



Guide to Sports Parenting

Before the game:

- Tell your child to "give it your best shot and have fun!"
- Make a commitment to honor the game in action and language no matter what others may do.

During the game:

- Don't add to your child's confusion by giving instructions. Let the coach correct player mistakes.
- Cheer and acknowledge good plays by both teams.
- Acknowledge good calls by officials and refrain from commenting on their mistakes.
- Gently correct the unsportsmanlike behavior of other parents and spectators.
- Don't do anything in the heat of the moment that you'll regret. Ask yourself, "Will this embarrass my child or the team?"
- Have fun and enjoy the game.

After the game:

- Thank the officials for doing a difficult job.
- Thank the coaches for their efforts. Understand that the best time to question a coach is not immediately after a loss.
- Thank or congratulate your opponents for a good game.
- Congratulate your child and teammates for their efforts, regardless of the result.
- Compliment players on their standout plays and sportsmanship during the game.
- Don't give too much advice. Instead, ask your child what he or she thought about the game. Be a good listener.

During the car ride home:

- Point out a good play, either athletic or sportsmanlike, that your child made during the game.
- Avoid criticizing or correcting mistakes.
- Ask open-ended questions about how the game was played, not how many points were scored. Some good questions are:
 - Did you have fun?
 - Did you give it your best effort?
 - What did you learn from the game?
 - What was the best play you made and how did it feel?
 - Did you bounce back from your mistake?