

The Role of Parents in Athletics

Based on a presentation by Rob Miller
NAIA Champions of Character

70% of children are done with sports by the age of 13.

Reasons for this: other things to do, burn out, or relationships (with coaches or parents).

Reminder for parents:

Help your athletes before competition by asking your child **3** questions:

Why do you want to play?

What are you going to get out of the season?

What is your role on the team?

Parents need to 100% accept the reason their child wants to play (even if it is not the reason the parent wants them to play).

Red flags that you have not released them to the game:

If you say “we” all the time.

If you try to solve their problems.

If you continue to coach your child past the time they know more about the game than you do.

If you are more nervous than your child for competition.

If it takes you longer to bounce back after a loss than it does your child.

If you are taking mental or physical notes about what your child did wrong.

If you are paying them or if you are critical of coaches, other players or umpires.

Parents need to **“release them to the coach”**.

Parents can talk to the coach in these 3 situations:

In case of an injury.

To find out what your child can do to improve.

If your child is behaving in a way during a sport that you would not allow at home.

Never talk to a coach about: playing time, strategy or other members of the team.

During Competition:

Children want their parents to model poise, confidence and appropriate behavior.

Your focus should be on the whole team and the team goals, not on your child.

Children want one instructional voice. They want it to be the same instructional voice they have heard all week at practice, the coach’s voice.

There are four roles in every athletic contest: coach, player, official and spectator. You can only be one.

When a parent yells at an official, it is sending the message that it is okay to disrespect an authority figure in public.

During Competition:

Children say the worst thing after a game is the ride home with the parent.

Children need to have time to recover after a game, give them the time and space they need.

Parents need to be a confidence builder, not a confidence cutter.

Let the coach critique the child’s performance in the game and the parent should support and build confidence.