

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our competitive team program. We, as coaches, are dedicated to helping our young athletes achieve their highest potential by maintaining an environment that is educational, challenging, safe, and enjoyable. We know that this must be a cooperative effort between the coaches, athletes and parents. We also know that it is our responsibility to set guidelines for team members and their parents based on our knowledge of the sport. It is very important for our athletes and their families to be aware of, and understand, our team philosophy and guidelines (please find enclosed). They reflect what our experience has taught us and what we believe is to be in the best interest of the individual athletes and our team.

The philosophy for our program is not based solely on soccer, but on very important life qualities. The qualities developed through our program can be instrumental in your child's development and success later in life. It is our goal to make a positive difference in the lives of our team members, and to develop happy, healthy, confident players. We believe the training we will give, will greatly add to the development of your child's physical and emotional well being. We will strive for quality and excitement in our competitive program. Our program will be directed initially toward the development of individual skills and later when those skills are mastered, toward the development of team skills. It is also our goal, to support the aspirations of each of the individual players as well as that of the team's.

Although winning is enjoyable, an indicator of team progress and good for team morale, winning is not a priority for the coaches. It is unrealistic to believe we will win all our matches. The development of technical, physical and social skills as well as the enthusiasm of our players is what we will measure our success by. In general, young athletes do not care what position they finish in. They play because they love to compete and because they love the game. It is adults and or parents who tend to measure success by the score of a game, the season standing, or the final placement in a tournament. We hope this will not be the case with our parents and that you will help your child to recognize all their accomplishments regardless of the outcome.

We are looking forward to coaching your children and we hope this will help you to understand our intentions. It is our intent to have many fun filled successful years ahead. **Please have your child read the team philosophy and guidelines to you. We need to have the last page signed by all and returned prior to our first practice.**

Sincerely,

Your Name

- **MUTUAL SUPPORT:** We will work hard to help each other improve at all times. A team can only be as good as the individuals within the team. No unconstructive criticism or denigration of teammates will be allowed. You each as individuals have your own goals and dreams, but you are also here to help and support your teammates. Encourage your teammates when they attempt new skills, support them when they make mistakes.
- **BE COURTEOUS:** Demonstrate the highest regard for the game and for your hard work by arriving to all competitions and practices, prepared, and on time. Conduct yourself in a manner that honors the sport of soccer, and accept all outcomes in a positive manner. Often times we learn more from our mistakes than we do from our successes. Always treat teammates, opponents, referees, parents, and coaches with respect. Whenever possible, remember to thank your parents, coaches, referees, and event organizers for all their time and effort. Without them, you would not be able to participate. Observe the rules of play. Be a good sports-person for the sake of everyone.
- **EMBRACE MODESTY, DO NOT BRAG:** When complimented always respond with a simple “**Thank You**”. Always carry yourself with humility. Have enough confidence in your abilities to keep your personal or team success to yourself.
- **NO TRASH TALKING, NO TAUNTING:** This is a common practice in sports today, used to create a psychological edge during the course of a match. This will not be tolerated in any form on our team. Resorting to these tactics usually is indicative of a lack of ability and or self-confidence. Let your play and your actions speak for themselves.
- **RESPECT YOUR PHYSICAL SELF:** The demands of soccer require that you fuel your body with nutritious food (**drink a lot of water & or scientifically researched sports drinks**). Rest your body get to bed early, and most important listen to your body when it tells you to stop because of either illness or injury.
- **RESPECT YOURSELF:** Give your very best every time you step on the playing field regardless of whether it is a practice or a match. Competitive player’s, who aspire to be good/great, understand that achieving their goals requires discipline and dedication. Only you can achieve this. Someone else cannot do it for you. It is through hard work, that you develop the necessary skills and confidence to become a better player.
- Success will not be given to you there is no magical phrase to make it appear. It will not come, unless you earn it. In order to achieve success, you must pay your dues through honest effort and commitment. The more you practice, the better you will become, the better you become, the more fun you will have. If you do not work hard to meet your potential, others who have made the commitment will steal your potential glory.
- It is up to you however, to make the commitment. Your coaches will assist you as much as possible, but, at the end of the day, it is only you who can make it happen

