

The parenting cheat sheet

Corey Quandt Playlist Group August 2, 2013



Helping Your Child Succeed in Elite Volleyball

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Key factors underpinning successful involvement:

Ensure You Understand and Enhance Your Child's Experience

o **Shared & Communicated goals:** Are you and your daughter/son striving to achieve the same things? What are your reasons for supporting your daughter's involvement in volleyball? Do you know what your daughter/son is trying to achieve this season? What is your child's ultimate volleyball dream?

o **An Understanding Emotional Climate:** The "ideal" environment is one in which you consistently display an understanding of your child, of volleyball, and the role volleyball in their life. The creation of this environment depends on a number of factors:

1. **Your knowledge and experience:** The more you know about volleyball the better you can understand your son/daughter's experience. Take time to learn about the sport -- the psychological challenges, the physical demands, the technical and tactical intricacies -- so you can appreciate your son/daughter's experiences. If you have experience in volleyball, be careful not to assume your son/daughter's experience is the same as yours -- each individual will experience the demands of sport differently and need different support.
2. **The relationship you have with your child's coach:** The coach

plays a critical role in your daughter/son's volleyball life and is an extremely valuable resource for you as a parent. Use the coaches to develop your understanding -- for example, what are the goals for the team? What should you be expecting your daughter to achieve this season? Do you need to be providing extra guidance to your son/daughter? The better your relationship with your child's coach, the easier it is for you to learn about the intricacies of the team. Given the extensive demands coaches' encounter it is important to develop appropriate methods of communication (e.g., e--mail rather than in person during training) and times to communicate (e.g., schedule meetings rather than approaching coaches during training) so meetings can be as effective as possible.

3. **Your ability to keep volleyball in perspective:** Volleyball is, obviously, an extremely important part of your child's life (and as a result your life). But it is only one part of his/her life. Getting caught up in winning and losing, the amount of time your son/daughter is on court, or being disappointed if your daughter/son doesn't play well can prevent enjoyment and success in volleyball. Focus on the multiple benefits your child is gaining from playing, identify the different opportunities she is gaining through her involvement, and understand the varying outcomes that can come from volleyball.

o **Individual and Flexible Parenting Practices of Competitive Sport:**

Not all athletes need the same involvement from their parents. What works for one person might not work for another. The specific behaviors athletes need from their parents are both person and sport dependent. So, as a parent it is useful if you strive to display behaviors that are most helpful for your child and applicable to volleyball. There are two things to focus on:

1. **Develop the skills to cope with competition:** Volleyball is a psychological demanding sport and athletes need the skills to cope with this. As a parent, the way in which you interact with your child can substantially influence her ability to cope with competition. To succeed

in volleyball athletes need to be independent thinkers, able to adapt to different situations and tactics; they need to be able accountable to themselves and their team, recognizing when and why they are making mistakes so they can change them; they need to be flexible, understanding that line--ups can change and trusting the coaches' decisions; athletes also need to be able to cope with the range of emotions they will experience and use these to their advantage. As a parent, if you do too much for your child, explain away mistakes, criticize coaches' decisions, or underplay the importance of situations you might be limited the opportunities for your child to learn and develop.

2. **Address individual child's needs at competitions:** Do you know what your son/daughter wants from you at competitions? Some athletes need a pep--talk before a game, others want to listen to music, while others want to talk about something entirely different. During games some athletes want their parents to provide a lot of encouragement; others want their parents to be silent. After games, the feedback athletes' want is likely to depend on their performance, the game outcome, and their personality. Engage in frequent discussions with your child about what s/he wants from you.

