





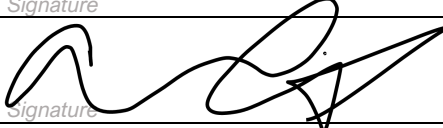
Guideline (GUI)

Parents Guide

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Errors or Omissions

Big Country Soccer Association has provided this manual to the membership as a guide for the parents of players who are registered with Big Country Soccer Association. Any errors or omissions contained herein shall not supersede the by-laws, policies, procedures, or guidelines of the Association. Any changes to the manual shall be included in the next edition. The by-laws of the association supersede any guideline or policy should a conflict occur.

Document Revision History

Rev	Date	Description	Originator	Checker	Approver
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Section	Description



Contents

1	<u>Vision</u>	5
2	<u>Mission</u>	5
3	<u>Scope</u>	5
4	<u>Reference</u>	6
5	<u>Acronym and Defined Terms</u>	6
5.1	<u>Acronyms</u>	6
5.2	<u>Definitions</u>	6
6	<u>Responsibilities</u>	7
6.2	<u>Parents</u>	7
7	<u>10 Commandments for Parents in Soccer</u>	7
8	<u>Player Code of Conduct (Competitive Age Groups)</u>	8
9	<u>5 Key Factors for Big Country Soccer Association</u>	10
9.1	<u>Key Factor#1- Head</u>	10
9.2	<u>Key Factor #2- Control</u>	10
9.3	<u>Key Factor #3- Look</u>	10
9.4	<u>Key Factor #4- Pass</u>	10
9.5	<u>Key Factor #5- Move</u>	11
10	<u>Personal Equipment</u>	12
10.1	<u>Shin Guards</u>	12
10.2	<u>Outdoor Footwear</u>	12
10.3	<u>Uniform</u>	12
11	<u>Nutritional Guidelines (“Food for Thought”)</u>	13
12	<u>Signs of Dehydration</u>	15
13	<u>Fluid Guidelines</u>	15
14	<u>Heat and Humidity as Risk Factors</u>	17
15	<u>“Paying for Scoring Goals is Flat Out Wrong!”</u>	18
16	<u>24-Hour Rule</u>	19
17	<u>Mixed Teams</u>	19
18	<u>Player Homework (Competitive Age Groups)</u>	20



Tables

<u>Table 1- Reference</u>	6
<u>Table 2- Acronyms</u>	6
<u>Table 3- Definitions</u>	6

Appendix

<u>Appendix 1- Parent Code of Conduct</u>	21
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1 Vision

The Big Country Soccer Association aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience for every athlete. A high-quality experience is one in which every athlete:

1. Is coached using the principles of Positive Coaching;
2. Has fun playing the game;
3. Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance;
4. Learns “life lessons” that have value beyond the playing field; and
5. Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

2 Mission

The Big Country Soccer Association is committed to providing well-organized soccer recreation appropriately structured to accommodate any level of play commensurate with our players’ individual abilities, potential, and interest and to promoting a positive youth sports culture that teaches life lessons and “honors the game” for all players in the Big Country, Alberta area. Our sporting philosophy is based on the following objectives:

1. To provide and support programs for the involvement and enjoyment of members of the Big Country Soccer Association in support of a long-term development of the sport of soccer.
2. To encourage and welcome parental support in youth soccer development.
3. To encourage good sportsmanship through development and competition in the sport.
4. To ensure all participants in all programs have fun and equal opportunity to actively participate in the sport.
5. To develop each athlete's basic skills that they can apply to the sport.
6. To develop good coaching and officiating capabilities in the sport.
7. To create and maintain a spirit of friendly competition without fear of bullying.

3 Scope

This document is intended to provide general guidelines and information to the parents and supports of those youth players who are registered to play with Big Country Soccer Association. This guideline document is meant to be used in conjunction with the published policies, guidelines, and other soccer requirement published by Big Country Soccer Association, Alberta Soccer Association (ASA), and Canada Soccer Association (CSA).



4 References

The following referenced documents are to be considered the latest edition and indispensable for the application of this document.

Table 1 – References

Document Number	Title
	Canada Soccer Association (CSA)
	Alberta Soccer Association (ASA)
BCSA-POL-001	Big Country Soccer Association Policy
BCSA-POL-016	Friendly Fan Policy

5 Acronyms and Defined Terms

For this document, the following acronyms and terms apply.

