

Coaches Pre-season Meeting with Parents

The purpose of this meeting is to provide to the parents the expectations of the league and the coach for the coming season. Every coach of every team should be required to have this meeting prior to every season. US Youth Soccer had some excellent pamphlets that could be distributed, as well. Contact the state office to place an order.

Introduction paragraph by the League President:

Expectations of the League: (LEAGUE SHOULD SPELL OUT AND GIVE TO COACHES)

1. Behavior of parents on sidelines
2. Consequences of poor behavior by parents
3. Use of young referees and expectations of parental and coach behavior toward them
4. Logistics: parking, cleaning up sideline area
5. Volunteer needs
6. Club/League philosophy for this level and age of winning/development/fun

Expectations of the Coach:

1. Attendance at practices and games
2. Playing time
3. Tardiness
4. How and when parents can discuss player with coach
5. Snacks and Treats (players should eat a small meal 2-4 hours prior to game)
6. Parents are no to "coach" from the sidelines
7. Discussions with referees never to be by parents/spectators
8. Sincere congratulations of opponents after the game, no matter the outcome
9. Parents will teach players not to play on goals
10. Water should be in individual container, and NEVER shared
11. Since coach is responsible for spectators, consequences of bad behavior

This meeting should be mandatory with all parents prior to each season. Players can come in for whole group meeting at the conclusion of parents meeting.

Feel free to use the following:

Parents/spectators need to remember that soccer is a kid's game, and parents have no role in the game. Certainly yelling instructions is confusing at best, and delays the development of the player and team. Soccer is a game in which players have to learn to play together, and that learning process means that mistakes have to be made, and players have to learn how to problem solve within the framework of the game. Coaching instructions from parents reduce the ability of players to learn.

In addition, parents must remove ALL remarks of any kind to the referee and to the opponents. Write to your league any complaints about referees or opponents, but do not foul the air at a kid's game with comments. Limit yourself to such comments as, "Way to go, John; Good effort, etc..."

If you cannot control yourself, stay at home. Do not be the person who make the game unpleasant and retards the enjoyment and/or character development of the youngsters. If you believe the referee is bad, take the course and be the best referee you can. Expect that the parents on your child's team behave, and if they don not, make your expectations for perfect parent behavior known in a parent meeting.

Find ways to applaud good play, even by opponents. While #7 may not be on your team, she/he still has the tender mind of a child, and could use all the adult support she can have to grow up.

(By Kay Catlett, Executive Director, Ohio Youth Soccer Association North)