



## Parental Support –The Key to Peak Performance

The role that parents play in the life of a soccer player has a tremendous impact on his/her experience. With this in mind, FDLA has taken some time to write down helpful reminders for all of us as we approach the upcoming season. If you should have any questions about these thoughts, please feel free to discuss it with us, the coaches.

### **1. Let the coaches coach:**

Leave the coaching to the coaches; think of the coach as your child's teacher in this activity. It is the coach's responsibility to focus on specifics and the parents' responsibility to praise their child's efforts. You have entrusted the care of your player to these coaches and they need to be free to do their job. If a player has too many coaches, it is confusing for him/her and their performance usually declines.

### **2. Support the program:**

Get involved. Volunteer. Help out with fundraisers, car-pools, calling-trees; anything to support the program.

### **3. Be your child's #1 fan before, during and after the game!:**

Support your child unconditionally. Making mistakes is part of learning. Recognize what your child is trying to do, not the results.

### **4. Support and cheer for all players on the team:**

Foster teamwork. Your child's teammates *are not* the enemy. When they are playing better than your child, your child now has a wonderful opportunity to learn. If your child hears you being critical, it will make him/her more critical of other teammates.

### **5. Encourage your child to talk with the coaches:**

If your child is having difficulties in practice or games, or can't make a practice, etc., encourage him/her to speak directly to the coaches. This "responsibility taking" is a big part of becoming a responsible player. By handling off-field tasks, your child is claiming ownership of all aspects of the game-preparation as well as playing the game.

### **6. Understand and display appropriate game behavior:**

Remember your child's self-esteem and game performance is at stake. Be supportive, cheer, and be appropriate. To perform to the best of his/her abilities, a player needs to focus on the parts of the game that he/she can control (i.e. fitness, positioning, decision making, skill, aggressiveness, technique). If he/she starts focusing on what he/she cannot control (i.e. field condition, referee, weather, opponent), he/she will not play up to his/her ability. Children need the freedom to think for themselves if they are to learn and grow as soccer players. It is easy to get emotional in a game but remember it is confusing to a child to have many adults yelling different things to them.

**7. Monitor eating and sleeping habits:**

Be sure your child is eating the proper foods and getting adequate rest.

**8. Help your child keep their priorities straight:**

Help your child maintain a focus on schoolwork, relationships, and other things in life besides soccer. Also, if your child has made a commitment to soccer, help him/her fulfill his/her obligation to the team.

**9. Reality test:**

If your child has come off the field when their team has lost but they have played their best, help him/her to see this as a “win”. Remind him/her that “process” is sometimes more important than “results”. Fun and satisfaction should be derived from “striving to win”.

**10. Keep soccer in its proper perspective:**

Soccer should not be larger than life for you. If your child’s performance produces strong emotions in you, please suppress them. Remember your relationship will continue with your child long after his/her competitive soccer days are over. Keep your goals and needs separate from your child’s experience.

**11. Have fun:**

This is what we will be trying to do! We will try to challenge your child to reach past his/her “comfort level” and improve him/herself as a player, and thus, a person. We will attempt to do this in environments that are fun, yet challenging. We look forward to this process. We hope you do too!

**12. Concerns:**

If you have any concerns with your child’s coach, we encourage you to discuss your concerns directly with the coach. If you feel that it is a concern that needs to be addressed by the FDLSA Board of Directors, please call one of the officers listed on our website: [www.fondysoccer.com](http://www.fondysoccer.com) or email: [info@fondysoccer.com](mailto:info@fondysoccer.com) to set up an appointment with the FDLSA BOD to discuss your concern and help find a solution.

***The sounds heard most at games should be the sound of children playing.  
Never should the outcome of a game matter more to us than the well being  
of the children playing it.***

***Let children play the game as they see it, let them take chances and  
fearlessly make mistakes, and the game will become their best teacher.***

***Keep it fun!***