

## Parents' Code of Conduct

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics parents, family members, and support staff agree to the following code:

**FOLLOW THE GOLDEN RULE** - Always treat others (coaches, parents, officials and players) the same way that you would want you and your child to be treated. Set the example by showing respect, dignity, and total sportsmanship at all times.

**ACT YOUR AGE** – Special Olympics sports are for the athletes. If you find yourself becoming too emotionally involved in what's happening on the court, take a step back and relax. Remember, your childhood is over. Give your athlete the freedom to enjoy theirs.

**BE RESPONSIBLE** - Get your athlete to practice and games on time. Make sure they are dressed appropriately for practice and have their uniform, gym shoes, etc. for games. Help them eat and drink right before, during and after the game. The more your athlete sees you act responsibly, the more they will do the same.

**BE SEEN, NOT HEARD** - Nothing is better for an athlete than having their parents on hand to watch them play. And nothing is worse for an athlete than hearing a parent booing, taunting, screaming or making comments at, or about, players, coaches, fans or officials (that includes your team as well as your opponent). Offer applause and cheers of encouragement for both teams following a good play or a great effort; otherwise keep quiet.

**IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE FUN** - So help make it that way. Keep smiling. Encourage enjoyment and participation over results. If it's not fun, something's wrong.

**MOTIVATE THROUGH CONFIDENCE** - Try and identify a positive from every game or practice to help build confidence. An athlete's sense of achievement is the greatest motivator. Support the learning effort of all the athletes, coaches and referees by demonstrating your patience.

**DON'T QUESTION AN OFFICIAL'S CALL** - You may not agree with a call, but it's not your job (or the athlete's or coach's either) to officiate the game. Never should an official's call be argued by anyone. Accept the call and move on.

**IF YOU MUST, TALK WITH THE COACH AFTER THE GAME** - Or better yet, wait until the next day if you have an issue to discuss about how the coach is running the team. Let the heat of the moment pass. Never make a scene in front of the team, as it's embarrassing for you, your athlete and the coach. And chances are, nothing will get resolved.

**PUT WINNING AND LOSING INTO PERSPECTIVE** - Games have winners and losers. Keep reminding your athlete about this reality and the need to deal with both outcomes. Athletes should avoid getting too cocky when they win and too upset when they lose. Remember the Special Olympic Oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." The important thing is that your athlete participates.

**AVOID THE POST GAME ANALYSIS** - Don't analyze your athlete's performance following every game. If you do, chances are they will avoid talking to you at all after games, or worse yet, not want you at the games at all. Let your athlete come to you for advice. It will have more of an impact than you going to them.

I/We understand that improper behavior at a Special Olympics practice, game or event may result in a parent being asked to leave. I/We also understand that upon review the Delegation Coordinator, and will if necessary, suspend our individual privilege to watch your athlete play should I/we behave in a manner that is rude or otherwise offensive. We agree to do our best to have as much fun watching the game, as the athletes should have playing the game.

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Print Athlete's Name

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Printed Name

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Relationship

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Signature

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Date

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Printed Name

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Relationship

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Signature

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Date