



Respect

Running a Respect evening for parents

Introduction

Youth football in England is enormously popular with over 60,000 teams playing regularly.

This level of participation is only possible through the effort of thousands of club officials, coaches, managers, referees, parents and carers who volunteer their time. They do this because they have an involvement with a club, a passion for the game and often the involvement of a son, daughter or grandchild in a team.

Children and young people tell us that they want the game to be enjoyable and fun, an opportunity to develop their skills and to play with their mates. They welcome the support of parents and carers but need the adults involved to put the child's interest and motivations before their own. For this to happen there are benefits to be gained from identifying a range of 'good' behaviours that are appropriate in and around football and also to identify a range of sanctions which can be employed if people choose to behave in a way which damages youth football, detracts from the enjoyment of the participants and undermines the authority of the referee.

The FA's Respect 'Codes of Conduct' lay out what is expected from those involved in football and the potential sanctions which may follow if people behave inappropriately. The sanctions identified include those that a club should employ to deal with poor behaviour as well those that the FA/County FA will apply in cases of reported misconduct.

Codes of Conduct

The FA would like clubs to adopt its Respect Codes of Conduct. However there is a recognition that many clubs have already crafted their own versions. In such case we would like clubs to look at the FA's Codes with a view to integrating any element absent from the existing club code.

Running a club parents' evening

People get involved in football clubs for many different reasons. So it's useful at a pre-season meeting for the club management to identify just what the objectives of the club are and how the club is run. It's an opportunity to agree collectively with its players, spectators, coaches, managers, Welfare Officers and referees:

- The club objectives for the forthcoming season
- Club fees and registration processes
- Club diary of events for the year
- Team management and support
- Club communication process
- To recruit additional volunteers
- Club welfare policy
- Club Codes of Conduct and disciplinary policy

This resource has been provided to assist you with agreeing a practical Code of Conduct for your club and a means of dealing with poor behaviour when or if it occurs.



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Practicalities

Depending on the number of teams and the facilities of a club, a parents' evening could come in all shapes and sizes. Find a venue where people will be comfortable sitting for a couple of hours, and which is equipped to allow you to show the Respect DVD resource on a large TV screen, or better still a projector.

Suggested agenda and timescale

5 minutes – introduce the leader of the session and any club officials in attendance. Inform the audience that:

- This part of the meeting will be used to agree a club Code of Conduct to identify the expected way of behaving for those involved in the club.
- Show the audience the Ray Winstone advert 'Lose Respect, Lose the Game'. Ask the audience whether they have witnessed similar behaviour themselves.

15 minutes – show the clips from The FA's Parents & carers Guide to Respect. First of all the footage of Joe and his Dad and then the reflections of the football experts.

10 minutes – allow for any reflections or comments from the audience on the film. If you are asked questions you can't answer it's fine to say that you will raise the matter with the league/County FA or FA and then provide an answer subsequently.

15 minutes – distribute the FA's Respect Codes of Conduct or an amended Club version. The code should be specific to the audience – players, coaches, club officials, managers, spectators. Request that it is the recommendation of the club's management that the Codes be approved as a way of defining what appropriate behaviour should be and the potential consequences of failing to

abide by them. Allow people the time to read through the codes. Discussion is important as club members need to recognise what the Codes are trying to achieve and the potential sanctions which may arise. For the Codes to be meaningful people have to accept them and not feel that they are being imposed without consultation.

10 minutes – request that all those attending the evening come forward and collectively sign up to the club Codes of Conduct. It may be necessary for some club members with multiple roles to sign more than one Code.

Conclude the evening – identify where copies of the Code will be displayed – this could be in a club pavilion, changing rooms, on registration documents or in a club handbook. Reaffirm that it is the intention of the club management to employ the Codes as the means of managing behaviour for the forthcoming season. Thank those in attendance for their continuing support and commitment to the club.

