

A Benefit For You

BEST CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



EAP NOTES A Positive Playing Field

Soccer on Wednesday, dance class Tuesday nights, baseball practice on Friday, and tournaments all weekend long. Does this sound like your children's weekly schedule? Sports and organized activities are not only healthy outlets for children, but also a way to learn teamwork, fairness, and good sportsmanship. However, overzealous parents on the sidelines often spoil fun on the field.

Yelling, using vulgar language and belittling the other team or umpires doesn't send a positive message to your children. It only embarrasses you and your child. Being a positive role model can be more valuable to your child than anything he or she learns on the field. Consider the following tips the next time that you attend a sporting event.

- 🏆 If you don't have **something positive to say**, then don't say it. Anything that you shout other than a cheer or words of encouragement will reflect poorly on you. You wouldn't act this way in front of your child in other situations, so why at his or her special event.
- 🏆 Is everyone **having fun**? Although sports are a healthy learning experience, they should also be fun. Check with your child to ensure that he or she really enjoys the sport and team, and is not doing it just for you. There is a myriad of other opportunities to explore in order to find the right fit.
- 🏆 **Show respect** for other teams. It's important to remember that the opponent is not the enemy. It's just a group of kids in different color uniforms. Treat them as kindly as you would want your children treated by other adults.
- 🏆 Remember that often coaches, umpires and referees are **volunteers**. They are only human, and at times will make mistakes. Make sure you praise the kids as well as their coaches. However, no coach has the right to humiliate or treat children in a disrespectful manner. Consult with league authorities if you feel this is happening.
- 🏆 It's your **child's game**, not yours. Try not to project your own athletic dreams onto your child. The probability of your child becoming the next Mia Hamm, Tiger Woods, or Michael Jordan is very slim. Children often become frustrated and insecure when they cannot live up to their parents' expectations.
- 🏆 Put on a **happy face**. Smiles, laughs and encouragement are contagious. Sport a positive attitude whether it's a win or a loss. At the end of the game, the important thing is that you were spending quality time together and having fun.

Adapted from: Robert P. Lockwood, *Our Sunday Visitor*

If you are putting too much emphasis on your child's athletic endeavors, it may be time to readjust your perspective. A professional counselor can help you with any parenting concerns that you may have. Contact your Best Care EAP for a confidential appointment at (402) 354-8000 or 800-666-8606.

Best Care
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
