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Silent Weekend

29 February & 1 March 2020

Central Venues
plus all
Tynedale Mini Soccer League matches



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What is the Silent Weekend?

We've organised the Silent Weekend in response to comments made by young players in our Youth Survey.

60% of 6-9 year olds had witnessed poor behaviour from adults at football matches - either coaches or spectators.

And of these, 62% said it had included shouting, and 37% had witnessed swearing.

How did this make them feel ? Sad, scared and upset - that's what they told us.

That's why we've decided to trial the Silent Weekend - at Central Venues where our U9s play and at all Tynedale Mini Soccer League matches - and we'll be assessing it to see if kids and adults have found it useful.

A silent weekend involves minimal verbal contact from coaches and spectators. It aims to create a fun, safe and developmental experience for all children in youth football. It allows them to make their own decisions and lets them play the game with freedom, without pressure or over-emphasis on winning at all costs.

Of course we still want to celebrate our young players' achievements, so applause for goals and examples of good play are definitely welcome!

Share your involvement with coaches, players, parents and supporters so they know in advance about the event and what is expected of them. We have produced guidelines to help with this.

This guide will give you all the information you need about the initiative, plus do's and don'ts you can print out, display and share with coaches, parents and referees.

How will it work - Q&As

Which matches will be involved in the Silent Weekend?

We're trialing the initiative at all Central Venue matches over the weekend of Saturday 29 February and Sunday 1 March. This includes: Cochrane Park, Amberley Playing Fields, Cramlington Sporting Club, Alnwick Town 3G and Goals.

All matches in the Tynedale Mini Soccer League will be included too.

Are we not allowed to make any noise?

The aim of the Silent Weekend is to reduce pressure on players and promote positivity and Respect. As such there should be silence from the sidelines - parents and coaches. This means no shouting at the players or the referee.

However you are free to clap your hands - applause for goals and examples of good play are always welcome!

What should we do if someone doesn't remain silent?

We realise that this would be very disappointing for everyone who is joining in. However, we can't force everyone to remain silent, we can only ask clubs and teams to publicise their involvement in advance, and for managers to also inform their opponents before the match and encourage their participation too.

Referees will be encouraged to address persistent infringements with a reminder of the purpose of the weekend, during an appropriate break in play.

Representatives from Northumberland FA, Northumberland Football Leagues and Tynedale Mini Soccer League will also be on hand at to encourage full support of the initiative, to answer any queries and to respond to feedback.

If coaches can't shout instructions, how do we get tactical information across to our players?

You can use pre-match briefings, and make notes during the match so you can use your half-time talk to speak positively to your players – silence isn't expected during these times.

And brief your substitutes so they can pass on instructions to other players.

We'd like to give you our opinion on the Silent Weekend – how do we do that?

We really want to hear your views on the Silent Weekend – did it work, what were the challenges and do you think we should repeat it?

We'll be running a survey after the event – look out for the link on our website, social media channels and our newsletter.

You can also email us directly at info@northumberlandfa.com or speak to a member of Northumberland FA staff or a league representative at the matches.

How can I let people know we're taking part in the Silent Weekend?

Share this guidance with your coaches and ask them to brief their parents and players - they can use the posters below to help.

Then promote your involvement by using the hashtag [#WeOnlyDoPositive](#) across social media.

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Do's and Don't's - Coaches

Do:

- Use applause for good play and to celebrate goals
- Allow young players to make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes
- Give tactical information before the match, and at half time
- Watch the match, takes notes and give players positive feedback at half time and post-match
- Use substitutes to pass on tactical information during breaks in play
- Brief your players and parents, and if necessary the opposing team, before the match so everyone knows what is expected of them

Don't:

- Coach your players during play
- Speak to the referee during the match
- Directly address the opposing team if they aren't respecting the Silent Weekend - report them to the league or Northumberland FA instead



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Do's and Don't's - Parents

Do:

- **Applaud good play and goals**
- **Talk among yourselves quietly on the sidelines**
- **Respect the referee's decision**
- **Cheer for both teams at the final whistle**
- **Be a role model for all the children**
- **Let the players make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes**

Don't:

- **Comment or speak to the referee during the match**
- **Antagonise the opposition players or parents**
- **Try to coach from the sidelines**
- **Approach anyone who isn't adhering to the Silent Weekend – report them to the league or NFA instead**

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Do's and Don't's - Referees

Do:

- Report anyone who doesn't respect the Silent Weekend by contacting the league secretary or NFA
- Set clear expectations for the coaches, before the match
- Allow children to talk openly on the pitch
- Assist players with match rules if necessary

Don't:

- Stop parents and coaches from talking quietly among themselves
- Be afraid to stop play to speak to someone who isn't adhering to the Silent Weekend



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