

Following are several articles by Wayne Goldsmith and Helen Morris relating to **Parenting and Sport**  
Take the time to consider .. if you constantly think “but” - it’s a worry, and it certainly should not be your first response

## Gold Medal Kids .... Gold Medal Parents (Part 1)

By Wayne Goldsmith [www.sportscoachingbrain.com](http://www.sportscoachingbrain.com)



- So you believe your child will be the next big thing in the **Big Leagues**?
- So you think it is inevitable that your child will win an **Olympic Gold Medal** one day?
- So you are a 100% certain that your little girl will be the next **Nadia Comaneci**?  
(first gymnast to score 10/10 in Olympic Competition .. 1976, Montreal)

### Gold Medal Kids need Gold Medal Parents.

Are you up to the challenge?

So what type of **sporting parent** are you?

#### 1. The “Been There Myself” Sporting Parent

- Typical behaviour** - Talks about how they did it in the old days. Tries to get children to train and compete the way they did when they were training and competing.
- Positives** - Knows and understands sport, coaching, training. Has an empathy with their children and what they are going through.
- Negatives** - Applies methods that were successful in their sporting careers to their kids. These methods are possibly outdated and may even be counter productive. May also try to live out unfulfilled sporting dreams through their child’s sporting career.

#### 2. The “Chance to Make a Million” Sporting Parent

- Typical behaviour** - Seen at tennis, golf and football training sessions and games.
- Positives** - If the child is successful, their financial security is assured. May take a very professional and thorough approach to their child’s sporting development.
- Negatives** - High pressure environment - long term psychological consequences if the child doesn’t make it - very few sports people can actually make a living out of sport.

#### 3. The “Over-Protective” Sporting Parent

- Typical behaviour** - Packs child’s sports bag for training and practice. Carries the bag into training. Would probably do their child’s homework if they could get away with it .. (some do).
- Positives** - Child feels supported, loved, nurtured and cared for.
- Negatives** - Child does not get the opportunity to develop independent, self-motivating characteristics.

#### 4. The “Ugly” Sporting Parent

- Typical behaviour** - Yelling, screaming and verbally abusing children, coaches, umpires and coaches at sporting arenas all over the world on Saturday afternoons.
- Positives** - None
- Negatives** - High pressure - equates child’s sports performance with child’s (or self’s) character. Child learns that unless they are successful, parent’s approval will not be forthcoming. Child feels embarrassed about parent’s behaviour.  
High level of emotion may lead to poor decisions being made under pressure situations.

#### 5. The “Drop you off, do my shopping while you play” Sporting Parent also called the “Sports as a Babysitter” Sporting Parent)

- Typical behaviour** - Leaves kids at training and practice while parent goes shopping or elsewhere.
- Positives** - Allows child to develop independence with limited pressure.
- Negatives** - No interest in child’s sporting development, child may resort to extreme behaviours to get attention.

### Parenting and Sport

NWA will add **Gold Medal Kids .. Gold Medal Parents Part 3**, when available  
Extra

### Helping Your Child Achieve in Sport - Fifty Things You Can Do

Wayne and Helen Goldsmith

## Sport and Parenting - GOLD MEDAL PARENTING (Part 2)

By Wayne Goldsmith [www.sportscoachingbrain.com](http://www.sportscoachingbrain.com)

In Part One of this article (NWA Newsletter 25-08) Wayne looked at different types of Sporting Parents.

Here are a few more.....see if you recognise anyone you know.

### 6. The “My Child is Better Than Yours” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Starts every sentence with their child’s name and their child’s sporting achievements.

**Positives** - None

**Negatives** - Puts unnecessary pressure on the child. Puts strains on the child’s relationships with other athletes and team mates.

### 7. The “Coach my Own Child” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Sets additional training for their child. Often found writing down details of their child’s workout set by the coach, so they can repeat them at home.

**Positives** - High level of interest in child’s sports career.

**Negatives** - High pressure, parents generally unable to be objective about key sporting career decisions. Kids may not get much needed rest and recovery time between training sessions and games.

### 8. The “more interest in other kids than my own kids” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Talks to other sporting parents about what their children are doing, how much training they do, what they eat, ....

**Positives** - Seen to be a team player.

**Negatives** - Comparison with own child may be counter productive.

### 9. The “my child is the greatest athlete in the world” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Praises their child excessively for every achievement - usually in front of other less successful athletes. Invariably blames other people for any failures.

**Positives** - Unconditional support of the child.

**Negatives** - High level of expectations and pressures on the child -long term issues with confidence and self-esteem.

### 10. The “I gave up my life for you” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Seen berating child after every training session and competition about all the time they waste taking kids to training and games. Also known as the “guilt” parent.

**Positives** - Supporting of child’s sporting career.

**Negatives**- Pressures and guilt if the child wants to retire or change sports. Child scared of negatives rather than inspired by positives.

### 11. The “I know more than the coach” Sporting Parent

**Typical behaviour** - Undermines coach’s decisions and training methods in front of their child.

**Positives** - None.

**Negatives** - Undermines the child’s faith in their coach which may inturn lead to disciplinary issues between coach and athlete.

So if we all know the types of sporting parents we DON’T want to be and we all know the types of sporting parents we DON’T want to work with - what types of sporting parents are great sporting parents?

