

Resources include:

The Positive Coaching Alliance
www.positivecoach.org

The Parents Association for
Youth Sports www.pays.org.

The National Alliance for Youth
Sports www.nays.org.

Center for Sports Parenting
www.sportsparenting.org

For additional resources on
youth sportsmanship, please
contact the Middlesex District
Attorney's Office at:

40 Thorndike Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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617-679-6500
www.middlesexda.com

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**Middlesex District
Attorney
Martha Coakley
presents:**

*Just Play:
Kids, Parents and
Sportsmanship*



Hear from the experts
about the pride,
pleasure, and pain of
raising young athletes.



Dear Friend:

Many of us have fond memories of playing sports. For those of a certain generation, it was putting a ball under your arm and meeting kids at the local park or pick-up games on the nearest dead-end street.

For children now, it is more likely to involve participation in a youth league, with regularly scheduled practices, inter-city games, uniforms, and a lot of parental participation.

Youth sports programs play an important role in our communities by helping to extend the day for working parents, and by providing important exercise for students. They develop critical skills like team-work, and teach kids how to be good winners as well as good losers.

Sometimes, however, adult values and goals intrude in kids' games and occasionally, there are serious consequences. In Middlesex, we know of many situations in which a parent, a coach or another adult reacts to an event with strong language, threats or even physical violence. Because of the vital role that organized sports play in today's society, I have asked several professional athletes and other experts to talk about the issues around youth sports from their perspective: as youth coaches, former or current professionals, parents, educators and role models for young and old alike.

I hope that you will find this video and the accompanying information useful in your community.

Cordially,

Martha Coakley
District Attorney

Youth Sports By The Numbers

It is estimated that 87% of American children will have participated in an organized sport before their 18th birthday. *US Dept. of Health and Human Services*

In a recent survey, 35% of kids involved in youth sports say they planned to quit in the next year. The top five reasons were:

- lost interest
- not having fun
- it took too much time
- coach was a poor teacher
- too much pressure.

The Dark Side of Youth Sports, Shane Murphy, PhD.

NAYS, the National Alliance for Youth Sports reported that incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct remained steady at about 5% until 1990— it now hovers around 15%!

74% of kids interviewed said they'd seen an adult acting "out of control" during a youth sporting event. *Sports Illustrated for Kids, 2001*

More than 82% of parents have seen bad parental behavior at youth sporting events and believe that an education program for adults is appropriate public policy. Two third of the respondents believe that the education program should be mandatory. *National Alliance for Youth Sports 1/02*

Did you know?

- 1 in 30,000 high school varsity basketball players will play professionally in the NBA.
- Less than 1% of all high school athletes will receive any form of athletic scholarship at the NCAA Division One level.
- Only 5.2% of high school athletes progress to play intercollegiate sports at 4-year institutions.
- Only 2.2% of high school athletes will continue on and play at the Division One level.

National Alliance for Youth Sports

What Do The Experts Say?

Unrealistic parental expectations and or exploitation of young athletes for extrinsic gain can contribute to negative psychological consequences for elite young athletes. *American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness (2000)*

You never have your kids' attention as much as when you lose. Those are real teaching and learning moments. *Harry Sheehy, Coach, Athletic Director and Author of Raising a Team Player*

I signed a code of conduct, as a parent. They only work if you follow them, and I will!
Ray Bourque

Children should feel that parental love or a relationship with critical adults is not contingent on winning or excelling in any one educational, sporting, career, or social goal. *"Achievement by Proxy" spectrum: recognition and clinical response to pressured and high-achieving children and adolescents. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Feb, 1999, by Ian R. Tofler, Penelope K. Knapp, Martin J. Drell*

Media Violence and Sport

- 98% of US boys from age 8-17 consume some type of sports-related media; 82% do so at least a couple of times a week, and 90% watch televised sports. *See, "Children and Sports Media" Amateur Athletic Found. Of Los Angeles (8/99)*
- 57% of children in a poll said that they see violence in sports programs often. www.Childrennow.org 9/99