5.1 Acronyms

Table 2 – Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ASA	Alberta Soccer Association
BCSA	Big Country Soccer Association
CSA	Canada Soccer Association

5.2 Definitions

Table 3 – Definitions

Term	Definition
Registered Member	This is the community that is registered with BCSA to register their players to compete in the Association with other registered teams. These communities will have their players registered with Alberta Soccer Association.



6 Responsibilities

- 6.1** The following list of responsibilities are not all encompassing. Additional responsibilities may be assigned out, as required, when there are tasks and/ or actions required to represent Big Country Soccer Association, its players, parents, coaches, and the governing soccer associations that Big Country Soccer Association is required to adhere to.
- 6.2** Parents are required to adhere to the following general responsibilities for their child to participate in soccer for Big Country Soccer Association:
- a) Ensure their player has the correct equipment for the sport.
 - b) Ensure their player attends practices/ games, as scheduled by Big Country Soccer Association and the Registered Members'.
 - c) If you are leaving your child for the practice/ game, ensure that you are on time to pick up your child from the soccer activity. If arrangements for pick-up is made with another support, ensure the coach and/ or parent volunteer is made aware of the arrangements. This is for the safety of the child.
 - d) Ensure their player is hydrated before practices/ games and comes with their own specific water bottle for their use during practices/ games. Avoid carbonated beverages.
 - e) Review and adhere to the spirit of the “10 Commandments for Parents in Soccer” and the Big Country Soccer Association “Parent Code of Conduct” as noted in this guide.
 - f) Adhere to the Big Country Soccer Association 24-Rule.

7 10 Commandments for Parents in Soccer

7.1 **Thou shall not impose your ambitions on the child.**

Improvement and progress occur at different rates for everyone. Avoid judging your child's progress based on their performance of others, and don't push on what you think they should be doing.

7.2 **Thou shall be supportive no matter what.**

There is only one question to ask your child- Did you have fun? If games and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

7.3 **Thou shall not coach your child when you are not the coach.**

Do not undermine the coach by coaching your child on the sideline. Your job is to support and love your child while the coach is responsible for the technical part of the player development journey. Remember that the coach is giving specific instructions that you may cause confusion within your



child by saying something different. This can cause a great deal of stress to the player because your player does not want to disappoint the parent or the coach.

7.4 Thou shall have only positive things to say at a soccer game.

If you are going to show up at a soccer game, cheer and applaud, but never criticize. Always strive to set a good example for your child. Deliver value messages over and over again....they will sink in and provide a positive environment for your child's confidence to grow.

7.5 Thou shall acknowledge your child's fears.

A soccer activity/ game can be stressful. It is appropriate for your child to be anxious. Assure your child that the coach is there to support your child.

7.6 Thou shall not criticize game officials for those age levels where game officials are offered.

Game officials are there to officiate the game and ensure the safety and enjoyment of your child participating in the game of soccer. Lead by example as a spectator and cheerleader.

7.7 Support the child's coach.

The bond between player and coach is a special one in which contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Coaches are volunteers who support participation and fair play in the sport. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child. It will only serve to hurt your child's enjoyment in the sport.

7.8 Thou child shall have other goals other than winning.

An honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than winning. This is something that will have a positive impact on a child's life. Nurture that with their soccer.

7.9 Thou shall place your child first above everything else.

Ask yourself this question -Are your child's goals more important to you than they are to your child? Remember that the focus of youth sports should be fun. A child is constantly changing, and his / her goals, interests and participation in activities will change as well. Parents should remain flexible, patient and always supportive while their child strives to find their niche in life.

7.10 Thou shall not expect your child to become professional players.

The odds of your child becoming a professional are very low. Soccer is the most popular sport for participation in the world. Do not focus on this as a future goal for your child. Soccer teaches self-esteem and fitness. It provides lifelong friendships and much more. Soccer builds good people, and you should be happy that your child wants to participate.



8 Player Code of Conduct (Competitive Age Groups)

- 8.1** Treat teammates, opposing players, coaches, referees, and spectators with respect. No one player is better than another. Each player possesses special qualities that will support the overall success of the team.
- 8.2** Arrive before practice with all the proper attire and equipment (shoes, shin guards, practice jersey, and water bottle). This will help you get ready for your soccer activity. The coach will let parents know the guidelines for the age group on practice times.
- 8.3** Arrive at game fields promptly when your coach requires (coach will identify this to the team).
- 8.4** If you are going to miss practice or a game, you and/ or your parent must let your coach or team manager know in advance. If you have an issue or a concern, speak directly with your coach about it.
- 8.5** Support your teammates and practice good sportsmanship. The name on the front of the jersey is more important than the number on the back! This is a team sport. All players are important to the team.
- 8.6** Accept the decisions of the referee without gesture or argument.
- 8.7** Win with humility and lose with grace. A player that is passionate about the sport of soccer also cares about the way the game is won and lost.
- 8.8** Strive for improvement. You will make mistakes. Don't let them bring you down. It is part of the learning process. Make mistakes trying rather than not trying.
- 8.9** Report all injuries to the team coach as soon as possible.
- 8.10** Honestly and wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of your team and your opponents. We are the ambassadors for our team and the Big Country Soccer Association.



