of the participants. It is more logical to change the size of the playing fields than to change the rules the game in order to adjust to the physical potential players.

PONY Baseball seeks to set each league to operate in an autonomous manner as possible. Through various publications, PONY provides a pattern of operation that is the result of the experience of many leagues for more than 60 years. However, actual operation lead is the responsibility of the involved people of your community. Players are assigned to leagues in two-year age groups according to “league age,” which is that age attained by the player before May 1 of the playing season.

PONY Baseball has leagues throughout the United States and a number of foreign countries. Nearly 500,000 players compete on one of over 30,000 teams worldwide. International tournament play is conducted at the Mustang, Bronco-II, Bronco, Pony-13, Pony, Colt and Palomino levels. Tournament competition in younger age groups generally restricted to Zone or Region level.

Participation in PONY Baseball is not limited to exceptional athletes, yet it is intended that a child earn the privilege of participation. The effectiveness of the program as a tool to teach youngsters is dependent upon the aspect of competition for a position on a team in the league, and upon the child’s own desire to play baseball. The program is of dubious value to those who do not have a sincere desire to play.

PONY Baseball leagues are operated in most communities by volunteers. It is estimated that over one million volunteers world-wide give of their time and effort in order to provide supervised PONY Baseball for children to help them develop individually. A quality, developmentally appropriate baseball program will enhance a child's physical fitness and healthy lifestyle, support self-confidence, improve motor and social skills and establish sportsmanship. The lessons they learn “inside the lines” will carry over to the lessons of life outside the lines. But the most important aspect of any youth sport is having fun! Parents share in this responsibility through the development of the proper attitude. Children will follow the example of adult role models, especially their parents. Set a good example for your child by showing good sportsmanship on and off the field. If you have concerns about some aspect of the program, meet with the coach privately. If you can't be part of the solution, don't be part of the problem. Parents can foster a positive climate that enables children involved in sports to enjoy themselves and reach their full potential. Most importantly, you are your child’s biggest fan. Take every opportunity to compliment your child on his or her efforts. Continue to offer your child encouragement, even when your child seems discouraged, by always pointing out the positive. When parents are positively involved, children are more likely to enjoy playing, participate longer and keep parents involved longer.