



## **Vancouver United FC's Commitment to Player Safety** *(Updated January 2024)*

### **Codes of Conduct**

The Codes of Conduct establish a clear set of guidelines for coaches, parents, guardians and spectators and players. The primary goal is to ensure that soccer is a fun, positive and enjoyable experience for all involved.

The Codes are based on the concept of fair play, defined by four basic principles:

- Respect for the rules;
- Respect for the referees and their decisions;
- Respect for all participants, including teammates, coaches and opponents; and
- Maintaining self-control at all times.

It is a condition of club membership that all members follow the Codes of Conduct at all times. Failure to comply with a will result in action being taken.

### **Coaches and other volunteers**

All team officials must:

- Show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers, and spectators;
- Must explicitly explain to their players that violent conduct towards opponents, game officials, spectators and their own teammates is not acceptable as it could lead to potential legal ramifications.
- Adhere to the Laws of the Game;
- Always respect the match officials' decisions;
- Accept zero tolerance for offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour or physical threats on the field of play or sidelines;
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission;
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials; and
- When working with players:
  - Place the well-being, safety and enjoyment of each player above everything, including winning;
  - Explain exactly what is expected of players and what they can expect from the team officials;
  - Ensure the parents/guardians of all players understand expectations from the team officials;
  - Refrain from, and refuse to tolerate any form of bullying;
  - Develop mutual trust and respect with every player to build their self-esteem;
  - Encourage each player to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance;
  - Ensure all activities are appropriate for the players' ability level, experience, age and maturity;

- Teach players to act fairly and respect the rules, referees and our opponents;
- Be selective in the amount of instructions given to players during the game;
- Be responsible for ensuring that substitute players, bench personnel and the team's spectators do not interfere with the match;
- Make sure that equipment/facilities are safe;
- Not ridicule or yell at players for making mistakes or for performing poorly; and
- Inform parents of any injuries their child might have suffered.

## **Parents, guardians and spectators**

1. Parents, guardians and spectators must set an example for the players. Good sportsmanship is not just for players and coaches; so those on the sidelines must:
  - Always respect the match officials' decisions and never criticize the officials - nothing positive will result (Note: referees can have an offensive parent or person on the sideline removed from the field, and if they refuse, the game may be forfeited to the opponent);
  - Accept zero tolerance for offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour or physical threats;
  - Remain outside the field of play and within the designated spectator area (where provided);
  - Avoid conflicts with other teams' parents;
  - Let the coach do their job, and avoid yelling out instructions from the sidelines that can be confusing and frustrating to the players;
  - When cheering, try to cheer all the players, and offer encouragement when they try something or succeed at something - remember that children play for FUN;
  - Communicate with your coach if you have ideas or problems;
  - Notify the coach if your child is sick, injured or otherwise unable to attend training or games. Absences of three or more weeks without an explanation can result in being removed from the team's roster.
  - Encourage the players to respect the opposition and the match officials; and never criticize a player for making a mistake - mistakes are part of learning
  - I understand that any feedback I may have must be communicated to one of the team officials (Head Coach, Assistant Coach or Manager) first. If I am not satisfied the Age Group Coordinator and then the VanU Technical Director may be contacted. Such contact should be away from other players/parents and in a location away from training or game facilities.
  - I understand that any breach of these guidelines will result in me being required to complete the 1-2 hour online education program, Respect in Sport at your own expense (\$12-\$15).
  - I understand that my child, and potentially I may be removed from all team activities, if breaches of these guidelines are chronic or serious enough in the eyes of the Technical Director or VanU Board of Directors.
  - Providing continuous positive reinforcement; valuing effort and performance over reinforcing success
  - Being a parent, NOT a coach – helping your child frame, understand and gain perspective from their coach's decisions
  
2. I agree, as a player parent or guardian, to the Respect in Sport Parent's Commitment, as outlined below:
  - I do not force my child to participate in sports. They do so voluntarily, for their own enjoyment.
  - I do not live vicariously through my child in sports.

- I do not have unrealistic expectations of my child in sports.
- I teach my child that winning isn't everything and to take each victory with humility and grace
- I teach my child to accept losses with good sportsmanship and as an opportunity to improve
- I always find something to praise in my child's performance.
- I let my child set his/her own standards of excellence.
- I provide love and support for my child regardless of sport performance and motivation.
- I support the coach's decisions and employ the 24-hour rule when discussing any concerns with the coach.
- I openly support and respect the decisions of officials and set an example for my child and other parents in doing so.
- I will speak out and intervene in instances of unacceptable behaviour. I will not be a bullying bystander!
- I cheer for the team and my child in only positive ways from the stands.
- I provide positive support and encouragement to my child's teammates.
- I never smoke or drink alcohol around my child's sporting events.
- I ensure proper rest, hydration and nutrition for my child.
- I am on time for practices and competitions.
- I control my temper and use of bad language
- I am courteous and respectful to all parents on my child's team and the opposing team.
- I stay active and fit as a role model.
- I never let an emphasis on sport create an imbalance in my child's life.
- I do not harass, bully or abuse anyone involved in my child's sport
- I ask my child if they had fun, and then ask why or why not.
- I will follow the policies and procedures of the sport.
- I will work with the sport to provide a safe environment for all participants.
- I will continue to invite communication with my child.

## Players

Players must:

- Play by the rules of the game;
- Respect the referees and officials and to accept their decision without criticism;
- Be fair to your opponent and to treat them well;
- Encourage your teammates and help them to succeed;
- Treat your coach/manager with respect and listen to what he/she says;
- Speak respectfully, openly and honestly in private to your coach should a dispute arise;
- Notify your coach or team manager if you are not able to attend a training session or game;
- Accept zero tolerance for profanity, temper tantrums, violent behaviour, drugs or alcohol on the field of play or sidelines;
- Shake hands with the other team and referee either at the beginning or end of the game; and
- Be generous and gracious in victory or loss.