



## Hawaii Youth Soccer Association

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### **PARENTS & COACHES – PLEASE READ**

“Kick him again, Chad!” “Take her out!” “Hey Ref, What the F\_\_\_!”

These are just 3 of the appalling comments I have recently heard while attending youth soccer games. An even more frightening fact is that 2 of the 3 above quotes were heard at UNDER 8 and UNDER 10 games. To think that parents would say these things is unconscionable. How would you feel if someone said this about your daughter or son? What if someone was yelling those things at you?

In this day of violence in our streets, violence in our schools, violence on the news and violence in video games, it seems to be creeping more and more onto (or around) our soccer fields. The problem is complex and the causes could be debated endlessly. While this violence is something we all hope to avoid, I feel it is something that we must actively work against. There has been an increase in the number of incidents involving PARENTS and COACHES.

Whether its on the nightly news showing a high school basketball player charging a referee; or a professional soccer player at Aloha Stadium throwing a blow after being fouled, our young people are being exposed to more and more violent behavior and attitudes. Our soccer fields should be a place of fun for children to participate and enjoy the game of soccer. We all need to actively promote this. PLEASE be more aware of your own behavior, as well as that of the your coach and/or other parents. Be proactive! Don't wait for the referee to come over and warn the coach about fan behavior. If you see a team parent becoming “too involved” in the game and possibly losing control, say something. Of course, I'm not encouraging a confrontation, but I think one parent should be able to walk up to another on the same team and say “its okay, calm down.” Please remember, this YOUTH soccer. It is not the World Cup, the Super Bowl or the World Series...and even if it were, poor behavior is still unacceptable.

In addition, something should also be said about the way that referees are treated. It is never okay to yell, scream or hurl insults at the referee whether they are in the center or on the line or whether they are a youth referee or one of our senior referees. The fact of it is that our referee population is limited and each season we lose a few more that feel it's just not worth it to put up with the verbal abuse.

Please take this as a friendly reminder from HYSA that sideline behavior by both coaches and parents needs to be one of positive cheering and support for the players. Coaches- please remember, you are responsible for the behavior and actions of your team (parents included).

Aloha,

SCOTT R. KEOPUHIWA  
President  
Hawaii Youth Soccer Association