

SPORTS PARENTING

- 1 Make sure your child knows win or lose, that you love them, you appreciate their efforts and **you are not disappointed in them.**
- 2 Try your best to **be completely honest** about your child's athletic capability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- 3 **Be helpful but don't "coach"** on the way to the track, diamond or court... on the way home... at breakfast... and so on.
- 4 Teach them to **enjoy the thrills of competition**, trying, working, improving their skills and attitudes... taking the physical bumps and coming back for more.
- 5 Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. Remember, you fumbled too; you lost as well as won; you were frightened; you backed off at times; and you were not always heroic. **Don't pressure them because of your pride.**
- 6 **Don't compete with the coach.** The young athlete often comes home and chatters on about "coach says this, coach says that." This is often hard to take, especially for a father or mother who has had some sports experience.
- 7 **Don't compare** the skill, courage or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the squad or team, at least not in front of them.
- 8 You should get to know the coach, so that you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics and knowledge are a **good influence** on your child.
- 9 Always remember that children tend to exaggerate both when praised and when criticized. **Temper your reactions** to their tales of woe or heroics they bring home.
- 10 Make a point of **understanding courage**, and the fact that it is relative. Explain to your youngster that courage does not mean an absence of fear but means doing something in spite of fear or discomfort.
- 11 Never approach a coach **on game day** to talk about your child, before, during or after a contest.

A parent's "Coaching Job" is the toughest one of all and takes a lot of effort. Sometimes in your desire to help your child, best intentions can end up being counterproductive. Applying the Rules for Parents will go a long way towards fostering an environment your child can use to enjoy and excel in their sport.

