



Simple Guidelines for Youth Soccer Parents

In negotiating the world of youth soccer, it is helpful to the players, the coach and the parents or guardians to understand what is expected of them. Some simple guidelines for parents/guardians helps establish the rules. Key to success is to remember that kids play soccer to have fun and to enjoy themselves. Keep big rules for big kids and the pros. For the younger players keep it simple so they can have fun.

1. Understand the coach and team philosophy. If you don't know the goals of the team (for example, player development versus competition), ask them to be spelled out at the meeting.
2. Send your children ready to play. They should be properly fed and clothed, and they should arrive on time.
3. Support the team, but do not instruct the players. It confuses your child and others, and undermines the efforts of the coach.
4. Avoid confusion when cheering. Do not say anything that is a command, such as "Pass it," "Shoot," or "Boot the ball."
5. Use positive encouragement instead. This would include such comments as "Way to go," "Nice effort," or "Stay with it."
6. Refrain from speaking to officials, unless it is to say thank you after the game. If you have questions or concerns with the referees, relay the information to the parent manager, who will take it to the coach.
7. Speak to the coach at the proper time. If you have concerns, use the telephone. If it is about a game, let the dust settle for a couple of days first.
8. Report to the coach all injuries, special medical conditions (such as asthma) or extenuating circumstances (such as lack of sleep or family crisis) that may affect the player.
9. Remember, youth soccer is "the game for all kids!" Support your child and all the other children on the field....praise success, ignore failure. The children are learning and having fun. They are pros.