

How parents can prepare for Tryouts by Dean Holden

The below blog was originally written by Ice Hockey coach Dean Holden. A lot of his writing is very relevant across all sports and this piece in particular can be adapted to soccer as we come into that time of Trials and Grading at the club. If any parents would like to discuss the process further please feel free to get in touch.

Rick

All players work extremely hard to make the team during tryout season. They place enough pressure on themselves and can feel it coming from everyone around them. Tryouts can be an exciting and stressful time for players, parents and coaches as they all want to make the correct decision with a limited amount of time to do so. To help alleviate some of the pressure your child may be feeling and allow them to have the best tryout possible, here are some tips for parents to remember during this time of year.

Stay relaxed

Whether you realize it or not, your body language, what you say and how you say it can greatly influence a kid. If you are visibly stressed, your child could feel extra pressure to perform well on the ice and not disappoint you.

Help your child prepare

Don't do it all by yourself – kids need to learn responsibility – but be a helping hand before leaving for the rink (*soccer club*). Whether making a meal or helping to pack their equipment, being there to help support your child can ease their mind and help them focus on getting mentally prepared for the tryout. Doing this will make it one less thing the player has to worry about.

Keep things in perspective

This isn't the only team in town and if your child doesn't make the team they want, it doesn't mean they can't play hockey (*soccer*) this season. Focus on the positives and improvements that have been made since last year and know that these skills will continue to develop. Nobody is mad that you didn't make the team, instead quickly refocus on the new opportunities in front of you.

Don't compare your child to other players

No two players are the same, and comparing your child to the best players on the team could hurt their development. Give more attention to what they do well. Not everyone can be the top scorer on the team – the other players are just as important. Wondering why your child isn't as skilled or doesn't play more than another kid only hurts the experience of watching them play sports.

Feedback

If you have any questions about your child's development or something that happened on the ice (*pitch*), wait until after tryouts to approach the coaching staff. Leave the teaching to them

but you are allowed to ask them things in a calm manner. Ask how your kid can improve or what the coaches are looking for on the roster.

Additionally, be constructive and positive when speaking to your child after tryouts. If they made a mistake, they will learn from it. Their skills will only get better as time goes on.

Bring the right attitude

Encourage your child to do the best they can and to learn as much as possible. Always stay positive and remember that this is never the end of the road. If a child isn't having fun, they won't want to keep playing hockey (*soccer*) and nobody wants that. Your actions can have a great impact on how your kid views the sport.