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The arrest of an Arnold Athletic Association coach has that group reviewing its policy on safety and kids. Baseball coach Thomas Mantle was charged with promoting child pornography this week.

With summer coming, many parents will entrust their kids to coaches. In Arnold, they had no prior policy when it came to investigating their staff. They quickly found out many other leagues didn't either.

They decided to take immediate action. Association president John Moroney says, "We're looking at what other groups are doing such as hockey or football, and looking at the different ways they investigate, do background checks. Background checks are great."

Background checks are also expensive. And with countless coaches and volunteers, the cost would add up. They've talked about hiring investigators, too. Moroney says, "In the end the question is how far do we go? How much are we going to have to raise fees in order to make sure everybody's kid is safe?"

Other communities are asking the same questions. In Ellisville, they implemented background checks three years ago. But found the \$3000 cost to be prohibitive. They have since stopped.

In Kirkwood, they rejected the idea of background checks, saying they aren't extensive enough and don't want to give parents a false sense of security.

In Affton, they do background checks themselves to save money. They have coaches fill out a form, then check the names against the state sex offender registry.

In the Festus/ Crystal City Twin Cities League, they use a website called littleleague.org, where they can get background checks done for a dollar-fifty per name.

Arnold parent and coach Jim Berryhill says, "I think alot of it is going to be a monetary thing. I think it's workable though, I really do."

Another parent and coach, Rick Farris says, "Just implementing a background check program down here certainly would make me feel better as a parent. But is it a foolproof system? No."

In fact, in the case of Thomas Mantle, it wouldn't have mattered. He had no prior criminal record. Still, in Arnold they say they've learned a valuable lesson: you can't be too cautious.

John Moroney says, "We want the kids to have fun and learn to play ball. We don't want them to be subject to the evils of the world. This is supposed to be a safe place."

Little League International requires all of its member teams to conduct background checks. However, very few local teams we talked to are members.

