



Dear _____ :

(child fills in name of parent(s) or guardian)

Thank you for letting me play sports. I can't wait to play and I want you to come to as many games and practices as possible. There are just a few things I'd like you to do:

Remember that I participate in sports to have fun.

Follow the rules of the game and support equal playing time for all players.

Encourage me at all times and teach me that honest effort is as important (maybe even more important) than winning.

Remain in the spectator area during competitions.

Support my coach and let him/her coach me during the game.

Accept that the officials are doing the best job they can.

Respect all players on the field, the officials, coaches, and other parents.

Keep your emotions under control.

Help when asked by a coach or official.

Remember that I will get the most out of sports with your love and positive support.

Athlete's Signature

Parent's Signatures

Coach's name/phone Number



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way to go!

signing up your kid for sports is the first step toward a season full of fun for the whole family! What a wonderful opportunity you have created for your child. One where he/she can learn new skills, get some exercise, meet new friends, be apart of a team, and have the attention and support of his/her biggest fan...you! Just remember—put the FUN FIRST and you will make this sport experience that much more enjoyable for everyone.



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Your child soaks up everything you say and even what you don't say.



why sports?

Why did you enroll your child in sports? Maybe it's because you enjoyed playing sports as a kid and want your child to experience the same benefits. Maybe it's because you want the best for your child and believe that sports are an integral part of a healthy childhood. **Whether or not you played sports as a child or play sports as an adult, your actions and behaviors will have the greatest influence on the happiness and success of your child's sport experience.**

parents too

should

play by

the rule

be a role model

Children learn behavior from many different people – coaches, teachers, other adults, friends, but they learn the most from their parents. Your child soaks up everything you say and even what you don't say. Your words and actions also need to be consistent if you want to send a clear message to your child. If you tell your child to respect his/her opponents, coaches, and officials that's great. But the message is lost if you don't practice the same behavior.



my kid's
going to be a
big league star

Almost every kid that plays sport dreams about making it to the big leagues. It's only natural for you as a parent to feel the same way about your child. Unfortunately, the reality is that it's very unlikely that your child will be offered a college scholarship or professional contract (even if they are the best player on the team right now).

*Try to remember that kids
play sports to have fun.*

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you, your child, and sports

Kids who participate in sport can have higher self-esteem, better life skills, do better in school, and are less likely to use drugs and alcohol. The problem is that sport participation alone doesn't guarantee these outcomes. The benefits your child achieves is very much your responsibility as parents. In order for your child to get the most out of sport, it is important that you support your child by giving encouragement and showing interest. Here are some suggestions:

1 Encourage all the players.

2 Reward your child for playing fairly and trying hard (they will learn the value of honesty and integrity).

3 Review the rules with your child and explain why they are important.

4 Promote and support equal playing time for all players.

5 Control your emotions.

6 Respect the referees' or officials' decisions.

7 Respect the coaches.

8 Congratulate the opponents when they win.

9 Thank the coaches, officials, and other volunteers who conducted the event.

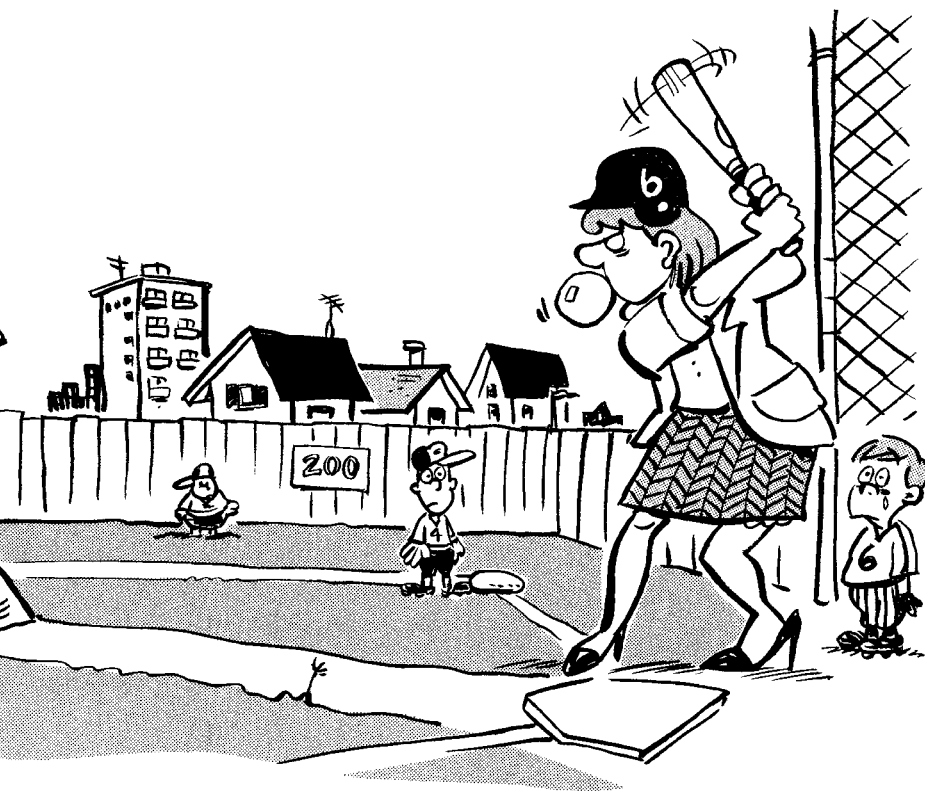


72% of children would rather play for a losing team than sit on the bench of a winning team.

