



**BISMARCK PARKS AND  
RECREATION DISTRICT**  
Est. 1927

## **PARENT'S GUIDE**

### *How to support your soccer players!*

As a parent you play a special role in contributing to the needs and development of youngsters. Through your encouragement and good example, you can help assure that all the boys and girls learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. In soccer, young people learn to work together, to sacrifice for the good of the team, to enjoy winning and deal appropriately with defeat - all while becoming physically fit and healthy. Best of all, they have FUN!

### **SUPPORT YOUR CHILD**

Supporting your child by giving encouragement and showing interest in their team is very important. Help your child work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship in every game. Teach your child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory - that way your child will always be a winner despite the outcome of the game!

### **BE POSITIVE**

Parents serve as role models for their children. Become aware of this and work to be a positive role model. Applaud good plays by your child's team as well as good plays by the opposing team. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.

### **REMEMBER: YOUR CHILD WANTS TO HAVE FUN**

Remember that your child is the one playing soccer, not you. It's very important to let children establish their own goals - to play the game for themselves. Take care not to impose your own standards and goals on them.

Don't put too heavy a burden on your child to win games. Surveys reveal that **72% of children would rather play for a losing team than ride the bench for a winning team.** Children play for the fun of playing.

### **REINFORCE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**

Positive reinforcement is the best way to help your child achieve their goals and their natural fear of failure. Nobody likes to make mistakes. If your child does make one, remember it's all part of learning, so encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things your child accomplished.

### **DON'T BE A SIDELINE COACH OR REFEREE**

Coaches and referees are usually parents just like you. They coach to make your child's youth soccer experience positive. They need your support too. That means refraining from coaching or refereeing from the sidelines. There's usually an opportunity for you to take your interest in coaching or refereeing to the next level and become one yourself!