- It is important to remember, if you practice more than someone else there is a good chance you will become better than that other person, but if that other person practices more than you, then that person will probably be better than you. Do not settle for mediocrity, the world is filled with mediocrity, strive for greater heights. A champion is someone who is bending over to exhaustion when no one else is watching.
- Life as an athlete is not always fun, practice is not always fun, games are not always fun. It is misleading to believe that the idea of playing should always be fun. The game takes tremendous effort, you will have numerous failures, at moments you may abhor the sport, but it is not the sport you hate, it is simply your own personal frustration. You will **not** play well, every time out. Not only is playing soccer physically demanding, it is also a very technical sport. You will be confronted with numerous emotional setbacks. Amongst them, frustration, fear of failure and defeat. Take these as challenges, embrace them, and overcome them, learn from your failures. If not for failure, progress can never be achieved. Set high goals and standards for yourself. Strive to achieve and maintain them, step by step. Maintain a positive sporting attitude when facing adversity. With a positive attitude your weaknesses and frustrations can and will be overcome through hard work. Knowing you accomplished something you never deemed possible, this is where the “fun” truly lies.
- **RESPECT AND LOYALTY TO YOUR TEAM:** Attend every practice leading up to all important games or events. Every event is important in some way, but some are more important than others. Prior to important games or events we expect all team members to attend every practice. It shows respect for your hard work over the prior year, respect and loyalty to your coaches, and most importantly respect and loyalty to your team. Give your very best effort prior to all-important events. Athletes who inexcusably miss a practice in the weeks prior to important events risk losing the respect and trust of their teammates and coaches.
- The way you behave with your team at practice is a personal reflection of your respect to yourself, to your teammates, to your coaches and to your families. The way you act at tournaments, team functions, and while traveling to and from tournaments is a public statement about how you feel about yourself, the team, and the sport of soccer. Only the highest standard of behavior will be acceptable.
- **NO PROFANITY, NO FIGHTING:** Our team activities should be enjoyable and safe for everyone. As a team we must represent ourselves, and each other responsibly. If a problem occurs, tell your coaches, or if in a game tell the referee. **Do not retaliate.** Have enough respect for yourself and toward your teammates to not engage in improper behavior.
- **THE USE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND TOBACCO IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED:** We as a team will dedicate numerous hours striving to give our absolute best effort and all of that work is an absolute waste of time if you don't have enough self respect to stay away from drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Engaging in any of these **illegal** activities will result in **immediate expulsion** from the team.

PLAYER GUIDELINES

- Attend all practices, competitions, and special events.
- Call in advance to alert the coaches if you will be absent for any reason.
- If you know in advance you will be absent. Please send a note, it is sometimes difficult to remember what all team members tell you.
- Arrive on time, prepared for practice and remain until practice is over.
- You are expected to work hard and give your very best. This is all we ever ask of you and this is always what you should demand of yourself.
- Always come to practice prepared with the following; shin guards (with socks over the shin guards), water or sports drink, soccer cleats, turf shoes, warm up, gloves, and an ear warmer. **You will not be allowed to participate without shin guards.**
- Treat other athletes with respect be kind and helpful to those athletes who are younger than you.
- Do not hold yourself in higher esteem than those around you. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses and if you have not found your weaknesses yet, you will.
- Always ask permission when leaving practice. This applies to leaving practice early or going to the restroom. The main reason for this is so your coaches know where you are at all times. Do not wander off. This is for safety reasons.
- If you do not have a ride home after practice, please let us know. You will not be allowed to remain unattended.
- Tell your coach when your body is telling you to stop or slow down. This shows respect for yourself and to your coach.
- If you are sick, on medication, or are injured, we need to know, and you need to listen to your body. Pain is the body's way of telling you to stop. In addition, alert your coach if you have engaged in any strenuous activity prior to practice. We do not want to risk injury by over taxing your body.
- There are times when players will feint an injury or illness to get out of drills that they do not want to participate in, but when they see an exercise they like, they become miraculously cured. This will not be allowed. If a player says they are ill or injured, they will have to sit out the remainder of practice and they will not be allowed to rejoin the activities.
- If a player is ill or injured they will not be allowed to participate until we have the parents approval for them to do so. This is for the player's safety.
- A player's participation will cease after a player's injury has been recognized and the player will not be allowed to rejoin the activities without the parent's approval.

