

Coaching a youth league team is exciting and rewarding. But from time to time, you may experience difficulty with parents. Some may want their children to play more or they might question your judgment as a coach. This is normal, so don't feel that you're alone if this happens. Here are a few thoughts to remember when dealing with parents:



begins to discuss your operating procedures.

☞ Be consistent! If you change a rule or philosophy during the season, you may be in for trouble. If you *do* change something, make *sure* the parents are informed as soon as possible.

☞ Handle any confrontation one-on-one and not in a crowd situation.

Don't be defensive. Don't argue with parents.

Listen to their views and be thankful.

☞ Don't discuss individual players with *other* parents. The grapevine will hang you every time.

☞ Ask parents *not* to criticize their children during a practice or game. Don't let your players be humiliated, even by their own parents. Explain that you as the coach must be given *complete* control of your team when they are on your "turf."

☞ Parents must accept the fact that umpires, coaches and other league officials are *volunteers* and should not be subjected to public criticism.

Always remember that you will be dealing with children and parents with different backgrounds and ideals. One of your main challenges as a coach is to deal with these differences in a positive manner so the team's season will be an exciting and enjoyable experience for all.

☞ Know what your objectives are and do what you believe to be of most value to the team, not the parents.

☞ Encourage parental involvement. Always *listen* to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they're interested and concerned because it's their children who are involved.

☞ Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.

☞ No coach can please everyone. Don't try.

☞ Most importantly, be fair. If you treat all players as equals, you will gain their respect.

☞ Resist unfair pressure. You are the coach and it's your responsibility to make the final decision.

☞ Don't blame the players for their parents' actions. Try to maintain a fair attitude.

☞ Make certain all parents know *your* ground rules. Have your rules, regulations, philosophy, practice dates and times, etc., printed and distributed to *all* parents. If necessary, have a parent meeting before the season