

The Ten Commandments for Soccer Parents

1. Thou shall not impose your ambitions on thy child.

Improvement and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of others, and don't push based on what you think they should be doing.

2. Thou shall be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child - Did you have fun? If games and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

3. Thou shall not coach your child.

Do not undermine the coach by coaching your child on the side. Your job is to support and love your child and the coach is responsible for the technical part of the job.

4. Thou shall have only positive things to say at a soccer game.

If you are going to show up at soccer game, cheer and applaud, but never criticize. Always strive to set a good example for your child.

5. Thou shall acknowledge your child's fears.

A soccer game can be stressful. It is appropriate for your child to be anxious. Assure your child that the coach would not have suggested his or her playing position if you child was not ready for it.

6. Thou shall not criticize officials.

Don't criticize those who are doing their best.

7. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and player is a special one which contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child. It will only serve to hurt your child's game.

8. Thy child shall have goals besides winning.

An honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than winning.

9. Thou shall place your child first above everything.

Ask yourself this question - Are your child's goals more important to you than they are to your child? Remember that the focus of youth sports should be fun. A child is constantly changing, and his/her goals, interests and participation in activities will change as well. Parents should remain flexible, patient and always supportive while their child strives to find his/her niche in life.

10. Thou shall not expect thy child to become an MLS or College star.

There are more than 3 million children playing soccer in America. The odds of your child becoming a star in the MLS/College are very slim. Soccer teaches self-esteem and fitness. It provides lifelong friendships and much, much more. Soccer builds good people and you should be happy that your child wants to participate.