Hard work pays off- even if it is over a lengthy period of time. Be patient and persistent.



9 5 Key Factors for Big Country Soccer Association

The following list of factors are in support of the “Vision” and “Mission Statement” of Big Country Soccer Association. These key factors are important to introduce to players even at young levels. Coaching that is provided to players will include activities that help develop the player to enjoy the sport of soccer. As players grow with the sport, these same key factors are still a focus but are made to suit the age and competitive level of the player.

9.1 Key Factor #1: The Head

Think before you act. Big Country Soccer Association will be helping develop this factor to help players understand and know what to do when they have the ball and more importantly what to do when they don't have the ball. We will help players learn to focus and concentrate on aspects of the sport while also enjoying it.

This will ultimately lead to helping players develop mentally when they get to more competitive levels for both practices and games. Learning age-appropriate skills and knowledge of the game will help players develop into more successful players.



9.2 Key Factor #2: Control

There are many ways in which the game can be played. Big Country Soccer Association is committed to focusing on helping improve players skill on controlling the ball. This is based on skills and drills that help players learn their touch and feel for ball and thus learn what they can do with it when in possession of the ball.

As players grow and develop their control, they will be able to receive the ball with their first touch in a way that will help set-up their second touch. If players do not learn to control the ball well when they start in the sport, then the rest of the key factors make it more difficult to enjoy the game.

9.3 Key Factor #3: Look

Before players receive the ball, they should already have an idea of what is happening around them to give the player options on what they would like to do with the ball. This includes introducing the factor of looking or being aware of where your opponents are on the field. Additionally, being able to see where teammates are, and most importantly, look for that open space where the player can feed the ball, strike the ball on goal, or make a run with the ball to set your team in motion.

9.4 Key Factor #4: Pass

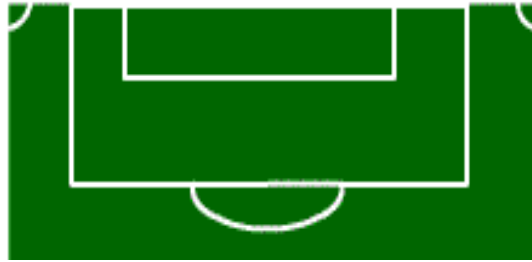
The ball will always move faster than a player can run. By this understanding, then a key factor at Big Country Soccer Association is the development of player passing abilities both short passes, and long passes. Big Country Soccer Association believes that when players are able to control the game by the previous key factors and by being successful at passing the ball, the game is much more enjoyable. Players from early on all the way through to the more competitive age levels will learn the importance of being able to pass the ball. Being able to develop as they grow to be able to make firm and controlled contact on the ball and always follow-through with their foot in the direction of the pass.

It is important to remember that players usually have only 2-seconds on the ball before the other team has a player pressuring them for possession.

9.5 Key Factor #5: Move

Most precious real estate in the world of soccer is SPACE.

Players being able to create space for themselves and their team by drawing opponents into one area of the field then shift the play into the space that was created. Learning to anticipate where the ball will be and get behind the ball. Because space is important to us, it is also important for the other team. Therefore, we will also learn to close space for the opponents by occupying it.



Big Country Soccer Association is committed to coaching players on the fundamentals of “Control-Look- Pass- Move” to make the sport more enjoyable.



10 Personal Equipment

10.1 Shin Guards

Shin Guards are mandatory for all players registered with Big Country Soccer Association and must be worn to all practices and games. This is for the protection of the player and in support of the FIFA Laws regarding player equipment.

10.2 Outdoor Footwear

If players are being fitted for soccer specific footwear, it is important to note the following:

- Avoid buying shoes that are too big because you want them to last more than a couple seasons. Soccer specific shoes are meant to fit the player at their current age and size (no more than a thumb width from tip of toe to end of the shoe). This is to avoid soccer injuries to the player’s foot by having shoes that are too big for the player.
- If the footwear is too big, it will impact the player’s ability to enjoy the sport because their touch on the ball will struggle and may impact their skill development.



