



Houston Youth Soccer Association **Sportsmanship Code of Conduct**

Established in 1968, Houston Youth Soccer Association (“HYSA”) is one of the largest youth soccer associations in the state of Texas. HYSA’s mission is to provide the highest quality environment for youth soccer activities possible. Integral to the ongoing success of HYSA and its member clubs is a code of conduct and behavior that is both fair and beyond reproach. In furtherance of that goal, HYSA has adopted a sportsmanship code of conduct that it expects to be adhered to in all elements of soccer activities occurring under the authority of HYSA and its member clubs. All team members, individuals responsible for team management and all spectators and parents are expected to support match officials, even if those officials are thought to have made a mistake. Failure to do so undermines the match officials’ authority and has the potential to escalate tension and create a hostile environment for the players, the match officials and all other participants and spectators. HYSA will take a zero tolerance attitude toward any individual who exhibits unacceptable behavior to match officials and opposing teams and spectators.

The Coach

Coaches shall conduct themselves properly at all times and recognize that they are a leading role model for youth, on and off their team, on and off the field and as someone whom parents and spectators look to for guidance and respect. The term “coach” may be taken to mean any adult who functions in a team management or leadership role including, but not limited to coaches, trainers, team managers or any other adult who may have an organizational role with a team. Coaches are expected to:

- Take all reasonable precautions to insure the safety of all youth.
- Take whatever action is necessary to control the actions of their fans.
- Treat all players, parents, and opponents with respect.
- Teach and inspire soccer players to love the game and to compete fairly.
- Demonstrate by example the type of person he/she wants the players to be.
- Have control and command of discipline at all times.
- Respect the interpretation of rules and judgment of all officials.
- Realizes that as a coach he/she is a teacher and therefore understands the game and proper soccer behavior at all times.

The Player

The player should recognize that is a privilege to be a player for his/her team, club and HYSA. The player is expected follow the rules of his/her club and the association during all soccer activities including practices, games, tournaments and other organized activities in association with the club and/or association. In order to remain a player in good standing the player will follow the following rules and guidelines:

- Treat opponents, officials and spectators with respect.
- Respect the game of soccer and its Laws by learning the Laws and local association rules and policies and play the game fairly.
- Work for the good of my team and club and conduct yourself with honor and dignity.
- Show good sportsmanship before, during and after training and games. Remember that soccer is a game, and that the members of the other team are my opponent in a game, not my enemy.
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without gesture or argument.
- Win without boasting, lose without excuses and never quit.
- Help parents and spectators understand the Laws of the game so they can watch and enjoy the game better.
- Always remember that it is a privilege to represent his/her soccer club and community.

The Official

Officials are responsible for conducting the game through enforcement of the laws of the game. As such, they need to insure that they consistently interpret actions on the field and fairly apply the enforcement of the laws. Officials are expected to:

- Know the rules and understands the game.
- Place health and welfare of the players above all other considerations.
- Treat players and coaches courteously and demand the same from them.
- Work cooperatively with fellow referees and linesmen.
- Be fair, firm and consistent in all decisions on the field.
- Maintain confidence, poise and self control from start to finish of the game.

The Parents/Spectators

Soccer is wonderful and passionate game and your passion and support of the game and its participants is critical to its success. Always remember that your attitude is contagious and that players in a match will respond directly to your attitude. While winning is important, recognize that learning how to play the game well and fairly both takes time and is the essence of the game. Parents/spectators are expected to lead in setting a good example for all of the players and officials by adhering to the following:

- Do not coach the team players including your own youngster, from the sidelines during the game.
- Respect the judgment of the referee and do not criticize officials openly or directly either during or after games.
- Supportive parents focus on mastering soccer skills and game strategies.
- Decrease the pressure to win, give only positive feedback to players.
- Cheer and support all players at games within the spirit of fair play regardless of the outcome. Find and talk about the little successes that the players exhibit during each game.
- Believe that soccer's primary value is to provide youth an opportunity for self-development.
- Understand the risks. A soccer game is full of mistakes and the team that makes fewer mistakes generally wins the game. Playing soccer includes willingness to chance failure.
- Communicate with the coach and create a positive, supportive working relationship.
- Understand and respect the different roles of parents and coaches.
- Control negative emotions and think positively.
- Understand that improper behavior at an event may result in a parent being asked to leave field or event by a referee or other official and respect that action.
- At all times show empathy for the young developing soccer player.

Everyone

Youth sports programs provide an enjoyable learning environment for the physical, social, and personal development of youngsters. The values of youth sports programs include:

- Promoting fitness
- Developing new skills
- Instilling a desire to succeed
- Teaching responsibility and commitment
- Teaching cooperation
- Preparing one to deal with success and failure
- Providing an outlet for the release of energy
- Building character through discipline
- Teaching how to cope with the realities of life
- Instilling positive attitudes toward authority
- Providing a fun and enriching experience

The likelihood that youngsters will realize positive sports value is enhanced when adult sports leaders take the responsibility to serve as facilitators of desirable sports outcomes. This can be achieved when coaches assume a role (and parents and spectators support that role) as teacher and carry out lesson plans which develop skill progressively, emphasize positive sports values, and encourage lifelong interest in sports participation.

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