

The Clarksburg Sports Association Parent Contract

As a parent, part of enjoying your children's participation in sport and recreation is watching them enjoy themselves, learning skills, making friends, improving their performance and generally having fun. But some parents get too caught up in the excitement of the action. They forget the sport or recreation activity is for their child's benefit, not the parents' entertainment. This Parent Contract provides you with information on what to watch for in your performance as a parent, so that your children can continue to have fun and play his or her own game.

Everyone has heard of, or worse yet seen, the loud obnoxious parent on the sidelines during a children's sport or recreation activity. Whether the incident takes place at a gym, rink or field is irrelevant. This parent has it in for the referee, the coach, and possibly even the other parents. Every call, decision and play evokes some response from the "repulsive" parent. Most parents are not like this. But one or a few parents can make a difference. They affect the ability of the coaches and officials to do their jobs. They embarrass children, steal their fun and maybe, without realizing it, train children to act overly aggressively and violently. In short, unruly parents are not setting a good example. And most kids learn from example. Whether it's by their friends, team mates or parents, those around them have a tremendous influence on their behavior. That's why it's important for parents and other adults to act appropriately at all Clarksburg Sports Association events.

Many sport and recreation activity programs have developed measures to ensure the sport and recreation environment is a healthy and respectful one. One of these is the Parent Contract, a simple agreement that is increasing in popularity in many sports organizations and recreation activities.

The Parent Contract lays out the acceptable rules of behavior of a parent in relation to their child's sport or recreation activity. Clarksburg Sports Association will be distributing this Parent Contract at the beginning of each season.

By agreeing to this code of conduct, parents are acknowledging that their child's activity is for his or her enjoyment, not theirs. It is the expectation of Clarksburg Sports Association that each parent lives by the contract and models it for their children and others. Should a parent deliberately ignore their responsibilities as outlined in the agreement, disciplinary action, such as asking the parent to leave the event or banning the parent from attending future games, may be imposed.

- I will not force my child to participate in sports.
- I will pledge to actively monitor my child's academic progress and reinforce the importance of academic achievement.
- I will remember that my child plays sport for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
- I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

- I will inform the coach of any disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- I will avoid leading my child to early specialization understanding that yearlong play in one sport can result in potential burnout.
- I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good players' performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sporting activities.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
- I will respect and show appreciation for the trained volunteer coaches who give their time to provide sport activities for my child, understanding that I have a responsibility to be a part of my child's development.
- I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
- I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
- I will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of the athletes.
- I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning.
- I will stress the importance of a lifetime of health, including habits of fitness and good nutrition ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
- I will stress the importance of academics first and foremost in the overall development experience, understanding that sports participation is a privilege available to support, not excuse classroom obligations.
- I will attend organizational meetings at the outset of sports seasons to meet coaches and organization officials and learn the expectations for participation in athletics.

- I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.
- I will give consistent encouragement and support to my student-athlete and fellow teammates, regardless of the degree of success, the level of skill or time on the field.
- I will leave coaching to coaches, ensuring not to publicly criticize coaches, strategies or the team; nor pressure my student-athlete or coaches about playing time and performance.
- I will emphasize the moment, not the future and recognize that only a small fraction of student-athletes earn a college scholarship, compete in the Olympics or sign a professional contract.
- I will respect and show appreciation for the other parents who share these beliefs.
- I will be there when my child looks to the sidelines for a positive role model.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal warning by official, head coach, and/or head of league organization
- Written warning
- Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file by organizations involved
- Game forfeit through the official or coach
- Parental season suspension

I agree to Play Fair: _____
 (Signature of parent or legal guardian)

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____