

Paragon Artistic Boys Team Parent Guide (Do's and Don'ts!!) rev. August 2017

Over the years, we have had many "new to sport" parents attending competitions. This document is adapted from materials presented to coaches at the Olympic Training Center.

Do's and Don'ts for Gymnastics Parents/Guardians

DO FOR YOURSELF:

1. Get vicarious pleasure from your children's participation, but do not become overly ego- involved.
2. Try to enjoy yourself at competitions. Your unhappiness can cause your child to feel guilty.
3. Look relaxed, calm, positive and energized when watching your child compete. Your attitude influences how your child feels and performs.
4. Have a life of your own outside of your child's sports participation.

DO WITH OTHER PARENTS:

1. Make friends with other parents at events. Socializing can make the event more fun for you.
2. Volunteer as much as you can. Youth sports depends upon the time and energy of involved parents.
3. Police your own ranks: Work with other parents to ensure that all parents behave appropriately at practices and competitions.
4. **Parents and guardians are NOT allowed on the field of play in any circumstance for a variety of different reasons. USA Gymnastics will pull the sanction of any competition where this has occurred and void out all the scores / accomplishments of the athletes.** This includes (and is not limited to) moving on to the field of play to take pictures, speak with your athlete/coach, speak with judges, or event staff. It is also against the rules to represent yourself as anything other than a parent to the event staff of a hosted competition. Parents/Guardians breaking this protocol will have their athlete immediately removed from competition for the remainder of the day, and for the remainder of the competitions for the season.

DO WITH COACHES:

1. Leave the coaching to the coaches.
2. Parents should not try to speak with the coach(es) during the competition. Many times, the venue will provide seating that is close to the athletes. We will not acknowledge or speak to parents/guardians during the meet, with very few exceptions. In the case of injury, we will come get the parent and bring them out onto the field of play (this is the only exception made by USA Gymnastics.) We are happy to speak to all parents immediately following their session, as long as time permits.
3. Give them any support they need to help them do their jobs better.
4. Communicate with them about your child. You can learn about your child from each other.

5. Inform them of relevant issues at home that might affect your child at practice/competition.
6. Inquire about the progress of your children. You have a right to know. Meetings between the parents and coaches are usually scheduled in March/April for Level 3-7 athletes to discuss progress. These meetings are not limited to those two months...parents/guardians who wish to schedule a meeting can do so at any mutually convenient time.
7. Make the coaches your allies.

DO FOR YOUR CHILDREN:

1. Provide guidance for your children, but do not force or pressure them.
2. Assist them in setting realistic goals for participation.
3. Emphasize fun, skill development and other benefits of sports participation, e.g., cooperation, competition, self-discipline, commitment.
4. Show interest in their participation: help them get to practice, attend competitions, ask questions.
5. Provide; a healthy perspective to help children understand success and failure.
6. Emphasize and reward effort rather than results.
7. Understand that your child may need a break from sports occasionally.
8. Give your child some space when need. Part of sports participation involves them figuring things out for themselves.
9. Keep a sense of humor. If you are having fun and laughing, so will your child.
10. Provide regular encouragement.
11. Be a healthy role model for your child by being positive and relaxed at competitions and by having balance in your life.
12. **GIVE THEM UNCONDITIONAL LOVE: SHOW THEM YOU LOVE THEM WHETHER THEY WIN OR LOSE!!!**

DON'T FOR YOURSELF:

1. Base your self-esteem and ego on the success of your child's sports participation.
2. Care too much about how your child performs.
3. Lose perspective about the importance of your child's sports participation.

DON'T WITH OTHER PARENTS:

1. Make enemies of other parents.
2. Talk about others in the sports community. Talk to them. It is more constructive. It is frowned upon heavily by our coaching staff to "badmouth" or talk disparagingly about other clubs, or their kids. We especially do not badmouth other clubs or kids IN THE STANDS at the competitions. It creates a bad image of our club in the community.
3. Recruit! **Do not approach other parents/athletes about the possibility of joining our team. This includes e-mails, phone conversations, luncheons, etc. We frown heavily on parents and coaches recruiting athletes for Paragon from other clubs.**

DONT WITH COACHES:

1. Interfere with their coaching during practice or competitions. It is especially hard to run practices with parents who wish to speak with you once practice has begun. It is important that the coach can walk into the gym knowing that they can focus on the athletes 100 percent. Please save your inquiries for after practice (we are happy to talk to you then.) It is also easy to text/call/email us before practice begins.
2. Work at cross purposes with them. Make sure you agree philosophically and practically on why your child is playing sports and what they may get out of sports.

DON'T WITH YOUR CHILDREN:

1. EXPECT YOUR CHILDREN TO GET ANYTHING MORE FROM THEIR SPORT THAN A GOOD TIME, PHYSICAL FITNESS, MASTERY AND LOVE OF A LIFETIME SPORT, AND TRANSFERABLE LIFE SKILLS.
2. Ignore your child's bad behavior in practice or competitions. Any child breaking our rules and policies will be disciplined according to our handbook. We expect parents to work together with coaches when this occurs so that we can help eliminate the undesired behavior.
3. Ask the child to talk with you immediately after a competition.
4. Show negative emotions while watching them perform.
5. Make your child feel guilty for the time, energy and money you are spending and the sacrifices you are making.
6. Think of your child's sports participation as an investment for which you expect a return.
7. Live out your own dreams through your child's sports participation.
8. Compare your child's progress with that of other children.
9. Badger, harass, use sarcasm, threaten or use fear to motivate your child It only demeans them and causes them to hate you.
10. Expect anything from your child except their best effort.
11. EVER DO ANYTHING THAT WILL CAUSE THEM TO THINK LESS OF THEMSELVES OR OF YOU! !