

How Parents Can Advocate Without Coaching From the Sideline

Supporting your athlete's needs while giving coaches room to coach.

THE BIG IDEA

Advocating for your child doesn't mean directing the coach. You have an important role in helping your athlete communicate what they need, but once practice begins, the coach is responsible for coaching. The goal: **advocate before and after, support during**. It's not Parent → Coach. It's **Parent + Athlete + Coach**.

What Advocacy Sounds Like vs. Coaching

SAY THIS (ADVOCACY)

NOT THIS (COACHING)

They learn better with a demonstration

"Coach, demonstrate it again."

They may need a little extra time

"Give them more time!"

What can we do to help them understand?

"You need to change the drill."

I'll talk with my child about what happened

"You need to tell them exactly what to do."

How can we work together?

"Here's what you should do."

The Sideline Test

Am I supporting my child, or coaching my child?

Supporting: encouraging, celebrating effort, helping your child regulate emotions.

Coaching: where to stand, what play to run, how to perform the skill.

Move Toward Independence

Parent speaks



Parent & athlete together



Athlete speaks, parent nearby



Athlete speaks independently

Before contacting the coach, ask your child: "What do you want me to do?"

Parent Quick Checklist

Give the coach information they can use, not information they can't act on.

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| ☐ Have I shared what the coach actually needs? | ☐ Am I encouraging rather than directing? |
| ☐ Have I included my child in the conversation? | ☐ Have I let emotions settle before reacting? |
| ☐ Does my child know how to ask for help? | ☐ Am I approaching the coach as a partner? |

"Your child's success doesn't require you to coach from the sideline. It requires you to build the right team around them."

You are part of a team working together to maximize your student-athlete's success. — Accommodations to the Field