

Parents' roles and responsibilities

As a parent, what influence am I likely to have on my child's sporting journey?

A huge one! As a parent the way in which you are involved in your child's sport can influence their enjoyment, their long-term engagement, and even their performance. Working with your child to ensure you are involved in the best possible ways for them is really important.

How can I help my child achieve their potential in sport?

As a parent it is helpful if you know about your child's sport and all the different aspects associated with development and progression in sport - lots of this information is available on this website. Of course, both your child and your child's coach are also very important sources of information.

How can I ensure I am involved in my child's sporting life in the best possible way?

The first thing to remember is that there is no one way to parent your child and the same is true in sport. Supporting a child involved in sport is complex and individual but good communication between you and your child will be key. Take time to talk to your child about their goals and aims for sport, seek to show that you understand their sporting experience and the role sport plays in their lives, and talk to your child about what they want you to do and say at competitions.

What are the best things to do at competitions?

Children want different things from their parents before, during, and after competitions depending on how they are performing and feeling, and also the outcome. The best thing you can do is talk to your child and find out what things you do that are helpful and what things they would like you to stop. You can then work alongside your child's coach to optimise your child's competition experience. It might also be useful to talk through different situations so you can anticipate what changes you might need to make to your involvement at different times.

How can I help my child manage set backs and challenges?

To help your child in these situations one of the first things you can do is proactively teach them coping strategies and anticipate different situations before they arise. When they do arise, you need to take care of your own emotions and ensure they are not impacting on your reaction. Then you can work with your child to reappraise the situation and help them use their coping skills.

How can I work with coaches to ensure my child has the best experience?

Communicate, communicate, communicate! The more you and your child's coach can communicate and understand what each of you are trying to achieve the better it will be for all involved. Taking time to learn about your child's coach and understand the demands they face in their job can also be helpful. Finally, actively seeking to support the coach, whether by taking on different jobs on the team, reinforcing their messages, or taking concerns directly to them rather than other parents or your child will also facilitate a more positive parent-coach relationship.