

Parent and Player Code of Conduct

Preamble

The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department seeks to instill positive character building and ethics in communities' youth through the demonstration of good sportsmanship, respect for others, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. We ask that players, coaches, parents and their guests attending HPRD sponsored events help us by reflecting these character traits.

These Codes of Conduct are an agreement between HPRD players, parents, and coaches to abide by the rules and regulations of the game, as well as to maintain a cooperative attitude and uphold the ideals of fair play and sportsmanship. These Codes express our core values and goals. It is essential they be honored and followed.

The Codes of Conduct can be summarized in the following three principles:

- (1) Demonstrating a positive attitude;
- (2) Setting a good example; and
- (3) Maintaining good relationships with all youth participants - including officials, opponents, and our own team's players, parents, and coaches.

Demonstrating A Positive Attitude:

Players, parents, and coaches are expected to show a positive, respectful attitude for everyone involved in the sport. Criticism and disrespect for officials, opponents, coaches or fans undermine the purpose of sport and encourage behavior contrary to the spirit of the game.

Setting A Good Example:

Each person associated with HPRD is accountable for his/her own behavior at all times on or off the field of play. Parents, coaches and other adults should remember that children learn by example - it is up to the adults to set good examples. HPRD will not tolerate conduct that is detrimental to the sport, the participants, or the community. Such conduct includes: Vulgarity by coaches, players or parents; harassment or belittling of officials, coaches or players; verbal abuse, threats or physical violence toward anyone before, during or after a match; and the taunting of opposing players, coaches and parents. We require thorough self-restraint by all participants - both players and adults. Teams must exercise appropriate control over those who fail to control themselves.

Maintaining Good Relationships:

Officials - The referee's job is a difficult one. All referees are human and they do make mistakes. Parents or players who believe their team has been treated unfairly or has been

assigned an unqualified referee should speak to their coach after the game. Coaches should inform the HPRD Staff if there is an issue with an official. Referees have the authority to suspend play if a coach does not control his players and parents/supporters.

Opponents - Players and coaches are required to maintain a sense of fair play and be respectful of opposing players, coaches and fans at all times. Sportsmanship begins with respect. Without it, the positive competitive environment, which should be a perfect classroom for learning the values of sport, is completely undermined. Occasionally we will encounter opponents who do not share our values and high standards. If we allow ourselves to be drawn down to their level, we will have lost regardless of the final score.

Our Own Team - In an environment where our children are competing not only against other teams but also frequently against each other, it can be difficult to control jealousies and rivalries. A successful team resembles a family in that members put their own needs second, behind the greater good of the team. Great care must be taken not to undermine the coach's authority. As in most cases, parental example is all-important.

Player Code of Conduct:

It is a privilege to play sports for HPRD.

As a player, I will:

- Play the game for the game's sake, and not just to please my parents or coach.
- Be modest and generous when I win and gracious when I lose.
- Respect the game and its rules, learn these rules and try to follow them, and play the game fairly.
- Work for the good of my team and give my best effort at all times.
- Show respect for the authority of the official, even though I will sometimes disagree with his/her calls.
- Show good sportsmanship before, during, and after games. I understand that this is a game, and that the players on the other team are my opponents, not my enemies.
- Conduct myself with honor and dignity and treat other players as I would like to be treated.
- Help my parents and fans understand the rules of the game so they can watch and enjoy the game better. I will be sure they understand that disagreement is not appropriate or permitted at games.
- Control my temper and not retaliate, even if I believe I have been wronged.
- Not use or possess tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs.

Player consequences will be determined by the team coach and HPRD Staff for violations of the player Code of Conduct.

Parent Code of Conduct:

As a parent, you play a special role in the development of your daughter or son, and of his/her teammates. Your encouragement and good example will do more to ensure good sportsmanship and self-discipline than any other influence. The other team is the opponent, not the enemy, and should be treated with respect. While winning is important, playing well and fairly is the essence of the game.

1. SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

Support your child by giving encouragement and showing interest in his/her team. Help your child work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship in every game. Teach your child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory.

2. BE SUPPORTIVE AND YOUR CHILD'S BIGGEST CHEERLEADER

Children learn more by example than by criticism. Work to be a positive role model, and reinforce positive behavior in others. Applaud good plays by others on your child's team as well as good plays by the opposing team. Do not criticize any child's performance from the sidelines. Accept the results of each game. Teach your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by learning and working toward improvement.

3. DON'T BE A SIDELINE COACH OR REF

Refrain from coaching or refereeing from the sidelines. Parents who shout or scream from the sidelines often give inappropriate advice at the wrong time. The coach should be the only sideline voice. Remain well back from the sidelines and within the spectator area. You and your child will both enjoy the game more if you put some emotional distance between yourself and the field or play. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship - Do not openly question their judgment or honesty.

4. DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD YOUR OPPONENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Opponents are not enemies. Take care to show good hospitality at home and to represent Hartford in a positive way when playing other teams. Never allow yourself to be drawn into a verbal disagreement with opposing parents or coaches. No one has ever regretted letting "cooler heads prevail."

5. REMEMBER THAT YOUR CHILD WANTS TO HAVE FUN

Your child is the one playing, not you. Children must establish their own goals - to play the game for themselves. Take care not to impose unreasonable demands on your child. Let your children experience the fun of playing as well as the challenge of excelling.

General Expectations of HPRD Parents:

They will set a good example for their child in his/her soccer development by adhering at all times to the following. I/We will:

- Not criticize the referee openly or directly, during or after games. Any criticism shall be done in writing, sent to my coach and/or my club representative, not verbally.
- Give only positive feedback to players.
- Cheer at all games within the spirit of fair play and shall do our best to cheer the effort regardless of the outcome. We will be mindful in "lopsided" game where cheering our own "winning" team might be misunderstood.
- Do our best to teach our players to become students of the game.
- Show the quality of our sportsmanship during and after each game and help our child remember to thank the official after the game without regard to the result.
- Do our very best to have our child prepared for every game.
- Support the learning efforts of the players, the coaches, and the referees by demonstrating our patience.
- Understand that improper behavior at a game may result in a parent being asked to leave the field by the referee or HPRD Staff.
- Leave the coaching to the coach during the game. We shall not give our child instructions during the game.
- Understand that the leagues can, and will if necessary, suspend our individual privilege to watch our child play should we behave in a manner that is rude or otherwise offensive.
- Agree to do our best to have as much fun watching the game as the players should have playing the game.

24 Hr Rule:

The 24hr rule is a rule that is in place to help keep peace between the coach and parents.

The rule is simple. Parents are not allowed to approach the coach about issues until 24hrs after the issue.

Reasons for the rule:

- To allow the parent to calm down after the issue has developed
- Allow the coach to calm down after the event
- Give parents and coaches time to think about the problem
- To prevent any unnecessary acts or scenes in front of players and other parent's
- Calmer heads will prevail
- To stop any embarrassing moments in front of the Players or child
- The hope that time to think about the issues will help to solve the problem in a positive manner and the right resolution
- Sometimes in the heat of the moment parents and coaches say things that they really don't mean. This can hurt the player or team because things were not handled correctly. The parent & coach relationship is important, but the overall decisions should be based on what is best for the team and players. The rule is in place to help protect the players and team.

Violations Of The Parent Code Of Conduct:

Violations of the Parent Code of Conduct may result in:

- A Parent being suspended and/or removed from a game for misconduct.
- A Coach being suspended and/or removed from a game for misconduct.
- A Parent or Coach could be removed from the team/facility for the duration of the season.