



BETTER ATHLETES
BETTER PEOPLE

Second-Goal Parent[®] Self-Assessment

PCA believes there are two primary goals in youth sports: striving to win and, more importantly, teaching life lessons that help kids develop into the best people they can be. As important as winning may seem, a Second-Goal Parent lets coaches and athletes worry about the first goal of scoreboard results. A Second-Goal Parent has a more important role to play: ensuring that children take away lessons that will help them succeed in life.

A Second-Goal Parent recognizes that there is a Little Picture and a Big Picture in youth sports. The Little Picture concerns such matters as whether children are playing their preferred positions, whether the team is winning, etc. The Big Picture, too often obscured by the Little Pictures, is about what the child is learning from youth sports.

Assess yourself on each of the statements below using a 1-5 scale:
(1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always).

The ELM Tree of Mastery

While winning is important and learning to compete is a major life lesson available through sports, not everyone can win every game. Still, regardless of the score, youth athletes are winners when they pursue mastery. As a way to remember key elements of mastery, PCA uses the acronym ELM for Effort, Learning and Mistakes are OK.

- _____ 1. I reinforce with my child that it is OK to make mistakes.
- _____ 2. I tell my child that I appreciate his/her best effort even if it falls short of the desired result.
- _____ 3. I help my child value learning and improvement over outcomes and comparison with others.

Filling Emotional Tanks

An "Emotional Tank" is like the gas tank in a car. When it's empty, we go nowhere, but when it's full, we can go most anywhere.

- _____ 4. I encourage my child with specific tank-fillers regardless of scoreboard results.
- _____ 5. I avoid immediate and critical debriefs with my child right after a game or practice.
- _____ 6. When it comes to conversations with my child about youth sports, I do more listening than talking.

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Second-Goal Parent Self-Assessment, continued

Honoring the Game

To help remember the ideals of sportsmanship, which PCA calls “Honoring the Game,” we talk about respecting ROOTS, an acronym for Rules, Officials, Opponents, Teammates and Self.

- _____ 7. I review ROOTS with my child and/or use PCA’s *Conversation Starters* e-mail series to help my child absorb life lessons from sports.
- _____ 8. I model Honoring the Game myself as I watch my child compete and even as we watch sports on TV together.
- _____ 9. I encourage other spectators to Honor the Game.
- _____ 10. I refrain from berating officials.