

# C.I.Y.S.L.

## Silent Soccer Sidelines

Silent Sidelines is exercised in other competitive youth leagues across the United States & is the essence of a child centered sports philosophy. It is one way for our league to encourage parents to let our kids play the game their way rather than the way we want them to play. It's an opportunity for coaches to notice how players learn from each other during the course of a game and appreciate all the subtle ways the game teaches. We expect coaches and parents to let our kids explore their potential by making their own choices on the field instead of being told what to do throughout a game. We want our players to be free to set their own level of competition rather than play to our expectations.

The American youth soccer system has recently recognized that over-coaching our young players stifles their creativity and development, which the international soccer community has been telling us for years. Silent Sideline Weekend is an opportunity for parents and coaches to learn that youth prefer to be stimulated, rather than instructed. A player's opponent provides all the stimulation they need to develop good soccer instincts, which is further enhanced if the game is structured to be age-appropriate. In such a game players have many opportunities to make decisions, move the ball, explore their primary roles, and adjust their play.

Coaches and parents will always see more than their players do, so it requires patience and self-discipline not to say what you think they should be doing. They are all doing their best, given their age and experience, and don't need to be urged to play harder or smarter than they already are. Build an appreciation for the patterns you see in their development. Once you do, you will discover many subtle moments to applaud.

### **Tips for Coaches:**

- Bring a note pad- it will help you evaluate how your players do & how to improve!
- Sit down- you'll be less inclined to yell
- Greet the opposing coach pre match & discuss or remind each other of silent soccer
- Remind your parents pre match that we are practicing silent soccer
- Evaluate how well your players 'figure it out' for themselves without parent/coach direction
- Ask your players at the end what they thought of silent soccer
- NOTE: You are free to coach pre game/half time/full time & if any injuries etc

### **Tips for refs:**

- Remind the parents pre match that we are practicing silent soccer today
- Educate the coaches/parents- do not 'throw anyone out' for failing to adhere
- Remind the coaches' pre match as well as the players of silent soccer. If a coach refuses to practice this, the other coach is permitted to talk. Silent soccer is a collaborative effort and we need ALL parties to be on board for it to be a success!

### **Tips for parents/spectators:**

- Let your kids play. The best players in the world attribute their skills to early "street soccer" experiences.

- Applaud good plays
- Ask your children at the end of the game what they thought of silent soccer
- View it as a collaborative effort from both sets of parents on the parent side for the good of the game.
- Relax on the sidelines - give your blood pressure a break today!
- Have fun with it- bring duct tape & signs. Cheer loudly with bright colors!
- View it as an opportunity to allow your children to express themselves & be creative!

**Tips for players:**

- As always, have fun
- Try to communicate more with your team-mates
- Try to make your own decisions without coach or spectators 'joystick-ing' you where to go, what to do.
- Be creative!
- View it as a test & a challenge to express yourself & showcase your talents & leadership
- Learn from mistakes you will make
- Thank the coaches, parents & spectators at the end- this has been difficult for them!

**A sports field is also a child's playground**

**Let the kids play 😊**