

WHAT COACHES AND PARENTS HAVE IN COMMON IN OUR ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

- **There is a common respect given just because of the title “Coach”. When addressing one as Coach, there is a sense of respect and honor that naturally goes with that title. We think of the great coaches in our lives that had an impact in our development as young men and women. We fondly remember all of the life’s lessons that we learned from them. At the same time, we need to remember that some with that title have discredited the title with their actions and understand why some parents are hesitant to “release” their sons and daughters to us. Now, what about the titles “Mom and Dad”? Shouldn’t those endearing titles that indicate love and respect to most of us? We, as coaches, need to fully recognize that those are the most difficult job titles on the face of the earth as we usually have no prior experience at them until they are given to us at birth of a child. And there is no owner’s manual provided with them, either.**
- **Parents are doing the best job that they can with the knowledge and skills that they have. Can’t that also be said about coaches that try to do what is best for the athlete? Both sides of this athletic equation want what is best to promote the interest of the student-athlete.**
- **Coaches believe that their athletes and Parents believe that their sons/daughters are life-long learners who grow with every experience and can master that which they continually practice.**
- **No can deny that the athletics teach life skills and that this reinforces exactly what the parents are trying to accomplish at home also.**
- **Parents do what they do because they love their kids. Coaches do what they do because they love working with kids and trying to motivate them to become more than the thought they could be. So if both Parents and Coaches love the kids, why can’t we find a middle ground where we can all work together to make it a better experience for all involved? Why does it become a competition where we force our athletes to choose between listening to Mom and Dad or to the Coach?**

So let’s look at the positives. We all want what is best for the student-athlete. So demonstrate that by communicating effectively with their parents rather than isolating them. Find ways to make the Parents feel like a part of the program instead of an outsider. Define their role so they understand how to behave and how to support the coaches. Continually thank them for their support and encourage them to be positive role models and to demonstrate sportsmanship. Parents are not the enemy. They are CO-WORKERS in the process of making better men and women out of our student-athletes.