

Belly Button Fly Balls

The objective of this drill is to have kids work on finding the ball in mid-flight, as well as working on communication.

1) Two outfielders lay on their stomachs, facing away from the coach who throws the ball (or the pitching machine propelling the balls). They should be about 30-35 feet away from each other, or if space permits, about as far apart as the center fielder would be from either the left fielder or right fielder.

2) The coach throws the ball, or launches from the pitching machine, in between the two fielders. The coach yells "Ball!" 2 seconds after the ball has been launched into the air. Once the fielders hear the cue, they get up, find the ball, communicate, and make the play.

*Coaches can lessen the distance between the fielders, as well as where they throw the ball

*The player not making the play needs to be backing up the other fielder

Eyes Off Fly Balls

The objective of this drill is to have kids work on taking their eyes off of the ball in order to gain speed while retreating back on balls hit over their head.

1) Players line up at shallow center field.

2) Using a pitching machine, the coach calibrates the trajectory and depth of the ball to have it land on or near the warning track

3) The coach launches a ball, and the player takes a drop step back. Instead of watching the ball the entire way, the player has to put his/her head down and run to where they think the ball will land. Only after the player thinks they are nearing the ball, are they to look up to make the catch.

*Players may have to adjust where they line up in accordance with the trajectory and distance the ball travels.

*Coaches without the use of a pitching machine can use a fungo, but will likely need to throw the ball where they want it to go. In this case, the players can line up much closer to the coach to decrease the distance the coach needs to throw the ball.