

## **What Is Good Sportsmanship?**

Good sportsmanship occurs when teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials treat each other with respect. Kids learn the basics of sportsmanship from the adults in their lives, especially their parents and their coaches. Kids who see adults behaving in a sportsmanlike way gradually come to understand that the real winners in sports are those who know how to persevere and to behave with dignity — whether they win or lose a game.

Parents can help their kids understand that good sportsmanship includes both small gestures and heroic efforts. It starts with something as simple as shaking hands with opponents before a game and includes acknowledging good plays made by others and accepting bad calls gracefully. Displaying good sportsmanship isn't always easy: It can be tough to congratulate the opposing team after losing a close or important game. But the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways.

The best coaches — and parents — encourage their kids to play fair, to have fun, and to concentrate on helping the team while polishing their own skills.

## **What Is Sportsmanship?**

Sportsmanship is defined as:

- playing fair
- following the rules of the game
- respecting the judgment of referees and officials
- treating opponents with respect

Some people define good sportsmanship as the "golden rule" of sports — in other words, treating the people you play with and against as you'd like to be treated yourself. You demonstrate good sportsmanship when you show respect for yourself, your teammates, and your opponents, for the coaches on both sides, and for the referees, judges, and other officials.

But sportsmanship isn't just reserved for the people on the field. Cheerleaders, fans, and parents also need to be aware of how they behave during competition. Sportsmanship is a style and an attitude, and it can have a positive influence on everyone around you.