

# 7 things all sports parents should know

Corey Quandt   Playlist Group   December 12, 2015

## 1. Reasonable expectations

Keep in mind, 98 percent of club and high school athletes will not play competitively in college or professionally. So embrace a big-picture mindset built around all the good things that will come from your child's sports experience. They'll learn teamwork, leadership, discipline, mental toughness, time management, sportsmanship, personal accountability, academic responsibility, humility and integrity. They'll have an opportunity to get in good physical shape and, very likely, they'll develop confidence from learning to do something well.

One way to help young athletes have a well-rounded experience is to avoid early specialization. At some point in their youth sports career, they may have to narrow their focus to a single sport or, maybe, two sports, but locking them in to one sport at a very young age is rarely a good idea. It can prevent them from experiencing other activities (music, theater, hobbies) and lead to overuse injuries and burnout.

## 2. Positive communication

Negativity and poor sportsmanship from parents can yield all kinds of unwanted results for your child, including embarrassment, distraction and the a feeling of added pressure. It also models bad behavior, which can result in kids picking up the same destructive habits.

Here are some keys to positive, effective communication:

- Understand the 24-hour rule. If you have a grievance or any type of

issue, don't talk to the coach about it until at least a full day after the match.

- Request a meeting via text, email or phone message. Don't pour your thoughts into an email. Face-to-face meetings tend to be much more productive.
- If your athlete is 12 years old or over, encourage them to advocate for themselves. If they're younger, it's a good idea for them join you in the meeting with their coach.
- Start any communication by expressing an honest appreciation for the coach's efforts.
- Take a problem-solving approach rather than an approach that's critical of the coach. Ask questions for clarification and talk only about your athlete, not about other players on the team.