

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S COACH

Your role as a parent of an athlete is to support, encourage, volunteer and guide them through the ups and downs of every season.

While it's the coach's job to instruct, you must become comfortable with the process and be aware of what your child is doing.

What are your thoughts on playing time? Know up front whether your coach's main focus is winning or development. At the younger levels, the final score should not matter. As athletes advance, a coach's job might be tied to the team's performance.

Do you have first-aid training? Don't assume that coaches can do anything more than apply a BAND-AID®. Insist that someone on staff is present at all games and practices, knows CPR and can identify both heat illness and sudden cardiac arrest.

What is your emergency action plan? If an emergency does occur, are you prepared to react? Is there proper cellphone coverage at all practice and game sites? Are there automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) and cooling tubs available nearby?

How can I help?

This answer might surprise you. While every league and school welcomes volunteers to do the work behind the scenes, the coach's No. 1 request might be, "Please get your child to practice and games on time."

Do you have a child on the team?

Don't jump to conclusions. If the coach says, "yes," seek assurances that favoritism will not be an ongoing problem throughout the season.