PLAYER GUIDELINES CONTINUED

- No one will be allowed to play injured. The coaches can advise but we are not doctors or family.
- In the event your child is to suffer an injury, when they are able, we would still like them to attend practice. They can learn by watching, as well as listening. They are still part of the team.
- Provide your body with nutritional food, drink, and be sure to get a proper amount of sleep this will help you to stay healthy and enable you to perform to the best of your ability. Stay away from junk food and sodas.
- Please respect and care for all the equipment. When practice is over, it is the player's responsibility to make sure that all equipment is picked up and put away. This is a job for all team members not just a select few.
- Always act in a way that shows respect for yourself and your teammates. The time we will spend together is to be a happy, motivating, and uplifting place to be.
- There is no place for rude or belittling comments, displays of anger or disgust, talking back to coaches or other adults, or crying because you have given into your frustrations or fears.
- Be honest, lying and cheating is the highest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your teammates, to your coaches, to your parents, and most importantly to yourself.
- If you cannot or will not complete an activity, be honest about it, but also be prepared to suffer the consequences.
- Players who are unprepared due to missing practice or an inability or unwillingness to apply themselves at practice may see less or no playing time.
- A player may be suspended from practice, for one or more days, due to poor behavior or a poor work ethic. Reinstatement may be allowed, pending a parent coaches meeting.
- A player may be suspended from a game or tournament due to poor attendance, a poor work ethic, or a negative attitude.
- A player may be permanently dismissed if they do not conform their behavior to the expectations of the team and or the coaches. We will not allow the bad attitude of one player to bring down the spirit and work ethic of an entire group.

PARENT GUIDELINES

- Parents play a huge role in the development of a successful athlete and team. Your role is every bit as important as that of the coaches. It is also every bit as difficult. That is why we welcome your presence at every practice, team function, and at every event. Our goal is to be family friendly. We want your input and support because we want your child to succeed.
- The player's will train in a safe, well-equipped, organized environment under the direction of organized, experienced, licensed coaches.
- Your child's involvement in soccer will be an investment of time, money, and effort.
- The expenses in operating a competitive program are considerable and will include fees for the following; balls, two sets of uniforms, registration fee, league entry fee, tournament fees, travel to and from games and tournaments, hotel rooms, as well as other miscellaneous items.
- The coaches all believe that the training, educational opportunities, and emotional support we offer is valuable and important. The coaches responsibilities are enormous, in addition to the amount of time they spend planning, training, and traveling, the coaches are also; meeting with parents and players, writing letters, arranging for practices and fields, returning phone calls, taking care of and ordering equipment, organizing and administering all fundraising, games, tournaments, taking care of travel and sleeping arrangements and maintaining and improving the program. All this is in addition to the actual time they spend coaching. This may be a labor of love, but it is still labor. So please volunteer to help with any of the administrative duties. **We especially need help with fundraising!!!!**
- Since your child is unable to drive, it is your responsibility as parents to make sure your child makes it to all practices, dressed and ready, on time, and that your child stays through until practice is over.
- When practice is over, and all the equipment is picked up, your child may leave.
- Out of courtesy, please make sure you pick up your child on time.
- Please let a coach know before practice, if you think your child might have a problem due to illness, medication, or injury.
- We will **not** practice under the following conditions; snow, bitter cold, heavy rain, when the field is too muddy, or when lightning is near.
- We **will** practice in a light rain (when warm), or if rainy weather looks like it might break (dress appropriately).

