



South Suburban
PARKS AND RECREATION

PARENTING MY CHAMPION

SOUTH SUBURBAN'S PARENT GUIDE



The South Suburban Parks and Recreation's Athletic Department is committed to provide quality sport experiences for youth. It is important that children receive the maximum support to enjoy their recreational experience. Our goal is to provide a safe place for children to learn the rules and skills of the game, but most importantly, to have FUN!!!

An estimated 30 million children play organized youth sports each year in the United States. Youth sports help children fight obesity, lead healthier lives and learn character-building values such as teamwork, dedication and discipline.

Experts estimate that more than 70 percent of children quit organized youth sports by age 13.

Source: Michigan State University's Institute for the Study of Youth Sports

KNOW YOUR ROLE

The first step to helping your child is to know where you fit in the process and acting appropriately. You can play. You can coach. You can officiate. You can be a fan. But you need to pick just one role and respect the others. **KNOW YOUR ROLE.**

Source: Bruce Brown and the NAIA



The 5 biggest parent/child interaction problems are:

- overemphasizing winning.
- holding unrealistic expectations.
- coaching one's child.
- criticizing one's child.
- pampering one's child too much.

Source: Citizenship through Sports Alliance and Bruce Brown of NAIA

Most parents are considered FANS and what does that mean?

- Be a positive and encouraging supporter.
- Cheer for good plays on both teams.
- You're not the coach, so don't shout out instructions.
- You're not the official, so don't offer opinions on the officiating or on a particular call.
- It's your job to help your child keep it all in perspective. That means keeping a appropriate perspective yourself.

WHO WILL YOU PORTRAY?



CHOOSE ONE. RESPECT THE OTHERS.

KEEP IT FUN

SOUTH SUBURBAN'S NUMBER ONE GOAL!!

One way to keep your child engaged in youth sports is by keeping it fun and focused on their needs. The largest study conducted to date (surveying 8000 youth) identified the top 5 reasons children participate in sports (Seefeldt, Ewing, & Walk, 1992):

1. To have fun.
2. To do something in which they excel.
3. To stay in shape.
4. To learn new or improve skills.
5. To play as part of a team.



Here are 4 easy ways to keep it fun for your child:

- Emphasize skill development, not winning.
- Maintain realistic expectations.
- Stay positive and avoid criticizing your child's play.
- Keep in mind that if sports become work, it's no longer fun.

Need one more reason to keep it fun? Young people report a variety of reasons for dropping out of sports, but one reason that stands out is this: "It just wasn't fun anymore."

Source: Hedstrom & Gould, 2004

P is for **PRAISING**, which your child needs often.
A is for **ACCEPTING** your child for what they are.
R is for **RECOGNIZING** your child's many talents.
E is for **ENCOURAGEMENT** to strive to do the best.
N is for **NURTURING** to help your child learn and grow.
T is for **TEACHING** without judging.
S is for **SUPPORT** of your child in all that they try.

RECOGNIZE YOUR GOALS

ARE THEY REALISTIC?

These numbers from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) show just how few high school players will go on to college or the pros:

- Less than one in 35 high school senior boy basketball players will go on to play NCAA college basketball.
- Less than one in 75 NCAA men's basketball players will be drafted by an NBA team.
- Only 1 in 100 NCAA women's basketball players will be drafted by a WNBA team.
- Only 1 in 50 NCAA senior football players will be drafted by an NFL team.
- Only 1 in 200 high school senior baseball players will eventually be drafted by an MLB team.
- Only 1 in 250 high school senior boy ice hockey players will eventually be drafted by an NHL team.

Source: NCAA

Keep your goals and expectations realistic. Just because your child is good at sports now doesn't mean they will excel, or even participate, later in life. Is your goal to develop a well-rounded adult or are you hoping to have college paid for through sports?

Source: Citizenship Through Sports

If you believe your goal is helping your child earn college athletics scholarship or play in the pros, you may want to take a look at these numbers:

- First, the simplest math: There are nearly 7 million boys and girls who play high school sports. There are only 126,000 NCAA student athletes who receive either a partial or a full athletics scholarship. That means about 1 in 56 high school athletes will have the opportunity to translate their athletic success into financial assistance.
- According to the NCAA's most recent survey, only 126,000 out of the estimated 350,000 NCAA student athletes received either full or partial athletics scholarships.
- In all but the most high profile sports, scholarships are divided up and spread among many different student athletes.

