

DOs AND DON'Ts FOR PARENTS OF MINOR HOCKEY PLAYERS

DO

Get your kids to the rink on time. This allows them to get physically and mentally ready to play, hang out with friends and feel part of something bigger than themselves.

Set the standard that effort is essential. Tell your kids to work as hard as they can all the time. Reinforce that you value effort above all else.

Align your general parenting style with your hockey parenting style. Ask yourself what your parenting style is at home and be mindful that you are consistent and reflect it in your behaviour at the arena.

Support the coach. Learn the coach's philosophy.

Ask what things your child could be working on. Refrain from second-guessing and discussing who should be playing and what systems the team should be using.

Remember why most kids play hockey.

It's about having fun, learning new skills, making new friends and experiencing the excitement of the game.

Be a good listener and a great encourager.

Young players don't often see the positives when they lose. But no matter what the score, parents should consistently search for the positive.

Praise hard work rather than emphasizing outcomes. Say "I liked your hustle," rather than "great goal."

Encourage your kids to enjoy themselves.

"Have fun" should always be the last thing your young hockey player hears from you before they hit the ice.

Teach your child to become a stronger person, rather than a stronger hockey player. Focus on helping them build values that lead to positive interactions with coaches, teammates, opponents and referees.

Sources: Howie Draper, head coach, Pandas hockey team; Lindsey Post, goalie, Pandas hockey team; Serge Lajoie, head coach, Golden Bears hockey team; Nick Holt, professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

GO TEAM



DON'T

Put unreasonable expectations on your child. Kids will tell you when they want more opportunities for skill development. There is a massive dropout rate in sports around age 14 because parents have pushed their kids too hard too soon.



Be negative about your child's performance. Do not criticize your hockey player for making mistakes. Hockey players learn by making mistakes. Be positive and comment on a good shift or play they made.

Let your competitive side ruin the game. Don't yell or be obnoxious towards referees, opponents, fans or other parents.

Pay your kids for goals. This is counterproductive. There's enough thrill in the simple act of scoring a goal. Kids do not need a financial reward for that.



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