

20 Critical Parent Questions for Success in Youth Sports!

1. Do you and your spouse use open-ended questions (“how was the game today?”) when discussing your child’s athletic experiences, or do you use close-ended questions (“did you win?”)?
2. Do you and your spouse use active listening skills, whereby you actively keep the conversation going by listening closely, asking for clarification, and paraphrasing when necessary?
3. Do you and your spouse use positive reinforcement as a teaching tool or do you use punishment?
4. Do you and your spouse work cooperatively with your child’s coaches, or do you tend to “coach the coach?”
5. Do you and your spouse help your child balance school and sports?
6. Are you and your spouse aware of your child’s training routines – including the possible use of performance supplements?
7. Do you and your spouse mandate breaks and down-time from sports?
8. Do you and your spouse attend most of your child’s games – as well as some of his/her practices?
9. Do you and your spouse assist with your child’s goal setting? Are his/her goals realistic?
10. Do you and your spouse model pro-social behavior when it comes to resolving conflicts in youth sports?
11. Have you and/or your spouse ever yelled at, ridiculed, or been silent toward your child after one of his/her poor sport performances?

12. Do you and your spouse help your child use imagery techniques to help prepare for practices and games?
13. Do you and your spouse take time out with your child to identify athletic transferable skills? Do you show your child how to use these skills in school, other activities, and in life?
14. Do you and your spouse know how to react/respond should your child want to quit playing sports?
15. Do you and your spouse have agreed upon feelings about year-round sports, as well as sport-specialization?
16. Are you and your spouse aware of how often, as well as the nature, of your child's communication patterns with his/her coach? Have you checked to see if your child and coach are engaged in communication through social networking pages?
17. Have you and your spouse explored professional assistance options in your community should your child appear to be "burned out," depressed, or overly-anxious about playing sports?
18. Do you and your spouse respect the coach and understand the difficulties coaches face when it comes to playing time? Do you ask to speak to the coach at an appropriate time, or do you wait to speak to him/her after games and practices when emotions are typically high?
19. Do you and your spouse know the realities of how few kids will "make it" to the college or professional level? Have you both discussed these odds with your child?
20. Do you and your spouse place equal – if not more – emphasis on your child's academic and other non-athletic interests as you do his or her athletic endeavors?

