



## The Calm Parent Sideline Guide

Most parents at youth sports games mean well. They love their kids and want them to succeed. But sometimes emotions take over and the sideline becomes stressful instead of supportive. When that happens, here are a few simple things you can do to keep the experience positive for your child and everyone around you.

### **Separate Yourself**

Sit away from the loudest group of parents if necessary. Choose a quiet spot where you can simply watch the game. The goal is to enjoy watching your child play, not listen to constant complaining or yelling.

### **Don't Buy In**

Parents have been questioning coaches and referees since basketball was invented by James Naismith. But you don't have to participate. Change the subject or walk away when conversations turn negative.

### **Remember: It's Not About You**

Your child's game is their journey. When emotions rise during a game, take a breath and remind yourself that the experience belongs to them.

### **Embrace Silence**

Research consistently shows that most kids prefer their parents to be quiet observers during games. They don't want sideline coaching or criticism. They simply want supportive parents watching them play.

### **Coaches Notice Everything**

Coaches evaluate players, but they also notice parent behavior. Negative sideline behavior can impact opportunities for players more than parents realize.

### **Find Positive Environments**

If the sideline environment becomes consistently negative, look for teams and programs that emphasize positive coaching and supportive parents.

Youth sports should be fun. One of the best things a parent can do is simply be calm, supportive, and enjoy watching their child play.