



TOP 3 TIPS FOR YOUTH SPORTS ADVOCATES

By R. E. Martin

Youth Sports are About Having Fun...

Let's work together to make sure that it is... remember, they are very special!

Enjoy the journey... it doesn't last forever. Make positive memories for yourself and all participants (not just your own). We sometimes live vicariously through our involvement with your sports, but the playing of amateur games should belong to the participating young competitors... let them own it! Don't be the Grinch who spoils the experience.

#3 The Golden Rule of Amateur Sports: Words Said and Heard Can Hurt Keep it positive!

Don't say out loud things about other people's children that you wouldn't want said about your child. We all have personal opinions... however, some things are better left unsaid. Do not make negative comments and/or criticisms in public forums... including social media.

#2: Protect & Build Their Self-Esteem Nip tragedy in the bud... before it takes hold

The effort to win is VERY important, but contributing to the personal self-esteem of each young competitor is paramount and most important. We are all different... children, adolescents, teenagers, young adults and adults. We should all strive to remain vigilant to the needs of the emotionally vulnerable athletes. Making them feel good about themselves is a job well done.

#1: Talk About Their Feelings Cast light to their darkness...

Encourage competitors of all ages to share their true, personal feelings with those who they trust. Left unaddressed, feelings can escalate and contribute to intense feelings of unhappiness. As a caring Advocate, break the ice, broach the subject... studies suggest that asking will not contribute to the occurrence of acts of self harm.

EMERGENCY

In a crisis, call "911" immediately
If considering self-harm, call "988"
The National Suicide Intervention Lifeline

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

To speak to a counselor,
Call (800) 656-4673
RAINN

BULLYING/HAZING

For helpful resources,
visit stopbullying.gov
or stompoutbullying.org

CHILD ABUSE

To report suspected child abuse,
Call (800) 422-4453
Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline

It is recommended that incident(s) of serious misconduct be reported to law enforcement. Minors should report incidents of misconduct to their parent(s) or guardian(s).