

Ten Commandments of Sports For Parents

By: Jim Simpson, Sports Psychologist

(Note: an older document that was shared with me in the early 90's and I am sharing it with you unedited.....some good points and reminders almost 3 decades later)

“Although I strongly advocate the involvement of boys and girls in organized sports, I must caution that the rich potential of such involvement can easily be short-circuited by the wrong parental approach.”

1. **Make sure the child knows** that - win or lose, scared or heroic - you love him/her, appreciate his/her efforts, and are not disappointed in him/her.
2. **Try to be completely honest** about the child's athletic capability, his/her competitive attitude, his/her sportsmanship, and his/her actual skill level.
3. **Be helpful**.....but don't coach on the way to the rink, track, or court, or on the way back, or at breakfast.
4. **Teach him/her to enjoy the thrill of competition.** Don't say “winning doesn't matter”, because it does.
5. **Try not to relive your athletic life through your child** in the way that creates pressure.
6. **Don't compete with the coach.** Remember, in some cases, the coach is a hero to athletes, a person they look up to.
7. **Don't compare** the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the squad.
8. **Get to know the coach** so you can be sure that his/her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to expose your child to him/her.
9. **Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized.** Temper your reactions when they bring home tales of woe or heroics.
10. **Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative.** A child must know that courage is not absence of fear, but rather doing something in spite of fear.