



CITY OF BANGOR PARKS AND RECREATION

10 LIES THAT YOUTH SPORTS PARENTS BELIEVE

1. My kid has to play sports. I did.
2. Playing time is what it's all about.
3. My kid's coach doesn't deserve respect.
4. I have to fight my kid's battles.
5. My kid's definitely gonna play college.
6. My kid is the best player on the team.
7. Winning is the most important thing.
8. My kid must play one sport year-round to succeed.
9. We have to pay big bucks for club sports to keep up.
10. I have to push my child or he won't be successful.

jbmthinks.com

DON'T BE THE ANGRY PARENT OF A HAPPY KID

WARNING:

**Competitive sporting success
at an early age
can have very limited relevance
in predicting the potential
of a young athlete.
Keep things in perspective.**



coachinyoungathletes.com

The 10 Commandments of Sports Parenting

1. Thou shall love your child no matter what.
2. Thou shall let the coach do his job.
3. Thou shall be realistic about your child's abilities.
4. Thou shall let your child have fun.
5. Thou shall volunteer.
6. Thou shall not relive your athletic life through your child.
7. Thou shall not compare your child's abilities or attitudes with anyone else's.
8. Thou shall be grateful.
9. Thou shall support the whole team
10. Thou shall see the big picture.

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CITY OF BANGOR
PARKS AND RECREATION

Parent Code of Ethics

All cancellations will be posted on the Bangor Parks and Recreation Website
as well as Facebook, Twitter & Instagram
www.BangorParksandRec.com
and whenever possible you will be contacted by either email or text message.

PLEASE REMEMBER

THESE ARE KIDS

THIS IS A GAME

THE COACHES ARE VOLUNTEER

THE REFEREES ARE HUMAN

NO SCHOLARSHIPS ARE BEING OFFERED

DON'T BE THE ANGRY PARENT OF A HAPPY KID

PARENTS' CODE OF ETHICS

I Hereby Pledge to Provide Positive Support, Care and Encouragement For My Child Participating in Youth Sports by Following This Parents' Code Ethics Pledge.

1. I Will Encourage Good Sportsmanship by Demonstrating Positive Support For All Players, Coaches, and Officials at Every Game, Practice, or other Youth Sports Event. **I WILL NOT COACH FROM THE SIDELINES**
 2. **I Will Place The Emotional and Physical Well Being of My Child Ahead of a Personal Desire to Win.**
 3. I Will Insist That My Child Plays in a Safe and Healthy Environment.
 4. **I Will Support Coaches and Officials Working with My Child, in order to Encourage a Positive and Enjoyable Experience for All.**
 5. I Will Demand a Sports Environment for My Child that is Free of Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol, and Will Refrain from Their Use at Youth Sports Events.
 6. **I Will Remember That the Game is for Youth and Not for Adults.**
 7. I Will Do My Very Best to Make Youth Sports Fun For My Child.
 8. **I Will Ask My Child to Treat Other Players, Coaches, Fans and Officials With Respect Regardless of Race, Sex, Creed, or Ability.**
 9. I Promise to Help My Child Enjoy the Youth Sports Experience by Doing Whatever I Can, Such as Being a Respectful Fan, Assisting With Coaching, Being on Time or Providing Transportation.
 10. **I will contact coaches when my child will be unable to attend and show up on time for practices and games.**
 11. I Will Obey All Rules. (Help Enforce Them)
- Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to keep up with all cancellations and updates on programming.**

What not to do at your child's game or practice



- DON'T** BURDEN KIDS WITH A LOT OF INSTRUCTION BEFORE THE GAME
- DON'T** FOCUS ON THE SCORE OR RESULTS
- DON'T** TALK ABOUT HOW GOOD THE OTHER TEAM IS
- DON'T** TALK ABOUT MISTAKES THEY MADE IN THE PAST OR GAMES THEY LOST
- DON'T** YELL AT THE REF OR THE COACH
- DON'T** SHOW FRUSTRATION WHEN YOUR KID MAKES A MISTAKE
- DON'T** TALK BADLY ABOUT THE COACHES
- DON'T** JUST CHEER FOR YOUR KID. CHEER FOR EVERYONE!
- DON'T** ACT ANGRY OR FRUSTRATED IF YOUR ATHLETE LOSES
- DON'T** POINT OUT EVERY MISTAKE YOUR ATHLETE MADE
- DON'T** FORGET THAT SPORTS SHOULD BE ABOUT HAVING FUN!

