

Codes Of Conduct - Be A Good Sport

AYSO has always encouraged good sportsmanship in its programs. In fact, "Good Sportsmanship" is one of the six philosophies listed in the AYSO National Bylaws. AYSO strongly recommends that its individual Regions promote good sportsmanship through dynamic programs.

Elements of these programs may vary from Region to Region, but all define the conduct of players, coaches, referees and even parents. They explain the fundamentals of good behavior-which is simply showing courtesy and respect for all involved in the game.

We figure that if players, volunteers and parents understand what is expected of them when it comes to good sportsmanship, that's probably how they will act. AYSO is proud of its many good sports, but understands that good sportsmanship doesn't just happen. It needs to be taught, encouraged and demonstrated.

Player's Code

- Play for the fun of it, not just to please your parents or coach.
- Play by the Laws of the Game.
- Never argue with or complain about referees' calls or decisions.
- Control your temper. Most of all, resist the temptation to retaliate when you feel you have been wronged.
- Concentrate on playing soccer with your best efforts. Work equally hard for your team as for yourself.
- Be a good sport by cheering all good plays, whether it is your team's or your opponent's.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated.
- Remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve skills and feel good. Don't be a showoff or a ball hog.
- Cooperate with your coaches, teammates, opponents and the referees.

Referees Code

- Always remember that the game is for the players. Player safety and fair play come first.
- Study and learn the Laws of the Game and understand the "spirit" of the Laws. Help fellow referees do the same.
- Encourage and enforce the AYSO philosophies of "Everyone Plays," "Positive Coaching" and "Good Sportsmanship."
- Respect other referees' decisions, and do not publicly criticize another official.
- Wear the proper uniform and keep it in good condition.
- Maintain good physical condition so you can keep up with the action.
- Stay calm when confronted with emotional reactions from players, coaches and parents.

- Honor accepted game assignments. In an emergency, find a replacement.
- Support good sportsmanship with a kind word to players, coaches and parents of both teams when deserved.
- Always be fair and impartial, avoiding conflicts of interest. Decisions based on personal bias are dishonest and unacceptable.

Parents Code

As a parent, you have a special role in contributing to the needs and development of these youngsters. Through your encouragement and good example, you can help assure the effectiveness of the AYSO program.

Support Your Child

Support your child by giving encouragement and showing an interest in his or her team. Help your child work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship in every game. Teach your child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory. Your child will be a winner, even in defeat.

Always Be Positive

Parents are not participants on their child's team. However, they do contribute to the success experienced by their child and the team. Parents serve as role models for their children. Applaud good plays by your child's team and by the opposing team. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sporting activities.

Be Enthusiastic and Supportive

Let children set their own goals and play the game for themselves. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals on your child. Don't put too heavy a burden on your child to win games. Surveys reveal that 72 percent of children would rather play for a losing team than ride the bench for a winner.

Reinforce Positive Behavior

The best way to help a child to achieve goals and reduce the natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one, remember that he or she is still learning. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things your child accomplished.

Let Coaches Coach and Refs Ref

Coaches and referees are usually parents. They volunteer their time to help make your child's youth soccer experience a positive one. They need your support, too. What coaches and referees don't need is your help in coaching from the sidelines. So please refrain from coaching during games and practices. Referees are not the "bad guys." They are volunteers, too, and need your support and encouragement. Treat them and their calls fairly and respectfully.

Coaches Code

Enthusiastically support and practice the "Everyone Plays," "Good Sportsmanship," "Positive Coaching" and "Player Development" philosophies of AYSO.

Be reasonable in your demands on a young player's time, energy, enthusiasm and performance on the soccer field.

Impress on your players that they must abide by the Laws of the Game at all times.

Develop team respect for the ability of opponents, and for the judgment of referees and opposing coaches.

Ensure that your players' soccer experience is one of fun and enjoyment (winning is only part of it). Players should never be yelled at or ridiculed for making mistakes or losing a game.

Set a good example and be generous with your praise when it is deserved. Children need a coach they can respect.

Keep informed of sound principles of coaching, growth and child development.

Check your equipment and playing facilities. They should meet safety standards and be appropriate for the age and ability of your players.

Follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured child is ready to play again.