

Positive

or it's pointless



Fact Sheet

Supportive Officials – getting the most out of sport

Getting the most out of sport

Being an official is a rewarding experience where you can help children develop good values and confidence. You can support children by:

- Developing values such as respect and fair play
- Developing confidence and self-esteem
- Learning cooperation and teamwork
- Having fun
- Learning from mistakes.

What children want

Children want to have fun, learn new things and be with their friends. Children have a great sporting experience when parents, coaches and officials are positive and supportive.

Children want officials to:

- Treat all children equally and with respect and patience
- Let them have fun
- Communicate the rules clearly and be consistent
- Officiate for the right skill level.

Children don't want officials to:

- Embarrass them with negative comments or behaviour
- Abuse team mates, parents or coaches
- Yell critical comments during or after the game.

Strategies for game day

Before the game

- Encourage both teams to have a go, do their best and have fun!
- Let the coaches, team captains and spectators know if you are a new official or don't have a lot of experience. Thank them for supporting you
- Explain how you will apply the rules to the skill level of the teams. Make sure the players, coaches and spectators are all aware of this
- Remind the teams, coaches and spectators to treat every person like they would like to be treated
- Check all equipment and safety gear to ensure the welfare of the players.

Let's make junior sport positive everyday

During the game

- Don't coach the players
- Officiate to their skill level
- Don't provide comments on the game, be fair and consistent
- Treat the players, coaches and spectators with dignity and respect.

After the game

- Congratulate both teams, the coaches and supporters
- Ensure all record keeping is correct.

Communicating with coaches

- Always support the coaches by not speaking negatively about them in public, especially in front of the children
- If you want to clarify a decision, wait until after the game:
 - let your emotions settle before speaking to the coach, and explain your query
 - let the coach respond without your interruptions and listen
 - agree to a resolution even if you agree to disagree!
 - make opportunities for future discussion
- Leave the coaching to the coaches. Remember they have training
- Recognise that the coach is likely to be a volunteer. Find ways to appreciate them for supporting children in sport.

Communicating with parents

- Always support the parents by not speaking negatively about them in public, especially in front of their children
- Remember that parents are both excited and protective about their child's involvement. They may not know all the rules of the game or how to address conflict
- Get to know the parents and appreciate their support of the team
- If a parent is displaying inappropriate behaviour, follow your club's methods in addressing the situation. This could include:
 - if there is a match official let them handle the situation.
 - taking the parent aside privately and speaking to the parent about their influence on their children.
 - advising the club about the parent's behaviour.

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