

## Responsible Sport Parenting: Tools for Creating Coach/Parent Partnership

### ■ **RECOGNIZE THE COACH'S COMMITMENT**

Coaches commit many, many hours of preparation beyond the hours spent at practices and games. Recognize that they do not do it for the pay! Try to remember this whenever something goes awry during the season.

### ■ **MAKE EARLY, POSITIVE CONTACT WITH THE COACH**

As soon as you know who your child's coach is going to be, introduce yourself, let him or her know you want to help your child have the best possible experience, and offer to assist the coach in any way you are qualified. Meeting the coach early and establishing a positive relationship will make conversation easier if a problem arises during the season.

### ■ **FILL THE COACH'S EMOTIONAL TANK**

When coaches are doing something you like, let them know about it. Coaching is a stressful job, and most coaches only hear from parents when they have a complaint. A coach with a full Emotional Tank will do a better job.

### ■ **DON'T INSTRUCT DURING A GAME OR PRACTICE**

Your child is trying to concentrate amid the chaotic action of a game and do what the coach asks. A parent yelling out instructions hardly ever helps. More often than not, it confuses the child, adds pressure and goes against the coaches' instruction, which undermines the player-coach relationship, the player-parent relationship and the parent-coach relationship.

### ■ **DON'T PUT THE PLAYER IN THE MIDDLE**

When parents share their disapproval of a coach with their children, it puts the children in a bind. Divided loyalties hinder people. Conversely, when parents support a coach, it is easier for children to put forth maximum effort. If you think your child's coach is mishandling a situation well, do not tell your child. Just take it up with the coach.

### ■ **OBSERVE A "COOLING OFF" PERIOD**

Wait to talk to the coach about something you are upset about for at least 24 hours. Emotions can get so hot that it's much more productive to wait a day before contacting the coach. This also gives you time to consider exactly what to say.



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