



Parents Paying Players For Scoring Goals

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.

“There’s a parent of a U12 soccer team player paying kids \$5 for every goal they score. What’s your take on this?”

PCA Response by Joe Scally, PCA Trainer–Chicago

The question is “Why pay kids to score a goal?” Kids love to score goals. They don’t need a monetary reward to be motivated. In fact, research indicates that if a kid gets something of real value (and \$5 is of real value to most 11 and 12 year olds) for doing something, they will tend to think they did it for the reward. This undercuts internal motivation. In addition, it may send the message that goal scoring is more important than the effort the whole team makes that leads up to a goal. This probably undercuts the approach the coach is taking with the team. Better to have some rewards for hustling to get a ball, passing to a teammate, or playing good defense.

It’s even better if the rewards are symbolic. For example, a sticker has no monetary value but can represent appreciation for a great effort. One coach I know of gives out small gift boxes of laundry detergent to players who get their uniforms dirty by playing hard. Another gives out a small plastic figure of a construction worker to the player who put on his or her hard hat and gave a consistent effort.

PCA Trainer Joe Scally is a longtime soccer coach based in the Chicago area. Joe spent several years as PCA’s national director of training.

To read more questions and answers like this, or to submit your own question to the Ask PCA blog, visit:

www.positivecoach.org/our-tools/ask-pca