

Good Sportsmanship

We expect our athletes to exhibit good sportsmanship while they are competing in athletic events.

Please be mindful of the following criteria:

What Is Good Sportsmanship?

- Good sportsmanship is when teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially their parents and their coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand that the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and to behave with dignity — whether they win or lose a game.
- ☑Parents can help their kids understand that good sportsmanship includes both small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully.
- ☑Displaying good sportsmanship isn't always easy: It can be difficult to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game. But the student-athletes who learn how to control themselves and exhibit good sportsmanship will be learning a skill which will carry them into careers and relationships.
- Student-athletes who bully or taunt others on the playing field aren't likely to change their behavior when in the classroom or in social situations. In the same way, a child who practices good sportsmanship is likely to carry the respect and appreciation of other people into every other aspect of life. Furthermore, bullying, harassment and taunting others carries with it legal ramifications from the NJSIAA and the State of New Jersey policies and regulations.
- Some people define good sportsmanship as the "golden rule" of sports — in other words, treating the people you play with and against as you'd like to be treated yourself. You demonstrate good sportsmanship when you show respect for yourself, your teammates, and your opponents, for the coaches on both sides, and for the referees, judges, and other officials.
- Sportsmanship isn't just reserved for the people on the field. Cheerleaders, fans, and parents also need to be aware of how they behave during competition. Sportsmanship is a style and an attitude, and it can have a positive influence on everyone around you.

Win or Lose, Sportsmanship Helps You Get Through

- In the last few years, taunting, trash-talking, gloating, and cheap shots have become all too common in sports. You've probably seen athletes who take their own successes too seriously, too. They celebrate a goal with a prolonged victory dance or constantly brag about their abilities. This is the exact opposite of what sportsmanship is all about. This kind of behavior might make you feel tough or intimidating to an opponent, but keep in mind it can also cause you to lose the match. Plenty of games have been lost to penalties gathered from "unsportsmanlike conduct."
- Everyone feels great when they win, but it can be just as hard to be a good sport when you've won a game as when you've lost one. Good sportsmanship takes maturity and courage — when you work really hard at a sport, it's not easy to admit you made a bad play or that someone has more skills than you. In competition — as in life — you may not always win but you can learn something from losing, too.

- It's pretty tough to lose, so it definitely doesn't help matters if someone continues taunting you or your team after the competition is over. Sometimes it's hard to swallow your pride and walk on. But there's always the next match.
- When you do lose — and it will happen — don't take it out on your opponent, blame the officials, or blame your team. Take it in stride. When you lose, lose with class. Being proud of how you performed, or at least being aware of things you need to improve for next time, is key. When it comes to losing, good sportsmanship means congratulating the winners promptly and willingly. Also, it means accepting the game's outcome without complaint and without excuses, even if you sometimes might suspect the referees made some questionable calls.
- When you win, be a gracious and generous winner. Good sportsmanship means acknowledging victories without humiliating opponents, being quietly proud of success, and letting victories speak for themselves. Even if you win by a landslide, good sportsmanship means still finding ways to compliment your opponents

Practicing Good Sportsmanship

- What does it take to demonstrate good sportsmanship in real-life situations? Here are some examples of things you can do:
- Learn as much as you can about your sport. Play by its rules. Show up for practice, work hard, and realize that on a team, everyone deserves a chance to play.
- Talk politely and act courteously toward everyone before, during, and after games and events. That includes your teammates, your opponents, your coaches and their coaches, the officials presiding over the game, and even spectators (who can sometimes be loud about their opinions).
- Stay cool. Even if others are losing their tempers, it doesn't mean you have to. Remind yourself that no matter how hard you've practiced and played, it is, after all, just a game.
- Avoid settling disputes with violence. If you're in a difficult situation or someone's threatening you, seek help immediately from your coach or from an official. Remember, too, that if you respond with violence you could get penalized, which could hurt your chances of winning.
- Cheer your teammates on with positive statements — and avoid trash-talking the other team.
- When officials make a call, accept it gracefully even if it goes against you. Remember that referees may not be right every time — but they're people who are doing their best, just as you are.
- Whether you win or lose, congratulate your opponents on a game well played.