



# Getting Players to Get Along with Each Other

*This resource stems from a question submitted to the Ask PCA blog. Responses come from our experts including PCA Trainers, who lead live group workshops for coaches, parents, administrators and student-athletes.*

**“How do you deal with high school girls on the same team that are not getting along? How can you get them to appreciate each other’s differences, respect each other and take corrections or suggestions from each other?”**

## PCA Response by Kelly Cagle, PCA Trainer–Phoenix

In team sports, both male and female, teams that struggle with morale or togetherness have a harder time working together on the field. And if there is tension on and off the field, players and coaches will not enjoy themselves as much as they could.

Still, not enough coaches WORK at creating a positive and unified team culture like they work at the x’s and o’s. If they did, they would see immediate changes, on and off the field. Start by setting, communicating and enforcing expectations for your athletes’ behavior as human beings, and as teammates. Here are a few suggestions:

- Communication is Key: Encourage open and honest communication, including the staff. Communication is a life skill, and it’s our job to help teach our athletes how to listen and talk, both to peers and coaches, and how to communicate effectively, verbally and non-verbally.
- Core Values Bind All: Breathe life into the values of your team THROUGHOUT THE YEAR by pointing them out and creating activities around them.
- Team Building Infrastructure: Positive team culture is something you must work at EVERY DAY.
- Rotate buddies often
- Have teammates sit with different people at meals
- Expect a culture of inclusion, not exclusion
- Be a team-builder yourself
- Make decisions based on culture/values instead of results or talent to build a LONG-TERM cohesive and competitive culture.

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## Getting Players to Get Along with Each Other, continued

- Incorporate Team Culture Into Goal Setting: Most teams set goals specific to development of skill or are results oriented. Be sure to incorporate a positive/competitive team culture into your goals.

A great quote I heard once about culture says, “Culture eats strategy for lunch.” When coaches emphasize a positive team culture, they enjoy themselves more and see better results on the field.

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