



Parents and Their Role in Sport

August, 2012

Parenting Do's:

- Push to follow through on commitments, work hard, and be a good person. This is the time to challenge your child—when they want to take a short cut that does not show commitment to the team or the coach. Pushing, however, to win is not healthy and will only create issues between you and your child.
- Reinforce with your child to be a good sport. For example, emphasize shaking hands after games no matter how bitter the contest, and never belittling someone to make yourself feel better.
- Have realistic expectations for your child's success in sport. Try to be objective when your child is not receiving playing time or starting; or they struggle with their performances. They are not mini-adults; they are maturing young people who make many mistakes as well as doing many great things.
- Remain calm and composed during games. Avoid yelling at officials. Athletes find it very frustrating and embarrassing when parents yell at officials, or lose their composure in the stands. There is enough pressure on these kids to perform as it is. Your added pressure from reacting to mistakes they make, being critical and negative, and just too emotional create unneeded stress and take away from the fun of the game.

Parent and Coach Communication Guidelines

Credit to: David Hoch and Loch Raven High School, Towson, MD

Communication you should expect from your child's coach

1. The coach's philosophy.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e., fee, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. Procedures that are followed should your child be injured during participation.
6. Team rules and disciplinary procedures that would result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.

2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance of the practice or event.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and expectations.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student participants.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

Keeping Perspective and Controlling Emotions

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How did we get to the point where coaches and administrators often say parents are the biggest issue in interscholastic athletics? Certainly a societal trend in treating the lives of youth as a series of planned experiences to hone their skills and open their opportunities for success (i.e., scholarships)

as an adult contributes to the importance placed on sport. At the same time, it seems that the professional model of sport has trickled down right through the Olympics and elite amateur sport and college athletics to middle/junior/high school sport. Winning and development of talent for the glory of scholarships and increased opportunities epitomize a professionalization of sport. If the mindset is "win at all costs", "athlete before stu-

dent", and "performance before well-being" then the sport is professionalized.

With this backdrop we can understand why many parents take sport so seriously despite the estimated results showing that less than 6% of high school athletes compete at the NCAA level, and many of those do not



(Continued on page 2)

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Keep In Mind:

Academics are important!

**Sportsmanship
Expectations:**

- Applaud during the introduction of players, coaches and officials.
- Recognize a player's performance who has fouled out with applause from both sets of fans and with a hand shake from opponents.
- Accept all decisions of officials.
- Treat the competition as a game and not a war.
- Applaud the performance of all participants at the end of a contest.

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(Continued from page 1)

receive a full-ride scholarship. If your child's success is tied to your self-esteem as a parent, you have goals for your child to play at an elite level, and/or it is really important to be better than others, then emotional reactions and bad sportsmanship are going to occur.

At the end of the day every parent must take responsibility for modeling good sportsmanship and teaching good values through sport. When armed with a few helpful strategies, even the most intense junior high school parent can survive the big game without a blow up.

Want more sport parenting advice? Go to www.youthsports.msu.edu



Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High-School Interscholastic Level

Student-Athletes	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Baseball	Men's Ice Hockey	Men's Soccer
High- School Student Athletes	545,844	438,933	1,108,441	471,025	36,912	398,351
High- School Senior Student-	155,955	125,409	316,697	134,579	10,546	113,815
NCAA Student- Athletes	17,500	15,708	67,887	31,264	3,944	22,573
NCAA Freshmen Roster Positions	5,000	4,488	19,396	8,933	1,127	6,449
NCAA Senior Student-Athletes	3,889	3,491	15,086	6,948	876	5,016
NCAA Student-Athletes Drafted	48	32	255	806	11	49
Percent High School to NCAA	3.2	3.6	6.1	6.6	10.7	5.7
Percent NCAA to Professional	1.2	0.9	1.7	11.6	1.3	1.0
Percent High School to Professional	0.03	0.03	0.08	0.6	0.1	0.04

Note: These percentages are based on estimated data and should be considered approximations of actual percentages.

“Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Interscholastic Level “
NCAA, Indianapolis, September 2011