

Thanks for wanting to learn more about the Sports Proactive Information Formative Feedback Inventory (SPIFFI) Program.

SPIFFI is a simple, one page questionnaire handed out to coaches, parents and kids at the start of the sport season.

SPIFFI's eight target goals include:

encouraging sportsmanship
increasing enjoyment
distributing play time fairly
conducting valuable practice sessions
using praise to increase skills
handling losing and difficult situations well
handling winning well
respecting players physical and physical rights.

Designed to help everyone remember what youth sports is really all about, the SPIFFI Program has been in use in American Youth Soccer Organization Region 69, Pacific Palisades, since 1996. Each year we have enjoyed increasing success. Our coaches started with good ratings that became great ratings with award winning coaching the product of our region's combined coach training, coach support, family involvement, and commitment of our Region 69 Commissioner, Debbie Held, to the goal of changing our culture of youth sports. We all know that youth sports can and should be a positive, appropriate, developmental experience for everyone alike ... adults and kids alike.

It is easy to implement a SPIFFI Program in your community.

First, check out your sport organization's mission statement.

(Most feature good commonsense values like sportsmanship and fair play).

Second, adapt the general SPIFFI goals to reflect your community.

(There is also a copy in Appendix B of *Raising Winners*).

Third, print up SPIFFI copies for everyone at the start of the season.

(Include coaches, administrators, referees, parents, grandparents, siblings, and kids... in other words, anyone who will be involved in your sport play).

Fourth, encourage folks to talk about SPIFFI goals.

Fifth, provide support for coaches during the season.

(Encourage coaches to talk to each other and use each other as resources).

Finally, near the season end, distribute copies of the SPIFFI to families on the playing field with mailback or collection instructions. Volunteers can then organize the SPIFFI's by coach.

In AYSO Region 69, we have the SPIFFI comments (usually all positive) typed and given to the coach. We even have implemented Annual Coach Awards recognizing our most successful, positive coaches.

The SPIFFI program has been instrumental in helping us to change the culture of youth sports in our community. Last year, 75% of our coaches received award recognition for their coaching and we now enjoy an over-abundance of coach volunteers. It makes sense. We help coaches stay tuned to the positive parts of their job. By doing this, they give more positive out and in turn, receive more positive back from kids and parents alike. Many coaches also comment that the SPIFFI helps them when they work with parents, too. It is a tool to show parents, in writing, just where youth sports should be focused ... sportsmanship, fair play, increasing skills positively and respecting individual rights as our kids grow and develop through positive sports involvement.

If you're interested in setting up a SPIFFI Program in your neighborhood, I would love to help. Anyone can Email me at shariyo@earthlink.net. Thanks again for your interest ... and happy, positive playing.

SPIFFI One Page Insert.