



# **SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER** **CODE OF ETHICS / CONDUCT**



## **I. SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER CODE OF ETHICS FOR “COACHES”:**

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer. (The term “Coaches” shall include, but is not limited to, Head Coach, Assistant Coaches, Team Manager/Trainer and/or Team / Club Representative.)

### **A. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS**

1. Unethical recruiting is defined as any intentional act whereby coaches contact a player, outside of their club, who is registered or rostered by the South Carolina Youth Soccer State Registrar/designee on another South Carolina Youth Soccer team to entice that player to join their team before his/her State Cup competition is completed. (State Cup competition includes: State Cup, Region Cup, and National Cup).
2. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
3. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
4. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
5. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
6. Demands on player’s time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.
7. Coaches must never encourage players to violate SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.
8. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician’s instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while injured.

### **B. RESPONSIBILITIES TO SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

1. Adherence to all South Carolina Youth Soccer and Member Association rules, policies and procedures, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting and guest players is mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of the coach to know and understand these rules, policies and procedures.
2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation are essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport is maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate South Carolina Youth Soccer District Commissioner, Member Association, or League.

### **C. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME**

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.
2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.
3. Coaches are responsible for their players’ actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
4. If coaches permit, encourage, or condone performance which is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, South Carolina Youth Soccer and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

### **D. RESPONSIBILITIES TO OFFICIALS**

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players, and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the game. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.
2. Coaches should strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.

3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as “Referee” or “Mr. or Ms. Referee” and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between official, coach, and player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the State Referee Administrator of South Carolina @ [www.scref.org](http://www.scref.org) and a copy to the league referee assignor.

#### **E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents, or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association and South Carolina Youth Soccer.
3. It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club and managers to pressure organizations, Member Associations, or South Carolina Youth Soccer to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.

#### **F. GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. A coach’s behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.
2. Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. Coaches shall exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine himself / herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach, officials, or bench personnel during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.
5. The coach’s foremost post game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.
7. All Member Associations are advised to monitor their own members to ensure they comply with the South Carolina Youth Soccer Code of Ethics / Conduct.

## **II. SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/VISITORS**

1. Unethical recruiting is defined as any intentional act whereby parents contact a player, outside of their club, who is registered or rostered by the South Carolina Youth Soccer State Registrar/designee on another South Carolina Youth Soccer team to entice that player to join their team before his/her State Cup competition is completed. (State Cup competition includes: State Cup, Region Cup, and National Cup).
2. Children have more need for example than for criticism.
3. Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.
4. Show respect to your child’s coaches and officials. Many coaches are volunteers giving of personal time and money to provide a recreational activity for your child.
5. Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
6. Do not openly question an official’s judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.
7. Accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.
8. Remember, your children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, NOT YOURS! Encourage your child to always play by the rules.
9. Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
10. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as “Referee” or “Mr. or Ms. Referee” and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between the official and the parent.
11. Parents / visitors should not be within the bench area, except at half time, unless they have an official pass.
12. No alcohol is permitted at any South Carolina Youth Soccer event.

### **III. SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Have respect for the game, players, officials, parents, coaches, member association volunteers and fellow board members and deal with them in a patient, courteous and consistent manner.
2. Criticism channeled through the proper quarter should be educational, constructive, balanced and positive. Under no circumstances should it be demeaning or detrimental to the self-respect of the individuals involved.
3. Clubs are responsible for the action of their “coaches”.

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RECRUITING**

1. A player may only be recruited after the completion of his/her State Cup competition until such time the player is registered or rostered by the South Carolina Youth Soccer State Registrar/designee for the next seasonal year. (State Cup competition includes: State Cup, Region Cup, and National Cup.) **Players who have made a financial commitment to a club will be considered as registered to that club for the seasonal year as of July 1 of the upcoming year.**
2. Unethical recruiting is defined as any intentional act whereby coaches or parents contact a player, outside of their club, who is registered or rostered by the South Carolina Youth Soccer State Registrar/designee on another South Carolina Youth Soccer team to entice that player to join their team before his/her State Cup competition is completed. (State Cup competition includes: State Cup, Region Cup, and National Cup).
3. All South Carolina Youth Soccer rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coaches and parents.
4. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his/her ODP coach or any other coaches or parent during the seasonal year. (Refer to # 2)
5. When discussing the advantages of their organization, the coaches have an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.
6. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
7. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of videotape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.
8. Any such allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting must be submitted, in writing, to the appropriate District Commissioner with all supporting evidence to prove such activity.

### **V. PENALTIES / VIOLATIONS**

Any Organizational Members, coaches, players, parents or administrators found guilty of violating the intent, the spirit, or rules of the South Carolina Youth Soccer Code of Ethics and Conduct, may be subject to probation, suspension and fines. Any Organizational Member or individual found guilty of unethical recruiting may be subject to a minimum one year suspension from all South Carolina Youth Soccer Activities. Any player found to have been illegally recruited may be determined to be ineligible to participate in State, Regional, or National Cup Competition on the team to which he was recruited.

**All matters shall be conducted in accordance with South Carolina Youth Soccer Discipline and Appeal Policies and Procedures.**