Source: NCAA

In fact, some educators have estimated that there are 30 times more scholarship dollars available for college academic scholarships than there are athletics scholarships.

Source: John E. Roberts, Michigan High School Athletic Association

SEE THE BIG PICTURE

NOT THE SCOREBOARD

As the parent your job revolves around the big picture, making sure your child gains life experiences and life lessons from sports that will make your child a stronger, more responsible and confident person in life.

Here are some points to take into consideration while thinking about the big picture.

Source: Positive Coaching Alliance

- Help your child learn to bounce back from disappointments in sports. It's a good preparation for life.
- Remember to emphasize values like teamwork, discipline and responsibility. *Winning comes and goes, but values remain.*
- See sports as one of the many enriching activities your child participates in not the focus of their life.



Promote Fitness and Health to Your Child

If your child quits youth sports, which 70 percent of children do by age 13, they won't reap the benefits of participation anymore. Why is that a problem?

- Children participating in organized sports tend to achieve higher results in school, develop excellent interpersonal skills and lead healthier lives.

Source: Michigan State University's Institute for the Study of Youth Sports

- Almost 50 percent of youth in the United States don't take part in regular vigorous exercise.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999

- Childhood obesity is on the rise, with 13 percent of children age 6 to 11 are classified as either overweight or obese.
- Obesity in childhood often leads to obesity in adulthood.
- Obesity can lead to diabetes, heart problems and a variety of ailments, including high blood pressure, some forms of cancer, depression and poor self-esteem.

Source: U.S. Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

WITH CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Fill Your Child's Emotional Tank

- Praise them for a behavior you'd like them to continue.
- Be both specific and truthful.
- Look carefully to find something genuine to praise, even when things aren't going well.
- Children can see through false praise, so keep it truthful.

Source: Positive Coaching

Build a Praise Sandwich

- First start with a slice of praise, such as, "You've really developed a great ability to bring the ball up the court."
- Next, slip in the slice of constructive criticism, such as, "If you could develop the ability to dribble the ball with your left hand as well as your right hand that would really be special."
- Then top it with another slice of praise. "And if you could dribble with both hands, as well as you're doing with other parts of your game, you'd be unstoppable."

Source: Rick Wolff & Center for Sports Parenting

Honor the Game

- Set a good example.
- Show respect for all people involved in the game.
- Avoid making bad comments about your child's coach.
- Encourage other parents to honor the game.
- Support efforts by your child's coach and/or your child's league.

Source: Jim Thompson & Positive Coaching



GAME TIME

WHAT IS YOUR PREPARATION?

“If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others.” Haim Ginott

Game Time – Things to Keep in Mind Before the Game

- Tell your child you are proud of them before the game. It will help relieve pressure on your child, regardless of how they perform.
- Tell your child to play hard and have fun. Remind them that their effort is what is most important.
- Know your child’s goals. Ask about them and really listen to the answer. Adopt theirs and drop yours.
- Release your child to the game. Remember it is their experience not yours.
- Honor the game and be a good sport, no matter what the outcome or situation.

Game Time – Things to Keep in Mind During the Game

- **Remember your role. Let coaches coach, the officials officiate and the players play.**
- **Don’t give advice to your child or to other players during the game.**
- **When it comes to officiating – silence is golden, no matter what happens.**
- **Model the type of behavior you’d like your child to have.**
- **Honor the game and be a good sport.**
- **Give your child and their teammate’s positive comments.**

Game Time – Things to Keep in Mind After the Game

- Tell your child, “I love watching you play.”
- Thank the officials for doing a difficult job.
- Thank the coach for their efforts.
- Give your child space and time to recover from the game. The ride home is not the time to initiate game conversation.
- Refrain from questioning the coach’s actions. It can undermine the coach’s authority.
- Discuss poor sportsmanship or bad behavior as a parent to a child, not a coach to an athlete.