



Game Day Best Practices

A Guide for Parent Behaviour

The Role of Parents / Spectators

The Opportunity for Parents - help create a great environment for fun and learning

Without our players, referees and volunteer coaches we won't have a game

Club charter and codes of conduct are there - let's dig deeper



Respect the Ref

Referees are re still learning and developing their skills just like the players So don't be a bully!!

DID YOU KNOW Harassment by spectators and coaches is well recognized as a major factor contributing to lack of retention of referees in soccer. Unfortunately many young officials will have a “bad game” and subsequently never referee again.



Agenda

- General Guidelines when at the game
- Examples of “What not to do”
- Youth Soccer Methodologies and Approaches
- Examples of Positive Behaviours

General Guidance - Spectator Areas

Parents and spectators should set up on the opposite side of the field to the Players and coaches

Don't pace up and down the sidelines

Watching the game or coaching from behind the nets or on the goal line (ends behind Goals) is not permitted at any level.



Spectator Areas

Please have a seat at a safe distance from the sidelines. We don't want anyone to get hurt! For PYL fields often have stands for spectators. For Metro parents often bring their own chairs depending on the location.

TOO CLOSE



MUCH TOO CLOSE



Entering the field of play uninvited

Any parent that enters the field of play to confront an official (player or coach) either before, after or during the game must be reprimanded or removed by the Field Marshall.

Even coaches are required to wait until given permission by the referee before entering the field of play



Dealing with Incidents

Only field Marshalls are authorised to feed back to referees. Only coaches are authorised to feed back to field Marshalls.

Field Marshalls wear orange vests or yellow shirts (distinctive clothing) and are easily identifiable. They are there to;

- Supply equipment
- Support the Officials
- Encourage the smooth flow of games
- Collaborate with the referee to determine if 'cancellations due to weather' are necessary
- Address issues involving coaches, referees and spectators
- If a coach has any issues from a game they can speak to the Field Marshall about them



Food For Thought!

Sideline Don'ts - THE SCREAMER

Screamers see all the negative things on the field. Everything is going wrong and they yell constantly. They yell at the players, the referee, passing cars and birds.

The screamer focuses on the negative and is often verbally abusive to the players. The screamer must learn how to see the positive things in the game and make an effort to ignore the mistakes.



Sideline Don'ts - THE SHRIEKER

The shrieker is the super positive one. Shriekers get so excited they will yell out every time their child even gets close to the ball. They cheer so much the kids get embarrassed. It's important for those who get overly excited to learn how to balance their enthusiasm.



Sideline Don'ts - THE SIDELINE COACH

- The sideline coach is a parent who actually yells out instructions to the players.
- It's not a good idea, no matter how correct the comments are. A coach may have a plan or be working on specific tactics and it can be confusing for kids to hear two different things.
- The sideline coach needs to focus on encouragement and let the coach do their job.
- Don't be a Back Seat Driver!



"The reason they can play that good is their parents aren't yelling at them from the sidelines."



Understanding Youth Soccer and What Parents/Spectators can do to Make it Better

Youth Soccer is About Development

When winning is the priority...

- Success is wrongly solely measured by who wins and who loses
- Not all players get fair playing time
- Not all players get to experience different position
- Coaches may not encourage risk taking
- Pressure on kids to win and not make mistakes leads to fear and playing afraid is like playing with shackles on

How Children Learn Sports

THE GAME IS THE BEST TEACHER - Through Trial and error building a bank or library of neural pathways and muscle memory - VAST LEARNING

Mum or dad screaming Instructions from the sideline is like talking to them in a class room of screaming kids - they just hear noise most of the time and feel stress. Don't waste your breath!



Understanding what is happening on the field and why



Playing Position

- Goalie, Defender and so on

Substitutions

- Shifts vs Stoppages

Playing Time

- Equal Play - Development
- Fair Play - Competitive

Call Ups

Other Clubs



Creating an Optimised Gameday Learning Environment

Our Coaches, regardless of which age group, are challenged to encourage key four elements on game days;

Positivity - players respond to positivity

Ownership - Players Making Their Own Decisions

Instinctive - Mentally light and free. Simplicity is key, too much new or complex information overburdens and confuses players which impedes performance - players need to feel free in order to play on instinct

Clarity - Players need clarity through a specific task focussed approach towards a common performance goal

U7 – U9

The Age of Fun

Introduction to Soccer

We want them to have fun and fall in love with the sport - so they keep coming back

They don't possess coping mechanisms for dealing with winning and losing

Players are too young to properly understand positional structure and roles such as defender, midfielder, forward.

