



Helpful Information for Crowd Control Planning

Sportsmanship, whether good or bad is a learned behavior so expectations must continually be emphasized, promoted, and enforced. Ugly displays of personal, verbal attacks against officials, coaches and the opposing team's students can quickly escalate into embarrassing and potentially dangerous situations so it is critical that schools work together to take a proactive approach to influence behavior in a positive way. The following general suggestions will help administrators and member schools prepare for crowd management and any situations that may arise.

- Communicate behavioral standards and expectations in a variety of ways (meetings, website, social media, and announcements, etc). Coaches, players, students, cheerleaders, spectators, and school personnel should understand these standards and expect that they be followed with consequences in place when they are not.
- Establish and implement an emergency action plan for each athletic facility. Communicate the plans and emergency procedures. Local fire departments can help in the planning, and the [Anyone Can Save a Life Program](http://www.anyonecansavealife.com) (www.anyonecansavealife.com) is a great resource and tool for organizing emergency action plans for all athletic teams.
- Make sure that visiting schools and the officials are greeted when they arrive and a supervision plan is in place to escort teams and officials to safely enter, participate, and exit the facility at the end of the event without harassment.
- Event supervisors should greet and identify themselves to game officials and the visiting team when they arrive. They should be expected to be active and visible throughout the contest to quickly identify problems and discourage bad behavior.
- Establish job descriptions and expectations of all event personnel. Inform event staff about their duties, rules, regulations, and emergency procedures. Encourage them to avoid becoming too involved in watching the event and to be observant, active, and consistent in applying rules and procedures.
- Be consistent in applying policies and rules. Be supportive of your supervisory personnel at contests. Make sure they know you respect and appreciate their role in supplying the students involved with educational and character-building lessons.
- Be strategic about where student groups and spectators are seated. Wherever possible, have separate areas for each school's student and spectator sections. Be proactive in keeping each school's spectators away from the opposing school's team bench area.
- Act on policies and procedures. When someone is behaving in an undesirable way which violate the rules of good sportsmanship, do something about it. The general rule is that you can't go wrong if you cheer positively for your school and not against the opposing team or the game officials. Personal and verbal attacks aimed at players and game officials have no place in an education based athletic environment and must be addressed immediately by event staff and security.
- Supervise restrooms. Have personnel in place to identify and discourage any negative behavior that may occur at or around the restroom facilities.
- Assist and accommodate all persons with special needs. Make every reasonable attempt to ensure any person with special needs can enjoy the athletic contest.
- Have facility diagrams visible to the public showing accessible areas and emergency exits. Every spectator at the event needs to be aware of the proper exits and points of access available to them. This will help with crowd control and prepare all parties in case of emergency.