



Welcome to Challenger Little League!

We believe first and foremost that every player deserves a positive, safe, and inclusive place to play—where they can grow, build confidence, and experience the joy of being part of a team.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's anything we can do to better support our Challenger players and families.

email: challengerdistrict2@gmail.com

What is Challenger Little League?

Challenger Little League is a division of Little League International created for individuals with physical and/or intellectual challenges. It provides the opportunity to participate in baseball/softball in a fun, safe, and supportive environment.

Today, Challenger serves more than 30,000 players in over 900 programs worldwide. Our Kalamazoo District 2 program has proudly supported local families by creating a place where every player, aged 4-26, can belong and succeed.

Our Program

- Teams are formed based on **ability**, not age
- Games may include **tee-ball, coach pitch, or a combination**
- Each player is supported to participate at their own level
- Current divisions are **Beginner, Intermediate** and **Advanced**
- Games/practices are played at **Milwood Little League** in Kalamazoo, on Ryan Walker field

Challenger focuses on:

- Building **confidence and self-esteem**
 - Learning **basic skills and fundamentals**
 - Encouraging **teamwork and sportsmanship**
 - Most importantly—**having fun!**
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The Buddy Program

A unique part of Challenger is our **Buddy system**.

Buddies (often student-athletes and community volunteers) assist players by:

- Helping with batting and running the bases
- Providing guidance and encouragement
- Supporting players while promoting independence

This program creates meaningful support from community partners and allows families to relax, cheer, and connect with others. We look for buddies for our beginner and intermediate divisions for both practices and games.

What to Expect During the Season

- Every player gets a chance to **bat each inning**
 - Games/practices are **adapted based on team ability**
 - **No scores are kept**—the focus is on participation and fun
 - All players receive a **uniform (hat is included in the spring season)**
 - **Equipment** - helmets, bats and fielding gloves are available to use; players can also bring their own equipment (no metal cleats are allowed)
 - The **spring** season includes approximately **7 games** and as many weekly practices (each team meets two days per week)
 - The **fall** season includes approximately **6-7 games** and no weekly practices (each team meets one day per week)
 - **Team and individual photos** are taken during the **spring** season
 - Every player receives an **award** at the end of the season
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Our Goal

Our goal is to provide a positive and inclusive baseball experience where every player feels **supported, successful, and celebrated**.

Our website: <https://challengerkalamazoo.com/>

Our FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/ChallengerKalamazooD2>

Our donations page: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-challenger-little-league-district-2-michigan>

Our weather line: 269-220-0683

Family Expectations & Safety Guidelines

To help create a safe, supportive, and enjoyable experience for all players, we ask families to partner with us in the following ways:

Supervision

- A parent or guardian is required to **remain at the field at all times** during practices, games and events
- This ensures each player has the support they may need

Basic Safety Guidelines

- Players should remain in the **dugout** unless they are:
 - Up to bat
 - On the field playing defense
- **Helmets must be worn** while batting and running the bases
- Please help reinforce safe behavior in and around the field
- Per Milwood Little League rules, animals are not permitted on the premises, with the exception of trained service dogs

Volunteers & Safety

All of our coaches and league committee volunteers generously give their time to support our players. To ensure a safe environment for everyone, these volunteers are required to complete annual background checks and Little League safety training.

Our **Buddy volunteers** play an important role in supporting players on the field and are supervised by coaches and league leadership throughout all activities.

How Families Can Help

Your involvement makes a big difference in your athlete's experience!

- **Encourage your player** and celebrate their effort, growth, and joy
- Maintain **open communication with coaches** regarding any mobility, sensory, emotional, behavioral, or medical needs
- Help us create a **positive and inclusive environment** for all players and families

Challenger Little League Weather Policy

The safety of our players, families, and volunteers is our top priority. Weather conditions are carefully monitored, and decisions are made with safety in mind.

Rain

Cancellation decisions are made by the Milwood Little League Field Director, League President, and/or a Board member after evaluating field conditions and the weather forecast.

Temperature Guidelines

Games/practices will be canceled if the wind chill is 40°F or below, or the heat index exceeds 104°F. Decisions are normally made one hour prior to game time.

Severe Weather

- Tornado Watch/Warning: Games/practices canceled
- Severe Thunderstorm Watch: Games/practices continue unless conditions worsen
- Severe Thunderstorm Warning: Games/practices canceled

Lightning Policy

If lightning is detected within 3–8 miles, play will be suspended. If three strikes occur within 30 seconds, games are stopped. Milwood Little League has a lightning detector, and the field director will be monitoring.

For Challenger: If a game or practice is stopped due to lightning, the remainder of the day is canceled.

Cancellations & Communication

Decisions are often made close to game/practice time, with a goal of approximately one hour prior to start.

Updates will be posted on our FB page: www.facebook.com/ChallengerKalamazooD2.

We also utilize a “weather phone” with a recorded message: 269-220-0683

We understand cancellations can be disappointing, but our goal is always to ensure a safe and positive experience for every player. Challenger coaches will not contact players/families, so please check for updates beginning one hour prior to start time.

Milwood Little League Complex

3400 Lovers Lane, Kalamazoo