- **Metal cleats are prohibited from use for youth soccer.**
- If purchasing soccer specific footwear, ensure the player is wearing soccer specific socks while being fitted. There are many brands of soccer wear to select from but they must fit the player properly. Some shoes may fit slim compared to others.

Players in the younger age groups playing may wear outdoor runners if they do not have soccer specific footwear. Playing without proper athletic footwear is not permitted and the player will not be able to participate in the activity. Remember this is to protect the player.

10.3 Uniform

Registered Members' will be providing team jerseys and shorts for players. Parents are responsible for providing soccer socks that must be worn over the player shin pads. This is to prevent the shin pads from shifting when the player is active.

11 Nutritional Guidelines (“Food for Thought”)

Proper nutrition is a key element to help players ensure that they have the necessary energy to play and enjoy the sport. While each individual player's intake and requirements will vary, here are some basic guidelines to help players with their energy levels.

11.1 Before a Practice/ Game

It is recommended to eat a light snack consisting of good carbohydrates that can be found in fruits and pasta. Usually, 1 ½ hours before the game or practice for the food to properly digest and better energy release from the food to the working muscles.

Large/ heavy meals before a practice/ game may result in:

- Not being able to run at full capacity.
- Tiredness/ weighed down feeling.
- Cramps and/ or irritability.
- Possible vomiting.
- And not being able to properly concentrate and keep up.

Artificial energy boosts found in chocolate, ice-cream, chips, etc. will not provide the necessary long-term energy for the player over the course of the practice and/ or game. However, it is nice to have a snack filled with energy after a good hard-worked soccer activity once and awhile.

If practices and/ or games are scheduled around mealtimes, only have a small snack on the way to the event. It is better to play slightly on an empty stomach and have a regular meal after the event.



11.2 During a Game

As the body needs to replenish lost fluids, it is recommended that water, fruit juices or a combination of both be used. Water goes directly to the working muscles and quenches thirst.

Try to stay away from chocolates, chips, meat sandwiches, etc. as they require the body to work extremely hard to digest and makes one very thirsty. Foods that are easily digestible (fruits, cheese/peanut butter sandwiches, etc.) will provide muscles with a steady supply of energy.

11.3 After a Game

Plenty of fluids (water, fruit juices) to replenish the body and a good hearty nutritious meal of whatever the player is craving.

11.4 Carbohydrates

Simple:

These are sweet tasting substances i.e. chocolate.

Although fruits also contain simple sugars, they are generally supplied with fiber, vitamins, minerals and are easily digested.

Complex:

Yield sugars that are released into the bloodstream over a period of many hours and days and can provide a steady supply of energy to the body until the next meal.

i.e., brown rice, pasta, whole grains, cereals, (whole wheat, oatmeal), beans, peas, fresh fruits, and vegetables, etc.

11.5 Fiber

Fiber aids in rapid absorption of carbohydrates and allows food to move quickly throughout the body.

11.6 Protein

Provides important materials to build and maintain muscles and many other body tissue. Choose foods that are low in fat excessive proteins as it takes longer to digest and is harder on the liver, and kidneys.

11.7 Fats

There are four groups of fats:

- 1) **Saturated fats:** found in animal foods, dairy, coconut, chocolate, cocoa butter, palm oil, vegetable shortening margarine, etc. These foods should be used in moderation.



- 2) **Monounsaturated fats:** found in olives, olive oil. Use in moderation.
- 3) **Polyunsaturated fats:** Found in high concentrations in vegetables, fish, and poultry. The best of the four groups of fats.
- 4) **Hydrogenated fats:** manufactured chemically, therefore use in moderation, or try to avoid completely.

12 Signs of Dehydration

There is a lot of effort that players produce in the sport of soccer. Dehydration is something that all parents should help watch out for in places. If dehydration progresses unchecked, the risk of heat illness increases. Heat illness is best understood in three separate degrees of severity: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and the most serious form, heat stroke. The symptoms outlined below are not always additive and do not necessarily occur in progression. This means a young athlete could experience heat stroke in absence of other indicators.

