



SURREY LACROSSE ASSOCIATION
COACHING BULLETIN #3
PARENTAL SUPPORT – THE KEY TO PEAK PERFORMANCE

This document should be printed out and distributed to all parents at the initial Parents Meeting. The role that parents play in the life of a lacrosse player has a tremendous impact on their experience. With this in mind, the following are helpful reminders for all of us as we approach the upcoming season. If parents should have any questions about these, they should feel free to discuss it with the coaches.

1. **Let the coaches coach:** Leave the coaching to the coaches. This includes motivating, psyching your child for practice, after game critiquing, setting goals, requiring additional training, etc. You have entrusted the care of your player to these coaches and they need to be free to do their job. If a player has too many coaches, it is confusing for him/her and their performance usually declines.
2. **Support the program:** Get involved. Volunteer. Help out with fundraisers, car-pool; anything to support the program.
3. **Be you child's best fan:** Support your child unconditionally. Do not withdraw love when your child performs poorly. Your child should *never* have to perform to win your love.
4. **Support and root for all players on the team:** Foster teamwork. Your child's teammates *are not* the enemy. When they are playing better than your child, your child now has a wonderful opportunity to learn.
5. **Do not bribe or offer incentives:** Your job is *not* to motivate. Leave this to the coaching staff. Bribes will distract your child from properly concentrating in practice and game situations.
6. **Encourage your child to talk with the coaches:** If your child is having difficulties in practice or games, or can't make a practice, etc., encourage *them* to speak directly to the coaches. This "responsibility taking" is a big part of becoming a big-time player. By handling the off-field tasks, your child is claiming ownership of all aspects of the game - preparation for as well as playing the game.
7. **Understand and display appropriate game behaviour:** Remember, your child's self esteem and game performance is at stake. Be supportive, cheer, be appropriate. To perform to the best of his/her abilities, a player needs to focus on the parts of the game that they can control (fitness, positioning, decision making, skill, aggressiveness, what the game is presenting them). If the player starts focusing on what he can not control (the condition of the field, the referee, the weather, the opponent, even the outcome of the game at times), they will not play up to their ability. If the player hears a lot of people telling him/her what to do, or yelling at the referee, it diverts their attention away from the task at hand.
8. **Monitor your child's stress level at home:** Keep an eye on the player to make sure that they are handling stress effectively from the various activities in his/her life.
9. **Monitor eating and sleeping habits:** Be sure your child is eating the proper foods and getting adequate rest.
10. **Help your child keep his/her priorities straight:** Help your child maintain a focus on schoolwork, relationships and the other things in life beside lacrosse. Also, if your child has made a commitment to lacrosse, help him/her fulfill their obligation to the team.
11. **Reality test:** If your child has come off the floor when his/her team has lost, but he/she has played their best, help him/her to see this as a "win". Remind your child that he/she is to focus on "process" and not "results". Their fun and satisfaction should be derived from "striving to win". Conversely, your child should be as satisfied from success that occurs despite inadequate preparation and performance.
12. **Keep lacrosse in its proper perspective:** Lacrosse should not be larger than life for you. If your child's performance produces strong emotions in you, suppress them. Remember your relationship will continue with your children *long after* their competitive lacrosse days are over. Keep *your* goals and needs separate from your child's experience.
13. **Have fun:** That is what we will be trying to do! We will try to challenge your child to reach past their "*comfort level*" and improve themselves as a player, and thus, a person. We will attempt to do this in environments that are fun, yet challenging. We look forward to this process. We hope you do to!