



Warren County Youth Soccer League Coaches Code of Conduct

The Board of Directors of the Warren County Youth Soccer League (WCYS) are concerned with the conduct of all coaches and referees during games at all levels, from recreational to select.

We want to ensure that the games are fair, positive and enjoyable experiences for all of the children and adults involved. A soccer game should be friendly and unifying - a spirited social and athletic occasion for players, coaches, referees and spectators.

To clarify expectations of coach conduct, we jointly expect all coaches to conform to this code of conduct:

- Always keep the **best interest and well being of the children** as the highest priority.
- In both victory and defeat, the behavior of the coach shall model **dignity, patience, and positive spirit**.
- Treat the referees with respect.
- Stress **fair play and good sportsmanship** whether winning or losing. During the game, you are responsible for the sportsmanship of your players. If one of your players is disrespectful, irresponsible or overly aggressive, take the player out of the game at least long enough for him/her to calm down.
- During the game, you are also responsible for the **conduct of the parents** of your players. It is imperative to explain acceptable player and parent behavior in a preseason meeting. Encourage them to applaud and cheer for good plays by either team. Discourage them (and you may need to be forceful and direct) from yelling at the players and the referee.
- **Don't run up the score.** Getting defeated by a large margin can really demoralize young soccer players, so please use your best judgment when teams are mismatched. There are ways to keep the score reasonable (e.g. move stronger players to goalie, defense or sidelines, team rule that no shots can be taken until there have been 5 consecutive passes).
- During the game, do not address the referee at all. If you have a small issue, discuss it with the referee calmly and patiently after the game. If you have a major complaint, or if you think the referee was unfair, biased, unfit or incompetent, report your opinion to the League. Your reactions will be taken seriously if they are presented objectively and formally.

Recommended Coaching Best Practices

- Soccer is the players' game. The paramount concern of coaches is the holistic development, welfare, enjoyment and safety of their players.
- Always remember, it's not about winning but developing mature and well-adjusted children.
- Make it fun — if it's not fun, re-evaluate how you are teaching.
- Don't over coach — the children learn through playing.
- Provide positive reinforcement and build esteem — every practice, every game.
- Remember, attitude is learned, both positive and negative.
- Before a game, introduce yourself to the opposing coach and to the referee.
- After the game, thank the referee and ask your players to do the same.

- Referees - especially young and inexperienced ones - are like your players and yourself, in that they need time to develop. You can play an important role in helping them to improve by letting them concentrate on the game. You can help by encouraging them, by accepting their inevitable, occasional mistakes and by offering constructive post-game comments. On the other hand, you could discourage and demoralize the referees by criticizing their decisions, by verbally abusing them and inciting - or even accepting - your own players' overly aggressive behavior.
- Your example is powerful, for better or worse. If you insist on fair play, if you concentrate on your players' enjoyment of the game and their overall, long term development, and if you support the referee, your players and their parents will notice. If you encourage (or allow) your players to play outside the rules, if you're overly concerned about results, and if you criticize the referee harshly, your players and their parents will also notice.

Procedures for Dealing with Violations of the WCYS Coaches Code of Conduct

Any reports from referees, opposing coaches, players or parents regarding violations of the WCYS Coaching Code of Conduct officially filed with the WCYS League will be handled as follows:

1. The WCYS League, at its discretion, may recommend that a coach be suspended from participation in league activities while the League investigates and contemplates any action.
2. The WCYS League will verify details of the complaint, including interviewing the person or persons who have made the complaint, as well as any witnesses who may have observed the incident.
3. The WCYS League will send a letter to the coach involved, asking for his/her version of the incident. The coach will have 7 days to respond in writing to the WCYS League.
4. The WCYS League will meet within 14 days to determine if disciplinary action should be taken.
5. If the allegation is determined to be correct, the Board may recommend that the coach be subject to immediate suspension from the league for a period of time to be decided on. If the suspension is approved by the Board, the coach will be notified verbally and in writing of the League's decision. Based on the nature and severity of the offense, and depending on whether this represents a repeat offense, disciplinary actions may range from:
 - Official warning / clarification of expected conduct
 - Partial season suspension (1-3 games)
 - Suspension for the remainder of the Fall and/or Spring Season
 - One year suspension
 - Permanent ban from coaching in WCYS

I, the undersigned, will remember that as a coach, I represent the Warren County Youth Soccer League and the community. I have read the Coaching Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its guidelines. I understand that poor behavior during practices, games, or tournaments may result in disciplinary actions, including game suspensions.

Coach Signature: _____ Date: _____

