

Gloucester County Union Soccer Club

Code of Conduct for Coaches, Parents, Players, and Spectators

Welcome coaches and parents. THANK YOU for your time and commitment to our children and GCU. We need to keep in mind that our players are our children and that they want to enjoy their childhood. Good coaches recognize that soccer is just a game; a leisure activity that, in the end, belongs only to the players. Our referees enforce the laws of the game and are responsible for the safety of our players. Their decision on the field is final and they are to be shown respect by coaches, players, parents and spectators.

Fair Play for Players:

- Play soccer for the enjoyment of the game. Do not play just to please other people.
- Play by the rules; never argue with the officials' decision.
- Try your best in every game to play within the rules.
- Play at a level of competition which is challenging and stimulating; competition which is too easy or too difficult will not be enjoyable.
- Cooperate with your coach and your teammates; be a team player.
- Be respectful to the opposing team, both in victory and defeat.
- Treat your teammates with the same respect you want them to have for yourself.
- Learn from your mistakes; work hard in practice to improve skills.
- Be the best player you can be.
- Trying your best and doing your best is more important than winning.
- Pay attention to the coach and the referee – listen and show them respect.
- Remember winning isn't everything. Playing fair, improving your skills, making friends and doing my best are important.
- Most importantly – HAVE FUN!

Fair Play for Parents and Spectators:

- Coaches are volunteers. Please always remember they are out here doing their best and spending their time with your children
- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in soccer.
- The game (and practice) is to be enjoyed by supporters as well as the players; show your sportsmanship and enthusiasm.
- Remember practices and games are equally important. Players need to attend both.
- If for any reason you cannot attend a practice or game parents will notify coaches at least 24 hours in advance to make any adjustments needed.
- Parents and spectators are asked to respect the coach's time with the team. All parents and spectators are to observe the game from the opposite side of the field from where the coach and players are positioned.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules.
- Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that a loss is acceptable without undue disappointment.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping your child work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship. Do not ridicule or yell at your child for making a mistake or losing a competition; it's only a game.
- Children learn by example. Applaud good play by your child's team and their opponent.
- Do not yell at the referee, EVER for any reason. Do not publicly question the official's judgment or integrity. Parents and Spectators behavior can lead to the team being penalized. If required, Parents and Spectators must obey a request by a referee or from a team's coach to leave the vicinity of the field.
- Recognize the value and importance of the referees and our volunteer coaches who give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for your children.

- Do not instruct players from the sidelines. Players' focus and attention should remain with the coach. The game is fast-paced and confusing enough. Additional distractions only add to the confusion.
- Let the coach(es) coach and let the player's play. If the children are having fun, we all win.
- Relax and enjoy. It's only a game.

Fair Play for Coaches

- The first responsibility is the health and safety of all participants.
- Remember that all participants need a coach they can respect. Be generous with your praise and set a good example.
- Communication is key. Maintain an open line of communication with parents and their families
- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important. Teaching rules, techniques and strategists is important for all participants.
- Be respectful to officials, opposing coaches, parents, spectators or others. Never argue with anything as this violates the spirit of sportsmanship we are trying to teach the children.
- Remember you are a representative of GCU. Dress appropriately at all games and practices. Drinking, smoking or any other illegal drugs are not allowed. Never be involved in any circumstances that are offensive or suggest sexual connotations. Failing to abide by the rules and regulations set forward can result in removal of coaching.