

YOUTH SPORTS PARENTS

Being a parent is a tough job, and when a member of the family decides to join a youth sports team, it gets even tougher. You've done a lot already to bring up your child. You've created the environment in which your child has grown. You've shared your values with your child by the structure you've given his/her life and by the model you have been for him/her. You've exposed him/her to the world as he/she knows it. Since your child joined a youth sports team, you've been involved in a whole new set of things. You have had to adjust the family routine; a lot of your time has gone into transporting your child to practice at inconvenient times and to weekend games. You have sacrificed some of your own interests, and others in your family have had to adjust, but you have gotten some returns too. There is the pride you feel as your son or daughter plays. There is some kind of expression of thanks your child has "said" to you. You have met other parents and gained new friends. Being a youth sports parent isn't easy, but the rewards sure are grand!

IMPORTANT DON'TS FOR PARENTS

1. Don't put yourself in the place of your son or daughter on the court. Your child is in the game, not you.
2. Don't talk about the "big game" all day. Chances are the "big game" isn't as important to your child as it is to you. Your child will most likely keep the game in its proper perspective if only you would.
3. Don't criticize your child or other children on your child's team or other teams.
4. Don't yell instructions to your child; that is the coach's job. Besides, your child will be able to hear your voice over the crowd, which will make him/her more nervous. Please shout encouragement only.
5. Don't start analyzing your child's performance right after the game. All your child wants is peace, quiet, and something to eat.
6. Never criticize the coach, even if it is apparent that he doesn't understand the game. Before you complain, decide whether you are ready to give up your valuable free time to step into the shoes of the coach. If not, don't complain.
7. Don't abuse or criticize the officials. This type of behavior does not promote the respect for authority you expect from your children.
8. Don't decide that your child has a future with a professional team, but don't write him/her off either. Kids mature athletically at different paces.
9. Don't forget to praise your child for simply performing. Don't over praise or dwell on a mistake with scorn or anger.
10. Don't forget to praise all of the players after a game, even if they lost.
11. Don't take sports so seriously. Even the "big game" can't solve the world's problems. Just let the kids have fun! Remember we do not WIN AT ALL COST