

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH COACHES

1. PRIOR TO MEETING WITH COACH TO DISCUSS A CONCERN

- Avoid conversations with a coach before or after a game regarding a personal matter or in-game decision making.
- Contact the coach using the designated method of communication (phone, e-mail, text, etc.).
- Communicate with the coach that you would like to schedule an in-person private meeting on a non-game day.
- Be upfront and clear as to the purpose of the meeting and request for a date and time as soon as possible.
- Spend quality time with your child discussing their feelings, concerns, frustrations, and matters of importance to them.
- Deeply reflect on your child's words and thoughts. Make sure that you completely understand their point of view.
- Collect your thoughts on personal observations from the bleachers and sidelines.
- Be an advocate for your child's wishes and best interests. Don't be tempted by your personal agenda or feelings.
- Spend time creating your child's narrative in a manner that makes sense.
- Practice for the meeting by running through your child's narrative as well as various scenarios and responses.
- Establish reasonable goals for the meeting that properly reflect the best interests of your child.

2. DURING THE MEETING WITH A COACH TO DISCUSS A CONCERN

- Concerned, but not a confrontational tone.
- Kindly ask prior to the meeting if the coach would have any objection to note taking by the parents.
- Initiate a warm and constructive tone to the conversation.
- Thank the coach for their time and begin to outline the purpose of the meeting. Stick closely to your child's narrative.
- Never reference another child or parent in the meeting. Stay completely focused on your child's best interests!
- Avoid accusations, comparisons, hearsay, and rumors. Always stick to the facts!

2. DURING THE MEETING WITH A COACH TO DISCUSS A CONCERN CONT.

- Once you have finished speaking, please allow the coach to respond without
- interruption. Respect is a two-way street!
Listen closely to what the coach has to say and use nonverbal cues in a positive manner.
- Even though differences of opinion may develop over the course of the conversation, always remain calm.
- Always avoid name calling, yelling, and profanities. They immediately escalate an already stressful situation.
- Ask the coach for their honest opinion and recommendations on how to improve the
- current situation.
- Ask the coach how you could be of an assistance in improving the current situation.
Collaborate on the next steps going forward and maintain open lines of communication.
No matter how pleasant or unpleasant the conversation, always leave on civil terms.

3. AFTER THE MEETING WITH THE PARENTS AND THE NEXT STEPS

- Send some form of thank you correspondence to the coach (e-mail, text, note, etc).
- Highlight the key points of the conversation as a reminder of the next steps.
- If necessary, set up another formal meeting for a progress report on the next steps.
- Establish informal check-ins at times convenient for all parties involved just to touch base.
- Carefully monitor your child's progress and overall happiness.