

Helping Your Child Become a Strong Competitor

By Michael A. Taylor

Gymnastics Risk Management and Consultation

coacht@gym.net

Visit Michael's Website at www.gym.net

You can help your child become a strong competitor by...

1. Emphasizing and rewarding effort rather than outcome.
2. Understanding that your child may need a break from sports occasionally.
3. Encouraging and guiding your child, not forcing or pressuring them to compete.
4. Emphasizing the importance of learning and transferring life skills such as hard work, self-discipline, teamwork, and commitment.
5. Emphasizing the importance of having fun, learning new skills, and developing skills.
6. Showing interest in their participation in sports, asking questions.
7. Giving your child some space when needed. Allow children to figure things out for themselves.
8. Keeping a sense of humor. If you are having fun, so will your child.
9. Giving unconditional love and support to your child, regardless of the outcome of the day's competition.
10. Enjoying yourself at competitions. Make friends with other parents, socialize, and have fun.
11. Looking relaxed, calm, and positive when watching your child compete.

12. Realizing that your attitude and behaviors influences your child's performance.
13. Having a balanced life of your own outside sports.

Don't . .

1. Think of your child's sport participation as an investment for which you want a return.
2. Live out your dreams through your child.
3. Do anything that will cause your child to be embarrassed.
4. Feel that you need to motivate your child. This is the child's and coach's responsibility.
5. Ignore your child's behavior when it is inappropriate, deal with it constructively so that it does not happen again.
6. Compare your child's performance to that of other children.
7. Show negative emotions while you are watching your child at a competition.
8. Expect your child to talk with you when they are upset. Give them some time.
9. Base your self-esteem on the success of your child's sport participation.
10. Care too much about how your child performs.
11. Make enemies with other children's parents or the coach.
12. Interfere, in any way, with coaching during competition or practice.
13. Try to coach your child. Leave this to the coach.