

# **Positive Coaching Alliance**

## ***Honoring the Game of Water Polo***

Water polo has a long history and is an international sport played around the world. A lot of great things happen on the in the pool during a water polo game. It is an honor to be involved in the sport of water polo. Parents and coaches talk about sportsmanship, and Sportsmanship is very important. In order to get the most out of water polo, everyone needs to be “Honoring the Game”. **Honoring the Game goes to the ROOTS of the matter — R-O-O-T-S.**

**R is for Rules:** The rules of water polo are what allow us to keep the game fair. Respect for the rules is important, even when it’s possible to break them without getting caught. Everyone should play by the rules, even if you think you won’t get caught if you break them. Breaking the rules dishonors the game, even if it means that your team wins.

**O is for Opponents:** Without opponents, we could have no game. A good opponent makes everyone do his or her best. Everyone should respect opponents, & remember they are out there to have fun just like you.

**O is for Officials:** It is very important to respect officials. Often, this can be the most difficult part of Honoring the Game, so we need to remember to keep it as a focus when we play. Officials have been selected and trained to enforce rules, and they have a very hard job. Without the officials the game would be unsafe and unfair. Officials are not perfect (just like coaches, athletes and parents!) and sometimes make mistakes. However, there is no excuse for treating officials with disrespect when they make errors. Everyone should show respect for officials, even when you disagree with the call.

**T is for Teammates:** A big part of water polo is the team. Being with teammates should be fun. Later in life you will often be part of a team, and it is important to learn to work together. Please encourage and support each other on and off the playing field.

**S is for Self:** Some people only Honor the Game when their opponents do, but everyone should Honor the Game no matter what the other team or its fans do.

**The key to preventing adult misbehavior in youth sports is a youth sports culture in which all involved "Honor the Game." Here are ways that parents can create a positive youth sports culture so that children will have fun and learn positive character traits to last a lifetime.**

- **Make a commitment to Honor the Game in action and language no matter what others may do.**
- **Don't give instructions to your child during the game. Let the coach correct player mistakes.**
- **Cheer good plays by both teams!!!**
- **Mention good calls by the official to other parents.**
- **If an official makes a "bad" call against your team? Honor the Game—BE SILENT!**
- **If another parent on your team yells at an official? Remind him or her to Honor the Game.**
- **Don't do anything in the heat of the moment that you will regret after the game.**
  - **Ask yourself, "Will this embarrass my child or the team?"**
- **Remember to have fun! Enjoy the game.**
- **Thank the officials for doing a difficult job for little or no pay.**
- **Thank the coaches for their commitment and effort.**