PARENT GUIDELINES CONTINUED

- If you are not sure whether or not there is a practice and you do not see the coach at the field on a bad weather day, do not leave your child there.
- If at any time you are unable to attend an event, please take care to cover the following details.
- Know the name and phone number of the facility in which your child is staying.
- Communicate clearly with your child who is taking them and who will be picking them up when they return.
- Make sure to send your child with everything they will need. All team equipment, sleeping bag, etc.
- Let them know where they will be staying and when they will be returning.
- Provide your child and the coach with a number where you can be reached and an alternate number to call in the event of an emergency if you are not there.
- Arrange for your child to call home in the event your games are running late.
- Send enough money to cover meals, snacks, phone calls, recreational spending and to contribute toward gas.
- Parents perform their role at home and outside the practice area. During our team sessions the coaches perform their roles. Please do not coach your child. When a parent starts to coach their child they actually interfere with the very performance we are trying to improve.
- We have very specific skills that we will be developing at very specific times and each of these stages must be built on the previous stage. We like to think of it as a pyramid, with ball mastery and individual skill development being the foundation. Without that nothing else can be further developed.
- By telling your child to do something other than what we are telling them is only going to confuse your child and make them upset. No matter which choice they make, someone is going to be upset with them and they will no longer progress the way they should. Coaching your child puts them in a no win situation. This is unfair to them and to the coaches.

PARENT GUIDELINES CONTINUED

- Encouragement and support is the best way to improve your child's play.
- We encourage all our parents to attend every game or event. Having a strong cheering section does wonders for team motivation. As parents you should be reminded that you too represent our team and our team philosophy.
- Cheer loud and often but do so in a courteous manner.
- Cheer for all members of the team and feel free to cheer for a fine play by the other team.
- The only time a parent should approach an event official, a referee, or another coach is to thank them for a job well done. If you have a complaint, you need to bring it to the attention of the coach, but please do so after the game.
- Please do not talk to your child once they are on the playing field. We ask them to focus all their energy on their roles and their competition and we want as few distractions as possible.
- Although the vast majority of the players are very good students, there may be times when a pressing assignment or test might mean a shortened or missed practice. We have no problem with this just let us know.
- Please attend all team parent meetings. This gives coaches an opportunity to communicate detailed information with plenty of time for questions and answers.
- If you feel you need to talk to us on a one-on-one basis, please feel free to arrange a time when we can meet.
- Prior to practice we are usually unable to visit because there is a great deal of work to do in preparation for practice. So please don't think us rude or to be ignoring you.
- Please do not discipline your child by restricting them from participating with our team. By doing so you are punishing the coaches preparation as well as all the other members on the team. As with school, your child also has a responsibility and obligation to our team. If at the end of a season you need to remove your child for disciplinary measures that is your decision, but during the season your child occupies one of a limited number of positions and needs to fulfill his or her obligation to the team.

PARENT GUIDELINES CONTINUED

- Please do not complain to other parents, complaining to other parents cannot solve your problem and it is very disrespectful to the coaches and the team. Come to us, the coaches if you have a problem or concern. The coaches cannot help to solve any of your concerns if we do not know about them. Your thoughts are important to us.
- This does not necessarily mean that any changes will be made and we ask that you respect our decisions. If you respect us enough to allow us to play a large role in your child's life, please respect us enough to know that we have your child's best interest at heart.
- We do not want to have dissention amongst team members because they have overheard parent's ignorant and or malicious comments. This is very harmful to the children and very disrespectful to the coaches. There will be no place for this in our program.
- It is possible that a player will have to leave the team because of the actions or in-actions of his or her parents.
- While we never want to punish a child for the actions of his or her parents, we will not tolerate parents who by their words and actions do not support the policies and values of our team program.
- **Lastly, it is important to remember the coaches work as well and that they too, have families and obligations of their own. They are volunteers, yet they are spending a lot of time and energy for the benefit of your children and your families. Please respect and appreciate all that they do for your children.**

I have read and agree with the philosophy and guidelines for the TYSL and will abide by them.

Player's Name (please print): _____

Player's signature: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mother's Name (please print): _____

Mother's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Father's name (please print): _____

Father's signature: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____