

Tools for Parents

The following ideas may be helpful for being a supportive AYSO parent.

Conversations before the games

- Tell your child you love him/her regardless of the outcome.
- Tell him or her "Go for it, give it your best shot and have fun!"

During the game

Understand that kids are over-stimulated during games. The coach may be giving instructions, opponents and teammates are talking, the crowd is cheering, and the referee is blowing the whistle. To a youth sports participant, the atmosphere is much like that of a fighter pilot with enemy jets racing all around. Do not yell instructions to your child during the game because it only adds to the confusion. Sometimes the best thing you can do as a parent is to be quiet.

Cheer and acknowledge good plays by *both* teams.

After the game

- Thank the officials for doing a difficult job.
- Thank the coaches for their efforts. After a difficult loss, recognize that it is not a good time to question a coach.
- Thank your opponents for a good game.
- Congratulate your child and his or her teammates for their efforts.
- Compliment individual players on good plays they made in the game.

During the car ride home

- Point out a good play your child made during the game.
- Avoid criticizing or correcting mistakes.
- Ask open-ended questions about how the game was played rather than how many points were scored. Here are examples of open-ended questions that might apply:
 - ✓ Did you have fun?
 - ✓ Did you give it your best effort?
 - ✓ What did you learn from the game?
 - ✓ What was the best play you made and how did it feel?
 - ✓ Did you bounce back from your mistakes?

AYSO recognizes the efforts and advancements made by the Positive Coaching Alliance in Honor of the Game. The Kids Zone Parent Pledge is adapted from Positive Coaching Alliance's Parent Pledge (www.positivecoach.org)