

It's your turn to
make a difference.

Coaching Your Kids from the Sidelines *pg. 1*

Participating in sports helps children develop a number of qualities that will have lifelong benefits. Studies suggest that participation in sports can help children learn responsible social behavior and gain an appreciation of personal health and fitness. Regular physical activity also helps the body manage stress, which can result in better school performance and improve your child's ability to respond appropriately to daily challenges. In addition to these benefits, team sports give children a sense of belonging. Below are some tips to help parents build confidence and good character in their children through sporting activities.

Setting an Example for Your Child

- Teach good sportsmanship. Be a role model to your child and other parents. Offer words of encouragement to your child, his or her teammates and their opponents.
- Be respectful of everyone. Show respect for the other team, the coaches and the officials. Avoid criticizing a child's athletic ability, a coach's decision or an official's call on a play. Keep this in mind when attending athletic events and watching sports on TV with your child as well. If you have a concern about a coach's particular style of coaching, politely bring your concern to the coach's attention after the game. You may want to volunteer to help the coach during the next practice.

Building your Child's Confidence and Motivation

- Focus on effort, not results. The message to "win at all costs" can put a lot of pressure on a child. Regardless of the final score, your child should feel proud that he or she played their best. Let children know when they had the right idea or made the right decision in the game even if it didn't result in a score. Let your children know they are always winners in your eyes.
- Accept mistakes. Children are still learning to master the skills of the sport and making mistakes is a valuable part of the learning process. Focusing on what they learned or what they can do the next time will help them make progress, which is what making mistakes is all about! To help your child stay motivated, point out areas in which you have noticed personal or team improvement since the last practice. This helps children keep mistakes in perspective.

For More Information

www.preventchildabusewv.org

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Pinwheels for
PREVENTION
Prevent Child Abuse
West Virginia

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Coaching Your Kids from the Sidelines *pg. 2*

Extra practice

- If the coach brings up an area your child needs to work on, help them practice at home and offer lots of specific encouragement. Occasionally plan to stay after practice for an extra 10 or 15 minutes so your child can get a little extra time with their teammates. This encourages social development and team building.

Encourage the team

- Cheer for the team, in addition to the individual players. This can help put the focus on the importance of all players working together.
- Teach your child to honor their commitments. When a child commits to play a sport, they should take the commitment seriously. Sometimes a child will have a bad experience during a game or practice, and they will not feel like playing anymore. Few children will be the star athlete on every team. The benefits of setting goals and following through greatly outweigh any MVP status. Explain to your children that their coach and teammates are counting on them. If they are not able to actively participate, it is usually a good idea to have them dress in uniform and sit on the sidelines to show support for their teammates.



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