

# Sport rage incidents – what parents should do

Despite your best intentions, sport rage incidents may still occur.

## On-field sport rage

Managing sport rage incidents on-field is covered in the rules and regulations of your sport. Officials are responsible for enforcing the rules of your sport, including managing bad behaviour and sport rage. Leave on-field incidents to the officials.

## Off-field sport rage

While it is the club committee's responsibility to deal with incidents off the field, as a parent you should understand and support the process. When an incident occurs you should:

- ✓ Report it to the ground official or club committee member
- ✓ Stay calm and collected.

It is the responsibility of the ground official or club committee member to approach offenders and take action.

## When confronted with sport rage, it's important you don't:

- ✗ Retaliate or approach the offenders
- ✗ Get upset by emotional reactions
- ✗ Ignore it and allow situations to get out of hand.

Clubs/associations should have a process in place for dealing with sport rage.



## Kids' comments

For parents, it's a good idea to reflect on what children really want from sport. Here are some typical comments:

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

'My dad is great – he just watched.'

'We don't have a scoreboard, but we do have the best meat pies.'

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

'I don't really care who wins as long as I have fun... although it's good to win at least once.'

'When spectators yell at the referees it's like that person has wrecked the game for everyone.'

'I feel good when we score a goal, I guess the other team must feel the same when they score.'

*Taken from the Central Coast Sport Rage seminar, 2003 and Kids Sport – A Very Real Guide for Grown Ups, Denis Baker*

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[www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportrage](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportrage)



# Stamp out Sport rage

## Tips for Parents



[www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportrage](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportrage)



# Let's stamp out sport rage

Sport rage is any violence, foul language, harassment, abuse or bad behaviour by players, coaches, officials or spectators of sport.

Simply put, sport rage is bad for children and bad for sport as a whole. At its worst, sport rage reduces a child's enjoyment of sport, risks safety, tarnishes clubs and can lead to drop out.

Sport can do without sport rage. Play your part – stamp out ugly sporting behaviour.

## What parents can do

Parents can help create a positive sporting environment and reduce sport rage by being good role models. To do this:

- ✓ **Encourage fair play**
  - Cheer and acknowledge good plays by both teams
  - Thank the official, coach and other team after the game.
- ✓ **Respect officials, coaches and opponents**
  - Accept decisions by officials – they are human and can make mistakes
  - Deal with issues in a controlled and professional manner after the game.
- ✓ **Keep your emotions in check**
  - Be enthusiastic, but don't scream instructions from the sideline
  - Don't get into shouting matches with anyone
  - Never use bad language or harass others.
- ✓ **Uphold your club's code of conduct**
  - Understand, uphold and support your club's code of conduct for parents.
- ✓ **Help kids enjoy sport**
  - Emphasise trying hard and having fun, not only winning
  - Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake.

[www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au) is a great place to learn more about fair play in sport.



## Self test: Which parent are you?

The majority of parents do a great job of contributing to an enjoyable sporting environment for everyone. But others could be unwittingly creating tension which contributes to sport rage. Which parent are you?

### The Screecher

focuses on the negative and yells constantly at the players and officials. The Screecher must learn to see the positive things in the game and make an effort to ignore mistakes.

### The Try Hard

is overly positive, cheering so hard it can be embarrassing for their kids. It is also irritating for the coach, players and other spectators. The Try Hard must learn to balance their enthusiasm.

### The Analyst

takes notes (and even video!) to analyse performance. They relive the match with their child and point out things to do better. The Analyst needs to learn to leave the coaching to the coach.

### The Wannabe

lives their dreams through their child. They treat their child's game as if it were their own. The Wannabe needs to drop the win at all costs attitude and remember it's not their game.

### 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. The Not Really There should remember a little encouragement goes a long way.

### The Five Star Parent (you?)

focuses on the child's effort and not the outcome. They respect and thank the coach, officials and opposition. They are positive supporters and keep in mind the role they are playing on the sideline.