

The main objective of the Vermilion Soccer Club (VSC) is to offer a safe, progressive learning environment, in which all players and parents can participate and benefit from the sport of soccer while developing positive, lifelong experiences. In order to meet this objective, the VSC has developed the following codes of conduct for all participants: Coaches, Players and Spectators. We have also developed procedures for the review of complaints and discipline of coaches and players.

VERMILION SOCCER CLUB CODES OF CONDUCT

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT:

Coaches and assistant coaches are expected to maintain a higher level of sportsmanship, professionalism, and integrity both off and on the field. A coach's primary responsibility is for his/her players to have fun, to develop soccer players, and to instill a passion for the game. The performance of coaches is not measured in wins and losses, but rather in what is taught to players in terms of technique, sportsmanship, and fair play. Coaches must maintain respect for the game as well as the referees. Coaches are charged with the responsibility of controlling their players and parents at all times during a match. Coaches lead and teach by example; players will be a reflection upon each individual coach.

Coaches and assistant coaches are expected to:

- Have a basic knowledge of the game and to pursue coaching education allowing you to better develop your players. The VSC will reimburse any reasonable class or seminar fees incurred by the coach during this pursuit. Travel and meal expenses will not be reimbursed.
- Use positive reinforcement when dealing with players, never use foul or abusive language, and never abuse a player mentally, verbally, or physically.
- Have respect for the authority of the referee and his/her assistants. You should not harass, abuse, or berate the referee during or after the match. You should not enter the field of play without the referee's permission.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship both off and on the field. You should teach your players the rules of the game, fair play, and proper game behavior.
- Play every player at least the equivalent of one half of a match. This is a rule of the Lorain County Soccer League (LCSL). Depending on game day roster size, some players may get more playing time. It is not mandatory that everyone have the same amount of playing time, as long as everyone gets their allotted half.
 - Provided that the player participates in the majority of the regularly scheduled mandatory team practices (typically teams practice twice a week, in some cases teams have an optional 3rd practice)
 - Provided that the player is not being subjected to a VSC and/or LCSL sanctioned discipline/suspension. Procedures for VSC sanctioned discipline are listed below.
 - Provided that the player is not suffering from a pre-existing or in-game injury or physical condition. All concerns about pre-existing injuries or medical conditions must be addressed with the player and parents prior to the game. By rule of thumb, the VSC would prefer to err on the side of caution, but the player's parents will have final say on whether the player's allotted time will be affected.
 - Provided that the player even wants to play. This is recreational soccer, and at times (especially with the younger teams) the players don't want to go back into the game. If this is the case, the VSC expects the coach to explain this to the parents immediately following the game.

PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT:

Children play soccer to have fun, to learn and develop a passion for the game as well as to improve their skills. Players have a responsibility to their team, coach, the VSC and the LCSL. They are representatives of the club as well as the team, coach, parents, and the community. Players must maintain a high level of sportsmanship and fair play. Violent and belligerent play will not be tolerated.

Players should:

- Play within the laws of the game and spirit of the game.
- Be on time and prepared for games and practices.
- Display self-control in all situations and should not use foul or abusive language at any time - before, during, or after a game, or practice.
- Train and play to the best of their ability, have a positive attitude, and encourage others to do the same.
- Show respect towards the referee and his/her assistants as well as toward the opponents.
- Not harass, abuse, or berate a referee, spectator, coach or other player for any reason.

SPECTATORS CODE OF CONDUCT:

Spectators must set the example for the children by exemplifying the highest standards of sportsmanship. Spectators participate in a game by watching, cheering, and supporting the efforts of all participants of the game. Soccer must be fun! The game is for the children. Their participation and enjoyment of the game is the most important element.

Parents have responsibilities to their coach, team, the VSC and the LCSL. Spectators should have respect for their coach, all children on the team, and the authority of the referee and his/her assistants.