12.1 Dehydration

Dehydration during exercises is a common problem. Some young athletes can suffer serious problems if they become dehydrated by just 2 percent of their body weight during exercise in the heat. That's why it's important to recognize the warning signs:

- Thirst
- Dry lips and tongue
- Irritability
- Lack of energy
- Dizziness
- Red, flushed face
- Muscle cramping
- Headache
- Nausea

Treating the symptoms of dehydration is crucial for preventing more serious symptoms and/ or illness:

- 1) Have the child rest in a cool place.
- 2) Provide a sport drink that contains electrolytes.
- 3) Prevent dehydration in the future by having the young athlete drink fluids before, during, and after the activity.



12.2 Muscle Cramping

Muscle cramping can be associated with exposure to excessive exercise and not hydrating the body. Painful involuntary whole-body muscle cramps are often associated with loss of fluids and electrolytes. Some of the signs and symptoms of muscle cramps include:

- Muscle spasms
- “knotting” of muscles and muscle pain
- Excessive sweat loss
- Excessive saltiness of sweat over the skin or visible dried salt on the skin

To treat a young athlete suffering from muscle cramps:

- Have them drink fluids with electrolytes.
- Gently stretch and massage the cramped muscles.
- Have them rest in a cool area.
- Apply ice to the cramped area.

13 Fluid Guidelines

To help ensure that the young athlete performs at their optimum, note the following points for fluid guidelines:

- Before a prolonged physical activity i.e., game, ensure that the young athlete is well hydrated.
- During any physical activity, the youth athlete should drink every 20 minutes even if they are not thirsty.
- A youth athlete should consume the following:
 - ⇒ 5 ounces of fluid for a player weighing 90 pounds or less.
 - ⇒ 9 ounces of fluid for a player weighing 90 pounds or more.
- To ensure the player is not dehydrated before a practice and/ or a game, they should consume 12-16 ounces of fluid at least 30 minutes before arriving at the field.
- Once the physical activity is done, the youth player should ideally drink every 20 minutes for the first hour after the physical activity.
- In addition to replacing fluids, youth players also need to replace the electrolytes, such as sodium, lost through sweat. Electrolyte replacement is important to stimulate a child’s thirst mechanism, help the body hold on to the fluid, helps prevent muscle cramps, and to maintain sodium levels in the blood.



- Fruit juices have higher sugar content, which can slow fluid absorption and cause an upset stomach in large quantities.
- Carbonated beverages, such as soft drinks, can reduce voluntary drinking due to stomach fullness and throat burn when gulping.
- Energy drinks should be avoided because many contain caffeine and have high carbohydrate concentrations, which slows the emptying of fluids from the stomach.



***Remember to ensure
your player has a suitable
water bottle for all soccer
activities.***



14 Heat and Humidity as Risk Factors

If the air temperature is high during vigorous activities such as playing outdoor soccer, young athletes can lose a significant amount of water during sweating. High temperatures and high relative humidity make it hard for the body to dissipate heat; heavy sweating occurs, but the water lost does not help cool off the body. Under these conditions, participants run the risk of overheating.

The humidex describes how hot and humid the weather feels to the average person. The humidex combines the temperature and humidity into one number to reflect the perceived temperature.



Relative Humidity (%)

	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
20						20	20	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27
21						21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29
22					22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31
23					23	24	24	26	27	27	28	28	29	30	31	31	32	33
24					24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35
25				25	26	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37
26				26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
27				27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
28			28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
29			29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	45	46
30			30	31	33	34	35	36	37	39	40	41	42	43	44	46	47	48
31			32	33	34	35	37	38	39	40	42	43	44	45	47	48	49	50
32		32	33	34	36	37	38	40	41	42	44	45	46	48	49	50	51	53
33		33	34	36	37	39	40	42	43	44	46	47	48	50	51	53	54	55
34		34	36	37	39	40	42	43	45	46	48	49	51	52	53	55	56	58
35		36	37	39	40	42	43	45	47	48	50	51	53	54	56	57	59	
36		37	39	40	42	44	45	47	49	50	52	53	55	57	58	60		
37	37	38	40	42	44	45	47	49	51	52	54	56	58	59				
38	38	40	42	43	45	47	49	51	53	54	56	58	60					
39	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59							
40	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59								

Combined the temperature with the humidity for the perceived temperature.

Temperature (C°)

15 “Paying for Scoring Goals is Flat Out Wrong!”

The following article was circulated around a group of parents in the soccer community in regard to hearing about parents and/ or coaches paying their soccer player for scoring goals. This is something that has sparked conversation on its impact on the spirit of the sport. Please review the article as it does present some interesting points.

