

# 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.



## 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.

**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



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