



A guide for
**Parents
& carers**

How to Support Your Child in Soccer...

Our children are strongly influenced by our own attitudes and behavior...

- Children's soccer is a time for them to develop their technical, physical, tactical and social skills. Focus on this, rather than exclusively on winning matches.
- Don't take it too seriously. Even if your child is talented, at this stage their enjoyment is still the main goal.
- Children need positive feedback to feel that they can improve their game. It doesn't help to tell them what they are doing wrong.
- Help them analyze their own game after the match is over. Ask them how they felt about it, about other players, and ask them what went well to reinforce their strengths.
- Help children learn from their own mistakes by encouraging them to think about what they could have done instead. Remind them of their strengths.
- Help children to feel confident, enjoy themselves and feel like they 'belong' by supporting a positive atmosphere at a game.
- Soccer is a passionate game but don't let disappointment at a misplaced pass or a poor touch get in the way. Encourage players to 'move on'.
- Respect the officials – children copy their parents and other adults' behavior!

How to Manage a Conflict Situation...

- Remember soccer is for the children, not the adults.
- It's not a professional game.
- It's meant to be fun.
- Getting angry won't solve anything.
- If adults lose control, children will lose respect.
- Suggest everyone takes 'time out' if there's shouting.
- Never tolerate violence or abuse, in any form.





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What Experts Say About Children and Competition...

Experts in child development tell us that...

- ⚽ Children should feel confident that they'll be supported, whether they win or lose.
- ⚽ Too much pressure to win can have a negative effect and put children off the game altogether.
- ⚽ Dreaming of success is fine, but make sure they're your child's dreams, not yours.
- ⚽ It helps to manage your child's expectations, so they regard losing as learning, not as failure.
- ⚽ Research has shown that children are more interested in playing the game than getting a result.
- ⚽ Winning is great but at this stage it's not everything.
- ⚽ If we see competition as a way to improve a team's game, losing can be as valuable as winning.





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Get the Most from Watching Your Child Play Soccer...

Be a good spectator...

- 🏆 Cheer good effort.
- 🏆 Be positive and supportive of all the players.
- 🏆 Allow the coach to do their job without interference.
- 🏆 Respect the referee's decisions, even if you disagree.
- 🏆 Don't criticize or dwell on mistakes or weaknesses – this undermines confidence.
- 🏆 Appreciate the opposing team's efforts too.
- 🏆 Take a coaching or referee course – improve your own understanding of the game and provide practical assistance to the club.