# Helping Your Child Achieve in Sport - Fifty Things You Can Do

By Wayne Goldsmith & Helen Morris [www.sportscoachingbrain.com](http://www.sportscoachingbrain.com)

**Fifty (50) tips for parents of young athletes, to help them get the most out of their chosen sport.**

1. Love them unconditionally.
  2. Support their coach.
  3. Accept that they can not win every time they compete.
  4. Allow them to be a kid and to have fun.
  5. Help them to develop as a person with character and values.
  6. Turn off as a sporting parent. Don't make sport the one and only topic of conversation at the dinner table, in the car, etc.
  7. Don't introduce your child as "This is my son the swimmer or Rugby player" –  
their sport is just something they do – it does not define them.
  8. Don't do everything for them. Teach them responsibility and self management.
  9. Reward frequently for success and effort but make them small, simple, practical, and personal things.  
Kids don't need a CD or \$20 just for playing sport.
  10. Best of all reward them with what they really love.....your time!
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11. Be calm, relaxed and dignified at competitions and games.
  12. Accept that progress in any sport takes a long time: it takes at least 7 – 10 years **after** maturation in most sports for any athlete to achieve their full potential.
  13. Believe it or not, kids can learn to pack and unpack their training bag, clean their own training and competition clothes, fill their own water bottle – teach them and encourage them to take control over their own sporting careers. A little manual work and helping out with household chores are important lessons in developing independence.
  14. **Don't reward champion performances (any performances) with junk food!**
  15. Skills and attitude are the important things. Don't waste money buying kids the latest and greatest equipment and hope to buy a short cut to success.
  16. Encourage the same commitment and passion for school and study as you do for sport.
  17. Avoid relying on "sports foods" or "sports supplements" – focus on a sensible, balanced diet which includes a variety of wholesome, healthy foods.
  18. Allow your kids to try many sports and activities.
  19. **Don't specialize too early!!!** There is no such thing as a champion ten year old winger or opening bowler or halfback.
  20. Junk food is OK occasionally. Don't worry about it.
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21. Praise qualities like effort, trying hard, attempting new skills, the execution of a new skill in a game and similar values rather than winning.
  22. Love them unconditionally (worth repeating).
  23. Have your "guilt gland" removed. This will help you avoid phrases like "*I've got better things to do with my time*" and "*Do you realize how much I have had to give up for you to play football*". Everyone loses when you play the guilt game.
  24. Encourage activities which build broad, general movement skills like running, catching, throwing, balancing, agility, balance, co-ordination, speed and rhythm. These general skills can then have a positive impact on all sports.
  25. Encourage the occasional "down time". No school or sport – just time to be kids!
  26. Encourage relationships and friendships away from training, competition and school work –  
it's all about balance.
  27. Help and support your child to achieve the goals they set, then take time to relax and celebrate and enjoy their achievement as a family.
  28. **Never** use training or sport as a punishment i.e. more laps / more training.
  29. Do a family fitness class, yoga or martial arts or another sport unrelated to their main sport. Everyone benefits.
  30. Car pool! Get to know the other kids and families in your child's team, then in turn, you can allow your child to be more independent by doing things with other (trusted) adults.

31. Attend training regularly to show you are interested in your child's effort and the process rather than just the win / loss of the outcome.
  32. Help raise money for the team, club and kids: even if your own child is not involved in the target of the fund-raising.
  33. Tell your kids you are proud of them for being involved in a healthy activity .. (often).
  34. Volunteer your time to be on the committee.
  35. Volunteer your time to help out at training and competition **but** .....try not to work directly with your own child. This helps teach your kids the importance of "team" where working together and supporting each other are important attributes.
  36. Even if you were an athlete or a player, and even if you are a trained coach, resist the temptation to coach your own child. It rarely, if ever, works.
  37. Be aware that your child's passion for a particular sport may change.
  38. Also be aware however that **skills learnt in one sport can often transfer to another sport**.
  39. Accept flat spots. Times when your child does not improve. During these times encourage participation for fun, focus on learning skills and help them develop perseverance and patience – two life skills that will help them throughout their lives.
  40. Believe it or not, Australian kids are unlikely to die from drinking tap water.
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41. Cheer for your child appropriately. Don't embarrass yourself or them.
  42. Make sure each week includes some designated family time, where you do family things and talk about family issues, not about sport.
  43. Take a strong stand against smoking and drug use (both recreational and performance enhancing).
  44. Set an example with sensible, responsible alcohol use when your kids are around.
  45. Don't look for short cuts like "miracle sports drinks" or "super supplements" success in sport comes from consistently practicing skills and developing an attitude where the love of sport and physical fitness are the real "magic".
  46. If one of your kids is a sporting champion and the other kids in the family are not so gifted, ensure you have just as much time, energy and enthusiasm for whatever they are doing.
  47. Eliminate the use of the phrase "well what we did when I was playing".
  48. Encourage your kids to find strong role models but try not to let this decision to be based on sporting ability only. Look for role models who consistently demonstrate integrity, humility, honesty and the ability to take responsibility for their own actions.
  49. Encourage them to learn the qualities of leadership and concepts like sharing, selflessness, team work and generosity – sport teaches life lessons.
  50. **Don't compare the achievements of your kids to any other kids** – good or bad. It only creates barriers and resentments between young people and the world can do without more of that!

**Wayne Goldsmith and Helen Morris**

**No one can ever make you feel inferior ... without your consent**