



RESPECT Program

Information for Parents and Guardians

This is the second year of the GHFA Respect program. This is an ongoing journey to change to culture in Football to a consistently positive and rewarding one. We are aiming to emphasise that, while winning is important as a measure of achievement; it is not the only measure out there. Setting your own goals and achieving them can be just as fulfilling for teams and individuals.

Help your coach:

- Meet with the coach and manager early in the season and agree on the team and individual player goals
- Allow the coach to coach! Telling a child to do something different to what the coach is asking is counterproductive and confusing. If you have suggestions for the team, make them to the coach.
- Do not complain about the coach to other parents or your child. If you feel strongly about something speak privately to the coach. There may be a method in their madness!
- Tell your children it's OK to make a mistake. A mistake can be a valuable learning experience. Let them learn this— they are not going to get everything right first or even second attempt. Tell them you appreciate their best effort even if they fall short of the desired result. This is an important life lesson.

Help the game:

- Make positive comments from the sideline. Players and officials will make mistakes. It is often difficult for you from the sideline to accurately assess who made the error. Outbursts from the sidelines can upset players and the match officials. Set an example by being a positive and enthusiastic spectator.
- Don't make negative comments about players on the other team. All players are playing because they enjoy the sport. They deserve to be encouraged. Cheer a good play or save regardless of which side made it.
- Avoid conflicts with parents of the other team. Both sets of parents want their team to win. Share the joy of watching children play. The other team is not the enemy. Without them, there would be no game.
- Post-game is not the time to focus on negative aspects of the game. Don't fall into the trap of blaming a loss on someone else. There are always positives in every game even if it is a loss. Focus on these and ask you child how they think they could improve their performance. Make a loss a positive experience for your child and you! If you can't control your behaviour, then go home, relax and unwind.

Help the match officials:

- Being a referee can be a difficult task. Many referees are young and learning their trade just as the players. No referee will be 100% perfect. Sure they may make a wrong call. Occasionally, they may cost you a game. However, it is usually the case that teams win or lose matches, not the referee.
- If you criticise the match officials, be it from the sidelines or in the car on the way home, you are affirming that this is OK. When you child is then sent off for dissent, they will have been modelling your behaviour!

Help yourself

- Be aware that other players or match officials may be minors. Your behaviour to them could have serious repercussions. Clubs can and do ban parents/guardians from matches if they demonstrate inappropriate behaviours.
- Remember that sport is an opportunity to teach life skills and life lessons.
- Have fun. Be positive.