

Ten Commandments of Sports for Parents

1. Thou shall be sure that your child knows that – win or lose, scared or heroic – you love him/her, appreciate his/her efforts, and that you are not disappointed in him/her.
2. Thou shall try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, his/her competitive attitude, his/her sportsmanship – and his/her actual skill level.
3. Thou shall be helpful – but don't coach him/her on the way to the rink, track, court, field, or pool – or on the way back home.
4. Thou shall teach your child to enjoy competition for competition's sake, remembering that there are lessons to be learned in winning as well as in losing.
5. Parents try not to relive your athletic life through your child – or try to create an athletic career to replace the one that you never had.
6. Thou shall not compete with the coach – remember, in many cases, the coach becomes a hero to the athletes, a person who can do no wrong.
7. Thou shall not compare the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the squad or team – at least not in his/her hearing.
8. Thou shall get to know the coach so that you can be sure that his/her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to expose your child to him/her.
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 tales of heroics.
10. Thou shall make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains but fear flight – some of us will want to fight but turn to jelly if a spider crawls nearby. A child must learn: courage is not absence of fear, but rather doing something in spite of fear.