

# Parent Pledge

Young people need to know that respect, fairness and responsibility are lifetime values, taught through athletics and activities, these are the principles of good sportsmanship.

We need good sportsmanship:

- *To prevent violent action towards officials, judges, coaches, opponents and spectators.*
- *To decrease the emphasis on just winning and losing.*
- *To promote ethics, respect and character in all walks of life.*
- *To promote the ideal of intrinsic rewards of athletics and activities.*
- *To learn the attitudes necessary for responsible behavior.*

You can make proper behavioral choices while viewing your school's athletic and activity events. Those who pledge agree:

- *To be a proper role model for our student participants.*
- *To inform our students that we have taken the pledge and why.*
- *To be clear and firm about rules concerning our conduct and behavior while viewing and participating in an athletic or activity contest.*

As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics and activities are an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators, officials and support groups. I will participate in cheers that support, encourage and uplift the teams involved. I understand the spirit of fair play and that good sportsmanship is expected by our school, our conference and the MSHSL. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student involved in athletics and activities.

**Parent (s) Name(s)**

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**Athletes Name(s) & Sport**

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# Tips for Parents

## **Be Supportive of Coaches**

In front of your child be supportive and positive of the coaches decisions. If you have problems with what the coach is doing, it is best to talk directly with the coach.

## **Teach Respect for Authority**

There will be times when you disagree with a coach or official but always remember they are trying their best and are trying to be fair. Show good sportsmanship by being positive.

## **Let the Coach do the Coaching but you can do some of the Teaching**

When your child is on the field, court or ice, let the coach do the coaching. You can teach sportsmanship and how to deal with success and failure. Develop their character and teach life skills that athletics and activities bring to the forefront.

## **Help your Children Learn through Failure**

The way your child handles failure can help them to face the certain failures life will throw them in the future. The worst time for you as a parent to give advice is immediately after a disappointment. Let your child cope in their own way.

## **Get to know the Coach**

Since the Coach has a powerful influence on your child, take the time to attend the preseason parent meeting and get to know the coaches' philosophy, expectations, and guidelines.

## **Focus on your Child as an Individual**

Focus on what your child does well and where they need to improve. Encouragement is essential.

## **Listen to your Child, but Stay Rational**

Always support and listen to your child, but remember to stay rational until you have investigated the situation.

## **Be Mindful of your Role as a Role Model**

Take a good honest look at your actions and reactions in the athletic arena. These actions are a big cue to your child and to the others around you.

## **Show Unconditional Love**

The most important thing...show your child you love them, win or lose.

**Sportsmanship is Everyone's Responsibility**

# Sportsmanship A Parents Guide



*Creating a  
Healthy Sport  
and Activity  
Environment*

## A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Parents:

Good sportsmanship is the attitude and behavior that exemplifies positive support for the interscholastic athletic and activity programs of the Minnesota State High School League's member schools, as well as for the individuals who participate. People involved in all facets of interscholastic athletic and activity programs are expected to demonstrate respect for others and display good sportsmanship.

It is essential that student-participants, coaches, parents, student groups and fans in general are constantly reminded that Good Sports Are Winners! Sportsmanship is an important issue of concern in interscholastic athletics and activities. Positive experiences do not occur by chance, rather they are a result of the educational structure, the right perspective, the right leadership and the true understanding of sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship is not merely a campaign — it is the essence of what educational athletics and activities are about. Let all of us who have the opportunity promote the ideals of sportsmanship, so that today's students and tomorrow's citizens may build a better society.

The Minnesota State High School League and the Sportsmanship Advisory Committee trust that you will do your part in promoting good sportsmanship within your school and community. Remember, sportsmanship is EVERYONE's responsibility!

Sincerely,

Dave Stead  
MSHSL Executive Director

## The Role of the Parent

Much of the joy of being a high school sports parent comes from watching your children compete in athletic events. There are very few kids who are not bolstered by looking into the stands and seeing their parents cheering for them. As part of their responsibilities, parents should be involved in their child's educational process, this includes being actively involved in after school activities. Fortunately, the majority of parents behave appropriately at school sporting events. But those who misbehave can spoil it for all the rest. It takes only a few out-of-control parents to ruin what should be a pleasant atmosphere into one that is stressful for everyone. In addition to some of the obviously inappropriate actions, such as profanity, use of chemicals, throwing of objects and the like, the following rules of thumb for personal behavior should be followed.

- ◆ Express interest, encouragement and support to your child and to the coaching staff.
- ◆ Learn the rules of the game so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- ◆ Lend a hand when a coach or school administrator asks for help.
- ◆ Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play or achievement by either team.
- ◆ Inappropriate and/or harrassing comments should not be made to athletes, parents, officials or coaches of either team.
- ◆ Shouting out instruction or criticism may hinder the overall experience of the student-athlete.
- ◆ Negative comments and gestures of displeasure toward the coach, visiting team, or officials, only undermine the efforts of all involved.
- ◆ Remember that interscholastic athletics and activities are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. Praise students in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people, as you would praise a student working in the classroom.

Good sportsmanship among all spectators is a goal worth working for, but especially for parents, who have the obligation not only to control their behavior, but to also remind others around them of their responsibilities when necessary. When parents misbehave, it is the duty of other parents and school administrators to step in and correct the situation. A simple rule of thumb for all spectators to follow is that absolutely nothing in their actions should interfere with any youngster's enjoyment of the game.

**We hope you'll join us by being a good sport always!**



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