



How can I help my child prepare for tryouts or an evaluation?

The best thing you can do is TALK to your child about tryouts prior to their tryouts or evaluation! This can be done days prior to the event, or the day of the event, depending on how your child processes information. How does your child digest information? For example, does he/she take time to process information and then come back with questions and with time is ready for an in- depth discussion? Or, is he/she able to take in information, digest it and discuss it immediately? Everyone is a bit different, so make sure you have thought about when a good time to have a meaningful discussion with your child would be.

Ask your child how **he/she** is feeling about the upcoming tryout or evaluation. Players will respond differently to this question: some players will act like tryouts don't bother him/her at all, and other players will have some anxiety around the event. With either response, it is important to reassure them that being anxious and nervous are very normal feelings to be having. If your child is letting you know that they are feeling some anxiety, please put them at ease by helping them explore those feelings. Some good questions to ask are:

- Why are you nervous or anxious?
- How can you, as the player, best prepare for the tryout or evaluation?
- What results are you hoping for?

Most likely your daughter or son is feeling nervous and anxious because he/she wants to perform his/her best and make a certain team. Players want to make certain teams for different reasons including:

- Being on the most competitive team in the club
- They like the coach
- They want to play with their friends
- They want to attend college showcases and this team is scheduled to attend these events

Whatever your child's reason is for wanting to make a specific team, please discuss the outcomes that could occur as a result of the tryout and what that might mean to your child. Discuss the positives that will occur if they make the team they desire as well as the positives that will occur if they don't. There are positives to any team they are placed on – help them see this. **Players will often follow the lead of how their parent feels and acts about team placement.**

One thing that is important to discuss about any type of evaluation process, (whether it be sport or something else), is to discuss what success means to you and your family. Success can be defined in many different ways... it doesn't always mean being the best at everything. Success can mean showing up and doing **your** best. In truth, that is all anyone can ask of you. **When we are conducting an evaluation, we are looking to place children on a team where they can experience the most success as an athlete and a person.** Being placed on the top team is not always the best placement for an athlete in order for them to experience success and grow. Pushing and stretching athletes to compete at a level he/she is not ready for often ends up to be a negative experience. This is not the ideal circumstance for anyone. We strive to place players on teams where individual growth and



development can occur in a positive, uplifting way. We look to place players on teams where they can be their best.

Have a conversation of what it means to control the controllable. First, in a tryout or evaluation situation, all you can control is yourself. And secondly, you are in control of your effort and attitude. In a tryout or evaluation, these two things are extremely important! Help your son or daughter to remember to focus on what he/she can control.

- Effort: what does effort look and feel like?
- Attitude: what does a good attitude look like? Perhaps role play this if you are unsure they understand what a good attitude looks like vs. a poor attitude.
- Arrival time: arrive early so your child can get a feel of the environment. Your athlete can start getting mentally and physically ready for their evaluation with time to think instead of being rushed and anxious because of the worry about being late.
- Being prepared: do you have all things necessary for the evaluation - cleats, shin guards, comfortable shorts and shirt, water bottle, socks?

Tips for tryout day:

- Arrive a little early
- Be prepared to be your best
- Be focused
- Be intentional
- Be engaged
- Ask questions if you are unsure of something
- Give 100% effort
- Be positive and encouraging to others
- HAVE FUN