

7 Good Reasons to Get Your Child Involved in Sports

Encourage a Healthy Lifestyle

Making exercise a part of your child's life teaches your child the importance of fitness. This, along with proper nutrition, plays a vital role in maintaining health. Children need physical activity every day and participation in sports helps fill this need. With today's wealth of video games and increasing computer literacy, daily physical activity is often times forgotten. Getting your child involved with sports helps them make exercise a part of their lifestyle and increases their chance of being a healthier adult.

Promote Self Esteem

When a child realizes that they are getting better and better at their sport, they can't help but feel a sense of accomplishment. Choosing a sport your child can grow and improve in gives your child an opportunity to build self-esteem. Together, with positive reinforcement from you their parent, they will gain confidence and have a more positive view of themselves.

Learn Goal Setting

I'm sure you'll agree goal setting and success go hand in hand. Participation in sports gives your child a fun, practical way to learn about goal setting. They'll see, experience, and learn about how goal setting works. If your child's coach doesn't cover goal setting, that's okay! You as a parent can sit down with your child and set goals. By assisting your child in developing this skill, you give them a better chance at succeeding in life.

Learn and Experience Teamwork

How often have you read a help wanted ad where the employer wants a "team player" or a candidate that "works well with others"? I see it all the time. How much more valuable are you as an employee when you can put differences aside and get the job done? Sports teach children about teamwork and about how their actions affect other people. If they can't learn to work together with teammates while playing a sport they enjoy, how will they be able to work with co-workers they may or may not like while performing a job they may or may not enjoy? This is an important lesson to learn. Encourage your child to be a team player and, as a sports parent, keep tabs on whether or not your words and actions promote this trait in your child.

Develop Time Management Skills

Adding extracurricular activities to your child's schedule encourages development of and time management and prioritization skills. Teach your child that taking care of responsibilities, such as school work and cleaning up after themselves, comes first. This gives them their first taste of prioritization. Next, help your child formulate a plan which enables them to efficiently handle their responsibilities while still leaving time for sports practices and competitions. For example, show your child how working on homework instead of playing outside during their after-school program helps them finish their homework in time for practice each day. Then go ahead and make that part of your plan.

Learn About Dealing with Adversity

Everyone makes mistakes. Everyone has problems. How well you handle these mistakes and problems directly affects happiness and quality of life. Many people "get in a slump" and can't get out of it. Others continue making the same mistakes over and over again. In sports, we always try to minimize errors, but we're human. Mistakes happen. Even professional athletes make bad choices and make bad plays, but it's not the mistake that counts. What you do from that point forward carries much more significance. If your child learns how to deal with adversity, errors, and challenges in sports, chances are, they'll be able to translate that skill to real life and effectively minimize mistakes and/or bad decisions as well as competently recover from set backs.

Have Fun!

Positive experiences play an essential role in raising a happy, healthy human being. Sports provide numerous opportunities for positive experiences both for your child as an individual, and for your family as a whole. "Sports parents" are blessed with the chance to watch their child have fun while learning and developing as an athlete and as a human being.