



Parent Sidelines Ethics Agreement Policy

Purpose - Parents play an important role in helping their own children and other players learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. They must set an example when it comes to demonstrating the importance of working together, to sacrifice for the good of the team, to enjoy winning, and to deal appropriately with defeat. The Elk Grove Youth Soccer League encourages parents to enjoy youth soccer for what it is— children having fun. Coaches, parents, and spectators should be role models of good behavior on the sidelines.

In line with this purpose statement, the Elk Grove Soccer will require that parents sign a “Parent Sideline Ethics Agreement” prior to their child participating with any Elk Grove Soccer team. That agreement shall state the following:

1. I understand the fun of soccer is playing not winning

Parents should always encourage children in skill development and 100 percent performance. Winning is not their motivation. They want to have fun. So, lighten up, decrease the competitive pressures, and encourage skills, teamwork, self-esteem, and good sportsmanship. Enjoy this opportunity to be with your child.

2. I will strive to understand the game and the laws of the game

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. Understand the basic laws and increase your enjoyment of the game.

3. I will support the team, not just my own child

Give encouragement to the entire team. Don’t ever give your child instructions. Soccer is above all a player-dominated game, and they have to make the decisions on the field. Always be positive, win or lose. Don’t get over involved. Applaud good play by either team.

4. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship

Always show your sportsmanship and enthusiasm. Young people learn by example. Encourage your child to play by the rules. Cheer good play by both teams. Ask your child: “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 (like the handshakes) reflect good sportsmanship.

5. I will let the players play

Soccer is a players’ game. Children participate for their enjoyment, not yours. Remember this is their experience. Playing is more important than winning to children, while winning is more important to parents and coaches. Emphasize player development and having fun over winning.

6. I will let the coaches coach Your coach provides guidance, skill instruction, and supervised fun for your children in soccer. Respect the coaches and their decisions. Their concern is the whole team, not just your player. They need your support. Don't undermine, second-guess, or criticize a coach in public. Most coaches will listen to parents in private.

7. I will let the referees judge the game

Soccer referees control the game the moment they enter the grounds. They respect fair play, sportsmanship, skill, and the spirit of the game. The referees always believe they made the proper call, that's why they made it. Trying to show superficial support because the call went 'your' way is inappropriate. Yelling out "good call ref" or "thanks for the call" is simply annoying to the officials, and to anyone within earshot. Support the referees.

8. I will come to the games in the spirit of fun

Meet other parents and coaches. Make sure your children come on time 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, or watch a game on TV. 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.

9. I will be a supportive soccer parent

Volunteer to help. Soccer teaches discipline and responsibility, so be on time. If you can't be on time, then be early. Support the coach in any way 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.

10. I understand that they are only kids and this is 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, it builds character, self-esteem, and awareness of others. If players do their best, there's no such thing as a loss. You'll see great progress if fun and skill development are your priorities.

11. After the game, I will reinforce the positive aspects of soccer

The ride home is sometimes as important as the game itself. Make that time a good memory for your son or daughter by discussing as many positives as you can about him/her, the coach, and the teammates.

Player's Name (Print)

Father's/Guardian's Signature

Mother's/Guardian's Signature

Print Name

Print Name

Date: _____

Date: _____

