

LESSONS LEARNED

Pitching and Batting Practice Safety

To prevent similar incidents, ASCIP recommends the following:

1. **Always** use L-screens or A-screens when pitching during batting practice, especially if tossing the ball from distances closer than the regulation pitching distance. Students must be instructed on properly using such screens. This training should be documented and kept on file.
2. When possible, have coaches pitch during batting practice.
3. Coaches or other staff designees must supervise practices and other events at all times.
4. Always check equipment prior to use to ensure it is in proper working condition.
5. Require pitchers (including coaches) throwing during batting practice to wear helmets as a best practice to prevent injuries.
6. **Always** make sure your District has current, signed athletic participation waivers from all players and coaches on file. The waivers should include a release, indemnity agreement with an assumption of risk for participation in a voluntary activity, and a medical treatment authorization form. A player or coach should not be allowed to participate in a practice or a game until these signed documents are on file. ASCIP provides sample forms on our website or by clicking on the following link: <http://ascip.org/risk-services/sample-agreements-forms/>
7. More information about sports' risks and sample forms can be obtained from ASCIP's Athletics Risk Management Guidelines which is available at <http://ascip.org/risk-services/guidelines-best-practices/>.

In 2014, Aroldis Chapman was hit in head by a comebacker and suffered facial fractures.



Contact your ASCIP Risk Services Consultant for more information at (562) 404-8029

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The Lawsuit:

An ASCIP member was sued by a student who sustained a head injury during baseball practice. The student was pitching to batters while standing behind an L-Screen, which is designed to protect pitchers during batting practice. At one point, he moved out from behind the screen and was hit by a baseball causing a severe head injury.

The Allegations:

The lawsuit alleged that the student was not properly instructed in the use of the screen, and that he should have been required to wear a helmet. The student had signed an athletic participation waiver form; however, the court ruled the form was inadequate.

The Award:

The case went to trial and the jury awarded the student \$260,000.

Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself. ~Alfred Sheinwold