

Parent and Spectator Rules of Behavior

This information is being provided in an effort to assist your children and you in gaining the maximum benefit possible from your participation in Fox Chapel Area Youth Soccer. Below are some simple "rules" to be observed for the benefit of all. **PLEASE CONSIDER THEM CAREFULLY!**

1. Be positive. Be supportive. Your children are playing soccer to have fun, not to earn a grade! Make positive comments from the sideline. Cheer for the team and encourage all of the players. A young player will make an extra effort when they hear encouraging words from the sideline about their hustle. Cheer for your child when he/she plays the ball well. However, remember that your child is a member of a team. Let the other players know you support them, too. Suffer in silence (or moan softly) and keep negative comments to yourself whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. Young athletes do not need to be reminded constantly about their perceived errors or mistakes. Their coaches will instruct them, either during the game or at half time, and during practices. The players are doing the best that they can; playing good soccer is more difficult than it looks.

2. Do not coach. If you want to coach, obtain your coaching certification and then apply for a job. Do not shout instructions to your child. This only causes confusion, since the coach has already instructed your child on how to play. If you are telling a player to do something different from what his/her coach is telling them, you create distraction and confusion. Many times the instruction from a spectator is exactly the opposite of the instruction given by the coach. If you shout instructions, your child will probably try to please the coach and you at the same time, and end up pleasing neither. The players should be allowed the freedom to make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes. Additionally, spectator statements like "Stay Wide," "Clear It," "Pass The Ball," "Get Rid of It," "Move Up," "Move Back," etc., tend to undermine the need for players to communicate with each other. Let the coaches make adjustments as they see the need. If you have what you truly feel is a legitimate concern with your child's coach, arrange an appointment to meet privately, away from a soccer field.

3. Sit still. Do not run up and down the sidelines. Find a comfortable place to sit down or stand, relax and enjoy the match. Walking up and down the sidelines following the play is unnerving to players and unnecessary.

4. Treat the officials with respect. Officials are human and will make mistakes. Officials are hardly over-compensated and give an honest and usually competent effort. Let the coaches approach the officials if they feel the need. Do not shout insults or verbally abuse the referee. It is hard for a child to learn respect for the referee or other officials when their parents set a poor example. The referee *can* and **will** stop the match if the

crowd becomes discourteous, the offending parent(s) can and will be asked to leave the premises and your child's coach can be suspended from coaching for the parent's actions.

5. Do not engage in game-related discussions with parents from the opposing team. Parents on the "other" team are not the enemy. Neither are the boys or girls on the other team. Do not discuss the play of specific young players in front of other parents. Negative comments and attitudes are hurtful and unnecessary. We will be playing these teams for many years to come. We want to be known in the soccer community as an organization that has class, whether we win, lose or draw. Game scores will not be remembered, but arguments and inappropriate remarks will be.

6. Leave the game on the field. When the game is over, no amount of comment, question or discussion with the players, officials or coaches will change the outcome. Regardless of the outcome, the coaches will evaluate the players' performance, reinforce the good things and work to correct the things that need improvement.

7. Keep the game fun. Winning is more fun than losing, but each player should enjoy playing because they love the game. Make sure that you take time to enjoy the game, too.

8. After the game. The ride home is sometimes as important as the game itself. Make that time a good memory for your son or daughter by discussing as many positives as you can about him/her, his/her coach, his/her teammates and the game.

REMEMBER-

Relax and enjoy the game! Your child and you will forget about today's game. Next week he/she and you will probably have forgotten the score. However, both of you will remember the good time your child had playing and you watching the most popular sport in the world. Your child will be happy that you noticed his/her good qualities. After the game, ask yourself and your child: Did we have fun? If he/she and you had fun, the day was a success!