

Used by Permission: PLACT



Champion Parent Focus: Open Communication with your Child's Coach

Sport parents typically focus on their own child and what they feel is best for him/her. A coach, however, must look at the team as a whole, being equally concerned about each member of the team. Parents should leave coaching to the coach. To go a step further, parents should try to put themselves in the coach's shoes trying to relate to the difficult issues that coaches face in leading their team most effectively.

If you are upset about something happening on your child's team, talk with your child to see if it is an issue for him/her. If it is, encourage your child to speak with his/her coach directly about the situation.

There may be circumstances when you feel it is important for you to speak directly with your child's coach. There are appropriate means of communicating. Always show respect for the coach and do not confront the coach at an inappropriate time, such as:

- During a game or practice, or anytime that takes time and attention away from the athletes.
- Not in front of the athletes on the team.
- Not while angry.
- Not late at night or during the coach's personal time.
- Not immediately after a critical incident. Follow the 24 hour rule: Take at least one day to reflect before you



"The worst prison
would be a closed heart."

~Pope John Paul II

Speak to the coach.

- Avoid email communication. Instead request an appointment with the coach to talk either in person or over the phone.

When appropriate communication occurs between two respectful adults who openly listen to each other's point of view, almost every situation can be resolved amicably. Understanding that coaches and parents both have the same ultimate goal - to see that their children do well - should make communication between the parties go smoothly. If the issue cannot be resolved in a mutually agreeable manner, the school or league athletic administrator can become involved.

Young people are often exposed to boundary-violating behavior by adults and can be influenced by a parent's negative attitude toward his or her child's coach. It is important that parents support their children without undermining the coach's decisions and team leadership.

Remember that coaches are giving much of their time and talent to the team and coaching is not always an easy job. As parents, we should do our part to help the process be rewarding.

Parent Like A Champion Today!