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How to have Fun Playing Sports

When we talk to children like you who are participating in youth sport, they tell us that what they want most in sports is to have fun, to learn new skills and get better at the skills they already have, to develop physical fitness, and to compete against other children. Your coaches try to do their best to help you achieve these goals. But you have to help too! What can YOU do? Here are some ideas:

- Always try as hard as you can, both in practice and in competition.
- Remember that practicing your skills is the most important thing you can do to make yourself a better athlete.
- Everyone makes mistakes when they play sports, even the very best athletes like the professionals. Don't get upset at yourself or others when mistakes happen. Just try harder the next time. No one is perfect.
- Help your teammates to get better too. Encourage them, don't criticize them.
- Pay attention when your coaches are teaching you skills or strategies. Ask questions if you don't understand what they said.
- Your parents may not know very much about the sport you are playing. Talk to them about your sport. Explain how the sport is played. Tell them what you do in practices to learn your sport.
- Is winning real important to you? Think about this little saying: To win the game is great, to play the game is greater, To love the game is greatest.

Now get out there and have FUN!

This article provided by Dr. Richard Stratton, Health and Physical Education Program, Virginia Tech