

Positive Athletic Parenting

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these “six pillars of character.” Following these guidelines of Positive Athletic Parenting will help coaches and parents develop young student athletes into well rounded young adults.

1. **Be realistic.** Know the limitations of your son or daughter and be thankful for their unique set of abilities both mental and physical.
2. **Motivate with a positive attitude.** Don't motivate negatively. Don't offer excuses for shortcomings or make unfavorable comparisons with others.
3. **Model respect.** Respect other players and parents, in spite of mannerisms that may irritate you. Envy can and will destroy a team, and hurt other players and parents.
4. **Support the coach.** Coaches are human. They make mistakes. But don't continually second-guess them. Give positive support to the coach's rules, system and philosophy, even though you may disagree with some minor points.
5. **Emphasize total commitment (body and soul) to the program.** Teach and stress discipline, attitude, respect, and team-work traits that last a lifetime and determine relative success or failure.
6. **Stress academics before athletics.** Insist on good study habits and good academic performance. Brains will carry your child further than their legs.
7. **Serve as a good role model.** Encourage love of the game or activity, and support whatever role your child chooses or is assigned.
8. **Monitor your child's social activities.** Help and encourage your child to choose friends and to make the right choices in and out of school, socially and spiritually.
9. **Encourage good decision making and leadership.** This can be developed. It has to do with self-esteem, grades, values, and respect for others, including competitors, and can come as a result of the first eight guidelines.