



Encourage Shield Guidelines for Parents and Supporters

1. THE ENCOURAGE SHIELD

The Encourage Shield is an annual handicap match play competition for teams of young Members of Golf Clubs in the Sydney Metropolitan Region.

The objective of the Encourage Shield competition is to provide young golfers the opportunity to test their skills and learn match play competition in an environment that is fun and supportive and free of undue interference.

The Encourage Shield has been conducted continuously since 1971 and has established a sound reputation for supporting and encouraging young golfers.

The Encourage Shield is governed by the Encourage Shield affiliated clubs. Each year, usually in July, the Annual General Meeting of Encourage Shield affiliated clubs makes decisions relating to the conduct of the Encourage Shield.

2. DOCUMENT PURPOSE

All junior sport requires the support of parents. It is important that parents provide positive support and that their child's, and every child's, involvement in the sport leaves them with positive memories.

The Encourage Shield rules do not allow players to have a caddy. Many parents and supporters (and even Team Managers) do not fully understand what they may, and may not, do on the golf course.

The vast majority of the parents want to do the right thing. This document attempts to answer these questions for parents and supporters so they can confidently play their part in making the game a positive learning experience for every player.

3. RULES OF GOLF

The Encourage Shield is conducted under the Rules of Golf. Even for experienced golfers, the rules can be tricky and we do not expect every parent to be an expert on the Rules. The Team Manager and the Match Committee should be familiar with the detail of the Rules and their decisions must be respected.

Etiquette is an important golf tradition. All junior golfers should be familiar with the rules of etiquette and most are. Etiquette applies to everyone on the golf course.

It is embarrassing for a parent to be 'told off' by a 10 year old for failing to follow golf etiquette!

Therefore, we do encourage parents to obtain a Rules of Golf booklet and become familiar with the section on Golf Etiquette (Section 1 – Etiquette; Behaviour on the Course – Pages 26 – 29). Rules of Golf booklets are available from your golf club at no cost.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

On the last page of this document is the Australian Sports Commission's Code of Conduct for Parents. The Code has been modified to make it relevant to golf. Parents should be familiar with this code. Parents and supporters must adhere to this Code.

5. ADVICE

One of tenets of the Encourage Shield is to limit outside interference and this is why caddies are not permitted. Under the Rules of Golf, a player may seek advice from their caddy or playing partner only. In an Encourage Shield Match, a player has neither a playing partner nor a caddy. Therefore, the player must not ask advice from anyone.



Encourage Shield

Junior Golfers

What is advice? The Rules of Golf define advice as 'any counsel or suggestion that could influence a player in determining his play, the choice of club or the method of making a stroke.

'Information on the Rules, distance or matters of public information, such as the position of hazards or the flagstick on the putting green, is not advice'.

6. DRESS REGULATIONS

Many golf clubs have strict dress regulations that also apply to parents and supporters. Ensure you understand the dress regulations of the club you are visiting and that you adhere to them. Some clubs will ask you to leave the course, if your dress standard does not meet theirs.

A good rule of thumb is to avoid denim, track suit pants and stubby shorts. Shirts should have collars and be tucked in. If you wear shorts, socks should be white and, at some clubs, socks will need to cover your ankles!

If you do not agree with a golf club's dress regulations, then stay at home. Having an argument with a club official will not enhance your team's reputation!

7. WHAT PARENTS AND SUPPORTERS CAN DO ON THE GOLF COURSE

The following is a list of things parents can do that will make the day better for everyone:

Be there: Arrive at the course at least 45 minutes before your child's scheduled tee time.

Be a spotter: Many parents gather around the tee. It is more effective to be about 150 to 200 metres down the fairway, or near the green, so you can see where the tee shots land. Knowing the location of each player's ball will speed up play and reduce frustration.

Be a searcher: If a player cannot find their ball, help in the search, even if the player is not on your child's team.

Be respectful: Show respect for all of the players and team managers. Do not make any noise or move while a player is making a shot. **Turn off your mobile 'phone.** Note also that some players like to talk when they play and others do not. If a player wants to chat then make conversation. If a player seems distant, then let them be.

Be helpful: If the group you are following is behind time (that is, the group is not waiting on the group in front to play), offer to fill divots or rake bunkers to save time. Point out to the players that you are helping out to save time and you will not be there always to do it.

Be safe: If you think someone may be hit by a golf ball yell 'fore!'. This is the only time you should yell on a golf course.

Remember, it is the 'Encourage' Shield: Encourage all the players! You can talk to your child at any time about anything but talk softly and never talk when anyone is playing a shot.

8. WHAT PARENTS AND SUPPORTERS CANNOT DO ON THE GOLF COURSE

Advice: Do not coach your child or offer advice on what club they should use or what shot they should play.

Distractions: Do not talk loudly or move during a player's shot.

Greens and tees: Do not walk onto the teeing ground or the green. This is the player's domain so leave them to it.



Parents and Supporters Code of Conduct

As a Parent, I will:

- Encourage my child to play within the Rules of Golf and respect Managers' and Match Committee decisions - no matter what
- Teach my child to respect the efforts of their opponents
- Remember that children learn best by example so I will applaud good shots by both my child's team and their opponents
- Give positive comments that motivate and encourage continued effort
- Focus on my child's efforts and performance - not the score
- Thank the Managers, Match Committee and other volunteers who give their time to conduct the event for my child
- Help when asked by a Manager or Committee Member
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all people involved in the game, regardless of their gender, ability or cultural background.
- Not pressure my child in any way - I know that this is their game not mine
- Not use bad language, nor will I harass Players, Managers, the Match Committee or other spectators
- Not criticise or ridicule my child's performance after the game
- Not arrive intoxicated, drink alcohol or smoke at Encourage Shield games
- Understand and abide by the etiquette of the game of golf