

TOURNAMENT OF KINDNESS – CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

The Tournament of Kindness is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, educational, and respectful environment for everyone who participates.

Because the tournament is designed specifically for **Novice and Middle School competitors**, every participant shares responsibility for creating an environment appropriate for younger and less-experienced students.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- Competitors
- Coaches
- Judges
- Chaperones
- Participating parents or guardians
- Volunteers
- Tournament staff
- Other program representatives

Participation in the Tournament of Kindness constitutes agreement to follow this Code.

Respect for Others

Participants must treat one another with dignity and respect.

The tournament will not tolerate:

- Harassment
- Bullying
- Threats or intimidation
- Discrimination
- Abusive or demeaning language
- Personal attacks
- Deliberate humiliation
- Retaliation against someone who raises a concern in good faith

Competitive disagreement is expected. Personal mistreatment is not.

Educational Environment

The Tournament of Kindness exists primarily to serve Novice and Middle School students.

Judges, coaches, and adults should interact with students in ways that are:

- Age-appropriate
- Constructive
- Patient
- Respectful
- Focused on learning and improvement

Critical feedback is appropriate.

Insulting, humiliating, intimidating, or unnecessarily harsh treatment is not.

Adult–Student Interactions

Adults participating in the tournament must maintain appropriate boundaries in all interactions with minors.

Communication with students should be professional and related to legitimate tournament, judging, coaching, or supervision responsibilities.

No adult may use their position of authority to intimidate, embarrass, threaten, exploit, or otherwise mistreat a student.

Programs remain responsible for supervising the students they enter.

Competitive Integrity

Participants are expected to compete honestly and follow tournament and event rules.

Prohibited conduct includes:

- Cheating
- Falsifying eligibility or registration information
- Receiving prohibited outside assistance
- Intentionally interfering with another competitor's participation
- Attempting to manipulate pairings, ballots, or tournament results
- Knowingly entering an ineligible competitor into a protected division

Programs are expected to honor both the letter and purpose of the tournament's Novice and Middle School eligibility requirements.

Online Competition

During competition through NSDA Campus:

- Competitors and judges must keep their cameras on.
- Recording is prohibited.
- Unauthorized observation is prohibited.
- Only participants assigned to a round may enter that competition room.
- Participants may not receive prohibited outside assistance.
- Tournament technical-time and online competition procedures must be followed.

Judges

Judges hold an important position of trust and responsibility.

Judges are expected to:

- Arrive promptly
- Remain attentive throughout the round
- Keep their camera on
- Evaluate competitors fairly
- Avoid outside distractions
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Submit ballots and decisions promptly
- Provide constructive feedback
- Follow tournament rules and instructions
- Treat every competitor respectfully

A disagreement with a student's arguments, style, experience level, or competitive choices does not justify disrespectful treatment.

Coaches & Program Representatives

Coaches and adult program representatives are expected to model appropriate conduct for their students.

Concerns involving rules, judges, eligibility, pairings, administration, or conduct should be raised with tournament staff rather than argued in competition rooms or directed at students.

Coaches may advocate strongly for their students while remaining respectful toward opponents, judges, other programs, and tournament staff.

Evidence Ethics

Evidence questions and formal evidence ethics allegations must be handled according to the Tournament of Kindness evidence policy and applicable NSDA evidence rules.

The judge is responsible for adjudicating evidence disputes within the round.

The Tournament of Kindness does not provide an appeals process for evidence decisions rendered by the judge.

Privacy & Recording

Recording tournament competition is prohibited.

Because many participants are minors, participants must also respect student privacy.

Screenshots, recordings, or other competition content should not be distributed without appropriate permission.

Reporting Concerns

Concerns involving student safety, harassment, discrimination, inappropriate conduct, judging behavior, or other possible violations of this Code should be reported promptly to:

tournament@smilesandheartsfoundation.org

Reports should include, when available:

- Event
- Round
- Individuals involved
- Description of the concern

Tournament Response

Tournament administration may review reported or observed violations and take action appropriate to the circumstances.

Possible responses include:

- Warning
- Removal of a judge from the pool
- Removal of an individual from a round
- Forfeiture
- Event disqualification
- Individual or program disqualification
- Removal from the tournament
- Restrictions on future participation
- Other remedies reasonably necessary to protect participants or tournament integrity

The Tournament Director or their designee retains final authority over interpretation and enforcement of this Code during the tournament.

Our Expectation

The name **Tournament of Kindness** is intentional.

We expect students to compete hard, judges to make honest decisions, and coaches to advocate for their students.

We also expect everyone involved to remember that speech and debate is an educational community.

Be competitive. Be fair. Be respectful. Be kind.