

FOR PARENTS

MY CHILD HAS AN IEP



What Should I Share With the Coach?

DO	DON'T
✓ Share how your child learns best. Tell the coach what helps your child understand and remember instructions.	✗ Don't assume the coach knows what the IEP means. An IEP is designed for school, and coaches may not be familiar with every accommodation.
✓ Share specific strategies. "Show her the drill before asking her to do it" is more useful than "She has trouble processing information."	✗ Don't just share a diagnosis. Knowing a diagnosis doesn't automatically tell a coach how to coach your athlete.
✓ Share your child's strengths. Tell the coach what your athlete does well, what motivates them, and where they shine.	✗ Don't make the IEP the definition of your athlete. Your child is an athlete first, not a list of challenges or accommodations.
✓ Explain what helps when your child gets stuck. Does your child need directions repeated, broken into steps, demonstrated, or clarified?	✗ Don't expect the coach to lower expectations. Accommodations should help an athlete access instruction, not eliminate accountability.
✓ Tell the coach what communication works best. Be specific about how your child responds to correction, questions, and feedback.	✗ Don't wait until there is a problem. A short conversation before the season can prevent misunderstandings later.
✓ Ask your child what they want their coach to know. Give your athlete a voice in the conversation.	✗ Don't speak for your child when they can advocate for themselves. Help them learn to communicate what they need.
✓ Share information that is relevant to athletics. Focus on strategies that could help during practice, games, and team activities.	✗ Don't feel like you have to hand over the entire IEP. Start with the information the coach can actually use.
✓ Work with the coach. Ask, "What can we do together to help my child succeed?"	✗ Don't make it a parent-versus-coach conversation. You and the coach are on the same team.

A SIMPLE WAY TO START THE CONVERSATION

"My child has an IEP at school. I wanted to share a few things that might help you coach them. They do really well with _____. They sometimes struggle with _____. It helps when _____. Their strengths are _____. Is there anything you notice during practice that we can work on together?"

REMEMBER

Your child's IEP is a tool for understanding how they learn. It does not define who they are as an athlete.

The goal isn't to make things easier.

The goal is to give your athlete the tools they need to succeed.

Disclaimer: Parents, educators, and coaches are all part of the same team working to maximize your student-athlete's success. Communication and collaboration between everyone involved can help create a more supportive and successful athletic experience.