



Top 10 Tips for Parents of Student-Athletes

1. It sometimes is hard to talk to our kids about their sports, but if you remember to ask your child how you can best help them, you will learn a lot of valuable information. In other words, don't assume what they might need from you. And, don't assume they are already getting what they need from you.
2. The more intense the competition the more everyone feels the raising of the stakes. Parents should try to set the right tone ó showing their kids that they (as adults) can remain in control, handle wins and losses with grace, and recognize how challenging it can be at times for their kids to compete and try to live up to expectations.
3. A parent's job is to try and encourage their sporty sons and daughters to see themselves as someone special - beyond their athletic abilities. To accomplish this, you as the parent need to stop talking so much about sports. And, instead bring up topics that interest your kids that have no direct ties to pressure or performance.
4. It may be better for you, mom and dad, to assume your kids are stressed when they are busy with athletics and school, even if it's hard to tell exactly how they are feeling. When they overreact to small upsets, or think the worst, it's most likely a function of their stress.
5. Encourage your sporty kids to say "no" once in a while to avoid stretching themselves to thin. Point out that saying yes to everything may seem like a good idea but it's a bad idea if they are going to feel more pressure and get less sleep. You can model that behavior for them.
6. Pick times to surprise your athlete with unexpected pleasures, like a trip to get ice cream, or maybe even tell them you are going to skip going to the game this time (if that makes them happy). The road to a healthy, happy relationship starts with connecting with your son/daughter as if they weren't just athletes ó but people with other strengths and interests.
7. Acting like (or being) your child's coach is tricky business. Proceed with caution. As much as possible, ask the assistant coaches to take on the role of coach for your son/daughter. It becomes harder at home, if you are always coaching them, for them to see you (and for you to act) as just mom and dad.

551 West Lancaster Avenue
Haverford, PA 19041
484-808-7273

8. Ultimately, this is your child's sport. Whether you played a lot when you were young or didn't play at all, and whether you had success in sports or not, we should look at sports as something that helps them figure out who they are. When a parent gets too involved, they don't learn as much about themselves. Remember that when you get in a car with them after a tough loss.
9. The car ride home is not the place to review the details of the game, unless your child is asking for you to weigh in on what happened. And, if you weigh in, start with the positives. Otherwise, you should make the car ride a time for mental and physical recovery, and parents should practice their own breathing and meditation to resist jumping in and analyzing a game that they didn't play.
10. Parents who meditate, breathe deeply and otherwise work on themselves have a much better chance of separating the game and its results from who their child really is. You really just want them to stick with sports as long as they can. So, you should expect youth sports to help you work on you, as parents, grow and improve.

Information on Youth Sports/Coaching

<http://changingthegameproject.com/>

<https://www.positivecoach.org/>

<http://www.kidssportspsychology.com/>

Greenepsych Sport Psychology Facebook Page

- *For information on upcoming sports-themed parent groups or groups for student-athletes, please email Dr. Greene at mgreene@greenepsych.com or look on our website at www.greenepsych.com*

551 West Lancaster Avenue
Haverford, PA 19041
484-808-7273