

# Business Tips

## Educating Your Parents-Part II

Last month, in Part I, I presented the case that it is well-known that team parents tend to under appreciate the benefits we gymnastics professionals provide for their children; and it is also well-known that team parents can sometimes be 'less than skillful' when dealing with their child/athlete; and that since these behaviors and their negative consequences are foreseeable, that a wise leader will take action in advance to minimize the potential difficulties brought about by these behaviors. Below is the outline I follow when speaking with new parents about what to expect of their child's sports participation at Kids First.

### I Parent Meeting

- A. We fully discuss the Kids First Mission (why we are in business) and how this grand purpose applies to the team program.
- B. We fully discuss our 7 Unifying Principles, the nonnegotiable principles describing how we-you, me, everyone-deal with one another.
- C. We detail our 11 Teaching Principles so the parents understand why we teach the way we do.
- D. We present the 15 Parent Red Flags-overt parent behaviors which can have negative implications for their child. Parents, do you...
  1. Find yourself telling others that you are not a pushy parent?
  2. Feel frustration or anger after a poor practice or performance by your child?
  3. Feel embarrassment or want to avoid other parents after a poor performance by your child?
  4. Not knowing what to say to your child after a poor performance?
  5. Get involved with your child's goals? (different from teaching the skill of goal setting)
  6. Motivate your child to perform with rewards?
  7. Feel jealousy of athletes or parents of athletes who outperform your child?
  8. Secretly want to deny another athlete his/her glory?
  9. Find yourself making excuses for your child's performance by blaming illness, injury, grouping, the coach, the program?
  10. Find yourself 'ranking' your child in the group?
  11. Want your child to be placed in another training group or level?
  12. Find that your support of the coach or program goes up and down relative to your child's performance ups and downs?
  13. Find yourself stating that "you always support the coaches/company/program."
  14. Feel compelled to watch practice or want to know everything that goes on in your child's training?
  15. Offer coaching hints to your child?
- E. We discuss what 'responsibility' means to you and your child?
- F. We discuss what 'success' means to you and your child?

Hope this helps in your quest for a better program. Make it a great month!

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