10 Things Parents of Athletes Need to Know

1 **It's not about you,** it's about them. Do not live your own sports dreams through your kids. It's their turn now. Let them make their own choices, have fun, make mistakes and learn from them.

2 **Never COMPLAIN to a coach** about your child's playing time after a game. If it's necessary to speak up, help your kid have that conversation. That said, if you just can't help yourself, do it kindly and respectfully, in person or on the phone, not in an angry email copied to a dozen people.

3 **NEVER yell at referees.** They are trying. How would you like it if someone came to your job and screamed at you? Not. So. Much. If you have a real issue, work through appropriate channels the next day, and keep your cool.

4 **Do NOT coach your kid from the sideline.** Your job is to **BE A CHEERLEADER,** not a coach. If you wanted to coach, you should have volunteered.

5 **It is EXTREMELY UNLIKELY** you are raising a professional athlete. Relax, let them have a good time and learn the lessons they are supposed to be learning in sports.

6 **Pursue LONG-TERM wins** so that sports helps kids learn to live well, make good decisions, be a moral person, live faith, and value honesty and good character way more than points scored and short-term wins.

7 **If you have NOTHING POSITIVE to say,** sit down and be quiet. Think about it: you really don't want to be "that" parent, do you?

8 **If you are LOSING YOUR MIND** on the sideline of a game, it's time to look in the mirror and figure out why. It's not healthy to care that much about sports. Put that energy into something more productive, like making sure every player feels like a million bucks after making a solid effort.

9 **Let them FAIL.** Forgotten equipment, not working out, not practicing at home? Let them experience the consequences. It will make them better people AND better at sports AND better at life.

10 **Your kids are WATCHING YOU.** And so are everyone else's kids. Make them proud, not embarrassed. Show them how grown-ups are supposed to act.