

Mansfield Soccer Association

Good of the Game Policy

- **Mission Statement**

Mansfield Soccer Association (MSA) has been formed to create a healthy playing environment for children playing recreational soccer. MSA is committed to the growth of children while developing a love for the game of Soccer. We hope each of you not only allows your child to come play soccer but wish each of you to get involved with MSA and your child's team. We are about whole family fun, not just the individual.

- **The Good of the Game policy consists of policies for**
 - Interaction with the Referee
 - MSA Coach's code of conduct
 - Parent's code of conduct

Policies Regarding Referees

It is MSA's policy and duty to insure a non-hostile work environment for the referees that choose to work MSA games. Further, it is our policy to continue mentoring and developing all of these referees regardless of their age or experience level. Finally, MSA is committed to doing all we can to insure that all aspects of the games played during the season promote sportsmanship, character, learning, and fun. To that end it is important for players, parents and coaches to understand and acknowledge:

- without referees there would be no game
- referees are human and make mistakes
- referee's have all received the required hours of training and passed the required USSF licensing course and are recertified annually
- MSA is constantly mentoring referees in an effort to assist the referees in their professional growth and to insure the best quality referees are available to the children of MSA
- All referees were, regardless of age, once a new referees – **AGE** does **not** indicate the experience level of a given referee
- Words have meaning – and the words of a parent's, player's and coach's words, both those that praise and those that demean, affect the referee

Therefore:

1. Any and all questions a team has concerning the game are to be directed to the Referee **ONLY** by the coach or the team captain, identified at the start of the game.
 - a. Questions may be asked at any stoppage point, at the discretion of the referee.
 - b. Any and all questions shall be asked in a professional, respectful manner and tone
2. Coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of their parents – if, after a warning to the coach, a parent continues to act in a manner that creates a hostile work environment, in the opinion of the referee, the referee shall have the authority to:
 - a. Tell the parent or guardian to leave the field

- b. And/or require the coach to leave the field
 - c. Abandon the game
3. Coaches shall be respectful to the referees at all times and will be held to the standards of the coach's code of ethics. Failure to maintain that standard could result in an Appeals & Discipline hearing.
4. The referee's decision is final.

Feedback

During the game, when adrenaline is high, is not the best time to address a game situation issue with the referee. The chances of changing a referees mind concerning a ruling or their "understanding" of the rules, at that moment are minimal. At that moment in time the rules of that game, are what that referee says are the rules of the game. However, if you feel as if the referee is either not interpreting the rules correctly or just does not know the rules, MSA is very interested in hearing from you. It is important that your thoughts are added to the game report or the preferred method would be an email sent to either to your age group commissioner or registrar@mansfieldsoccer.org. Your email WILL be read and your email WILL be answered by the appropriate board member.

Policies Regarding Members

All member of MSA are important.

The membership, according to the by-laws of MSA, shall support the board of directors and other members of the association. Any concerns that an individual has regarding the MSA program or its member's can be directed in a polite and constructive manner to any board member, at the convenience of the board member, or directly to the President of the Association. In addition, any member of the Association is welcome to address the board during the regularly scheduled monthly meeting, provided a minimum of 3 days notice is given in writing to the President or Secretary of the Association. Depending on the nature of the concern, the Association and its board members have the right to delay the hearing as deemed necessary (i.e. if an additional investigation is required).

Any contact with any association member (phone, e-mail, in-person etc) considered verbally or physically insulting, threatening or abusive will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. The disciplinary action will be handled by MSA's A & D chairman and nominated committee. The punishment shall also be determined by said A & D hearing.

Coaches Code of Ethics.

Sportsmanship

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as a Mansfield Soccer Coach by following the Mansfield Soccer Association and North Texas Soccer Associations Bylaws and Coaches' Code of Ethics: (to view the North Texas Soccer code of conduct go to

http://www.ntxsoccer.org/FormServerTemplates/ntssa_rules_08_01_10.pdf chapter 11)

- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all Mansfield Soccer Association Sporting events.
- I will be knowledgeable in the laws of Soccer, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will attend the training required by Mansfield Soccer Association and North Texas Soccer Association to obtain the license level I am required to have to coach my team.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for all of the skills that I teach.

I will remember that I am a youth soccer coach, and that the game is for the children and not for the adults.

PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents will be held to the Mansfield Soccer Association Code of Conduct but also the North Texas State Soccer Association's code of conduct.

To view the actual North Texas Soccer Association Parents Code of conduct please go to:
http://www.ntxsoccer.org/FormServerTemplates/ntssa_rules_08_01_10.pdf - page 98

As a parent, you play a special role in contributing to the needs and development of youngsters. Through your encouragement and good example, you can help assure that all the boys and girls learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. In MSA, young people learn to work together, to sacrifice for the good of the team, to enjoy winning and deal appropriately with defeat -all while becoming physically fit and healthy. *Best of all, they have fun.*

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

Supporting your child by giving encouragement and showing interest in their team is very important. 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 -*that way your child will always be a winner despite the outcome of the game!* Soccer is a team sport and it is imperative that they practice as a team. As a parent it is your responsibility to get your child to and from every practice. Please be respectful of your coach's time and don't be late to practice and don't make your Coach hang around and wait for you to pick up your child. If your child is unable to make a practice please notify this coach.

This is common courtesy and will go a long way toward a positive fun season.

ALWAYS BE POSITIVE

Parents serve as role models for their children. Become aware of this and work to be a positive role model. Applaud good plays by your child's team *as well as* good plays by the opposing team. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.

REMEMBER: YOUR CHILD WANTS TO HAVE FUN

Remember that your *child* is the one playing soccer, not you. It's very important to let children establish their own goals -to play the game for themselves. Take care not to impose your own standards and goals on them. Don't put too heavy a burden on your child to win games. Surveys reveal that 72% of children would rather play for a losing team than ride the bench for a winning team. Children play for the fun of playing.

REINFORCE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Positive reinforcement is the best way to help your child achieve their goals and their natural fear of failure. Nobody likes to make mistakes. If your child does make one, remember it's all part of learning, so encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things your child accomplished. Your child will not learn from doing everything right, they learn from their mistakes and this will improve their game.

DON'T BE A SIDELINE COACH OR REFEREE

Coaches and referees are usually parents just like you. They volunteer their time, to help make your child's youth soccer experience a positive one. They need your support too. That means refraining from coaching or refereeing from the sidelines. As a volunteer organization, there's usually always an opportunity for you to take your interest in coaching or refereeing to the next

level or become a coach or referee yourself. If you do not like the way a game was called you can make your comments to your teams coach after the game. He or she can then pass those on to the league if they feel it necessary.

Parents Code of Ethics & Sportsmanship:

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in Mansfield Soccer Association by following this Parents' Code of Ethics and MSA as well as North Texas Soccer Association Code of Conduct and Bylaws:

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other Soccer event.

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.

I will encourage that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.

I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will remember that the game is for youth -not adults and I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child as well as other children.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation when needed.