

Parental Support - The Key to Your Child's Performance

The role that the parents play in the life of a soccer player has a tremendous impact on their experience. With this in mind, I have taken some time to write down some helpful reminders for all of us as we approach the upcoming season. If you should have any questions about these thoughts, please feel free to discuss with me, your technical director, or with our team manager.

- **Let the coaches' coach:** Leave the coaching to the coaches. This includes motivating, psyching your daughter for practice, after game critiquing, setting goals, requiring additional training, etc. You have entrusted us with the care of your player and we need to be free to do our job. If a player has too many coaches, it is confusing for her and her performance usually declines.
- **Support the program:** Get involved. Volunteer. Help out with fundraisers, car-pool; anything to support the program.
- **Support and root for all players on the team:** Foster teamwork. Your daughter's teammates are not the enemy. When they are playing better than your daughter, your child has a wonderful opportunity to learn.
- **Encourage your daughter's to talk to the coaches:** If they are having difficulties in practice or games, or can't make a practice, etc., encourage them to speak directly to the coaches. This "responsibility taking" is a big part of becoming a big-time player. By handling the off-field tasks, your child is claiming ownership of all aspects of the game - preparation as well as playing the game.
- **Understand and display appropriate game behavior:** Remember, your daughter's self esteem and game performance is at stake. Be supportive, cheer, and be appropriate. To perform their best, a player needs to focus on the parts of the game that they can control (their fitness, positioning, decision making, skill, aggressiveness, what the game is presenting them). If they or we start focusing on what we can not control (the field condition, the referee, the weather, the opponent, even the outcome of the game at times), she will not play up to her ability. If she hears her parents telling her what to do, or yelling at the referee or the opponent, it diverts her attention away from the task at hand. And if we hear it, she will sit out the remainder of the game and/or tournament.
- **Help them keep their priorities straight:** Lets all try to help them maintain their focus on school work, relationships (not with boys) and other things in life besides soccer. Receiving passing grades in school is a must if they want to continue playing on this, team. Getting all of their school work done during their idle time eliminates using school work as an excuse for missing practice.
- **Have fun:** That is what we are trying to do! We will try to challenge your daughter to reach past their "comfort level" and improve themselves as a player, and thus a person. We will attempt to do this in environments that are fun, yet challenging. We look forward to the process. We hope you do too!