



RISE AS ONE

14 Things Parents Can Do to Help Their Children Succeed

1. **ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD.**

One of the most important things you can do as a parent is to encourage and support your child. Make sure they know you enjoy watching them play every time you go to a game. Think about how great your child will feel if you tell them "I loved watching you play today!"

2. **Remember that losing is an important part of the process.**

Instead of trying to soften the blow of the loss, encourage them to learn from the loss and move on. Many times the players move on from the loss quicker than the parents. By facing the challenge head on and overcoming setbacks, your child will learn mental fortitude and resilience.

3. **Encourage your child to be a team player.**

One of the great benefits of team sports like basketball is being a part of something greater than yourself. Teamwork teaches humility and is an important life skill. When players are focused on personal glory, they miss the experience of being part of a team. Children will learn what is important by your comments and attitude. Encourage your child not to "take over" the game, show off, try to shoot more, or focus on scoring. Don't just praise your child for winning. Don't just praise your child for winning or scoring; applaud their hard work and coachability.

4. **Let the coaches coach.**

Do not try to coach your child. If you coach your child in a different way than their coaches, your child may become confused or feel stressed about the conflicting expectations. Encourage your child to listen to the coach. The experience of being coached is valuable. One of the most important things you need to do as a parent is to find a program where you respect the coaches and agree with the philosophy of the organization. After that, take a step back and allow the coaches to coach. Everyone has a role to play, including parents. Players: Play, Coaches: Coach, Parents: Support, Officials: Officiate. Play your role well and don't try to take over someone else's role.

5. **Encourage your child to speak with their coach if they have questions or issues.**

Do not approach your child's coach about playing time. A coach should be honest with their players about where they stand and what they need to do to improve. Your child needs to learn to advocate for themselves and learn how to communicate with others. Remember that it is not all about playing time. It is important to learn to be a part of a team. Your child may be less experienced than some other players and may need time to develop. Many players do not come into their own until two years into the program.

6. **Do not compare your child to others.**

If parents constantly compare their children with others, their children will always feel second best. If you encourage your child to strive to be the best they can be every day, they will get better and reach their full potential.

7. **Cheer for all and respect everyone.**

Never speak negatively about your child, another child, or a coach. You would not want your child to be put down, so please be respectful of other people's children. What you do will influence your child's actions and attitude as well. When you treat everyone with respect, your child will learn to do the same.

8. Exercise self discipline if you get upset.

Sports are an emotional. They can bring out the best in us, but they can also bring out the worst in us if we are not careful. Keep your emotions under control. Be considerate and treat others how you want to be treated. Would you want someone coming into your workplace and yelling at you because they disagree with something you did?

9. Let your child control their own experience.

Everything we do in life will include both good and bad. In basketball, there will be great moments and average plays, victory and defeat. When you allow your child to experience these highs and lows on and off the court, it will help them learn to deal with the ups and downs of life. When parents try to control their children's experiences, their children miss out on opportunities to learn valuable life lessons and to mature as a person.

10. Teach your child to play for the love of the game (not a trophy).

Children should play for the love of the game, for their teammates, for the love of competition. If you teach your child to be a great competitor, a great teammate, and to love what they do, it will help them have a great perspective on life! In youth sports we need to get away from the attitude that everyone needs to get a trophy. This attitude teaches children to play for the reward instead of encouraging the child to discover that the reward is playing the game itself!

11. Focus on the process.

Sports, like life, are a process. Engaging in the process every day is what helps us grow and improve. Key elements of the process are hard work, knowledge, positive attitude, perseverance, teamwork, coachability, and handling success and failure well. Winning is the byproduct, both in sports and in life.

12. Enjoy the journey with your child.

Every journey has high points, setbacks, and moments that just make you laugh. Do not agonize over every play, every decision by the coach, the team's performance, or your child's individual performance. The little details won't be important in 25 years, but the fact that you supported your child and watched them play will. Sit back and enjoy the journey!

13. Be a parent, not a fan.

Fans focus on winning and performance; they are not concerned with the personal growth of the players. As a parent, your child's growth is more important than their performance. Your child will make mistakes and that's OK. Sometimes your child will need you to teach them in those moments, other times they will just need your encouragement. No matter what happens on the court or in practice, your child needs to know that you love and value them, not just their performance.

14. Encourage your child to make positive changes instead of excuses.

"The Teacher or coach does not like me" is a familiar excuse, but it doesn't lead to personal growth. Regardless of what you may think of the coach, you need to encourage your child to focus on their personal growth and character and not to stop trying because of someone else. Coaches like players that work hard, are coachable, have a great attitude, show perseverance, are good teammates, and who know how to handle success and failure with grace. Teach your child these attributes and they won't just become a better or more likeable player, they will become a better person.