



Palo Alto Soccer Club (PASC) Communication Plan



BASIC PRINCIPLES

The following principles can serve as guidelines to help parents and soccer staff (coaches, volunteers, and Board members) work effectively together:

1. **Assume Good Intentions:** We all care about the kids playing in our Club and share in the goal of providing these kids with a competitive youth soccer environment, whereby each of them can enjoy a fun, positive experience, while learning and playing soccer on a select CYSA team.
2. **Build Positive Relationships:** Showing appreciation when things are going well will go a long way toward creating good will.
3. **Be Respectful When Communicating:** Being respectful of time, feelings, and privacy in all of our interactions can lead to better communication.
4. **Solve Problems Effectively:** Productive resolution of problems is possible when we focus on the player; share ideas and feelings only with those directly involved; and remain focused, respectful, and honest.
5. **Be a Role Model:** Parents and soccer staff who work together successfully can act as role models for our children and other players.

BE RESPECTFUL WHEN COMMUNICATING

If you have an issue with another member of our Club, please try to approach them directly to discuss it and come to a resolution. Please do not involve other people (whether through gossip or sending Club-wide emails) in what could potentially be a very personal issue.

Please be sensitive to the fact that before and after practices and games may not be the best time to have a conversation. Not only could your conversation be overheard, but often the players are standing around either waiting to play or waiting for a ride. Email can be an effective tool to use when either alerting someone to a concern or trying to set up a time to meet. However, you should avoid using email if the situation is very complex. Just as in face-to-face communication, in email you should focus on the problem you are trying solve and not on assigning blame or being negative. The following are some reminders of strategies to use for respectful and productive discussions:

- Allow time for dialog and response. Some problems can't be addressed immediately. Schedule a time that is mutually convenient.
- Discuss your child – not others. Parents should frame their concerns and questions in terms of the effect on their child only. For example, saying, "I am really concerned about my son. He doesn't feel that he is getting much playing time. He feels that he works really hard in practice, but he doesn't get to show what he's learned in games" is a much more appropriate approach than, "Marcus and Andy show up to practice late every week, why are they getting more playing time than my son?"
- Use "I" messages that frame your concerns from your perspective. For example, you could say, "I am concerned that Amy is not enjoying practice" rather than, "Why are you yelling at Amy so much during practice?"
- Follow up with the coach or parent. If the person handles the problem well, take the time to thank him/her. If the problem is unresolved or resurfaces, communicate clearly and promptly to the appropriate people as described below.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

In all communications, please try to approach the person you are dealing with directly first. If that proves to be ineffective, then please refer to the steps listed below.

If You Are a Parent Who Has a Conflict with a Coach:

1. **Contact your manager:** He or she will try to mediate the situation. If the manager cannot mediate, then the issue can be raised to the next level.
2. **Contact the Director of Coaching AND Manager Coordinator:** The DOC and Manager Coordinator will investigate the complaint and decide whether the issue can be mediated at this level or if it needs to be reported to the Board of Directors.
3. **PASC Board of Directors:** At each monthly PASC Board meeting, 15 minutes will be set aside to hear conflicts and find workable solutions.

If You Are a Coach Who Has a Conflict with a Parent:

1. **Contact your manager:** He or she will try to mediate the situation. If the manager cannot mediate, then the issue can be raised to the next level.
2. **Contact the Director of Coaching AND Manager Coordinator:** The DOC and Manager Coordinator will investigate the complaint and decide whether the issue can be mediated at this level or if it needs to be reported to the Board of Directors.
3. **PASC Board of Directors:** At each monthly PASC Board meeting, 15 minutes will be set aside to hear conflicts and find workable solutions.

If You Are a Manager Who Has a Conflict with Another Manager:

1. **Contact your Manager Coordinator:** He or she will try to mediate the situation. If the MC cannot mediate, then the issue can be raised to the next level.
2. **PASC Board of Directors:** At each monthly PASC Board meeting, 15 minutes will be set aside to hear conflicts and find workable solutions.

If You Have a Conflict with the Director of Coaching:

If you are unable to work out your conflict directly with our DOC, please contact the PASC President. He will work with both parties to mediate the situation and decide whether the issue needs to be brought to the Board's attention.

If You Have a Conflict with a Board Member:

If you are unable to work out your conflict directly with the Board Member in question, please contact anyone on the Board of Directors (or the Director of Coaching) with whom you are most comfortable. That person will work with both parties to mediate the situation and decide whether the issue needs to be brought to the Board's attention.