**Modifying Helmets with Additional Attachments: What You Need to Know**

The safety of all our participants is our utmost concern, and, like the vast majority of youth organizations, Little League® requires our batters to wear helmets that meet National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications and bear the NOCSAE stamp.

As the popularity of helmet attachments (c-flap, etc.) increase throughout baseball and softball, Little League® International has begun to receive inquiries from our families, players, and volunteers as to whether or not they’re permitted in Little League play.

Altering a helmet in anyway (drilling holes, removing padding, etc.) may cause a manufacturer to void the NOCSAE certification of that helmet, making it illegal to use in Little League play. If you have altered your helmet or intend to, please contact the helmet manufacturer to determine if altering the helmet will void the NOCSAE certification.

**What are helmet attachments?**

Helmet attachments are products that are sold separately from helmet, that you, the consumer, are responsible for attaching to the helmet. They include the “c-flap,” and similar face guards which is a hard-plastic extension that attaches to the ear-flap of a batter’s helmet.

**How is this different from a facemask?**

A facemask is an attachment that covers the entire face and typically does not require the helmet to be altered by drilling holes into the helmet to attach the facemask. Many manufacturers sell helmets with a facemask already attached that are NOCSAE certified.

**Can we use them?**

In order to use a helmet attachment in Little League play, the helmet manufacturer must provide a notice indicating that affixing the protector to the helmet has not voided the helmet’s NOCSAE certification. That notice must be shown to the umpire prior to the game. Little League International has issued a [letter to all youth batting helmet manufacturers](https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/helmet-manufacturer-letter/) for clarification on whether or not adding to their helmets voids their NOCSAE certification.

If the manufacturer’s response is not listed below and/or if you have not received a notice, or the notice is not available, helmets with an attachment are not permitted to be used.

**What’s NOCSAE?**

The mission of the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) is to commission research in sports medicine and science and establish standards for athletic equipment, where feasible, this includes batters’ helmets. Little League International regulations mandate that helmets meet NOCSAE specifications and bear the NOCSAE stamp.

**Why can’t we use them without manufacturer approval?**

According to NOCSAE, adding “products to a helmet previously certified as meeting the appropriate NOCSAE standard will make the certification voidable by the helmet manufacturer. Such additions to the helmet create a new and untested model, as defined in the NOCSAE standards.” You can [read their release at NOCSAE.org](http://nocsae.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/NOCSAE-Add-On-Products-Release-5-8-18_.pdf). Little League is asking manufacturers to clarify whether or not their helmets with an added attachment are still NOCSAE certified, and therefore, permitted for Little League use.