



sport rage

play your part. **stamp out**
ugly sporting behaviour

Prevention kit for parents



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Preventing sport rage: tips for **parents**

About sport rage

Sport rage can come in many forms – an unruly parent abusing a referee, a player punching another player, or a spectator shouting racial taunts.

These moments of madness can result in serious injuries, disciplinary action and even lifetime bans.

Dealing with sport rage is now a major challenge for clubs. Not only does sport rage reflect badly on the clubs involved, it can deter participation at all levels.

It is important that everyone involved in sport unites to combat sport rage.

Kids' comments

"My dad is great – he just watches."

"I play sport because I enjoy it and it's fun. I met my best friend playing netball."

"I don't play anymore because mum used to yell too much. I got sick of it."

"I don't mind if I don't win every time I play – in every game someone has to lose."

"When people won't shake hands at the end of the game – that's bad sports behaviour."

Taken from sport rage seminar and *Kids Sport - A Very Real Guide for Grown Ups* by Denis Baker

While sport rage is often the result of many factors, parents can reduce incidents by being good role models and helping to create a positive sporting environment. Parents should consider the following six points:

What children want from sport

Sport provides many valuable learning experiences for children, but for the most part they do it for the enjoyment. Ask a child and you'll discover the scoreboard is not that important. In fact, one of the most enjoyable aspects of sport for children is being with their friends and being part of a team.

Encouraging fair play

As the parent, you have the perfect chance to reinforce the principles of fair play – respect, integrity and fairness – when your child participates in sport.

Parents should discuss fair play with their children and be good role models. They'll be the first in line to shake the other team's hands if you've shown how important it is to do so.

Keep your emotions in check

Unruly adult emotion at children's sport is sport rage at its worst. While some sideline emotion can be well intentioned, always consider the impact it is having.

Bad behaviour, such as abusing an official or ridiculing the opposition, is unacceptable. An official's decision that annoys you will probably go unnoticed by your child, but your loud and abusive sideline outburst won't.

Respect for coaches

Coaches and team managers play an essential role in providing a sporting experience for your child. Without them there would be no team and no game, so show respect for the people in these roles.

Respect for referees and officials

Referees and other officials are there to help make the game fair and more enjoyable for everyone. But they are human and may occasionally make mistakes. Your behaviour toward officials will affect the attitude of your child.

Parents should never approach the official directly. If you have an issue raise it in a controlled and professional way with the coach or club administrator.

Upholding the code of conduct

It is important you understand, support and uphold the parent's code of conduct. Your club is entitled to enforce this code. For example, while it may not be a criminal offence for a parent or spectator to verbally taunt an opposition team, such behaviour may well breach the code of conduct and disciplinary action may be taken.



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Dealing with sport rage

Despite everyone's best intentions, sport rage incidents sometimes occur.

While it is mainly the responsibility of ground officials and club committee members to deal with incidents, it is important that everyone understands and supports the process. Here are some of the steps that can be taken, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

■ **Reporting inappropriate behaviour** – *Responsibility of everyone*

Behaviour that contravenes the codes of conduct should be reported to the ground official. Any person who is unsure who the ground official is should report the incident to a club committee member.

■ **Approaching the offender** –

Responsibility of the ground official / club committee member

Only the ground official or club committee member should approach the offender.

■ **Issuing warnings** – *Responsibility of the club committee / ground official*

The first time a person breaches a code of conduct, they might be issued with a warning. The person may not be aware that their behaviour is unacceptable and should be notified of club rules.

■ **Taking disciplinary action** – *Responsibility of the club committee member*

If the conduct is repeated or of a serious nature, the club committee should consider taking disciplinary action in accordance with its rules. This might result in counselling, suspension or expulsion.

■ **Removing people from the field of play or venue** –

Responsibility of the ground official / club committee

The referee/umpire should communicate directly and immediately with the ground official to remove a person from the field. If the club is in a position to control ground entry, it will be able to evict persons from the ground. Where attendance is not controlled, clubs can request offenders leave the venue, or otherwise can discipline the person for breach of the code of conduct.

■ **Suspending play** – *Responsibility of the referee / umpire*

The referee/umpire may suspend play and refuse to restart until appropriate action has been taken. They may request that a person is removed from the sideline and, in serious cases, abandon the game altogether.

■ **Involving the police** – *Responsibility of the ground official / club committee*

If you feel the behaviour of an individual constitutes a criminal act the police should be notified immediately by the ground official. While it is lawful for a club to detain a person who has committed a criminal offence until the police arrive, it is recommended that this is done only as a last resort. Club officials are able to exercise reasonable force in detaining a person who has committed a criminal offence until the police arrive, but this should not be disproportionate to the conduct of the offender.

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Quiz: which sport parent are you?

Is your behaviour on the sideline contributing to a safe, happy sporting environment? Or could your actions be creating tension and sport rage?

Take this quiz – which sport parent are you?

The Screacher

The **Screacher** constantly yells and will see all the negative things in the game.

The **Screacher** must learn that their verbal attacks on players and officials is offensive and creates a tense environment.

The Over The Top

The **Over The Top** is the super positive one. The **Over The Top** get so excited they yell out every time their child even gets near the action. It is important for the **Over The Top** to learn how to balance their enthusiasm.



The Not Really There

The **Not Really There** is so busy catching up with the news for the week and talking on the phone that they pay no attention to the game at all. The **Not Really There** should remember that sport offers some very important life skills for children and a little encouragement goes a very long way.

The Five Star Sport Parent (You?)

The **Five Star Sport Parent** focuses on the effort and not the outcome. They respect the officials who are providing their child with the opportunity to be involved and remember to thank them. They are positive supporters and keep in mind the role they are playing on the sideline.

The Analyst

The **Analyst** takes notes to analyse the performance for the week to come – worse still, taking the video to do the same. The **Analyst** needs to learn to leave the coaching to the coach.

The Wannabe

The **Wannabe** is living their life through their child. They treat their child's game as if it was their own. The **Wannabe** needs to drop the 'win at all costs' attitude and remember it's their game not yours.



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r u a sportrager?



r u a sideline rager?



r u a dummy spitter?