Recreation Soccer Parent Info

When playing in a game, youth soccer players' minds are focused on making split-second decisions as they maneuver around and survey the field.

Every once in a while, however, a player's attention may be drawn to his or her hyper parent yelling instructions or making a scene from the sideline. While parents' actions may simply be the result of wanting the best for their child, their **behavior can have a negative effect on their young athlete's enjoyment of the game.**

US Youth Soccer spoke to Dave Carton, the director of coaching for Discoveries SC in Rock Hill, S.C., to hear his opinion on some areas in which many parents could improve their sideline etiquette. Carton is no stranger to addressing adults on how to act while at games, and a letter he sent to parents of his club that cited their improper behavior was featured on the US Youth Soccer [Coaches Blog](#).

Here are six things to keep in mind when attending your child's game...

1. Avoid 'coaching' from the sideline while watching your child's game

A common problem in youth soccer is the impulse parents have to shout instructions to their young player from the sideline. It's especially difficult for a child because he or she has a tendency to refer to what a **parent says, which often conflicts with the instruction from the coach.** Carton said parents should imagine being in a room and having multiple people yelling instructions at them in order to see the confusion it could cause a child.

"Another thing about yelling instructions is that the tone a parent yells with is typically a lot more aggressive than the coach," Carton said. "The coach is instructing with a teaching mentality. 'This is what we have to do to improve. This is part of the process to get better and improve your level of play.'

"The instructions that the parents are yelling have an immediacy to it. They want it done now because they want the gratification of the instant result. It's conflicting with what the coach is trying to do."

2. Do not criticize the referee

Carton said this is an epidemic, and spectators should realize that referees are people and will make mistakes — even those officiating at the highest levels of play. When parents go after a referee for what they perceive as a mistake, it begins to make the game about the adults rather than the kids.

"A referee is ideally going to make an objective decision on what he or she sees. Our referees are usually Middle School or High School kids helping out. A parent is going to interpret that same situation through the prism of the team that their child plays on," Carton said. "If it's a decision that goes against their team, they're automatically going to have a subjective view on it."

*"The problem comes when there is an aggression to how the parents react to that. The bigger problem is when the child sees that, the child thinks it's accepted. Parents need to remember **they always need to be a model for their child.**"*

3. Focus on the benefits of the game rather than the score

Far too often parents worry about the number of goals scored rather than the experience their child has while playing youth sports. Carton said parents are naturally from an older generation in which there was a larger focus on the result of a game. While it's natural for everyone to want to win, he said **parents need to keep focus on the larger picture.**

"It's natural instinct to want to win. The key thing is to keep things in perspective," Carton said.

He went on to talk about a hypothetical 1-0 loss.

"Very few of the parents are asking their child if they had fun today. The child will take the parent's reaction to the result of the game as the norm. They'll then relate their experience to the result of the game, which is really counterproductive."

4. Think when interacting with opposing fans

*"This is one that should be common sense. Grown adults should be able to go and enjoy their child's experience without having any confrontation," Carton said. "We get that at our club, too. We always say, **'Don't forget, you're not just representing you and your team, you're representing your child.'** The way you're acting right now — if you could see yourself through the eyes of your child, what would you think of yourself? Why are you making a public*

spectacle over a recreation soccer game? *Are you proud of what you're doing right now? Would you allow your child to act like this?'"*

5. Don't stress out over the game

Do you find yourself pacing up and down the sideline — anxiously following the action as it unfolds on the field? Stop it. Breathe.

*"Just calm down. Enjoy it. Stop being so attached to it. **It's not your game,**" Carton said. "Don't base your enjoyment or happiness on what is going on out there.*

*"Look at your child. Is he having fun? Is he or she active? Is he or she enjoying the social nature of the game? Is he or she getting as much out of this experience as he or she can? Don't worry about the rest of it. Some parents just give themselves aneurysms pacing up and down the line. Keep perspective. **There are more important things.**"*

6. Save issues with the coach for the next day

Maybe you don't agree with a decision the coach made during the game or practice. It's important to take some time to think about it rather than confronting the coach in front of your child and the team.

"Directly after the game, the parents should not approach the coach. It's an emotionally charged conversation and very little good can come from that," Carton said. "At that time, there's very little a coach can say that will make the parent feel any better. Go home. Talk to your family. Sleep on it. Get in touch the next day, whether it be by phone, email, or even going for a cup of coffee with the coach and asking for feedback.

