

10 Actions to Avoid as a Sports Parent

Don't be that parent that makes attending a high school sporting event unpleasant for everyone else in the stands—not to mention making things uncomfortable for the participants. An article on Stack.com lists 10 “no-no's” as a sports parent.

1. Coaching from the sideline

When a parent shouts instructions from the stands, it is rarely helpful. You may be taking that player's focus off the field. Then you may be saying something that directly contradicts what the coach has told the team.

2. Your expectations are too high

Only a small percentage of athletes go on to play in college, and a much smaller percentage of that group get to star at the major college level or play professionally. You should encourage your athlete to have dreams and set goals, but approach the situation knowing the odds for stardom are not high.

3. Criticizing other kids

Before you say something that might be hurtful to a player on the field, take a deep breath. The last thing you want to do is say something critical about someone else's kid, whose parents are likely sitting near you and could hear it.

4. Arguing with . . . just about anyone

You churn out a lot of emotion in watching your child play sports. Nobody wants to hear you berate the officials or argue with opposing parents.

5. Playing the blame game

It's inevitable that your child or another teammate will make a mistake during a game, or that the coach makes a questionable decision. Accept it.

6. You think every opponent of your child cheats

Don't take the stance—even for a second—that the players on the other team are looking for an edge and willing to cross the line in terms of breaking the rules.

7. Bragging

Even if your child is the star of the team or has an outstanding game, no one on your team or the opposing team wants to hear you gloat about it. Stay humble and gracious.

8. Not letting your kid have a life outside of sports

Practice helps athletes continue their improvement, but don't push your student-athlete to over-practice. Set a limit for your child's time spent on improving their athletic skills and focus on helping him or her become a well-rounded person with interests and abilities outside of athletics.

9. Yelling at your kid in front of everyone

Your child needs to accept criticism and use it constructively to improve. But there's a right way to do it and a wrong way—expressing your criticism in public is the wrong way.

10. Swearing/complaining/being a loudmouth

Your loud comments are not entertaining, nor are they helpful to anyone within an earshot. They just lead to negative feelings about you by others.