



WHITBY GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

Softball is a wonderful game. It combines the thrill and pride of individual accomplishments while allowing for the camaraderie of working with a team. We at Whitby Girls Softball are pleased to be able to offer this experience to the girls of our community.

LEARN TO PLAY

Unfortunately, one difficulty with learning softball at an early age is that acquiring the skills required can take more time than the young attention spans can provide. Enter our youngest division, Learn to Play, designed for girls aged 5 or 6.

In Learn to Play the girls are taught the basics of softball in bite-size pieces that are specifically designed to teach the skills in chunks manageable for the age group. Because of this the girls are able to consolidate the skills at a pace appropriate to their age instead of being expected to learn everything at once.

As well, the skills are presented in a fast-paced, fun-filled environment. Unlike a regular softball division, where only two teams meet at any park, in Learn to Play all teams in the division meet at the same time. The teams rotate together from one skills centre to the next, each centre teaching a different skill as a mini-game. The girls are kept in motion with a new game to focus on every few minutes. The excitement and fun-factor is high while camaraderie is built through the common experience.



At the end of the skills centres the teams are paired up to play a one-inning game so that they may practice the skills they are learning. The games are non-competitive, with every player on each team batting and the coaches encouraging the girls to use their new skills rather than win the game. In fact the score is not even kept.

WGSA's award-winning implementation of Learn to Play, as recognized by Softball Canada, has been a big success since its introduction in 2006, but it left us with an opportunity as well.

While the younger players had been getting a good grounding in the basics of softball skills, such as

throwing, batting and running, they do not have the same exposure to the more advanced concepts such as pitching, catching and knowing where to throw the ball during a fast play. Enter our newest division, Advanced Learn to Play.

ADVANCED LEARN TO PLAY

Starting in 2008 Whitby Girls Softball introduced a new division continuing where Learn to Play leaves off. In order to provide the girls with more softball-related skills prior to sending them on to full games in our Mite division, Advanced Learn to Play focuses on these skills while still giving the opportunity to practise the basics such as throwing, catching and batting.



The name, "Advanced Learn to Play", reflects the fact that this division more closely resembles the next division below, "Learn to Play", rather than the next division above, "Mite". As such, ALTP consists of a series of skills centres which the teams rotate through together. At the end of the centres the teams are paired together to play a one-inning, non-competitive game where they get a chance to practice the skills they are learning.

In fact, ALTP differs from LTP in only one main area: the skills centres themselves. In ALTP these introduce the girls to the skills of pitching, backcatching and "ball sense". Being able to throw a ball does not guarantee that you will know where to throw it when the time comes. These centres will provide this, among other skills. The goal is to maintain the fun-filled atmosphere from LTP while moving beyond the basics.



These two divisions have been remarkably successful in both of their goals: to teach softball more effectively to young girls and to

make the process for fun.
Sign up and check us out.