

KEEP YOUR CHILD INVOLVED IN SPORTS

A Self-Assessment Tool for Parents

*Parents are the key to improving youth sports for everyone.
Take this self-test to see if you're doing all you can to keep your child active in sports and receiving the benefits of sports participation.*

Do you know your role?

- ☐ I realize that there are only four roles in sport – player, coach, official or fan – and I pick one and stick with it.
- ☐ I understand that my child is the participant, not me, and my expectations are based on my child's needs, not mine.
- ☐ I avoid “coaching” from the stands, and I also avoid criticizing officials, coaches and opposing players.
- ☐ I seek to be a positive and encouraging fan, applauding good plays for both teams.
- ☐ If I coach my child's team, I seek to model appropriate behavior and sportsmanship.

Do you have it all in perspective?

- ☐ I understand that children play sports for fun, fitness, friends, participation and skill development.
- ☐ I examine my own reasons for being involved and make sure my child's reasons for playing come before mine.
- ☐ I focus on encouraging skill development and fun participation, not on winning.
- ☐ I realize that children's work is “play,” and I try not to interfere with their experience.
- ☐ I am focused on my child's development as a whole person, not on his or her prospects for a sports scholarship or for a professional career playing sports.

For more information, see
www.sportsmanship.org

Do you model the kind of behavior you'd like to see in your child?

- ☐ I let the coaches coach and the officials officiate.
- ☐ I avoid criticizing officials, coaches or players – both during the game and after.
- ☐ I applaud good plays for both teams.
- ☐ I treat coaches, officials, players and other parents with respect.
- ☐ I provide only positive encouragement before, during and after the game. If I can't say anything nice, I don't say anything at all.

Do you encourage sports participation for the long term?

- ☐ I do all I can to make sports participation fun, particularly since experts advise that most children stop participating when sports are no longer fun for them.
- ☐ I am quiet after the game and avoid critiquing or analyzing my child's performance on the way home. I know my child wants to hear me say, “I love watching you play.”
- ☐ I seek out leagues with trained coaches who focus on the positive aspects of sport, including sportsmanship, fun and skill development.
- ☐ I try to make five positive comments for every one critical comment to my child. Experts advise “filling the child's tank” with positive comments to aid in learning.
- ☐ I resist efforts to make my child specialize in any particular sport at a young age.

Through a Child's Eyes...

A Parents' Guide to Improving Youth Sports



Advice for Parents to:

- Keep your child active in sports
- Improve your child's sports experience
- Build your child's confidence
- Promote sportsmanship and fun



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National Association
for Sport and
Physical Education
and
Citizenship Through
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This is a national initiative to improve the quality of youth sport programs! Our youth deserve it!



How do
the programs
in YOUR
community
stand up?

Dear Parents and Adults Concerned with the Quality of Youth Sports,

The 2005 Youth Sports National Report Card was a wake-up call for Americans concerned about youth sports. Experts brought together by the Citizenship Through Sports Alliance (CTSA) created the report card and graded youth sports nationwide in the following areas: (1) Child-centered philosophy, (2) Coaching, (3) Health & Safety, (4) Officiating, and (5) Parental Behavior/Involvement. The grades were disappointing.

Only one area received so much as a B minus. Two areas received Ds. The grade point average for our nation's youth sports is unacceptable. High marks are expected in the classroom; why not on the playing field?

We can do better and you can help!

- If you are a parent, how does your child's sport program stack up?
- If you are concerned about youth sports, how do the programs in your community stack up?

How would you grade your programs?

- Are they too focused on winning?
- Are parents causing problems?
- Are coaches meeting expectations?
- Are children benefiting from their experiences?

Here's what you can do:

Download a report card and give the grades! Go to <http://www.sportsmanship.org>, click on the appropriate report card ("national," "for parents," "for administrators").

Parents—YOU give the grades for your child's program!

Coaches, officials, & administrators—YOU give the grades for programs in your community!

Compare your grades with national grades given by youth sport experts.

THEN TAKE FOUR EASY STEPS TO JOIN OUR NATIONAL INITIATIVE!

Go to www.NASPEinfo.org and click on "Youth Sports Report Card," then:

1. **Determine the grades for your sport program** by using the report card provided on the web site.
2. **Submit your grades** and you will be part of a nationwide effort to improve the quality of youth sports.
3. **Develop a strategy** for putting the report card to work in your program or community, and let us know the results in the "Strategy Bank."
4. **Provide your email address** so you may be included in a national follow-up study designed to provide creative strategies to improve youth sports.



Youth Sport Resources from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education



Contact
NASPE@aahperd.org
for more information

Visit www.NASPEinfo.org, and click on "Publications" to download the following position papers and resources:

- Coaching the Parents
- Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Interscholastic Level (Prepared by NCAA, maintained annually)
- Parents' and Coaches' Guide to Dehydration and Other Heat Illnesses in Children (Prepared by Inter-Association Task Force on Exertional Heat Illnesses, 2003)
- Guidelines for After School Physical Activity and Intramural Sport Programs
- Coaches Code of Conduct
- Sexual Harassment in Athletic Settings
- Choosing the Right Sport and Physical Activity Program for Your Child

Visit www.NASPEinfo.org, and click on "Online Store" to purchase the following NASPE books on quality sport:

- National Standards for Sport Coaches (NASPE, 2006)
- Coaching Issues and Dilemmas (NASPE, 2003)
- Coaching Education: Designing Quality Programs (NASPE, 2001)

