

How to be a Good Soccer Parent

By [Stewart Coggin](#), About.com Guide

The influence of soccer parents in developing a child's game cannot be understated.

The enthusiastic and encouraging parent, who plays soccer with their child, supports them in the youth leagues and offers advice off the field can only aid their development.

1. Support Child on and off field

Soccer at a young age is primarily about having fun and arguably the most important role of a soccer parent is to be enthusiastic and supportive. The best players in world soccer will tell you how they played the game obsessively from a young age, and you can help your child by practicing with them regularly and developing drills. Just a few minutes passing and dribbling each day could benefit your child dramatically. Provide emotional support, encouragement and constructive feedback. It is, of course, important not to contradict the coach and confuse the child, but being available to offer advice is crucial.

2. Attend Games

It is important to attend a child's games. This may not be possible every week, but being there to give encouragement is one of the most important aspects of being a soccer parent. Parents should ask their children if they actually want to be cheered on during play; some could think of nothing worse. **AVOID GAME DAY INSTRUCTIONS DURING THE SOCCER GAME. THIS IS THE COACH'S JOB AND WILL ONLY BE CONFUSING TO YOUR CHILD AND OTHER CHILDREN PLAYING ON THE FIELD.**

3. Learn the Game

Parents should also look to build on their own knowledge of the game.

4. Purchase Soccer Aids

Provide your child with the means to learn more about the game. Goals in the garden can only help, while rebounders are an excellent way to improve control. There are some worthwhile videos and books available, also sitting down with your child and watching professional soccer matches.

5. Show Respect

Once at matches, it is important to conduct yourself in the appropriate fashion. Only speak to the referee if you intend to be complimentary, respect the opposition and keep a reasonable distance from the field (sitting three to five yards back from the sidelines is a rule in many youth leagues). Set a good example, because children copy the actions of adults.

Basic Soccer Rules for Kids

Soccer is one of the simplest sports in the world. Don't complicate the basic soccer rules too much with technical rules that only apply when playing competitively.

Size Of Field: The field must be rectangle, that's pretty much it. Soccer field size depends on good judgment of how many players on each side and the size of your goals.



Ball Size: The ball size depends on age.

Players: soccer is played by two teams preferably equal number. Max players per team is 11 (Goalie + 10 field players). Team size is reduced by age.

Substitutions: For youth leagues usually there is no cap on subs.

Starting the Game: The game is started at the center of the field. The team who kicks off passes the ball Forward to a teammate at the referees signal. The opposing team is not allowed to enter the center circle until the team kicks off.

Game In Play: as long the ball stays in the field the game is in play. Only exceptions are when the referee blows his whistle for an infraction or offside. The ball is considered in play as long as it is inside the goal and side lines. Furthermore, it's still in play as long as it has contact with the line. Therefore, the ball may be touching the outer part of the goal or side line and still be considered in play (This applies if the ball is in the air as well). Contact with the goal post, corner flag, and referee back in the field is still considered in play. The referee is considered a fixture of the field.

GOAL: In basic soccer rules the point of the game is to get the ball in the opposing team's goal and the team with most goals after the specified time is the winner. The ball must cross the goal line to be a goal.

How Long Is A Game? Youth games range from 15-30 min halves with a half time.

NO HANDS!: I know you probably knew this but here it is anyway. Only the goalie can use their hands.

Out of Bounds: if the ball crosses the side line it is a throw in. The team who did not touch the ball last before the ball crossed the line gets the throw in. If the ball crosses the goal line two things may occur. If the team that is defending that goal line touches it out it is a corner kick. If the team attacking that goal kicks it out it is a goal kick.

<http://www.kids-play-soccer.com/basic-soccer-rules.html>