

Silent Weekend Guidelines

Purpose:

- To develop player on-field decision-making abilities and skills
- To promote player-to-player on-field communications
- To preserve the retention of referees, especially the younger and less experienced, often intimidated by negative remarks and verbal abuse from coaches and spectators
- To create a more relaxed, sporting and fun experience for the players

NOTE: Silent Weekend is not intended to deny any individual their constitutional right to free speech. Conscientious individuals would not consider it appropriate to shout out distracting and disruptive verbal communication during public events and the intent applies here, as well, to achieve the desired purposes.

Rules:

1. **Coaches** are **only** permitted to provide instruction to players before the match, during halftime, after the match and to substitutes during the match within the technical areas. Coaches are permitted to verbally request substitutions from the referees. Two exceptions are noted below:
 - a. The first **Exception** pertains to players with special needs (Autistic, ADD, ADHD, etc.). **Coaches** are permitted to provide verbal instruction to these players only. **Coaches** will notify the referee crew prior to the match and provide the jersey number(s) for the applicable player(s).
 - b. The second **Exception** permits **U09** and **U10 Coaches** to provide verbal instruction and **positive** words of encouragement and acknowledgment to players on the field during play.
2. **Coaches** are responsible for controlling and managing their assistant coaches and spectators, if, and when required and necessary. Offending spectators and assistant coaches will be **ASKED** to be quiet, **TOLD** to be quiet, and will be **ORDERED** to leave the field by the coach.
3. **Spectators** are permitted to talk to other spectators on their respective touch lines and to applaud, positively and enthusiastically, in appreciation for excellent play by either team during the match. **NO VERBALIZATION SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO PLAYERS ON THE FIELD.**
4. **Players** on the field are permitted, and encouraged, to talk and communicate to each other as much and as loud as they wish in a positive and constructive manner.
5. **Substitutes** are not permitted to provide verbal communication to players on the field. Substitutes are defined as rostered team members located in the technical areas. A player and a substitute exchange designation during the substitution process. Coaches may not use substitutes to convey instructions to players on the field.
6. **Coaches** and **Spectators** are permitted to use hand and arm to convey instruction on positioning to players on the field, but these motions may not be accompanied by words or sounds,
7. **Coaches** and **Spectators** are not permitted to use guttural sounds to “cough” instructions to players on the field.
8. Noisemakers, cow bells, horns and instruments of any kind are not permitted.

Referees:

- Will use the “**Ask, Tell, Remove**” method for controlling, managing and disciplining coaches, if and when required and necessary.
- Will be required, even more than normal, to communicate appropriate and relevant elements of the Laws of the Game on the field, to eliminate confusion on the part of players, especially at the younger age levels (i.e., goal kicks, corner kicks, throw-ins).