

Parent/Coach Communication

A. Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are challenging and sometimes difficult. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, you have a right to understand what expectations are being placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program. For a coach to do his/her job to their best ability they must be given the trust of running their program the way they believe it should be done. As parents you must support the coach and other team members in order to help your son/daughter have a positive experience in their sport. If a parent talks negative about their coach or some other team member at home or in the car after practices/games it only opens the door for mixed feeling between coach, parent, team members and your son/daughter.

B. Communication you should expect from your son or daughter's coach

1. Philosophy of coaching
2. Expectations the coach has for your child and team rules
3. Location of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation
6. Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

C. Communication coaches expect from parents

1. Encourage your son/daughter to communicate any concerns with the coach before contacting the coach. If after meeting with the coach your child still would like you to talk with the coach then you may contact the coach at school or by email to set up a meeting with your child present.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts with practice/games well in advance
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations. As your children become involved in athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. **Also it is important to realize that there may be times when things do not go the way your child wishes, but at the same time may be what is best for the team.**

D. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgement decisions based on what they believe is best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. **Other things, such as those listed in the following section, must be left to the discretion of the coach.**

E. Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy/substitutions
3. Play calling
4. Other student athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are to be encouraged because it is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of each other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

1. **Please do not attempt to confront the coach before or after a contest or practice.** These can be emotional times for both parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
2. **Encourage your son or daughter to communicate any concerns with the coach before contacting the coach. After such a meeting, if your child still would like you to talk with the coach then you may contact the coach at school or by email to set up a meeting with your child present.**
3. Do not call the Coach at home to discuss playing time, team strategy, play calling and/or talk about other students. However, if it is an emergency or if you need to communicate a conflict with practice/games then it is appropriate to call the coach at home. Remember the coach has a life too and should be respected. The coach does have a right to hang up on inappropriate phone calls.
4. Call to set up an appointment with the coach. Remember a parent/coach meeting with the child present is required first before contacting administration.
5. If the coach can not be reached or does not respond within reasonable time, call the Athletic Director (Randy Pongratz 926-3656, ext.356) to assist in setting up a meeting for you.
6. If the parent/coach meeting does not provide a satisfactory solution, then you may call and set up a meeting with the athletic director to discuss the situation with the coach and child also present.

Research indicates that a students involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant in athletics are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope that the information provided in this handout makes both your child's and your experience with the Mondovi High School Athletic Program less stressful and more enjoyable.