

# PCSL EXPECTATIONS: SIDELINE ETHICS

PCSL encourages participation in youth soccer for what it is—youngsters having fun. Coaches, parents and spectators should show only good adult behavior on the sidelines and act as role models for the younger players. Help create a positive soccer atmosphere. Influence your youngster's soccer experience by following these "Soccer Sideline Ethics."

**Playing is Fun:** Encourage youngsters in skill development and 100% performance. Winning is not their motivation. They want to be having fun. So lighten up, decrease the competitive pressures, and encourage skills, teamwork, self-esteem, and good sportsmanship. Enjoy this opportunity to be with youngsters on the field.

**Know the Game and the Laws:** Soccer looks simple, but it is complex to play, coach, and officiate. You'll enjoy the game more by understanding soccer skills and tactics, the flow of play, and how the game is played. Soccer is free-flowing with ever-changing situations and constant problem solving by the players. Soccer is physical and demanding. With few timeouts, it is fun to watch. There are only 17 laws in soccer. Understanding the basic laws and increase your enjoyment of the game.

**Support the Team, Not Just Your Youngster:** Give encouragement to the entire team. Don't yell constantly at a youngster. Avoid giving directions while they are playing. Soccer is above all a player-dominated game and they have to make decisions on the field. Always be positive, win or lose. Don't get over involved emotionally.

**Practice Good Sportsmanship:** Always show sportsmanship and enthusiasm. Young people learn by example. Encourage your players to play by the rules. Cheer good play by both teams. Ask you youngster: "Did you have fun and try your best?" rather than, "Why didn't you win?" Win gracefully, not boastfully. Lose without being negative. Make sure the end-of-the-game rituals (such as handshakes) reflect good sportsmanship.

**Let the Players Play:** Soccer is a player's game. Youngsters participate for their enjoyment, not ours. To children, playing is more important than winning, while winning is more important to parents and coaches. Emphasize player development and having fun over winning. We are GUESTS at our son or daughter's game!

**Let the Coaches Coach:** The coach provides guidance, skill instruction, and supervised fun for your youngsters in soccer. Respect the coaches and their decisions. Their concern is the whole team, not just the player. Don't undermine, second-guess, or criticize a coach in public. Most coaches will listen to parents in private, and may ask parents to help with practice.

**Let the Referee Judge the Game:** Soccer referees control the game the moment they enter the grounds. Most are still young and are still learning to referee, just as players are learning to play. They respect fair play, sportsmanship, skill, and the spirit of the game. Referee calls are final. No player, coach, or parent ever changed a ref's decision, but the criticism disrupts the game. Support the referees.

**Get Involved in Soccer:** Come to the games in the spirit of fun and play. Meet other parents and coaches. Make sure your youngster comes ready to play—with the proper equipment and attitude. Help them develop the skills and tactics for the game. Go to a pro or college game with your kids, or watch a game on television with them. Kick the ball around with them. Soccer isn't easy to play, so don't criticize your player for losing or making mistakes—applaud good effort.

**Be a Supportive Soccer Parent:** Volunteer with practices or with transportation. Soccer teaches discipline and responsibility, so be on time! Support the coach whenever possible. Be more concerned with your player's long-term development of skills and tactics than with short-term winning and losing. Focus on skill accomplishments and effort.

**They're only kids. It's only a game:** Allow your child to be a child. Kids see soccer as fun, learning new skills, emulating heroes, being on a team, gaining success by touching the ball, and just being involved. Soccer can teach skills for life, building character, self-esteem, and awareness of others. There is no such thing as a loss if players do their best. You'll see wonderful progress if fun and skill development are your priorities.