

## Parents "Are you a Winning Parent?"

### From News for Swim Parents

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Do you really want your child to excel and go as far as possible in his/her sport? Do you want him or her to have fun and feel good about him/herself? Would you like to help your child avoid becoming a dropout statistic? If your answers are "yes" to these questions then it is critical that you play the "right" role on the parent-coach-athlete team. Be supportive! Be your child's best fan! DON'T coach! (Unless you are the coach or your child comes to you and WANTS your feedback!) Take this questionnaire to see if you're doing everything possible to help your child have a successful and healthy sports experience. Answer each question with a 1, 2, 3 or 4. 1 = never true; 2 = occasionally true; 3 = mostly true; 4 = always true.

- 1) I get really frustrated and upset when my child performs below his/her capabilities.
- 2) I give my child critical feedback on his/her performance after each game.
- 3) If I didn't push my child, he/she wouldn't practice.
- 4) If my child doesn't excel and win, I see very little point in them participating in their sport.
- 5) I can be very critical when my child makes mistakes or loses.
- 6) I set goals with my child in relation to their sport.
- 7) I think it's my job to motivate my child to get better.
- 8) I feel angry and embarrassed when my child performs poorly.
- 9) The most important thing for my child's sport participation is that they have fun.
- 10) I get really upset with bad calls by the officials.
- 11) Most coaches don't know what they are talking about.
- 12) I keep a performance log/journal/statistics on my child's performance so we can monitor his/her progress.
- 13) I feel guilty about some of the things I say to my child after they play.

- 14) I try to watch most practices so that I can correct my child when he makes mistakes.
- 15) When my child fails I can feel his pain and disappointment.
- 16) I think it's important that my child gets used to having coaches yell at him/her to help prepare him/her for life.
- 17) My spouse and I argue about how I treat my son/daughter in relation to his/her sport.
- 18) I try to help my child keep his/her failures and the sport in perspective.
- 19) I'm never very concerned about the outcome of my child's game/match/race.
- 20) I will not allow my child to be put down or yelled at by a coach.
- 21) If my child wasn't so defensive when it comes to my feedback, he/she could become a better athlete.
- 22) It's not my job to evaluate or criticize my child's performances.
- 23) I feel that my child owes us a certain performance level given all the sacrifices we've made for him/her.
- 24) I believe my child's sport belongs to him/her and not to me.
- 25) I just want my child to feel good about him/herself and be happy when he/she plays.

### **SCORING**

Add scores for questions #1-8, 10-14, 16, 17, 21 & 23. (If you answered question #2 with a "mostly true" you add 3 points to the total score.) Subtract scores for questions #9, 15, 18-20, 22, 24, & 25.

### **INTERPRETATION**

The higher the score, the more potential damage that you are doing to your child. High scores indicate that you are playing the wrong role on the team and if you continue, you will increase the chances of your child burning out, struggling with performance problems and dropping out. Low scores mean that you are on track and doing the things necessary to insure that your child has a positive and life-enriching sports experience. If you scored a:

60 – 50: You are doing everything in your power to seriously damage your child's self-esteem, ruin their sports experience and make them a candidate for long-term psychotherapy later on in their life. If you continue your ways, your child will most likely drop out of sports. If you force them to continue, chances are good that they will struggle with serious performance problems. On the off chance that they do achieve success, they will not be able to appreciate what they've accomplished. Finally, your long-term relationship with them will be seriously jeopardized because of your lack of perspective and behaviors.

49 – 39: You are not being supportive enough and are doing too many things wrong. You are over-involved and putting too much pressure on your child. You need to back down, chill out and let them enjoy their sport. This kind of a parental stance will drive your child out of sports.

38 – 20: You're OK, but you need some help getting unhooked. You need to be more consistently supportive and take less of a pushing/coaching role.

19 – 16: You are pretty much on track as a parent. You are positive and doing most of the right things to insure your child has a positive youth sports experience.

0 – 15: BRAVO!!!! You are truly a winning parent. You can give workshops to other parents on how to help your child become successful in their sport.