

RYAN SUMMERS  
EPIC UNITED  
& THE EPIC FAMILY  
THOUGHTS ON...

# I AM AN EPIC PART!

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## THE ROLE OF THE PARENT AS DEFINED BY EPIC UNITED

*The “Thoughts on” series is a series of papers designed to supply Epic family members (and potential Epic family members) with our thoughts on various topics. There are exceptions to many rules, so if Epic is “for” or “against” a topic, that does not mean that it’s members cannot or must participate or that there is not an exception for a specific player. These are general guidelines and are a reflection of the opinions of the Epic Administration in most scenarios. Generally speaking Epic United refers to the entire Epic family (Epic, Altitude, and Diamond Elite)*

- I. Epic parents
  - a. One of the strengths of the Epic family is its parents. Not only have our parents done a great job raising their children, but they help set the tone for the attitude and personality of their teams and the club.
  - b. If we were lost in the forest
    - i. The director and AGC's are our guides, telling us where to go
    - ii. The coaches are our foreman/leaders telling us how navigate the terrain or how to build a bridge to cross the ravine
    - iii. The players are the ones doing all of the work and taking us where we want to go
    - iv. The parents are responsible for morale and atmosphere

II. Characteristics of the Epic Parent

- a. In the stands – Great sportsmanship & great support for all of the players
- b. On the ride home from practices – supports and reinforces coach and club decisions.
- c. When we lose – knows that improvement is the major goal and there are lots of ups and downs with volleyball and part of that improvement is going to involve playing teams who are better than us. Focus on the process, not always the short-term product.
- d. When we win – knows that the best game in your eyes may not be so in the opponents' eyes. Class and dignity are integral to our atmosphere
- e. When we struggle – is when our players need our support and cheer even more
- f. On the ride home from games – only talks volleyball if the player initiates
- g. Between tournaments – help to set up team bonding activities
- h. When watching other Epic family teams – knows that a true family cares about the entire family. In addition, those players may be on your daughter's team someday.

- i. When meeting other parents – understands that players like harmony and parents getting along are oddly important to a team’s success
- j. When at home – reinforce the great things that sports can teach. “team 1st, how to be a good teammate, how to work hard, how to help others, how to respond to obstacles, etc.” Also reinforces the value of sufficient sleep and eating correctly.

### III. Parent Traps that Epic parents avoid

- a. The ‘other’ kid – I have seen parents fall into the trap of worrying about other kids. “that kid doesn’t work as hard” or “she missed practice” or “she doesn’t provide enough energy.” This has three major flaws:
  - i. It’s likely to be untrue, but more a product of your perception
  - ii. Whether it is true or untrue, it does not affect your daughter’s ability to improve, ability to make her school team or her ability to play in college.
  - iii. Even if these concerns are valid, worrying about them is the beginning of a downward spiral to a negative atmosphere
- b. “We could have won if...” – maybe true, but how would your life be different if you had. Referees make mistakes, kids don’t play perfectly, coaches misjudge how a player will respond. We control what we can control. We focus on the process and that has led to winning seasons from almost every kid in our club and nearly 100% of our graduating seniors having an offer to play in college.
- c. “I (meaning the parent) need to fight for my kid” or “I don’t like what I see, so ....” – your kids are part of the Epic family and we will continuously do what’s best for them. The more a parent ‘fights for them’ the more they cause disruptions and the more they teach their child, “it’s not your fault, don’t worry daddy will fix it”
- d. Beware the water cooler talk (or bleacher talk).

### IV. Summary

- a. Parents, you set the **tone** of the team. You set the **atmosphere** of the club. You are an **integral** part of everything we do. This is your club, make it a club to be proud of.

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