

# TIPS FOR PARENTS & FANS—A CHILD-CENTERED APPROACH

## Know Your Role

There are only four roles in every game. You can play. You can coach. You can officiate. Or you can be a fan. But you can only play one role at a time.

- Be positive and encourage all the players.
- You're not the coach, so don't shout out instructions.
- You're not the official, so don't offer opinions on a particular call.
- Help your child keep it all in perspective by keeping it in perspective for you, too.

## Drop Yours and Adopt Theirs

Ask yourself why you want your children to play and what you hope to gain. Then ask your player: "Why are you playing?" and "What are your goals?" Really listen to the answer. If you discover you have different goals for your children—drop yours and adopt theirs. Otherwise, your child is in danger of dropping out, never realizing her potential and dramatically affecting her health and quality of life.



## Fill the Emotional Tank

People who are praised are motivated to continue that behavior. Use positive, specific comments ("I like the way you're hustling up and down the court!"). Praise a behavior you'd like them to continue. Find something genuine to praise—people can see through false praise, so be truthful.

The mission of Champions of Character is to restore character values and raise a generation of students who understand and demonstrate in everyday decisions respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership and sportsmanship. To learn more visit [championsofcharacter.org](http://championsofcharacter.org).



## MORE TIPS FOR PARENTS & FANS

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### Set a Great Example

Model the behavior you'd like to see. If you don't like a call against your team, be quiet (sure, it's hard, but of course you *can*). Avoid negative comments about the coach, especially in front of your child.

### Give Space After Games

Guess what most kids like *least* (by far) about their participation in youth sports? The ride home. After the game is absolutely the worst time to rehash. Sports are intense, and kids need time to relax. Take the cue from your child. When they're ready, they'll let you know. Then, ask open-ended questions ("What did you enjoy?" and "What did you learn?") Don't give your analysis unless your child asks for it.

### Tell A Player What A Player Really Wants To Hear

"I love watching you play!"



Tips and strategies provided by  
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