

Do you belong on the field?

“I wanted to pass along a ‘best practice’ we’ve come up with in our league for the background check process. We have about 600 kids in the league and somewhere around 150 volunteers/coaches/managers. My biggest issue in implementing the Background Check policy was figuring out how I was going to know, on a day-to-day basis, who had been screened and passed. I obviously can’t get to know all 150 volunteers personally or by site!

“I came up with a button that I designed, with our league logo, that is personalized with each volunteer’s name and the current year. Anyone onfield (practice or game) with the players at any level, at any time, must have their customized button either on their hat (where most coaches/managers keep them) or on their chest on the left front. They have to be in full view if they are on the field, or else they can’t be on the field.

I found an Internet vendor (Buttonstar) that helped me with the button – it’s really been great. Opening day was Saturday and I drove around throughout the day to different fields – everyone had their buttons on and I was assured that our league had done its job on the Background Check policy. Next year we’ll do the same thing – we’ll just change the button’s background color and put 2004 on it so that it stands out from this year’s button.

“I actually had the button company make up a sample button and send it to your attention – you’ll probably get it tomorrow. I just wanted to pass this along – I don’t know what other leagues are doing; we’ve started to get inquiries about our buttons from other area leagues that we interleague with, asking how we came up with it and where we got it. I’m sure there are other vendors out there – Buttonstar has worked great for us – they’re extremely responsive and very reasonably priced (\$1.50/button). We actually increased our sponsors fees this year to cover the

cost of the background checks and implementation, so we’re all set from a budget perspective.

“Let me know if you have any questions – as I said, this is working out really well for us and I thought I should pass it along.”

Brad Paige
President
Kennebunk-Kennebunkport,
Maine, Little League

“Dear Brad, Thank you for the great idea. We have also received input from leagues who use Photo ID cards like we use at the World Series for the same purpose of quick ID at the games and more important at practice.”

Daniel P. Kirby
Director of Risk Management
Little League Baseball, Incorporated

Editor’s Note: This idea was sent to Corey Wright, assistant East Region Director of Little League Baseball, who passed it to Little League International Headquarters and ASAP. We thank Corey and Brad for passing on this great idea of how local leagues can help the average participant know who is and is not supposed to be on the field with the children. If you have an idea to share, you can send it directly to ASAP by emailing asap@musco.com, or calling 800-811-7443 and leaving a message with your tip. And thanks for making it “safer for the kids.”

