



## SPECIAL OLYMPICS FLORIDA FAMILY MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character." We hope as family members you will embrace the spirit of Special Olympics and help us provide a competition and training environment that enhances athlete character and skill development. The following Family code of Conduct should be emphasized during training, competition and special events at any level (County, Area, State, and National).

As a Special Olympics Florida family member, I pledge the following:

- I will let my athlete choose the sports in which he/she would like to participate. I will not force my choice upon him/her.
- I will remember that athletes participate to have fun and that the game is for them, not the family members.
- I will see to it that my athlete's medical form is up-to-date, complete, and on file.
- I will learn the rules of the game and the Special Olympics Florida policies before I complain or protest.
- I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my athlete and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy and by demonstrating positive support for all athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators at every game, practice, or competition.
- I understand that I play a vital role in the healthy and safety of my child/guard's participation and I have a responsibility to assist Special Olympics in providing for the health and safety of all athletes, by reporting suspicious behavior, talking to my child/guard about personal safety, dropping off and picking up my child/guard from Special Olympics events at the times designated by the organization (not excessively earlier or later than said established times), and any and all other reasonable measures to assist in the protection of Special Olympics athletes.
- I (and my guests) will never engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct, such as booing and taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language and gestures, with any official, coach, or family member.
- I never encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of the athletes.
- I will teach my athlete to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will demand that my athlete treat other athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- I will teach my athlete that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my athlete will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
- I will praise my athlete for competing fairly and trying hard, and I will make my athlete feel like a winner every time.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my athlete, or other participants, for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my athlete over winning. I will also de-emphasize games and competition in lower age groups.
- I will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire that I may have for my athlete to win.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games and competition and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches during competitions. Instead, I will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- I will demand a sports environment for my athlete that is free from drugs and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sports events and competitions. I will smoke/chew tobacco only in designated areas.
- I will refrain from coaching my athlete, or other athletes, during competitions and practices if I am not the assigned coach.



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As a Special Olympics Florida family member, I also understand that, if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I may be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Verbal warning by officials, coaches, and/or County, Area, State personnel,
- Game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file in the County, Area and SOFL State Office,
- Written warning,
- Game forfeit through official or coach, and/or
- Season suspension.
- Misbehavior Form submitted by an official, competition or facility coordinator at state level competitions

*I Hereby Certify that I have reviewed, understood and agreed to this Code of Conduct.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Family Member*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Please print name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*County*

Added 07/02/07