



Sports Should Be FUN!

By Barbara Gilmour

We've been talking about ways to help a school be "cool." Sports are a fun part of school. Tanner's cousin Stephen is here with us today. Stephen loves all sports. He plays in school and in his neighborhood. Nicole, Carmen, Rudy and Truman the dragon all greeted Stephen and said, "We're glad you're here."

What are some things that make playing a sport fun? Tanner said, "Playing with friends. But don't tell someone they can't play if you don't know them. Invite them to play and make a new friend."



"Excluding someone hurts his or her feelings," said Truman.

"That's not what a 'Cool Kind Kid' would do," Rudy added. "Sports can be fun and cool when we are kind to each other." Nicole shared, "For a game to be fun, everyone has to play fair." What do you think it means to play fair? Carmen said, "Following the rules and playing by them." Rudy added, "It's fair to take turns, share and not cheat." "Give everyone a chance to do their best," Stephen said. Tanner added, "Yes, like not playing favorites."

What would you put into a "Cool Player's Pledge?" Rudy jumped up and cheered, "Go Team! Be a good team player." Tanner said, "Learn the rules and practice." Nicole said, "Don't brag when you win. Nobody likes a showoff." Stephen added, "Listen to the coach and accept

officials' rulings." Those help us be good sports.

Truman said, "Good sports congratulate the winners, even if we're bummed that we lost the game." Tanner added, "Shake their hands with a smile and tell them they played a great game." Rudy said, "Good sports don't blame others or make excuses when they lose. Good sports accept the loss and say, 'Next time we'll do better.'" Nicole added, "Good sports are 'Cool Kind Kids' who show respect to coaches, officials and teammates."

Truman was very quiet for a while, so the kids asked him what was wrong. He said sadly, "I love to play soccer, but there aren't any soccer teams for dragons. Some kids let me play with them, but when I hit the ball with my tail they make fun of me. They say 'that's not allowed.'"

Stephen reached up and put his hand on Truman's shoulder, which was as far as he could reach, and said, "I know how it feels to do something wrong when playing a sport. It hurts when kids tease me and makes me feel awful." Kids who do things like that are called "poor sports."

Tanner said, "If you're a poor sport, no one will want to play with you or be on your team." Carmen added, "I've seen the coach and other players be mad at a kid who was a poor sport." That won't make you feel confident about playing or about being friends with your teammates.

The kids invited Truman to play soccer with them, adding a new rule that allowed hits by his tail. They are learning that "Cool Kind Kids" are good sports.

Barbara Gilmour, Tanner's grandmom, is the creator and developer of the Tanner's Manners: Be a "Cool Kind Kid" Social Skills, Character Values and Anti-Bullying educational materials and the award-winning "Cool Kind Kid" Audio CD. She also writes the Children's Manners Blog, offering tips for teaching your children manners. <http://childrensmanners.blogspot.com>. The "Cool Kind Kid" team is committed to helping kids reject bullying by offering them the social skills tools they need to redefine "cool." © Cool Kind Kid. 866-KID-KIND. www.CoolKindKid.com