

## 10 Things Parents of Athletes Need to Know

I have seen some things on the sidelines over the years that would give you nightmares. Casts being sawed off, coaches going to blows, parents screaming obscenities at the other team fans. U.G.L.Y. We have all gotten way too emotionally involved in our kids sports. We have forgotten that it's about the kids and the lessons, the journey if you will, not the end point. I have an 18 year old now. He is playing D1 lacrosse for an east coast college and I couldn't be prouder of him. My 16 yo is committed to a college on the east coast to play as well in 2015. One thing I know for sure is this. **They did it. Not us.** No amount of screaming, calling coaches, forcing practices would have mattered if they didn't want it. It was our goal to be supportive, try and embarrass them as little as possible and give them the tools they needed to achieve their dreams. But they had to fight for those dreams. Not us.

My point here is, It's about them. Get out of their way, enjoy the process, uncoil a bit. Someday far too soon this whole sports thing will be over and you will be begging them to come home for Thanksgiving. TRUST ME. Ten Things Parents of Athletes Should Know:

1. It's not about you, **it's about them.** Do not live your own sports dreams through your kids. It's their turn now. Let them make their own choices, both good and bad.
2. **Never talk to a coach** about your child's play time after a game. Actually you never should. You should have your kid do that. That said, if you just can't help yourself, send an email the next day and ask for some phone time.
3. **NEVER yell at referees.** They are trying. How would you like it if someone came to your job and screamed at you? Not. So. Much. If you have a real issue, file a grievance the next day.
4. Do NOT coach your kid from the sideline. **Your job is to be a cheerleader,** not a coach. If you wanted to coach, you should have volunteered.
5. It is EXTREMELY UNLIKELY you are raising a professional athlete. I promise you. Relax, let them have a good time and **learn the lessons** they are supposed to be learning in sports.
6. Kids should play the sport that is in season until they are in middle school. Then they can decide which one or two sports they want to play and become more focused. Cross training prevents injuries and burnout.
7. If you have nothing nice to say, sit down and be quiet. Don't be "that" parent.
8. If you are losing your mind on the sideline of game, it's time to look in the mirror and figure out why. **It's not normal to care that much about sports.** Put that energy into something more productive.
9. **Let them fail.** Forgotten equipment, not working out, not practicing at home? Let them suffer the consequences of that. It will make them better.
10. Your kids are watching you. **Make them proud** not embarrassed.