



PLC Champion Parent Focus: Positive and Constructive Feedback



Sometimes it is a challenge to be a parent on the sideline: either watching your child struggle in a sport or watching him/her on a team where others are not as talented as your own child. It is always important to remember that sports need to be an encouraging and positive environment for ALL athletes.

“There are two ways of exerting one's strength; one is pushing down, the other is pulling up.”

~Booker T. Washington

To be a good role model for your own children, conduct yourself in a positive and sportsmanlike manner.

- Cheer for your whole team: “Go Red!” or “Strong Tiger’s Defense!” Instead of, “Come on Jack!” or “Pass the ball to Lauren!”
- Instead of expressing your disappointment in a negative way after your child or another makes an error, try saying “Great try!” “You’ll get it next time!” Many athletes are easily distracted by their parents or other environmental factors and when the crowd gets disappointed, the players may get discouraged or even embarrassed which will further impede their play.
- Naturally, parents want to give advice. Be constructive, rather than critical, in the way that you talk with your children. Let them know you noticed the positive things that they accomplished and **ASK THEM** what they thought they did well. Psychologists remind us that we should offer 3 positive comments to every constructive feedback we share.
- When correcting mistakes or addressing

players' weaknesses, it is important to phrase your comments in such a way that they are both supportive and challenging, so your child can improve. Start by saying something positive about the game; then indicate how you believe your child might improve; finally, express confidence that the child will succeed in the future. This is called: **the sandwich approach.**

An example of a Sandwich Approach for a student athlete might be:

"You did a great job staying with the ball. I noticed you ran out of gas toward the end of the 3rd period. If you keep with your new conditioning workout, I bet you'll have more stamina as the season goes on. I love how hard you work to improve and I think you will see this pay-off."

Remember, you are a role model for your child, your team and your school. Try to keep your child focused on improving his/her skills while you express your unconditional love and positive support for your child, your child's team, your school community and our Church.

Play and Parent Like A Champion Today(R)!