keep it in perspective

Remember that your child is the one playing the sport. It's natural to feel that your child's performance is a direct reflection (positive and negative) on you. There is nothing wrong with wanting the best for your children and **encouraging** them to be the best that they can be. The problem occurs when we set our expectations so high that our children can never reach them and feel bad in the process. It's important to let your children establish their own goals, to play the game for themselves.

winning is great, but it's not the only thing



Try not to put too heavy a burden on your children to win games. A recent study revealed that 72% of children would rather play for a losing team than sit on the bench of a winning team. The most important part of your children's sport experience is that they learn about themselves while they **enjoy** playing the game. A healthy environment that encourages learning and fun will develop a more positive self-image which can be an invaluable asset all through your child's life.

The best way to help your child deal with failure is through positive reinforcement. When your children make a mistake, remember that they are still learning. Encourage their efforts and point out the things they did well. As long as they tried their best, you should make them feel like a WINNER!



"Fall down seven times, get up eight"

-old Japanese proverb

can you care too much?

All parents care about how their child feels. But for whatever reason, we sometimes either don't pay attention to our children and fail to recognize their emotional needs or we let our own emotions get the better of us. It's natural for you and your child to want to win. Problems occur if our only measure of success is winning. Try to set your focus on effort rather than outcome and on learning rather than comparison to others. Try to teach your child that a winner is someone who makes maximum effort, continues to learn and improve, and doesn't let mistakes stop him/her from trying. Mistakes are inevitable. What we want is for our children to learn from their mistakes, to teach them to not give up and get back in the game. But remember, when a game is always about learning lessons and never giving up, it becomes too much like work and it ceases to be fun...the most important reason that kids play sports in the first place.

talk about it

Ask your children why they play sports. The answers may surprise you but more importantly your children can give you clues about how to best help them get the most out of their sport experience. Here are some questions to get you started:

What can I do to make playing sport more fun for you?

What do you like most about playing?

What were the best and worst things that

Why did you decide to play _____

Do you want to play again next

finding the time and knowing where to start

Adding another activity to what is probably an already hectic schedule can be daunting, but you don't have to be overwhelmed. There are many different things you can do to support your child's sport experience:

1 Create positive nicknames for kids on the team. Create a parents cheering section. Keep score. Sponsor a team.

2 Volunteer to bring a snack for after the game (be a really good sport and bring enough for both teams).

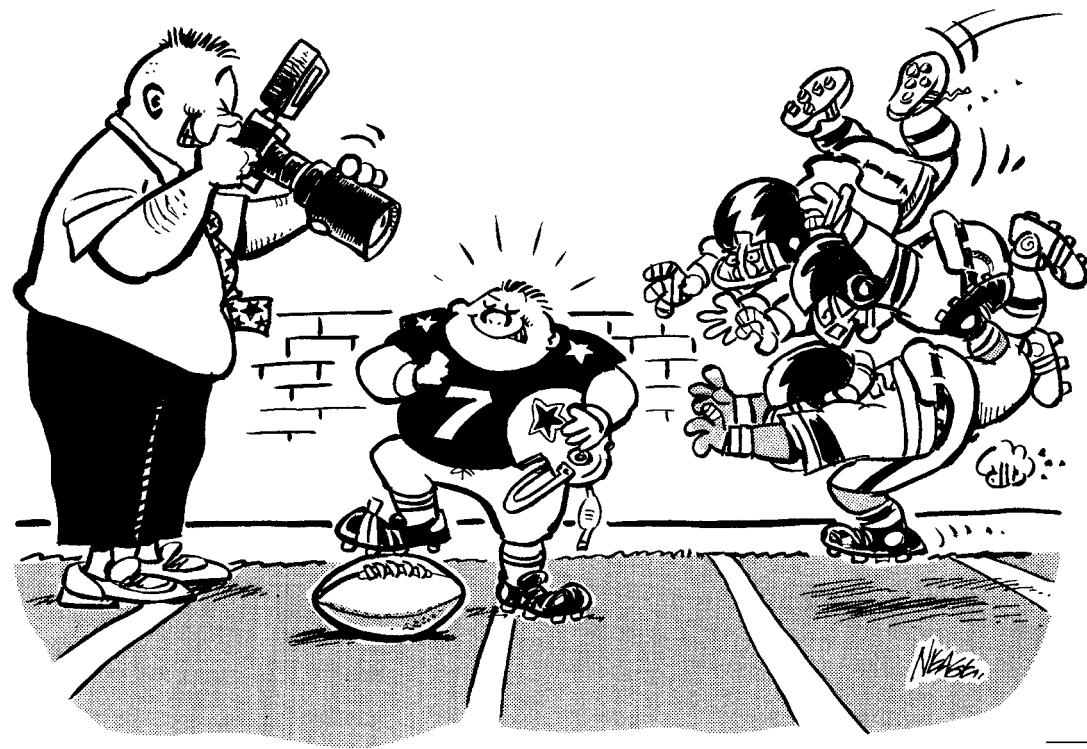
3 Talk and Listen to your child about what was learned in practice.

4 Practice at home with your child to work on basic skills.

5 Calmly offer correction and advice.

6 Become the team photographer.

7 Always put your child and the FUN FIRST!



_____ happened at the last game?

_____ (fill in the name of the sport)?

_____ season? Why or why not?

