

## 11 Commandments of Sports for Parents

1. Make sure that your child knows that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love him, appreciate his efforts, and are not disappointed in him.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, her competitive attitude, her sportsmanship- and her *actual* skill level.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach him on the way to the court (or the rink, or the track, or so forth), or on the way back, or at breakfast.
4. Teach her to enjoy the thrill of competition. Don't say "Winning doesn't count", because it does.
5. And hear this, parents: Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. Don't pressure him because of your pride.
6. Don't compete with the coach. Remember, in many cases the coach becomes a hero to his athletes, a person who can do no wrong.
7. Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with those of other members of the squad or team...or at least not in her hearing.
8. You should also get to know the coach so that you can be sure that his philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to expose your child to him.
9. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reactions when they bring home tales of woe or heroics.
10. Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains but fear a fight; some of us fight but turn to jelly if a bee buzzes nearby. A child must know: *Courage is not absence of fear, but rather doing something in spite of fear.*
11. Don't have us (the coaches) thinking about you while we are coaching your child.