

# Sport Parent “Do’s & Don’ts”



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF  
YOUTH SPORTS

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## About the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports

For over 30 years, the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports has scientifically studied the benefits and detriments of sport for children and youth. The staff of the Institute focuses on translating scientific findings about youth sport participation into practical training programs that have helped countless organizations to maximize the beneficial effects of sports participation for young athletes.

To find out more about ISYS and its research and educational efforts, please visit

[www.youthsports.msu.edu](http://www.youthsports.msu.edu)

*Advancing Knowledge,  
Transforming Young Lives*

## Top 10 Things You Should be Doing as a Sport Parent and 10 Things to Avoid

### DO...

1. Reinforce being a good sport.
2. Limit conversations about your child's sport.
3. Let them play for their own reasons.
4. Support your child's coach by not coaching from the sideline.
5. Keep it fun.
6. Maintain composure during games (before and after, too).
7. Hold realistic expectations.
8. Be supportive, especially after losses and tough performances.
9. Encourage your child to follow through on commitments and work hard.
10. Unconditionally love and support your child.

### DON'T...

1. Reinforce bad sportsmanship.
2. Focus your conversations with your child always on sport.
3. Put the opponent down to make your child feel good.
4. Criticize your child for poor performance after games.
5. Coach from the sideline.
6. Treat your child differently depending on game outcome.
7. Allow sport to dominate your child's life.
8. Control all decision-making about the child's participation.
9. See your child's sport as a financial investment needing a return.
10. Exert pressure to win and force your child to play.

*Sport parenting is full of tough decisions, sacrifices, and pressure. Live by these principles and you will be well on your way to becoming a positive sport parent. Learn more at*

[www.educ.msu.edu/ysi/online/sportparent.htm](http://www.educ.msu.edu/ysi/online/sportparent.htm)