



Zero Tolerance Policy

Youth sports are a great opportunity for a child to build self-esteem and learn fundamentals skills. It's also an opportunity for adults to become positive role models and to teach the value and importance of good sportsmanship.

Our priority is development not winning. Our League philosophy is long term player development, and again, winning is not the ultimate goal. Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association wants you to enjoy the great game of football, and we are providing this information in an effort to assist you and your child in gaining a greater understanding of player development and the game of football.

This policy applies to all coaches, players, parents and other supporters and referees effective immediately. Drinking alcohol, smoking, or use of illegal substances is prohibited during sanctioned MPEYFA practices, games, or events. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting, and other behavior (including but not limited to sarcasm, taunting, etc.) will not be tolerated during any event. Ultimate responsibility for the actions of coaches, players, and spectators resides with the team organizations.

It is the responsibility of the coaches to provide referee support and spectator control. This policy will apply, at all times, prior to, during and after the game, at the football field, and its immediate surrounding areas. It is the responsibility of the team organizations to provide instructions to their coaches on how they are expected to carry out this responsibility.

Team organizations and the MPEYFA Board of Directors will be assessing each incident on an individual basis.

Parents and Spectators:

No parent or other spectator shall persistently address the coaches or referees/officials at any time.

This includes but is not limited to:

1. Spectators shall not make derogatory comments to players of either team.
2. Spectators shall not dispute calls during or after the game.
3. Spectators shall not advise the coach or referee to watch certain players or attend to rough play.
4. Spectators shall not yell at the coaches or referees, EVER, including criticism, sarcasm, harassment, intimidation, discriminatory comments or feedback of any kind before, during, or after the game.

Below are some simple rules you should observe. PLEASE CONSIDER THEM CAREFULLY!

1. Do not shout instructions to your child. This only causes confusion, since the coach has already instructed your child on how to play. If you do shout instructions, your child will probably try to please you and the coach at the same time. In trying to do two things at one time, the child becomes unable to handle his/her loyalties and ends up pleasing neither parent nor coach.
2. Cheer for your child when he/she plays well. However, remember that your child is a member of a team. Let the other players know you support them too.
3. Suffer in silence (or moan softly) whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. A display of anger may inflame a delicate situation resulting in embarrassment for you or your child. Some parents embarrass their own children by making a spectacle of themselves.



4. Do not run up and down the sidelines. Find a comfortable place to sit down or stand, relax and enjoy the game.
5. Do not shout insults or verbally abuse the referee/official. It's hard for a child to learn respect for the referee or other officials when their parents set a poor example. The referee can and will stop the game if the crowd becomes discourteous.
6. Set the tone for good sportsmanship by adopting a positive attitude if your team loses. Compliment your child upon his/her good plays and ignore the mistakes. Your child will be happy you noticed his good qualities.

REMEMBER—your child will forget about today's game. Next week he/she will probably have forgotten the score. However, both of you will remember the good time the child had playing the game and positive interactions with you.

The only allowable exceptions to the above are:

1. Spectators may respond to a referee/official who has initiated a conversation with a parent or spectator.
2. Spectators may point out an emergency or safety issues, such as a player down on the field or observed lightning.

Players:

Communications between players and referees/officials are governed by the PIAA Rules. Penalties for violating the Rules will be governed by the PIAA rules themselves and the bylaws of MPEYFA.

Coaches and Bench Personnel:

It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters in all games. Failure to do so undermines the referee's/official's authority and the integrity of the game, resulting in a hostile environment for players, the referee, coaches, bench personnel and spectators. As role models for all of the participants and spectators, coaches participating in an MPEYFA event are expected to be supportive of, and to applaud the effort, good play, and sportsmanship on the part of ALL players from either team in a contest. By example, coaches and bench personnel are expected to show that although they are competing in a game, participants always have respect for the opponent, referees and spectators.

MPEYFA will not tolerate negative behavior exhibited either by demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks, including those addressed toward the referees/officials, players or coaches of an opposing team. Coaches exhibiting hostile, negative, sarcastic, or otherwise ill-intentioned behavior toward referees, opposing players or coaches will be subject to sanction by the referee/official and subsequent sanctions may be imposed by the Team Organization and the League.

Coaches shall not interact directly or indirectly with the coaches or players of the opposing team during the game in any manner that may be construed as negative, hostile or sarcastic either by way of demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks.

Coaches shall not offer objection to any call made by the officials at any time.

Coaches shall not address the referee/official during the game except to:

1. Respond to a referee/official who has initiated a conversation
2. Point out emergency or safety issues
3. Request time out.
4. Ask the referee to repeat a call (this should be infrequent)
5. Ask for the time remaining in the half (this should be infrequent).



Head coaches can ask a referee/official during or after a game, in a polite and constructive way, to explain a Rule or foul.

1. Polite and friendly concern can be exchanged with the referee/official. If the polite tone of the conversation changes, the referee/official may abandon the exchange at any time.
2. Absolutely no sarcasm, harassment or intimidation is allowed.

The MPEYFA Board of Directors suggests that all parents, spectators, players and coaches become familiar with the PIAA rules and regulations as written in the National Federation of State High School Association Football Rule Book.

Penalties for Parents, Spectators, Players and Coaches:

1. ***If any game, practice, MPEYFA sanctioned event or timeframe mentioned above is interrupted because of behavioral issues, the involved parties will have to comply without complaint, to abide by any sanctions or discipline executed or enforced by the MPEYFA Board of Directors.***
2. ***Each team organization has the right to the first disciplinary action such as game and or practice suspensions and release from the Team Organization.***
3. ***The MPEYFA maintains the right to uphold or supersede the disciplinary actions taken by the Team Organizations. Each incident will be examined individually and the MPEYFA Board of Directors will determine the penalties and disciplinary actions based on the severity of the misjudgment or the neglect to follow the aforementioned Zero Tolerance Policy rules and guidelines.***
4. ***Illegal acts as defined by the PA Crimes Code will be an immediate removal and suspension from the league and the prompt compliance to notify the authorities. The duration of the removal and suspension will be determined by the affected Team Organizations and the MPEYFA Board of Directors. A threat of bodily injury is a mandatory five (5) year suspension as regulated within the context of the bylaws.***
5. ***Any Team Organization member such as a President, current Board Member or Team Representative may enforce some or all these rules to maintain order in any situation where the Zero Tolerance Policy has been infringed or violated.***

Synopsis:

Play with integrity: One of the most essential lessons a child can learn from sports is to follow the rules. Make sure your team understands the rules and doesn't break them, even if they can get away with it.

Respect the officials: It's important to teach not only our young athletes but also our parents and coaches to respect the referees and officials. Our kids have a watchful eye and take notice when parents and coaches are disrespectful.

Be a good sport. This means doing what we can to lift our teammates up and help them reach their potential. Being a good teammate means also being a good person on and off the field regardless of the outcome.

Maintain self-control. Keep your cool, have a positive attitude, and don't overreact during practice or games. Be encouraging of other players.

Let the coach's coach: Avoid chiming in with your coaching advice for the team, or other parents. Let those in charge run the plays.