Spectators are expected to:

- Have respect for the authority of the referee and his/her assistants. They should not harass, abuse, or berate the referee during or after the game. They should not enter the field of play.
- Have respect for the coach and his/her assistants; they should never criticize a coach in a public manner. Do not coach from the sideline; let the coach do his/her job no matter how much you may disagree. If there is a problem, talk to the coach or a member of the Board of Trustees of the VSC at a later point in time.
- Have respect for all players. Cheer in a positive manner, not negative. Encourage your team and don't berate the other team. Cheer in a way to reward the good play of both teams and promote fair play.
- Not to use foul or abusive language toward any one for any reason.
- Have a responsibility to learn the rules of the game and the spirit of the game.
- Get involved with the organization and promote the game in a positive way.
- Demonstrate the utmost in sportsmanship and integrity; they are the role models for their children, they represent not only their families, but also our community.
- By the rules of the VSC and the LCSL, spectators are prohibited from bringing dogs or other animals to the soccer fields for games or practices.

COACH/PLAYER COMPLAINT/DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Since the VSC Board of Trustees can not be represented at every practice or every game, we ask that the parents take responsibility to monitor their child's soccer experience. Parents who feel their child is not being treated fairly or in a positive manner by a coach or another player should first make an effort to discuss the problem with their coach as soon as possible. Parents and players are expected to give the coach the opportunity to rectify the problem. This should be done by telephone or perhaps after a practice but never before or during a game. If, after talking to the coach, the player or parent is still not satisfied, they should then direct their concerns in writing, to the Board of Trustees, through the VSC Vice President (P.O. Box 16, Vermilion, OH 44089).

PLAYER DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

The single most effective way for a coach to discipline their players is to remove them from the situation by asking them to sit out for a duration of time designated by the coach. If, however the situation does not improve or is severe enough, removal from practice entirely may be required. If this occurs, or additional sanctions are designated by the coach, both the VSC Board of Trustees, via the Vice President, and the player's parents are to be notified in either an e-mail or a written form. The penalty, as defined by the coach, shall be reviewed by the VSC Board of Trustees to verify that it is appropriate for the offense. If the player's actions were against another player, the offended player's parents are to be also notified and the appropriate punishment must also be approved by that set of parents, within reason. The Board of Trustees will take the offended player's parents opinions into account before approving/revising any punishment. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

COACH DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

Even though all of our coaches are volunteers, they are first and foremost human, and therefore subject to emotions, just as anyone. Every coach in our organization is participating because of the kids. However, every one of them has the strong desire to see their team succeed. There are times that this desire may be exposed in inappropriate times and methods. If you feel that your teams coach has crossed that line or is not following the Coach's Code of Conduct (listed above) please make an effort to discuss your issue with the coach as soon as possible. As was stated before, parents and players are expected to give the coach the opportunity to rectify the problem. Many times you will find that the coach won't even realize that they have done anything inappropriately. If the issues were presented in a constructive manner, I am sure that the issues will be resolved in a positive manner for everyone involved. If, however, the situation does not improve, please contact the Board of Trustees, through the Vice President, in an e-mail or written form. The Board will due it's due diligence and review the situation. One of the following conclusions will be made:

- The Board will decide that the matter is relatively minor, and attempt to mediate a positive resolution for everyone involved.
- The Board will decide that the matter is minor, and will review the situation with the coach and issue a letter of reprimand to the coach.
- The Board will decide that the matter is serious, and the coach will be relieved from his/her coaching duties. In this case, if the actions occur during the season, the Club will take over the team until a replacement coach, from the pool of parents from this team, can be installed or the season ends, whichever comes first. If a replacement coach can not be found prior to the next season, the team will be disbanded.
- The Board will decide that the matter is serious, but the player and/or parent is the detriment to the team. The player will be re-assigned to another team, if a roster spot is available and the other team's coach approves.
- The Board will decide that the matter is serious and the player and/or parent is a detriment to the entire club. The player will be removed from the club. A pro-rated refund will be sent to the family.

Soccer is meant to be an enjoyable experience for all concerned, from parents to coaches to players. This enjoyment is the ultimate goal of the VSC. With everyone's positive involvement, I'm sure this goal will be achieved each and every season.

Vermilion Soccer Club Board of Trustees