"If the coach communicates well enough, the expectation should be there and the parent should understand the situation. If that's not the case, the parent is totally in his or her right to bridge that communication gap."

First time Soccer parents

Tucked away beside a bank in North Carolina sits the field where Kevin Carter's involvement in soccer began.

That's where Carter watched his then 4-year-old daughter, Caroline, play her first recreational soccer game. Seeing her run around on the makeshift soccer field, he remembers the kids playing "bumble-bee ball," with all of the players chasing the ball in one big mass of youngsters.

For Carter, like many parents across the country, his first experience in soccer came when his child began playing the sport. Now, nearly 15 years after that first game — and several other matches for his daughter and son, John Robert — Carter is immersed in soccer. He went from first-time soccer parent to the Volunteer of the Year at South Carolina United Mount Pleasant, where he is currently on the Board of Directors.

With his knowledge and experiences in youth soccer, Carter provided some insight on what parents who are new to the game can expect during their child's first soccer season.

Having the right expectations heading into your first few games is important, and Carter said the key is to remember youth soccer is **about the kids and not the parents.** As they head out to watch their kids begin playing, he said parents should realize that the youngest age groups feature a lot of volunteers.

*"Understand that it's a learning process for everyone," Carter said. "It's a learning process for the kids, the coach, and the referees, as well. **Exercise patience and understand everyone is there to have fun.** If you keep that in the back of your mind, you'll do the right thing."*

Parents who aren't familiar with all the rules of soccer can expect a slow process to fully understand the game if their child begins to play at young ages like 4 or 5. With those age groups using modified rules and playing small-sided games, where a smaller field is used with less than 11 players per team, the game is **focused on introducing kids to the sport.**

It wasn't until about five years after his daughter began playing that Carter said he began to pick up on a lot of the little intricacies of soccer.

“She was 9 years old when I really started to understand a lot more of the rules of the game,” he said. “I didn’t get a lot of that information until I got to a higher level and it looked more like typical soccer.”

There are a couple ways to learn more about soccer that benefits both parents and players, with one key being consistent communication between the coach and parents. Carter said communication with his daughter’s first coach was essentially limited to receiving a piece of paper with a schedule.



After going through the process a couple times, he said it’s helpful to talk to the coach to see **if there’s anything parents can do at home to help the child’s experience**. At the youngest ages, that could mean working on the simplest skills.

“A lot of kids get frustrated, so talking to the coach about activities they can do at home to make the game fun is a good idea,” Carter said. “You can do some fun training and some fun exercises at home. As my kids grew older and continued to be interested in the sport, I would work with the coaches at whatever level they were at, and we would do fun stuff in the yard at home.”

A simple way to learn more about the tactics and rules of the game is to attend a soccer match or watch games on TV. Prior to his kids playing soccer, Carter had minimal experiences watching the game. His dorm in college at the University of North Carolina sat near the soccer field. He and his friends would occasionally watch some women’s games from a distance because they heard the team — led by Mia Hamm and Kristine Lilly — was supposed to be pretty good. But that was the extent of his soccer attendance.

That has changed. He began watching the World Cup with his kids, and they’ve gone to several professional and college games. Carter says he’ll now watch English Premier League games on TV most weekends, and he believes watching soccer is a great way for parents and kids to educate themselves about the game.

“If you watch soccer, you can learn a lot about rules and how players interact with each other,” Carter said. “I would definitely encourage going to games, especially for parents who don’t know the game the same way I didn’t know. The more I picked up on, the more I began enjoying it.”

In the end, making sure everyone involved in youth soccer is enjoying their experience is the most important factor. And for the kids, the soccer experience isn’t limited to their time on the field. Parents need to be aware of the conversation in the car ride home and avoid critiquing what they saw at the game. The easiest way for parents to avoid that temptation — known to some as “station wagon syndrome” — is to remember all they need to tell their children is that they love to watch them play.

Carter said parents must also avoid looking ahead and thinking about high school or college soccer when their child begins playing. He has seen kids with too much pressure lose interest in playing and drop the sport. Parents who are new to soccer should focus on the present and ensure the first soccer experience is a positive one for their child.

“Be patient and keep the experience fun for everybody,” Carter said. “You don’t want to run coaches, referees or players away. It’s a game. It’s supposed to be fun.”