

SIDELINE ETIQUETTE

1. No sideline coaching. Sideline coaching undermines what the coach is trying to accomplish and takes away from the game. Sideline coaching is disruptive to the learning process and disrespectful to the coach. Most coaches will be happy to discuss strategy and tactics at another time—but not during or right after games.
2. Praise your child for things well done, but limit calling out your child's name at other times. Let them enjoy the game without distraction.
3. Kids don't like to be yelled at by their parents any time—whether at home or in front of their soccer teammates. It's embarrassing and it doesn't help. The soccer field is one place they can express themselves without concern for criticism from their parents.
4. **No yelling at, or arguing with the referees or linesmen.** In fact, don't make any comments to them. Be respectful and patient. These officials will make mistakes. This is soccer, after all. But, try to keep in mind that a) it is a challenging task, b) almost always they are trying to do their best, and c) they are there helping kids. We don't want our players to argue with the ref EVER. Parents need to avoid setting a bad example. Moreover, there has NEVER been a case where a parent has disputed a referee's decision and convinced him to change his mind. **Relax. It's just a game.**
5. Similarly, no vocal criticism of the other team, their parents, or coaches. Be respectful of our visitors while we're at home and of our hosts when we are away.
6. Speech is one thing we need to control and negative actions are another: like throwing your hat, kicking the Gatorade container, pulling your hair out and so on.

Those are some of the cautions. Here are things you can do to contribute to the game and your own enjoyment of it.

1. Cheer for good plays, good hustle, good effort, goals, saves, shots, tackles—on both teams.
2. Cheer for any play or player on the team that is deserving—not just your son/daughter.
3. Acknowledge a great play by the opposing team. It adds to the spirit of the game—and speaks volumes about your soccer knowledge.
4. Be there for moral support and positive reinforcement. Your player will perform better under these conditions and the coach will be better able to do his job.
5. Relax and enjoy the game. It is a game. Games are for fun and satisfying. Everyone on the field, on both sidelines, and in the parking lot should be having fun. Watch the game knowing you have no control over what happens. Your assignment is to enjoy the game, chat with other parents, praise the players and be philosophical about the outcome.
6. Soccer is the “Beautiful Game.” Both of those words are important.

Please see the next page for a letter from a Storm player who is also a referee.

A Friendly Note from an Experienced Soccer Player—and Referee

Soccer is a GAME that contributes to my overall development. If the adults around me do their job, playing soccer will help me gain confidence, learn how to be a team player, help me be fit, develop my self-discipline, and I will have lots of fun. What adults can do to help me:

- Stay positive and remember how old I am. Don't expect things from me that I can't do yet.
- Encourage me to give 100 % and have fun.
- Ensure that I give my coach and my team-mates respect.
- Let the coach do the coaching.
- Too much yelling during the game, even if it's positive, distracts me. Please do not embarrass me with your shouting.
- Remind me that it's just a game.
- Only say positive things about the coach, referees, or other players.
- Praise me for a job well done, or for trying my hardest, or for being a good sport.
- After the game, move on to the next thing. Do not go over the game and tell me what I could have done differently. This is a sure way to make me dislike soccer.
- Remember that parents care about winning a lot more than kids do. We just want to play and have fun.

Calvin Rutherford
Storm Player & Referee