Code of Conduct: Parents & Spectators

The Ontario Soccer Association ("OSA") is committed to promoting positive behavior on and off the soccer field through the support of coaches, parents, players, volunteers and officials. Respect is the communal responsibility of each participant in soccer to create an environment that is both safe and enjoyable for all who take part.

Royal York Football Club ("RYFC") is a strong supporter of making sport safe for our youth. Over the last couple of years, verbal abuse directed toward referees, players and team officials has been a particular problem. Accordingly, RYFC has established the Friendly Fan Policy for non-OSA registrants – anyone not individually registered with the OSA as either a Player, Team Official or Administrator ("Registrant") – to enforce a set of expectations around inappropriate behavior for parents, legal guardians and spectators (collectively "Spectators"), including but not limited to offensive, insulting or abusive language or behavior, sexist or racist remarks, violence and vandalism, in order to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all. For the purposes of this policy, a spectator is defined as an immediate family member associated with a game participant, including aunts, uncles, grandparents or children.

Spectator Code of Conduct

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behavior in the game. In particular, Spectators' expectations and attitudes have a significant bearing on a child's attitude toward:

- Other players;
- Referees;
- Team officials; and
- Spectators

RYFC wants to ensure soccer can be enjoyed in a safe, positive environment. Remember the game of soccer provides children the opportunity to develop their technical, physical, tactical and social skills. Winning isn't everything.

Spectators are asked to play their part by observing RYFC's Fair Play Code of Conduct at all times:

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports;

2. I will remember that my child plays sport for his or her enjoyment, not for mine;

3. I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence;

4. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game/event;

5. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard;

6. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a competition;

7. I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good plays/performances by both my child's team and their opponents;

8. I will remain outside the field of play and within the designated spectators' area (where provided);

9. I will respect the match officials' decisions and never publicly question the officials' judgment or honesty;

10. I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches and staff who provide sport activities for my child;

11. I will not interfere at any time with the duties and responsibilities of the coach or manager, including coaching from the sidelines during games or practices;

12. I will comply with the rules, policies and procedures of the team and the Club as they apply to me;

13. I will not act in any manner that is detrimental to the team or the Club;

14. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sporting activities; and

15. I will never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behavior toward any official, coach, player or Spectator.

The goal of the Fair Play Code of Conduct operating procedure is to promote a positive, safe and supportive environment for all participants at RYFC's soccer activities. If a Spectator chooses not to follow the Fair Play Code of Conduct, any, or all, of the following actions may be taken by RYFC and the Spectator may be:

- Issued with a verbal warning from RYFC or league official;
- Obliged to leave the match venue by RYFC or game official;
- Required to meet with the RYFC's discipline board;
- Requested by RYFC not to attend future games or practices; and
- Suspended or have RYFC membership revoked.

Spectator Policy

1. First OFFENCE (Written warning): Any Spectator judged by RYFC's discipline committee to be guilty of abusive conduct towards anyone in attendance at an RYFC event will be reprimanded in writing.

2. Second OFFENCE (Discipline by hearing): Any Spectator judged by RYFC's discipline committee to be guilty of a second conviction of abusive conduct towards anyone in attendance at an RYFC event will be required to attend a hearing with RYFC's discipline committee to address their behavior. A second offence may result in a Spectator being suspended from attending future games and practices for a specified period of time as determined by RYFC's discipline committee.

In the unfortunate circumstance and as a last resort, for the protection of all participants associated with RYFC's soccer activities, a second conviction may result in all playing members of the immediate family in question being de-registered from RYFC for a period of time of RYFC's choosing that may be, at RYFC's discretion, unlimited.

In extreme cases and/or depending on the nature of the behavior, as determined by RYFC's discipline committee, a suspension from attending future games or practices and/or the de-registration process may be invoked after a first or second offence.

This policy, as per the OSA policy, only covers non-playing Spectators which are associated with a game participant. For incidents not related to the event or involving non-associated spectators RYFC cannot enforce the Spectators Policy and/or Discipline Policies, however civil action may be sought by the parties involved.

If the source of the abuse is from a Registrant such as a team official, discipline procedures for the individual(s) involved will follow the policies for discipline management for OSA registrants as set out in the OSA Policies (Section 9.0 - Discipline).

Reporting Abusive Behaviour

Game Officials

When a person(s) in attendance, including but not limited to the game official, feels they are being abused, as per the scope of this policy, by a Spectator, the game official will be allowed to suspend the game. In all cases, the game official must inform the coaches from both teams that the game has been suspended and file a Special Incident Report with RYFC, who will process this document in accordance with the rules defined by the OSA.

If a Spectator's behavior results in the game official suspending play, the appropriate coach will provide the game official with the name of the individual(s) that is identified by the game official and the coach must advise the individual(s) that the next occurrence of a similar nature will result in an abandonment of the game. If the individual(s) is not associated with either team, the individual(s) may be warned that local authorities may be called to deal with the incident.

Where the situation cannot be rectified the game will be abandoned. However, where the incident has been resolved and the game continues without any further incident, the game official will inform his/her referee coordinator that the game was temporarily suspended, including providing a detailed explanation of the reason for the suspension of play and toward whom the abuse was directed

If the source of the abuse is from a Registrant, the game official should conduct himself/herself according to the policies for discipline management for OSA registrants as set out in the OSA Policies (Section 9.0 - Discipline).

In all cases the game official must file an Incident Report to RYFC's discipline chair for review.

Non-Game Officials

In the event that an incident of abuse is not recognized by a game official, or occurs in a non-game situation, for example during a practice session, it is the obligation and duty of the coach and/or other team officials to report such incident to RYFC's discipline committee. Details such as the day, time and location that the incident occurred, the parties involved, description of the abusive behavior and to whom the behavior was directed must be provided in the report.

A Spectator who feels that they have been the subject of, or witness to, abusive behavior, including but not limited to a team official such as a coach, may submit a written complaint to RYFC's discipline committee via frontoffice@royalyorkfc.com. Details such as the day, time and location that the incident occurred, the parties involved, description of the abusive behavior and to whom the behavior was directed must be provided in the report.

For direction regarding policies for discipline management for OSA registrants, please refer to OSA Policies (Section 9.0 - Discipline).