

The Role of Parents in Interscholastic Athletics

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

- Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for consistent positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- Be helpful but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure; you lost as well as you won. You were frightened, you backed off at times, and you were not always heroic. Don't pressure your child because of your pride. Athletic children need their parents, so you must withdraw. Remember, there is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit out there in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum achievement and enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.
- Don't compare the skill, courage or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains and are afraid to fly. Some of us will fly but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

Fisher Jr/Sr High School Mission Statement

"The mission of the Fisher Jr./Sr. High School community is to provide a safe and supportive environment with educational opportunities that inspire students to become responsible and productive citizens."



Fisher Jr/Sr High School

211 W Division

Fisher, IL 61843

Phone: 217-897-1225

Fax: 217-897-1708

School Website: <http://fisherk12.com/home>

Athletic Website: <http://il.8to18.com/FisherHS>

Twitter: @FisherBunnies

Facebook: Fisher Bunnies Athletics



"WE ARE FISHER"

**Fisher Jr/Sr High School
Parent/Coach
Communication Guide**

Succeeding Together

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
- Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning).
- Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation.

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

As your children become involved in the programs at Fisher Community Unit Schools, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

As you have seen from our list, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those mentioned upcoming, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

There are some situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES SHOULD BE USED:

- Call to set up an appointment.
- Fisher Jr/Sr High: 217-897-1225; Fisher Grade School: 217-897-1133
- If the coach can not be reached, call the appropriate Athletic Director. They will set up the meeting for you.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parents and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

THE NEXT STEP - WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

- Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
- At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.

Since research indicates a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided makes both your child's and your experience with the Fisher Community Unit School District's athletic programs less stressful and more enjoyable.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR BEING A SUPPORTIVE PARENT

- **Be positive.** Being on an athletic team is quite an accomplishment. Don't let playing time dictate the athlete's happiness. Celebrate the fact that their role on the team is important, no matter what that role might be.

- **Be supportive of the coaching staff and child.** Nothing can erode the intricate fabric of teamwork faster than athletes doubting their own and their coaches' capabilities. It can be a cancer that affects performance, confidence and the edge to compete.
- **Be a part of the parent network.** Whether you are part of a booster club or not, very special relationships can be fostered over the careers of our athletes by socializing with their parents. Parents need support too! Be positive with each other.
- **Booster parents.** Be satisfied with supporting the athletic department without ever thinking that you have to donate to allow your son/daughter to play. Donate to help make the experience for every athlete the best it can possibly be. The support we receive is extremely welcomed and appreciated. It provides our athletes with many things that enhance our programs.
- **Winning and Losing.** To say winning and losing is not important is not true. If it weren't, we wouldn't keep score. The higher the level of play each athlete achieves, the greater the emphasis will be on competing at a high level. We take a great deal of pride in the traditions of our accomplishments. Preparing for that competition is the athlete's ultimate goal. When things are not going well for your son/daughter or for the team, that is when parents need to be most positive and supportive. If we strive toward making our programs consistently competitive, the success will take care of itself.
- **College scholarships.** Having lofty expectations for our children is a normal, healthy, and challenging goal. In striving for these expectations, we must be realistic. Not everyone can receive a college scholarship, nor should the number of offers measure your son/daughter's athletic success they achieve. Our coaches will help individuals and parents in whatever way they can to find an opportunity for those who wish to pursue collegiate careers.
- **One final thought....publicly, be positive; privately, be more positive!**

SPORTSMANSHIP.....

It's everyone's responsibility!