By Dr. Alan Goldberg

www.Competitiveedge.com

Coaches or parents who pay their child to score goals are doing their child a terrible disservice.

First of all, they are corrupting the spirit of the game by encouraging and then rewarding selfishness. Soccer is not about the individual player who scores the most goals. After all, there are 10 other athletes on your side of the ball besides yourself and each one of those athletes plays a valuable role on the team. Rewarding a child for having a "me first" mentality is flat out wrong.



Second, when you bribe a child for his/ her goal production you are robbing him/her of the opportunity to learn the proper tactics of the game. Taking the ball, ignoring your mates and bulling your way through the defense by yourself is far from good soccer. In fact, it's very much bad soccer!

Third, bribing kids to "produce" on the field is a great way to distract them from the flow of the game, increase their nervousness and set them up to choke and fail. When your child is on the field he / she should be concentrating on the game, NOT on scoring.

Finally, paying your child to score is a wonderful way to actually de-motivate that child and turn him/her off to the game. Your kids are NOT professional athletes. The games that they play are NOT larger than life.

Soccer is simply a game that should be played mainly to have fun and, secondarily, to learn tactics, skills and how to play as a team. Bribing will help your child learn none of these valuable lessons and instead, will eventually contribute to your son or daughter's premature exit from the sport.

When adults pay kids to score, they make the game about them, not the kids. The game then becomes all about the adult's ego getting massaged and not about the kids having fun and learning.

16 24-Hour Rule

To help ensure that all parties involved with the teams, players, coaches, parents, etc. are maintaining a level perspective on things, we have a 24-hour cool off period. All parties who are upset with anything pertaining to the team are to wait 24-hours before engaging in conversations to address the concern. This will ensure that cooler-heads prevail. Please ensure that any concerns are dealt with the coaches. We want to make certain that we resolve any issues and not have it impact the player(s) and team.

Should Big Country Soccer Association need to be notified, contact the President and/ or Vice-President.

17 Mixed Teams

Big Country Soccer Association encourages all to be able to participate in the sport of soccer. Our teams may be mixed. Teams that are mixed will require both a male and female to be present for all practices/ games in support of the "Rule of Two Policy" (*Ref: BCSA-POL-014*).

If one is not available, a parent may be requested to participate in order to ensure there is a male and female representative present. If a parent is available and there is an opportunity to help, this is a fantastic opportunity to get involved and see the excitement and fun from the player perspective. Big Country Soccer Association's success is based on the amazing volunteer efforts of those involved in the sport for the community.



18 Player Homework (Competitive Age Groups)

To help gain a better touch on the ball, it is important for players to also do their part by practicing away from games and regular team practices. A homework book may be set-up by a coach to help players and parents track the player efforts on gaining more skills and confidence with the soccer ball.

Drills may be provided to players to work on at home to help improve aspects of how they control the ball. We would also like to encourage players and parents to go online and look for other soccer moves that players can practice and help demonstrate to the team. Big Country Soccer Association encourages creativity in the skills of players to control the ball in support of “Key Factor #2” as noted in Section 9 of this Guide. The more a player wants to improve by practicing at home, at team practices, and during games, the player skills will improve.



Appendix 1- Parent Code of Conduct

The following is a summary of details mentioned throughout this Guide. It is suggested to keep this appendix posted at home to help remind parents of important points on their role in helping support their players, coaches and volunteers, game officials, and Big Country Soccer Association.

Parents are required to adhere to the following general principles in the spirit of Big Country Soccer Association Code of Conduct:

- a) I will not force my child to participate in the sport of soccer.
- b) I will do my best to help my child fulfill their team commitments.
- c) I will encourage my child to play by the rules, in the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship, and to respect the decisions of the game officials for those teams playing competitive matches.
- d) I will not coach, give instruction to, or ridicule any player from the sidelines, no matter what the situation.
- e) I will give praise to players including the opposition, for good performances, hard work, and fair play so that players see other beneficial outcomes to sport besides winning.
- f) I will support all efforts to remove all forms of abuse, and neglect from the game.
- g) I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteers who work hard on behalf of the sport to provide players and parents with a positive experience in the sport of soccer.
- h) For those games that have a game official, I will never badger or harass the referees and volunteer linespersons.
- i) I will abide by the 24-hour rule if I have a concern that I would like to address with the coach and/or Big Country Soccer Association.
- j) If my player heads off the field when their team has lost, but they played their best, I will help my player see it as a “win”. I will remind my player to focus on “the process, not the result”.
- k) I will have fun: This is what it’s all about!