

Frequently Asked Parent Questions

The following attempts to answer some of the more common questions from parents.

Q. Why didn't my child seem to get as much playing time as some of the other players?

A. The team tries to balance out time so that all players get equal playing time. However, substitutions are done based on a game time situation and those situations don't happen at regular intervals. Therefore, over a single game, some players will get more game time than others. However, over a season, these playing variations should even out.

Q. Why didn't the referee/official call the obvious penalty for my child (or team)? What should I do when I see a bad call?

A. Game officials are people and make mistakes like everyone else. Officials have to see the infraction to call it and often they just aren't looking at the right place at the right time. Mistaken calls happen at every level of the sport and are just part of the game. Often, games at younger levels just aren't called as critically as those at older levels. If you feel strongly that the official was not acting in a professional manner, then you should write a letter to the league officials with all the details and let them handle the complaint. Do not discuss the matter directly with the referee or in the presence of your child.

Q. What should I be doing to help my child reach a professional sports team?

A. There are probably more things you can do to keep a child from reaching a professional team than there are ways to help. To reach the professional levels requires a tremendous amount of dedication on the part of a player. This dedication can only come from an absolute love of the game. This love of the game can only come from within and is based on positive and fun experiences. Therefore, the best thing a parent can do is make sure the child is enjoying the sport.

Q. What else can my child do to improve playing skills?

A. If a child wants to improve, there are many ways including workbooks, private lessons, backyard drills, exercising and just more experience. The most important thing is that the child wants to improve. Parents can't force a child to get better, but they can help by participating along with their child and by making the process of improving a positive and fun experience. This gives children the chance to share this experience with their parents.

Q. If the primary goal is not about winning, why publish wins, losses and other statistics?

A. Parents, coaches and players are going to keep their own standings whether the league does or not. Although winning is not the primary goal, sports is about competition. During games, coaches want players to compete against their previous performances to raise their level of play and they want the same thing at a team level. Tracking wins and losses is one method of motivation to improve and measure performance. Parents shouldn't focus on wins to determine the success of a season.

Q. Why do the kids always start practice with something that doesn't seem to emphasize or build new skills?

A. Players can't just go straight into maximum effort. Their muscles need time to warm up and stretch before attempting more aggressive drills. They also must mentally switch from school or family issues to physical performance. Therefore, practices often start with drills that help the kids loosen up, both physically and mentally.

Q. Am I a bad parent for wanting my child's team to win?

A. Being competitive is perfectly normal. However, it is important to separate your desire for wins with your child's desire to have fun. Wins and losses are team accomplishments and a win or a loss shouldn't determine how or in what mood you talk with your child after a game. If you want to make sure you can continue watching sports activities in the future (because your child continues playing), you must keep wins and losses in perspective.

Q. Why do coaches continue substituting players when the score is close and the game is almost over? Why not leave the best players in to give the team a chance to win the game?

A. The team is committed to winning and losing as a team with every player given equal playing time. All players should experience the highly competitive end to a game in order to develop their understanding of these situations.

Q. My child doesn't try his hardest at practices or games. What can I do to make him try harder?

A. There is little you can do to make a child try harder. Children must do it for themselves. A lack of effort is typically due to a lack of fun. Work with your child to start the skills development cycle. Find something your child is doing right and praise the accomplishment. Provide other ways for your child to excel if his skills are not up to those of other players. For example, helping your child understand position play can make them one of the smarter players even if they are not one of the fastest.