

Respecting our Coaches and Team Staff – A Guide for Our Parents



EXERPT From Respect in Sport:

“One of the most common reasons coaches, managers, officials and athletes, of all ages, cite for leaving sport is unacceptable parent behaviour. The Respect in Sport Parent Program will help define a standard of behaviour for all parents and create a more rewarding, safe and respectful environment for everyone involved. Parents want to do a great job supporting their kids. Respect in Sport provides parents with the tools to create and maintain Safe Sport environments.”

Our Coaches are volunteers. They are Mom, Dads, grandparents, siblings and even players themselves. The following summary was created to support our Team Staff recruitment and retention guidance document. Year after year, when conducting exit interviews with Coaches and team staff, the overwhelming response to the question – ***“What was the biggest challenge facing your role”?*** was, ***“dealing with difficult parents and team drama”***.

Communication with your Coach and Team Staff

When speaking to your Coach and Team Staff please consider the 24-hour rule. The 24-hour rule requires you to wait 24 hours after the event to discuss the issue or event with Coach or Team Staff.

In addition to the 24-hour rule, talk to your child before approaching Coach or Team Staff. This will help you gain a greater understanding of the event or incident that took place. Sometimes what comes from your child can be different than what you assumed.

Ways to express concern

If a concern arises that you need to bring up with your Coach or Team Staff please stay away from communicating through email and text messages. Ensure that any concerns or communication happens in person and in private with only the people necessary to the conversation.

When communicating a concern with a Coach or Team Staff, make sure it is an appropriate time to do so. Do not approach them without their knowledge – make sure they know you have a concern and would like to have a conversation.

Do not talk to your Coach or Team Staff before or after games. The Coach and Team Staff have an important role to make sure the team is ready for their game and support the team after the game. It is not appropriate to take the Coach or Team Staff away from their role during games.

The best time to talk to your Coach or Team Staff is after a practice.

Consider the following points before engaging your coach or team staff

Losing Perspective

- **Setting Realistic Expectations:** Always make sure that as a parent you are setting realistic expectations for your child, the Coach and Team Staff – they are not professionals. The Coach and Team Staff will make mistakes and are not perfect so do not expect them to be. Your child is also not perfect and will make mistakes and may not always behave appropriately when you are not around. During the year remember that everyone is there for their love of the sport and our children.

- Handling Winning and Losing: As in life, achievement comes in many ways and at different levels. Support your Coach and Team Staff to celebrate every achievement and successes the team has no matter how minor the success is. Today's knowledge of early childhood sport development is much higher than what we (parents) knew growing up. Your coach is trained to know that winning comes in the form of accomplishment. Setting personal goals, team goals, and season goals is part of "winning = accomplishment" strategy. If you have questions about the science of winning and losing, ask your coach or EFCLA Coaching Director.
- Burnout - Similar to realistic expectations, remember that your Player, Coach and Team Staff are not paid professionals. Ringette is a sport that everyone is involved with for fun and the love of the game. For your Player, Coach and Team staff there is more than just ringette in life. It is important to make sure there is balance so your coach and team staff to not get burned out.
- Misplaced Enthusiasm – Emotions, good and bad, can run high during games and practices. When emotions are running high it is important to remember to still keep them in control. While it may sound like you are supportive in cheering and yelling during games, your enthusiasm can be misplaced and misconstrued. Be a positive cheerleader!
- Living through your child – While it is great to support your child and teach them your own skills, remember that you are not your child. You have had your chance as a kid playing amateur sports and now it is your Child's turn. Put yourself in their shoes and remember what it was like during this time of your life.

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