

12 TIPS ON HOW TO PARENT AN ATHLETE.

THE BEST CHEERLEADER YOUR CHILD WILL EVER HAVE IS YOU. HERE'S HOW TO MASTER YOUR ALL-IMPORTANT ROLE OF STANDING ON THE SIDELINES.



BONUS TIP!

My last words to my kids before they go off to play or train is always, "Have fun!" Sport is meant to be enjoyable. The moment it stops being fun, the magic is lost.

1.

Fuel your young athlete with positive words and nutritious foods. Encourage them to stay involved in their nutritional choices and don't berate them for a dietary slip up here and there.

2.

Always say repeatedly, "I love watching you play/swim/run." This will remind them that they don't have to win the game to be a winner in the eyes of the people who matter most.

3.

If your child is feeling nervous before the game, don't talk about it. Your role is to get them thinking about other things. There is plenty of time to focus before the game with their coach and teammates.

4.

Be a good sports fan. Only let encouraging words come out of your mouth towards your child and the other athletes on the field.

5.

Don't talk about the score after the game. Focus on the skill. Ask instead "What felt good today?" It's about the moments, not the outcome.

6.

If your child is upset after a bad result, you don't always have to say something wise and witty. Be still with them and hold their hand.

7.

Share rewards for hard work and commitment with a new piece of equipment or ice cream with friends after the race. Rewards should come from effort, not just results.

8.

Remind your child that the goal of sport is not to win but to excel at being an athlete. That means taking pleasure in pushing your body to do things you think you can't do.

9.

Treat the coach like an ally, not an adversary. Your child's coach will be one of the most important voices in their life. Causing conflict sends mixed messages.

10.

Encourage positive sportsmanship and kindness towards other athletes. Sport should be a place where life-long friendships are developed.

11.

Foster independence. It is your child who has to want this, not you. Autonomy, the desire to be in charge of one's own life is a powerful intrinsic motivator.

12.

Enjoy different activities and hobbies with your child outside their chosen sport. Find time to talk and be together without focusing on training, races and results.