

# **NCSL's Guide to Referees for Youth Soccer**

## God's Word on Sports

*"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." (I Timothy 4:8)*

## Mission Statement

Combining the physical with the spiritual to help kids today and prepare them for the future.

## Our Goals

1. To impart to each child the fact that they are special, valuable, and loved by God.
2. To provide a fun and wholesome environment where kids can learn the true meaning and value of winning and losing, fair play, competition, honesty, sports skills, teamwork, practice, perseverance and respect.
3. To build each child's self-esteem.
4. To show kids how what they learn through sports can help them in other areas of their lives.

## Our Philosophy

1. A winner is someone who tries their hardest, strives to do their best, doesn't give up, and learns from their mistakes.
2. The opposing team is not the enemy, but they are helping us enjoy fun competition.
3. Coaches, players and referees will make mistakes, but each still deserves, and should be treated with respect.
4. A positive, encouraging atmosphere is not only more fun, but a much healthier environment to learn and grow in.

## The Role of the Referee

Like other games, soccer is controlled by officials who are responsible for interpreting and applying the rules. Unlike most American games though, soccer is controlled by only one official. This single referee is usually assisted by two linesmen. In some youth games, they have to work entirely by themselves. Whereas in football and basketball, the officials call and enforce every foul, in soccer, the referee calls only fouls which are a disadvantage to the team fouled against. The idea of this policy is to avoid any unnecessary stops in the flow of the game. The long periods of uninterrupted play account for the high pitch of spectator excitement that can develop in a soccer game.

## What Makes a Good Referee

Referees need special qualities to suit them for their crucial and demanding function. A good referee is like an invisible conductor, orchestrating the flow of the game without drawing attention to themselves. They must be thoroughly familiar with the rules of the game, fit enough to follow the action closely as it flows up and down the field, calm and objective enough to sooth explosive feelings, impartial in his judgment, and firm in holding to it. They must be secure enough to brave unpopularity and to take quiet satisfaction from a little appreciated role.

## Referee's Code

1. Always remember the game is for the players. Player safety and fair play come first.

2. Study and learn the Laws of the game and understand the "spirit" of the Laws. (Help other referees do the same)
3. Encourage and enforce the goals and philosophies of Northwest Christian Sports League. (Everyone Plays, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship)
4. Respect other referees and their decisions, and do not publicly criticize another official.
5. Wear the proper uniform and keep it in good condition.
6. Maintain good physical condition. (So you can keep up with the action)
7. Stay calm when confronted with emotional reactions from players, coaches and parents.
8. Honor accepted game assignments. (In an emergency, find a replacement)
9. Support good sportsmanship with a kind word to players, coaches and parents of both teams when deserved.
10. Always be fair and impartial, avoiding conflicts of interest. Decisions based on personal bias are dishonest and unacceptable.

## Pre-game Information

1. **Check field**
  - a. Marked properly
  - b. Nothing dangerous on field
  - c. Goals set properly and netting secured
  - d. Corner flags (cones)
2. **Pre-game meeting with linesmen**
  - a. In / out of bounds (throw-ins)
  - b. Corner / Goal kicks
  - c. Fouls
  - d. Offside
  - e. Which half of field to run
3. **Check players equipment**
  - a. Shoes
  - b. Uniform (Goalie different color shirt)
  - c. Shin guards (mandatory)
  - d. Dangerous items (i.e. jewelry, casts, extra clothing, etc...)
4. **Coin toss to determine**
  - a. Which goal to defend (winner of toss)
  - b. Kick-off (loser of toss)
5. **Prayer**
  - a. For players
  - b. For parents
  - c. For Referee and linesmen
6. **Check goals and nets**
7. **Game ball checked and ready**

## Post-game Information

1. Blow whistle to end game
2. Stay and watch during handshake
3. Report any mishaps to coaches
4. Report any mishaps to Referee co-coordinator
5. Go home and rest (you probably deserve it)