

# **The Parent's Guide:**

## **Promoting a Positive Athletic Experience**

From: Greg Dale, Ph.D., Mental Training Coach, Duke University

1. Be the best supporter and role model you can be. You, as parents, will have a bigger influence on your child's life than anyone else.
2. Communicate with your athlete and find out his goals in the sport. These goals may be different than what you want. Intrinsic motivation is much stronger than extrinsic motivation!
3. Let them know that anything worth achieving is going to take a lot of hard work.
4. Support your child and be realistic in his ability and skill level and encourage him to strive to higher levels. Don't compare your athlete to others!
5. Show unconditional love and support for your child NO MATTER how he performs! Realize that nobody loses on purpose.
6. Let the coach's coach. The worse thing we can have is a confused athlete.
7. Encourage your athlete to be a leader. Let him communicate with the coaches and let him make decisions.
8. Don't make excuses for your athlete.
9. Game Day Rules
  - a. Passionately cheer and support your athlete and the team.
  - b. While in the stands be positive. Don't yell criticisms or do anything to draw attention away from the athletes and toward you.
  - c. While your athlete is competing, please don't make an effort for the athlete to focus on you rather than the coach. Once again, we don't want a confused athlete.
  - d. Please refrain from yelling derogatory comments to the officials, fans, or anyone else involved in the event.
  - e. Let the coaches deal with referees. Abusing a referee never leads to a positive reaction.
  - f. Support the coaches' decisions and any disciplinary actions by the coaches.

**Most people come in contact with this program solely with the players, coaches, parents, and fans at competitions. How we act will stick with them.**  
**Let's all be a class act!**