

APPENDIX 4 - Western Region Football League Code Of Conduct

WRFL CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

The WRFL view the development and expansion of under age football as a vital component in the promoting and maintaining Australian Rules football as a major sport throughout Australia.

To this end, it is important that as many children as possible not only learn the skills of the game, but are encouraged to develop an enthusiastic enjoyment of all aspects of the sport.

The Junior Board of the WRFL feels it essential to set down of a minimum code of conduct. This WRFL's Junior Board has found it most challenging to make the split between actual conduct of all those involved in under age football and those philosophies that we believe are critical to the overall conduct.

With this in mind, we have opted to make a dual presentation as follows:

1. A Code of Conduct for Junior players, club officials, coaches and spectators.
2. Philosophies intrinsic to under age football.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited at any venue while under age football is being conducted.
- Players, spectators and officials should ensure that both on and off field behaviour is consistent with the principles of good sportsmanship.

Therefore:

- Swearing or abuse by either club official, player or spectator is not permissible at any time.
- Disputing umpire's decisions or behaving in an aggressive manner toward them is unacceptable. If there is a genuine concern, there are appropriate channels of communication in place.
- Aggressive behaviour and abuse toward opposition players, coaches, club officials or spectators is likewise unacceptable.
- All accredited coaches should be assessed by clubs regarding their knowledge of the Rules of the WRFL and their attitude toward working with young people. If their attitude or knowledge is inadequate, steps should be taken to enable them to attend the next available Coaches Accreditation Course for a further re-accreditation. Common sense should prevail if there is an attitudinal problem.

PHILOSOPHIES REQUIRED TO SUPPORT CODE OF CONDUCT

- All participants should understand that the Rules of the game are mutual agreements which no-one should evade or break. All those involved in under age football should strive to develop a respect for the League in which they participate, their club and their opponents.
- We all have an obligation to behave in a manner that will bring credit to ourselves, our club and the game of Australian Rules football.
- Players should be proud when walking off the ground after each game knowing they have given of their best.
- For the game to be enjoyable, players must have the opportunity to participate, learn and achieve their potential. The role of adults is to provide the environment for this to occur.
- Selection of teams and amount of field time given to players in under age football should not be decided on current ability only.
- Coaches must take into account the age group and skill level of those they are coaching - neither expecting too much nor too little.
- It is inappropriate in under age football for clubs with a large list of players in any one age group to neither loan nor make allowances for those clubs with smaller lists. Those teams with the greater number should play with no more than one extra player on the field.

PLAYERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Play for the 'fun of it' and not just to please parents and coaches.
- Play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your captain or coach approach the official during a break or after the game.
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other players, deliberately fouling or provoking an opponent and throwing equipment is not acceptable or permitted in any sport.
- Work equally hard for yourself and your team. Your team's performance will benefit so will you.
- Be a good sport. Cheer all good plays whether they are by your team or the other team.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another player.
- Co-operate with your coach, team-mates and opponents.
- Without them there would be no game.
- At all times show respect and manners to every one concerned.

OFFICIALS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Modify Rules and Regulations to match the skill of children and their needs.
- Compliment both teams on their effort.
- Be consistent, objective and courteous in calling all infractions.
- Condemn the deliberate foul as being unsportsmanlike and promote fair play and appropriate sports behaviour.

- Use common sense to ensure that overcalling violations does not lose the 'spirit of the game' for children.
- Publicly encourage rule changes, which will enforce the principals of participation for fun and enjoyment.
- Actions speak larger than words. Ensure that both on and off the field your behaviour is consistent with the principals of good sportsmanship.
- Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed of sound officiating principals and the principals of growth and development of children.

PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- If children are interested, encourage them to play sport. However, if a child is not willing to play, do not force him/her.
- Focus upon the child's effort and performance rather than the overall outcome of the event. This assists the child in setting realistic goals related to his/her ability by reducing the emphasis on winning.
- Teach children that an honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
- Encourage children to always play according to the rules.
- Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a game.
- Remember that children learn best from example. Applaud good plays by both teams.
- If you disagree with an official, raise the issue through the appropriate channel rather than question the official's judgement and honesty in public. Remember that most officials give their time and effort for your child's involvement.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches. They give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for the children and deserve your support.
- Always remember two points: sportsmanship but most importantly let's all have fun.

SPECTATORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Children play organised sports for fun. They are not playing for the entertainment of spectators only, nor are they miniature professionals.
- Applaud good performance and efforts by your team and the opponents. Congratulate both teams upon their performance regardless of the games outcome.
- Respect the officials' decision. If there is a disagreement, follow the appropriate procedure in order to question the decision and teach the children to do likewise.
- Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake during a competition. Positive comments are motivational.
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Show respect for your teams opponents, without them there would be no game.
- Encourage players to play according to the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Demonstrate appropriate social behaviour by not using foul language, harassing players, coaches or officials.

COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Abide by the Laws and Rules. The Laws of the Game and Rules of your Club/League.
- Teach the rules. Rules are mutual agreements which nobody should break.
- Group players competitively.
- Avoid overplaying talented players.
- Maximise fun. Place winning in perspective.
- Stress safety always.
- Consider maturity levels. Devise training programs to suit all.
- Develop team respect. For opponents, umpires and coaches.
- Recognise the importance of proper injury treatment.
- Keep up to date. With coaching developments.
- Attain coaching accreditation.
- Avoid derogatory language. Based on gender or race.