

# THE STATE GOVERNMENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPECTATORS AND PLAYERS.

The State government has introduced a code of practice for spectators, players, officials and clubs in response to an increase in so-called 'ugly parent syndrome'.

The code of practice, is called *User Friendly Clubs*, and has been launched to cover all sporting associations.

The guide warns that abusive or embarrassing behaviour on the sidelines could set the wrong example of children. But it also tells parents how to be positive influences, by promoting active and healthy habits that will benefit their kids for life.

Advice for parents contained in the guide includes:

- You should not criticise your child because they are not as capable as another child. All children play sport at different skill levels.
- Don't embarrass your child with loud, emotional or uneducated claims that they are being unfairly treated - they can't keep the respect of their team mates if it looks like you are seeking special favours for them.
- The friendly banter that goes with sport is great fun but know where to draw the line. There is a big difference between support and abuse.
- Kids' sport can be either a war or a game. There are no winners in a war but no losers in sport.
- Try not to interfere - though you can let the coach know you are available to help.
- Training shouldn't be all consuming - kids' training doesn't need to be five days a week. Kids have other interests and activities.
- Don't pressure your child - too many children turn off sport because of adult pressure on them to perform.

## Code of Behavior.

### NEVER.

- **Never** - Put the child's effort down – playing well is not the same as trying hard; they are learning their sport. Appreciate that skills, confidence and game savvy develop over a period of time.
- **Never** - Blame the umpire and slam their decisions – there is always a complex combination of events that make for a dubious decision, rarely is one person to blame.
- **Never** - Ignore the safety aspect – do not encourage tactics that could lead them to injure others or themselves.
- **Never** - Swear or abuse even in the heat of the moment – our children are listening and watching, they learn from us. Be conscious of the role you are playing in the development of your child.

### ALWAYS.

- **Always** – Understand and have respect for the rules.
- **Always** – Analyse what is fair and what isn't. Recognise that all team members deserve an equal turn, not just the best players.
- **Always** – Encourage our young players to play hard, and never promote violent action.
- **Always** – Remember, it is a game and it's supposed to be fun.
- **Always** – Inspire your children to praise their teammates, not reprimand them.
- **Always** – Offer encouragement and consolation to players who missed a shot or lost.
- **Always** – Highlight players' efforts over outcomes.
- **Always** – Discourage poor sporting attitudes.

### Behaviours and Attitudes that we hope to achieve:

- Respect for the umpires' decision. Decisions are made quickly and there are many that are entirely correct and others that aren't.
- Honour the rules – it is the rules that determine the game: there is no point arguing with them.
- Learn to win graciously – accept winning with pride and humility. Realise that a combination of elements makes for success.
- Learn to lose with dignity – make observations about the events, strengths and weaknesses without blame of themselves or others, learning to see the big picture.