

Getting Parents on the Team

A successful sport experience depends on parents being proactively trained to play the right role on the parent-athlete-coach team. Coaches should take the time in the beginning of the season to educate parents on their very important support position. The coach should appeal to the parent's proper involvement for the team's and their child's success. In parents' meetings and in written handouts the coach should present and discuss the correct parent, coach and athlete roles, the "do's and don'ts" for success.

PARENTS' ROLE:

1. **DON'T COACH** – Leave coaching to coaches. This includes pre-event psyching, motivation, after event critiquing, setting goals, enforcing additional cross training, etc.
2. **SUPPORT THE COACH** – Your coaches are the experts. They need your support for everyone to "win".
3. **SUPPORT THE PROGRAM** – Get involved. Volunteer. Help out at meets, fundraisers, etc.
4. **BE YOUR CHILD'S BEST FAN** – Support your child unconditionally. Do not withdraw love when your child performs poorly. Your child should not have to perform to win your love.
5. **SUPPORT AND ROOT FOR ALL ATHLETES ON THE TEAM** – Foster teamwork. Your child's teammates are not the enemy. When they do better than your child, your child now has a wonderful opportunity to improve.
6. **DO NOT BRIBE OR OFFER INCENTIVES** – Your job is not to motivate. Leave this to the coaching staff. Bribes will distract your child from proper competition concentration.
7. **TAKE YOUR CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS DIRECTLY TO THE COACH** – If you have a problem with the coach, do not go to the other parents to discuss it. Go straight to the coach involved. Talking behind the coach's back will not get you what you want.
8. **UNDERSTAND AND DISPLAY APPROPRIATE COMPETITION BEHAVIOR** – Remember your child's self-esteem and event performance is at stake. Be supportive and cheer but always be appropriate.
9. **MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S STRESS LEVEL AT HOME** – Keep an eye on your athlete to make sure he/she is handling stress effectively from the various activities in his/her life.