



Parents Ground Rules

- No matter what your child's skill level, if they're a starter or not, or their academic standing, remind them often that you are proud of them, you are here to support them, and that you will always love them . . . NO MATTER WHAT!
- Please do not impose your athletic and/or academic resume on your child. Maybe, dad, you were an outstanding athlete. Mom, perhaps you were on the Dean's List. There are few things, however, more stifling to a student-athlete's development than being chased by their parents' "ghosts" or trying to live up to unrealistic expectations. It can really be an emotional downer, as well as a real performance killer!
- Do allow coach to be a noun AND a verb! There are few impediments more detrimental to your child's attitude, performance and security than to hear their parents complain about, chastise or beat-down a coach! If you have a concern with the coach, please resolve it privately! Fast-forward twenty years: Would you really want to see your grandchild witness this kind of behavior from your child?
- Please let the coaches coach! We will be different than other teams, and this is a HUGE ground rule to represent that difference.
- Practice is to be observed, please! Our girls need 100% laser focus. Naturally, you can visit before and after practice sessions.

- During games, the dugout will be AZ Smashers sanctuary! Players and coaches only, please.

- Be encouraging! From the beginning, you were to be nothing to them but their parent. They needed you from Day One, and despite what they might say, or what you may think, they need you NOW . . . maybe more than ever! Be their biggest fans and see what happens!

- Be present! Maybe it's not possible to attend every practice (not necessarily recommended), game or school function, but you can surely be "plugged in" by knowing your child's class and game schedules, frequently asking questions about school and athletic progress, or how you can be of greater support for their dreams. Remember: TIME is a very valuable currency . . . Mom and Dad, please SPEND IT!

- Be realistic about your child's skill levels. This is not to suggest they can't develop into fine student-athletes, but less than one-percent of high school student-athletes will receive a fully-funded NCAA Division I scholarship! There are plenty of other Opportunities!

- Easy on the pressure. Considering your child is still in junior high or high school, isn't there inherently enough of that already? A relaxed student-athlete is happier and simply performs at a higher level.

- It's about education! It is nearly a certainty your child will not have the privilege of playing his or her sport professionally, so doesn't it make long-term sense to find the right-fit collegiate opportunity . . . athletically AND academically? There are myriad college opportunities out there, and the sooner your child gets exposed to them, the more motivated they will become about their educational future!

- Mom and Dad, when you feel you might be struggling with some of these Ground Rules, please close your eyes, open your heart and read the first rule. Your precious child will love you for it!

"A baby is born with a need to be loved - and never outgrows it."

-Frank Howard Clark