

Guide for Parents

As a parent, you play an important role in promoting your child's happiness and success in soccer and sport in general.

Your expectations and behaviour have a significant bearing on your child's attitude and behaviour while participating in soccer.

Parents/Guardians should not:

- ❖ Ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in soccer.
- ❖ Ridicule or shout at a child for losing a game or making a mistake.
- ❖ Treat any club as a child minding service.
- ❖ Take safety for granted.
- ❖ Put undue pressure on any child to please or perform well.

Support and encouragement from you will contribute to your children having:

A sense of personal achievement

An enjoyment of soccer

Improved physical fitness

Higher self-esteem

A greater level of skill

Improved social skills

Parent/Coach co-operation

It is important that you establish contact with the individual responsible for coaching your child.

- ❖ Encourage *Fair Play* at home and do not instil a “win at all costs” attitude in your
- ❖ children

- ❖ Be positive or be quiet, negative comments are counter productive

- ❖ Conduct yourselves in such a way which promotes the definition of *Fair Play*

- ❖ Be prepared to be asked to leave by officials or sport personnel if your behaviour is contrary to the definition of *Fair Play*.

Undesirable behaviours may include:

- ❖ Insulting players, personnel, e.g. name-calling, slagging.

- ❖ Arguing with, or shouting abuse at officials.

- ❖ Suggesting or encouraging cheating, aggressive or "dirty" play.

- ❖ Placing undue or inappropriate criticism on a player, causing the player unnecessary or unhealthy levels of stress.

- ❖ Behaving with physical aggression towards another person (actual use of force or the threat of use of force).

- ❖ Any "harassment" type of behaviour

- ❖ Communicate any concerns you may have to the coach.

- ❖ Give the coach help when asked and show appreciation for a job well done.

- ❖ Support the coach's and referee decisions. These individuals are only doing the best they can and they need your support not your anger.

- ❖ Refrain from contacting the coach unless it is necessary, respect they have a private life.

- ❖ Inform the coach about any illness, injury, holidays, etc.

- ❖ Make an effort to attend training and games.

- ❖ Make sure your child has appropriate equipment/clothing/refreshments

Parental Involvement in Soccer

There are many ways in which you can become involved in your child's sport. You may find yourself trying to juggle commitments to make time for your child's sport. Be realistic about the input you are able to make.

You could:

- ❖ supply or organise transport to and from practices and competitions

- ❖ assist coaches with supervision during sessions, if requested

- ❖ become a coach or volunteer

- ❖ referee games if requested
- ❖ wash sports kit
- ❖ help out with administration
- ❖ set up a parents' committee
- ❖ assist with the organisation of special events/activities

Find out what your child wants from soccer, and help set realistic targets to achieve this.

This may involve controlling your own aspirations and avoiding the desire to force your own dreams or unfulfilled ambitions on them.

Remember Soccer is about:

Fair play

Fun

Participation

Development of skills

It is important to:

- ❖ encourage but not force your child to be active
- ❖ know when your child is ready to play
- ❖ encourage healthy lifestyle habits
- ❖ attend training and games

- ❖ promote and teach *Fair Play*
- ❖ teach your child to treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, colour, sex or ability.
- ❖ help children to set realistic targets
- ❖ help children with decision making

Most importantly:

“Lead by Example”

Sample Parent Contract

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sport is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character."

I therefore agree:

1. I will not force my child to participate in soccer.
2. I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
4. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
5. I will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game and practice.
6. I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
7. I will not encourage any behaviours or practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of the players.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

9. I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, colour, sex or ability.

10. I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.

11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.

12. I will never ridicule or shout at my child or other participant for making a mistake or losing a match.

13. I will emphasise skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning. I will also de-emphasise games and competition in the lower age groups.

14. I will promote the emotional and physical wellbeing of the players ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.

15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.

16. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from any kind of drugs.

17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during matches and practices unless I am an official coach.

Parent/Guardian Signature