

2018 Dream Team Special Needs Summer Baseball Program Our 13th Season



The Franklin Lakes Borough and Recreation Department are once again sponsoring the Dream Team Special Needs Summer Baseball Program. This program provides an opportunity for special needs children, ages 6-21, to have the thrill of playing non-competitive baseball in a safe and fun environment. The program is open to children in Franklin Lakes and surrounding communities.

Opening Day for Season 13 of the 2018 Dream Team Special Needs Summer Baseball Program is Friday, June 15. The baseball program will consist of 8 Friday evening games. The "Season Finale" is Friday, August 10. There will not be a game on Friday, July 6. The Dream Team program is held at the Franklin Lakes Recreation Complex, located at 1 Vichiconti Way (off of Pulis Avenue) from 6:15p.m. - approximately 8:15p.m. The games are played on the *Field Of Dreams* baseball field which is the field that is located adjacent to the playground. The *Field Of Dreams* is a turf field that is completely walker and wheelchair accessible.

Family, friends, and community members are always welcome and encouraged to attend the games and cheer on the Dream Team! We always love to have our "Bleacher Creatures" supporting the team and of course *helping* Coach Jim with those close calls!! 😊

About The Dream Team Baseball Program

The Dream Team Program consists of All-Star Players and Student Buddies. The objective of the program is to create an environment where special needs children can enjoy participating in a baseball program in a warm, caring, supportive, and most importantly safe environment.

All-Star Players:

This program is for **special needs children** ages 6-21 diagnosed with developmental disabilities (cognitive and/or physical impairments) including, but not limited to: Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, TBI, Autism/PDD, Neuro-Muscular, and Neuro-Intellectual Disorders. All players must have a parent or guardian at the Field Of Dreams at all times. Players are supported by "Buddies" at each game. All players will hit, run the bases, and play the field every game with the assistance of their assigned Buddy. There are certain situations (ex. medical, physical, and/or behavioral) when a parent/guardian will be required to be their child's "Buddy". ***Please note:*** *This is a non-competitive baseball program. There are no strikes, outs, or umpires. Coach Jim pitches to all players and the field is supervised by Adult volunteers.*

IMPORTANT: With regard to safety concerns for all our players and buddies, the Franklin Lakes Recreation Director reserves the right to determine whether a player's skill level or behavior is not appropriate for the Dream Team Baseball Program. Safety is and will always be our number one priority, and we must ensure that all players and buddies are playing in the safest possible environment. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to contact Jason Robinson, Franklin Lakes Recreation Director, at (201) 847-8200.

Student Buddies:

We welcome student volunteers ages 12-21 who would like to be a "Buddy" for the Dream Team Baseball Program. The role of the Buddy is to "buddy-up" with and help the All-Star Player that they have been assigned to for the game. The Buddy remains with their assigned player for the entire game. The Buddy will assist his/her player with hitting, running the bases, and fielding, as needed, based on the player's specific needs and skill level. The Buddy is responsible for keeping their player safe and comfortable as well as interacting with them and assuring that they are having fun. Buddies must be mature, kind, caring, and patient individuals. They must also be compassionate and have a strong love for working with disabled children. Being a "Buddy" is an extremely responsible position. Safety is always the number one priority. Therefore, buddies must take this responsibility very seriously and give their complete attention to their assigned player at all times. A Buddy should never leave their player unattended. A Buddy must alert Coach Jim or an adult supervisor immediately if any concern or problem arises with their assigned player. Additionally, Buddies must also be dependable as this program relies on their participation throughout the summer. We strongly ask that if you apply to be a Buddy, you can participate in a majority of the scheduled games. It is important to be dedicated and reliable to our special needs players and the program. **Please Note:** Students **must** have reached their 12th birthday to participate as a Buddy for the program. (Adult volunteers are also needed to help with supervision of the baseball field. The games will not begin until there is proper supervision on and around the field.)

Registration:

To participate in the program, **All-Star Players and Buddies must register with the Franklin Lakes Recreation Department.** The Recreation Department is open Monday-Friday, from 8:30a.m. - 4:00p.m. Registration for the Dream Team Program is free.

Franklin Lakes Recreation Department
1 Vichiconti Way, Franklin Lakes, NJ, 07417
Telephone #: (201) 847-8200; Fax #: (201) 847-0719
Jason Robinson - Recreation Director
Kathy Furman - Assistant Recreation Director

For questions or information about the Dream Team Program, please contact: Jim Herbst, Coach & Debra Herbst, Dream Team Program Coordinator, at debmherbst@aol.com.