



REGIONAL UNITED F.C.

*“Regional United wants football to be safe; it wants football to be fun and wants to ensure that no matter what level of the game young people are involved in, that it takes place in the spirit of ‘**FAIR PLAY**’. Football, like all sports, provides an excellent pathway for children and young people to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own potential. Regional United wants to promote & develop the opportunities of our children and our community through our mission statement of fun, fairness and players overall development”*

The children Registered under our care are entitled to:

- Be safely cared for.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Participate in football on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy football.
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through a proper and effective complaints procedure.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Be listened to and to be believed.
- Have a voice in the running of the club.

Parents are encouraged to:

Find out what their children want from football, and help them to set realistic targets to achieve this. ***This may involve controlling their own aspirations and avoiding the desire to force their own dreams or unfulfilled ambitions on them.***

It is important for parents to:

- Ensure their children are registered with the club for participating in activities
- Encourage but not force children to be active.
- Know when he / she is ready to play.
- Encourage healthy lifestyle habits.
- Attend training and games to encourage your child's development.
- Promote and teach **FAIR PLAY**.
- Teach your child to treat referees, other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, colour, sex or religion
- Help children to set realistic targets.
- Help children with decision making.

Parents/Guardians should not:

- Ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in soccer.
- Ridicule or shout at a child for losing a game or making a mistake.
- **Treat the Regional Utd football club as a child minding service.**
- Take safety for granted.
- Put undue pressure on any child to please or perform well.

Most importantly parents / guardians should: “LEAD BY EXAMPLE”

In the Interest of Fair Play Children are encouraged to:

- Do their best – put in their best effort.
- Improve and develop their skills.
- Make friends.
- Play by the rules.
- Be courteous, respectful and mannerly
- Appreciate/accept everyone in the group, regardless of ability, race, religion, gender etc.

Player Responsibilities

Children should be encouraged to realise that they have an onus of responsibility to treat other children, referees, fellow players, coaches, parents and volunteers with fairness and respect.

All Players should undertake to:

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun.
- Make high standards of Fair Play the standard others want to follow.
- Respect opponents, they are not the enemy; they are partners in a sporting event.
- Shake hands before and after the match, whoever wins.
- Give opponents a hand if they are injured, put the ball out of play so they can get attention.
- Accept apologies from opponents when they are offered.
- Respect fellow team members and support them both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Treat players from minority groups with the same respect you show other people.
- Be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat "**BE A SPORT**".
- Approach the club Children's Officer with any questions or concerns they might have. Coaches and parents should encourage children to speak out and support them in doing so.

Children should not:

- Cheat or Bully
- Use abusive language, or argue with, the referee, officials, team mates or opponents.
- Use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules.
- Tell lies about adults or other children or spread rumours.
- Take banned substances to improve performance.
- Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm.

Support and encouragement from parents / guardians will contribute to children having:

- **A sense of personal achievement.**
- **An enjoyment of soccer.**
- **Improved physical fitness.**
- **Higher self-esteem.**
- **A greater level of skill.**
- **Improved social skills.**

Parent / Coach Co-Operation

It is important that parents / guardians establish contact with the individual responsible for coaching their child.

In addition, parents / guardians should:

- Ensure their children are registered with the club for participating in activities
- Give the coach help when asked and show appreciation for a job well done.
- Support the coach's and referee decisions. These individuals are only doing the best they can and they need support not anger.
- Refrain from contacting the coach unless it is necessary, respect they have a private life.
- Inform the coach about any illness, injury, holidays, etc.
- Make an effort to attend training and games.
- Communicate any concerns you may have to the coach.
- Make sure the child has appropriate equipment/clothing/refreshments.
- Encourage **FAIR PLAY** at home and do not instill a "win at all costs" attitude in children.
- Be positive or be quiet, negative comments are counter productive.
- Conduct themselves in such a way which promotes the definition of **FAIR PLAY**.
- Be prepared to be asked to leave by officials or club personnel if behavior is contrary to the definition of **FAIR PLAY**.

Parents / Guardians should never:

- Insult players or club personnel.
- Argue with, or shout abuse at officials and they should actively discourage children or young players from doing likewise.
- Suggest or encourage cheating, aggressive or "dirty" play.
- Placing undue or inappropriate criticism on a player, causing the player unnecessary or unhealthy levels of stress.
- Behave with physical or verbal aggression towards another person; (actually use force or threaten the use of force).
- Engage in any "harassment" type of behavior.

Coaches & the Player Centered Approach

Coaches need to be aware of why children want to play soccer. Children want to learn new skills, make new friends, be part of a group, to win and be successful, experience challenges, excitement and action. **While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of players.** Results are not necessarily a good indicator of coaching effectiveness or ability, the improvement level of players and their level of enjoyment is. Coaches should aim to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children and young people are placed at the centre of all activities.

Coaches are given a position of trust by parents/guardians and players, and should show the highest standards of behavior whilst in the company of underage players. It is important that coaches follow an agreed code of good practice and parents / club officials are satisfied that coaches are suitable to lead the activities undertaken. A comprehensive Code of Ethics & Best Practice guidelines is available on the Football Association of Ireland website at www.fai.ie *It is important to note that in adhering to these guidelines we ensure not only a safe environment for children but also a safe environment in which coaches and volunteers can operate.*

In promoting good practice and creating a child/player centered approach Regional United coaches should:

- Act as good role models.
- Encourage and be positive during sessions so that players leave with a sense of achievement.
- Set challenging, realistic but achievable goals.
- Plan and prepare each session appropriately and ensure proper levels of supervision.
- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Put the welfare and enjoyment of players first and strike a balance between this and winning or achieving results.
- Enforce the principles of fair play treating each player equally, with dignity and respect and ensure that all players play within the rules.
- Be aware of the developmental stages and needs of players.
- **Avoid over training and over emphasis on competition.**
- Involve parents/guardians and other club members in what we do.
- Be qualified and up to date with the latest coaching knowledge and skills.

In promoting “Sport for Fun” coaches should:

- Encourage participation and fun.
- Promote the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs.
- Emphasise and praise effort.
- Act as a good role model.
- Actively discourage children/young players from abusing referees, officials, team mates or opponents (take off offending players).
- Insist on **FAIR PLAY** (take off offending players).
- Be realistic with your expectations.
- Be aware of children’s feelings.
- Teach players to respect different cultures.

Safety

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the players with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control. Therefore, coaches should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

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- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Be listened to and to be believed.
- Have a voice in the running of the club.

Regional United FC is a Voluntary Run – “non-profit” Club that relies on the generosity of the community to provide its services to its registered members. No committee member, coach or volunteer receives any payment for their services.