

## Top Tips for Engaging with Parents

- Send a pre-season note establishing what they can expect from you, what you expect from them, and your goals with their child
- Be very clear about playing time and participation. If your policy is that everyone plays (we recommend it!) tell them that every child will get an equal amount of playing time – at practice and during games
- Host a pre-season meeting enlisting their support for your mission
- Share materials with all parents to help them understand how their child can best develop through sports
- Assign a “culture keeper” to promote positive cheering on the sideline
- Provide sufficient notice on scheduling of practices, games and events; establish email, text and/or social media groups so everyone has access to the information they’ll need
- Provide post-season, individual feedback to each child and parent
- Clearly display or advertise your coaching qualification or development efforts – parents like to know you’ve invested in the sport and in the kids!

## Resources for Engaging with Parents

- **Positive Coaching Alliance:** [https://devzone.positivecoach.org/browse/?f\[0\]=im\\_field\\_role%3A15](https://devzone.positivecoach.org/browse/?f[0]=im_field_role%3A15)
- **Changing The Game Project:** <https://changingthegameproject.com/coaches-stop-dealing-parents-start-engaging/>

# Sample Parent/Guardian Meeting Agenda

*A pre-season parent meeting is a wise investment. People tend to live up to expectations if they know them. A meeting can help mold the behavior of your athletes' parents.*

*The most effective way to have your pre-season parent meeting is in a private setting (such as the home of one of the coaches or parents) where you can have the full attention of the group. If this is not possible, then the meeting could be scheduled before one of the first practices or games when the parents would need to be delivering their kids anyway. Page two of this PCA Resource elaborates on the agenda below.*

## **1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

- | Coach's background as athlete, coach, parent, etc.
- | "We're going to be spending a lot of time together so let's get to know each other."
- | Each person share his/her best, worst or funniest personal moment in sports.

## **2 COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

- | Our team values
  - Honoring the Game/ROOTS
  - Filling Emotional Tanks
  - The ELM Tree of Mastery
- | Use of PCA's *Talking Points* e-mail series to guide discussions with players
- | Dealing with mistakes in competition/Team Mistake Ritual
- | Policy on playing time, missing practices, etc.

## **3 GOALS AND HOPES FOR THE SEASON**

- | Coach's goals and hopes
- | Parents' goals and hopes

## **4 LOGISTICS**

- | Practice and game schedules | Equipment
- | Contact lists | Other

## **5 ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS**

- | Snacks | Rides
- | Scorekeeper | Culture Keeper

## **6 MEETING ADJOURNS**

*Below fleshes out the bullet points on page one of PCA's Sample Parent/Guardian Meeting Agenda.*

**Welcome & Introduction.** Share how excited you are about the upcoming season and having their children on your team. Share some of your **relevant background** as an athlete, coach, parent, etc.

**Coaching Philosophy.** Share your values as a **Double-Goal Coach**<sup>®</sup>. Distribute the PCA Parent Letter that covers Honoring the Game, Filling Emotional Tanks, and the ELM Tree of Mastery. Discuss these principles in your own words, asking for questions on each before you go on to the next.

Ask for parents' **support in building a team culture** that will reinforce those principles. Discuss scenarios, such as "What if the official makes a questionable call against our team? Will you set a good example for the players and Honor the Game?"

Share your **policy on playing time**, missing practice, etc. If missing practice means less playing time, for example, tell parents in this meeting. You can avoid problems later by being clear now. Let parents know when and where it is best to contact you (by e-mail, at work during the day, only in evenings, etc.).

**Goals and Hopes for the Season.** In addition to goals such as winning games and qualifying for playoffs, consider and discuss such goals as:

- Players will love the sport at least as much at the end of the season as at the beginning
- All players' knowledge of the sport will improve
- All players will get as much meaningful playing time as possible
- The parents will enjoy the season as much as the players.

**Ask parents about their goals and hopes** for the season. This may give insight into the players' motivation. You don't have to respond to everything right then – you can think about it and talk with parents later if they express goals that are inconsistent with your values.

**Logistics.** Make sure everyone has practice and game schedules, contact information, and equipment lists. Leave plenty of time for questions.

**Ask for Volunteers.** Ask parents to volunteer for any duties, such as snack coordinator, carpool arranger, scorekeeper, fundraiser or culture keeper.

**For more Resources, visit: [www.PCDevZone.org](http://www.PCDevZone.org)**

**For more information on Positive Coaching Alliance, visit: [www.PositiveCoach.org](http://www.PositiveCoach.org)**