The game is not supposed to resemble the adult game - Individual play is prevalent

Game day objectives very simple focussed on trying to execute individual actions

Equal Playing Time

U11

The Age of Learning and Fun

Kids play because its fun but they also have ambitions and a desire to learn!

Transferring learning from training to game

Game Day Objectives becoming more complex and specific, relating to group and team play

Players learning structure and positional roles!

Players need to rotate between playing different positions to develop game understanding - Equal playing time

The game begins to resemble the adult game

Players can accept responsibility and coaches can be more demanding of players

Playing time becomes a tool to motivate
players towards the right behaviours
Playing time becomes a tool to motivate
players towards the right behaviours

U13-U17

The Age of “Competition”

Players learning structure and positional roles!
Players identifying primary positions but also
experiencing other positions is still good for
development

The game resembles the adult game

Players can accept responsibility and coaches can
be more demanding of players - Fair Playing Time

Still youth soccer so development should still be the
ultimate goal

Players learning how to achieve success through a
continued task & performance goal focus and
mindset

Game Day Objectives becoming more complex and
specific, relating to group and team play and
specific tactics and strategies

Developing the player and the person, the individual
within the team - four cornered holistic approach

Leave the Coaching to the Coaches

Refrain from providing instructions from the sidelines to players.

Yelling out instructions from the sideline can be very confusing and frustrating for the players.

It doesn't mean that the ideas you have are wrong. It just means that screaming them from the sideline doesn't help and it may conflict with the coach's plans



Leave the Coaching to the Coaches

Cheering and positive encouragement is welcome

- Ex: “Go Red team!”, “Play hard Blue!”, “Great save Goalie!”
- However technical instructions (“mark up,” “boot it”) should be left to the coaching staff

When cheering try not to use your child’s name over and over again.

- Everyone can hear you; it can be very embarrassing.
- Encourage each team member when they try something or succeed at something.



Sometimes you win ...

Which is great, but winning isn't everything – Try not to be preoccupied with the results of a game as this will likely be transferred to the player. Is the first thing you ask when they get home, “Did you win?” Metro League is the time to make mistakes and experiment to improve as a player



Sometimes you lose....

Maintain a positive attitude. It's not a time to open a coaching book. • When consoling your child on losing a game or missing the winning goal, don't lay the blame on a coach, referee or some other players.

Even if the referee made a bad call it's part of the learning process and it's part of the game. It happens and it will happen again. Parents need to set an example for players how to respond when things do not go their way!

Learning to lose is just as important as learning to win!



Summary - What to Say, What Not to Say!

Examples of good encouragement ...	Don'ts...	When the going gets tough...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good effort• Nice work• Good idea• Nice Try• Next time• Great ball• Well done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't...Yell instructions from the sideline• Don't...Make any comments to the referee• Don't...Repeatedly use your child's name• Don't...Yell at the parents of the other team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Heads up Blue! Let's stay in the game!"• "Looking sharp red, keep up the good Work"• "100% Yellow, give it everything you got!!!"

Keep Doing

- Feed Them & send them with a bottle of water
- Dress them appropriately
- Bring them
- Let them vent after a game
- Talk to the coaches if there is an issue
- Nutrition right after game

Stop Doing

- Offering win or goal scoring bonuses
- Shouting instructions
- Judging success by result
- Post game analysis/critique

Start Doing

- Remember one good moment of theirs and compliment them
- Ask them what they learned today
- Encourage them to play at home. Replace the screen time with green time.
- Encourage them to watch soccer on tv
- Bring them to watch C Cup/Jubilee and PYL
- Be Positive
- Sit back Relax and Enjoy

Let's have a Great
Summer!

