

## 4 Keys to Being a Great Volleyball Parent

Yes, there is etiquette for being a great volleyball parent. After paying all of that money and investing all of your time into your child's sport, you don't want to end up being that parent, do you? You know, the one screaming from the sidelines at the officials and players, bugging the coach before/during/after practice, or causing a scene after a loss.

Ok, it may be rare that you find a parent that bad in volleyball because most of being a great volleyball parent is common sense. That being said, it still needs to be reinforced occasionally that there are some things that are frowned upon.

### Respect the Coach

While it goes without saying that everyone should respect the coach of the team, sometimes people forget that disrespect can be portrayed in other ways that aren't as obvious as yelling or being rude.

Never talk about playing time with the coach – If you're concerned about the amount of time your daughter is playing, encourage her to organize a time to meet with her coach one-on-one and ask what she needs to improve upon to gain more playing time.

Give the coach their space after a loss – Coaches are often extremely competitive and take losses as hard, if not harder, than other people. It's best to keep your comments about the game to yourself immediately following a loss unless you've really gotten to know the coach's personality.

Teach respect by showing respect – Your volleyball player will learn how to address and treat their coach by observing how you speak with their coach. When possible, keep criticisms and opinions to yourself unless asked. Allow the coaches to be the leader they were chosen to be – they are the coach for a reason.

### Be Courteous at Tournaments

Between travelling, play time, and waiting between games, volleyball tournaments can be long, grueling days. Being surrounded by hundreds (if not thousands) of people all day, constantly hearing whistles being blown, and getting occasionally hit in the head with a ball can wear any parent's patience thin. Keep these tips in mind as you're trying to keep your cool:

Share your memories – If you regularly videotape the matches, try to upload them and share them with other parents that couldn't make it to the tournament. If the team doesn't have someone in charge of recording matches, share the videos with the coach for analysis purposes.

Never yell at the officials – Even if you're right, yelling at or critiquing the officials being paid to do their job sets a bad example for the players and other children watching.

### Encourage the Players

Be positive with every player – While it's up to your discretion how positive to be with your own child, sometimes players whose parents weren't able to make the tournament also need a few positive words of encouragement. If you notice that some parents aren't in attendance that day, try to say a few kind words to their player just as you hope another parent would do in your absence.

Be realistic about your child's ability – Not every volleyball player is destined to be a superstar. Don't spend your time comparing your daughter's abilities to others, instead continue helping her to improve week after week.

### Learn the Sport

If you've never seen a volleyball game before, it can take some time to learn the general rules. Once you've got an idea of what's going on in the big picture, take some time to learn the specific rules of the game. This will help you understand why the coach chose certain strategies during game situations,

help explain those decisions to your daughter, and allow you to make informed constructive critiques of her play.