



SUCCESSFUL SPORTS PARENTING

Supporting your Children in Sports

Parents can help their kids feel that they can reach goals they've set for themselves with effort, perseverance, and just a little patience. From PARENTS magazine, here are 7 ways to help your youngster do their best.

1. **Support their efforts.** Listen to your child's dreams, goals, and ideas and help him to work out the steps of those that seem attainable by organizing them into do-able parts.
2. **Encourage follow-through.** Praise task completion and encourage them to carry on when the initial excitement fades. Relate your struggles to complete tasks and your satisfaction at having achieved a goal.
3. **Offer reinforcement or reward.** Give incentive for better efforts, not just accomplishments. Keep a chart with stars tracking progress and reward the task's completion, not its grade. Younger children need quicker rewards and briefer tasks.
4. **Recognize his success level.** When a child reaches a point of frustration, learning specialists advocate you help him return to a level where he feels successful. Then his enthusiasm will return.
5. **Involve others.** Tell teachers and coaches that it's more important to you that your child feel successful than to come out on top. Making your values clear to them can make them more effective in helping your child.
6. **Point out effort in others.** Make your child aware of how others work hard at their daily activities, so they know they're not alone in trying, overcoming discouragement, meeting challenges, and succeeding.
7. **Praise him for trying.** Point out how much you appreciate your child's doing something that may be difficult for him.

Applied to schoolwork, sports or other pursuits, these devices can help kids develop a "can-do" attitude.

Adapted from "News for Swim Parents." Published by the American Swimming Coaches Association. Used with permission.