



## PLAYER & PARENT Sportsmanship Pledge

### S.A.G.E. - *Set A Good Example*



#### PLAYER SPORTSMANSHIP PLEDGE - (Please Read and Sign at Bottom)

1. We should remember that we play the game mostly because it is **FUN**. My opponents play for **FUN** as well.
2. We should always try to help our team be successful but it is okay to lose. The **FUN** we have during the game is far more important than the score at the end. In addition, losing teaches many valuable lessons just as winning does. We are sometimes not successful in other parts of our lives, losing in sports, helps prepare us to accept that, and we should just come back with enthusiasm the next time.
3. If we win almost all our games, it can mean that we are not playing good enough competition. Our intensity and skills improve most and carry over to future games when we play against good teams.
4. It is okay if I am not a great player. I should always try my best and that is all that can be expected of me.
5. We should not sound angry or frustrated when we give advice to our teammates. They will consider our suggestions more seriously if we use a pleasant tone of voice. I must also show **RESPECT** to my opponents, coaches, and spectators. I can set a good example for younger players.
6. I should recognize that referees try to do the best job they can, just as I am doing. They make mistakes but so do I. I should not criticize their decisions. It is not surprising that many referees quit because of the abuse they take and yet we wonder why there are not enough referees. I must show the same **RESPECT** to them that I want for myself.
7. I can help a teammate calm down if they are too angry in accordance with good sportsmanship and so that they remain in the game and continue to have **FUN**.
8. When another player says something inappropriate or is too rough, most of the time a confrontation can be avoided. If I respond when it is not necessary, it does not mean I am cool or tough. I am probably reacting emotionally without thinking, lowering myself to the irresponsible player's level and risking hurting my team by possibly being ejected from the match or removed by my coach.
9. By joining the team, I have made a commitment to attend practice and games and display good sportsmanship. I cannot expect as much playing time if I do not meet those commitments.
10. I can help my family by reminding them not to be angry and critical toward players, referees or coaches and to show **RESPECT** and good sportsmanship at all times.

#### PARENT/GUARDIAN SPORTSMANSHIP PLEDGE - (Please Read and Sign at Bottom)

1. It is often difficult for parents to see their children in situations where they are being evaluated, especially at a very young age. However, if we spend our time worrying too much, about how they are doing, we are missing what should be a wonderful experience for us as well as them. If they're not great players, we will love them anyway for who they are, find reasons to praise them for their accomplishments on the field, big or small, and know that they will be great at other things.
2. The game is for the kids. We should not let our natural competitive spirit and normal desire for glory turn into angry yelling at the kids when they do not fulfill our expectations. Sometimes our expectations may be unrealistic. If they're having fun as well as gaining confidence by learning skills, and being coached by a person who is teaching and mentoring without anger, that should satisfy us.
3. Winning is one goal, but only one of many goals. Fewer than half the teams competing win their games on any given day (counting ties) and as studies have consistently indicated, children play mainly for the fun of it. Kids almost unanimously rate the **FUN** they have during the match much higher than the score at that single moment when the game is over.
4. We need to also remember that it is okay to lose because life is not just about winning. We suffer setbacks at times. Learning to accept defeat gracefully and come back enthusiastically next time is an important lesson to teach. **As long as children try their best, they are winners on another level even when they lose the game.**
5. Coaches and referees deserve **RESPECT**. They make mistakes as we all do, but whether they are great at what they are doing or not, we have a responsibility to set a good example to help teach **RESPECT** to our children. Yelling criticism at referees, coaches, or players is inappropriate and that behavior must be subject to penalties from the club, including the last thing the club wants to consider, possible suspension from attending matches. Children often reveal that they are embarrassed when their parents shout out criticism. Referees do not change their calls but many do decide to quit because of the abuse they take from parents, coaches, and players. Yet, we wonder why we do not have enough referees. Coaches are giving time and effort and if they are making it a positive **FUN** experience, we should **RESPECT** them for that.
6. Some of us are more emotional, which is good in some ways. Some of us are calmer, which also is good in some ways. When we are emotional, perhaps sometimes because of frustrations in other parts of our lives, it is harder to keep ourselves under control. It can become a problem in this setting when we yell at the kids. When they think we are angry, it can make them nervous and lower their self-esteem. As a result, they may not perform as well as they can. Sometimes we do not even realize how angry we sound because, for one thing, our children do not always talk about their feelings. They may tell someone else.
7. When someone makes un-sportsman-like comments to other spectators, children, coaches, or referees, it is often best to ignore them unless they are good friends. **In general, when someone is excited and negative, that is NOT the time to talk about sportsmanship. We should avoid confrontations at all costs.**
8. Even if our child has outstanding ability, we should not look too far into the future. We need to be realistic about the question of whether they will get a lot of playing time in high school or college. Moreover, considering the rapidly increasing number of good players coming out of high school, we need to be aware there are relatively few college soccer scholarships and competition for spots on the roster will be intense.
9. **Know the level of commitment expected and the policy on playing time.** If you have any questions, it is often best to ask the coach during a quieter moment, not at a game.
10. If we keep the game in the proper perspective, we can realize that children usually have **FUN** as long as we support their efforts. **Putting them under pressure by being overly critical** is not a good idea. If they become anxious about their performance, they may be hesitant to try new skills, they may not reach their potential, and their interest in the game may decline.
11. The experience of watching children play youth sports is over all too soon. Why not relax and have fun simply knowing that the kids are having fun and we are having a good time together?

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Father:	Date:	Mother:	Date:
Player Signature:				Date: