

# Five Tips for Positive Parenting



# Preamble

The following resource for parents has been developed by Fiona McCarthy on behalf of the NSW Office of Sport, as a key initiative of the NSW Government's Future Champions strategy.

For more information on Future Champions, please visit [www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/parents-guardians-and-carers](http://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/parents-guardians-and-carers)

## Getting to know the author

Fiona McCarthy is a psychologist who owns and operates Mind and Body Balance, a business she set up 25 years ago. Fiona is a registered psychologist, specialising in the area of sport and performance psychology. She is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the Australian College of Sport and Exercise Psychologists.

Fiona lives in Newcastle NSW and is the Hunter Academy of Sport, Sport Psychology Consultant and a New South Wales Institute of Sport, Sport Psychology Service

Provider. Over the last twenty-five years, Fiona has assisted many local, state and national teams, athletes, coaches and parents in the areas of confidence, concentration, handling pressure, motivation, goal setting, time management, performance preparation and general well-being. She has worked with numerous sports assisting recreational level athletes to professional, international, Olympic and Paralympic level athletes.

Fiona recognises the valuable contribution parents make to their child's sporting pursuits. She

believes that parents want the best for their child and hopes that these resources provide parents with the skills needed to be the best sporting parent they can be so that they can best guide and support their child at all ages and stages of their sports journey.

These resources aim to provide parents with the support, encouragement and skills/tools required to assist their child(ren) in reaching their sporting potential in an environment that promotes fun, connection, success and positive well-being.

## Introduction

Parents play a vital role in sport and provide valuable contributions to the sporting community. As parents, we all want to support our children as best we can and see them enjoying their sport.

The following resource aims to empower parents and guide them in playing the best role they can in their child(ren)'s sporting pursuits. Parents are role models to their children and sport is a valuable vehicle to teach life lessons.

As a parent, have you ever wondered how to best help your child deal with success and disappointment? Or what to say to them when their nerves take over and they feel pressure to perform.

Do you find yourself rushing from sport to sport, child to child and not having much time to enjoy watching them play?

Have you ever wondered whether your child is doing too much sport?

How do you help your child believe in themselves and be confident with their sporting pursuits, rather than worried about other competitors or results?

This resource will help parents find the answers to these very common questions and much more.

They will provide parents with information and practical tools and tips to ensure they play their role as a parent to the best of their ability in order to allow their child to enjoy their sport and assist them in reaching their full potential in sport and life.

# Five tips to positive parenting:

## Listen to your child.

Get their point of view and be willing to see things from their perspective. Being able to actually listen to what your child is trying to tell you is fundamental.

Let your child tell you which sport they enjoy and wish to participate in. Allow them the opportunity to determine when and whether they wish to engage in competitive or recreation sport.

Regularly take time out to listen to what your child is trying to tell you. They are the ones who are actually competing and training for the sport.

## Let the coach do the coaching.

Try to understand things from the coach's perspective and respect the decision being made for the betterment of the whole team/squad and your child.

Remember the coach is a coach because he/she knows how to coach!

It is however important that if required, you can talk with the coach on how your child is progressing and ask your child if they are happy with the coaching atmosphere.

## Open Positive Communication.

Always try to engage in open, honest, positive two-way communication with your child, both verbally and non-verbally.

Communication between parents, athlete and coach needs to be positive, open, effective and consistent.

## Know.

It is important to know what your child's goals are so you can support them in their goals and not get them confused with the goals you have for them.

This is their journey.

As parents it is vital that you know exactly what your child wants out of sport.

Also know the true reasons for your child's participation in sport.

## Be there.

Being present, positive, and supportive for your child can help contribute to their happiness and success in sport and life.

It is a privilege to be able to watch our children play sport and we must always remember that we need to be their safe place to fall and grow.

Remind them that they have time to reach their goals and to look up, enjoy the opportunities they have and to be in the moment. One step at a time.

Parents need to be available for their child. Parents should provide support, encouragement, and positive recognition whether their child has won or lost.

The most important information parents can give their children is the importance to strive to succeed and to have fun, make friends and enjoy the experience of participating in sport.

Sport is designed to provide opportunities and experiences for all involved to strive to achieve personal bests, challenge oneself and to have fun. As parents let's nurture this and support our children to be the best version of themselves through sport.

Be a positive mirror for your child.

Treat your child at home and in front of their sporting friends how you would like to be treated when at home and in front of your friends.

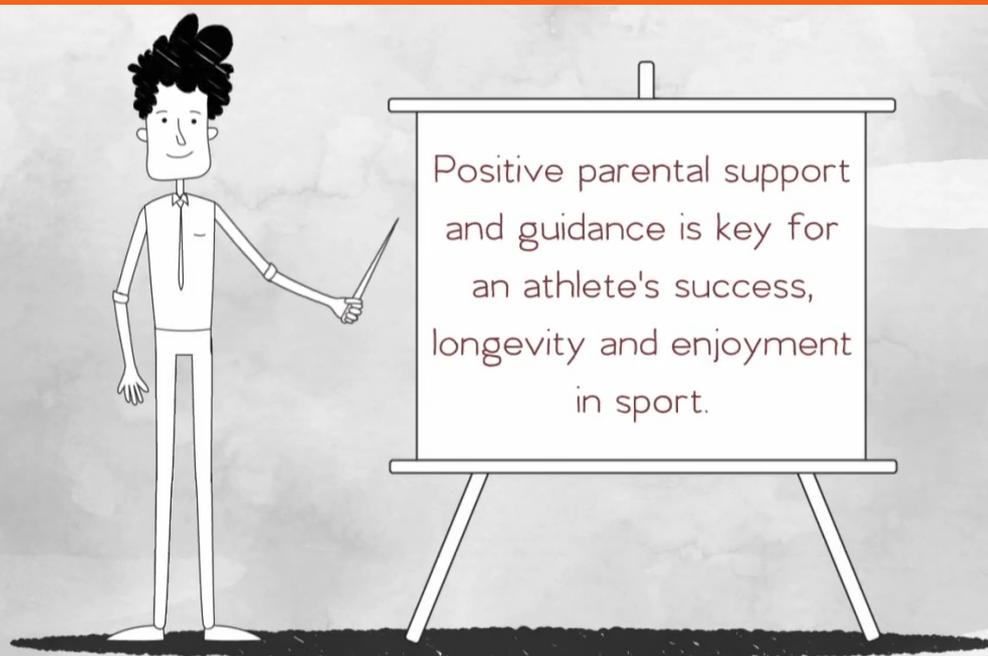
Sport is designed to provide opportunities for athletes to strive to achieve personal bests and to have **FUN**, so why not keep it that way!



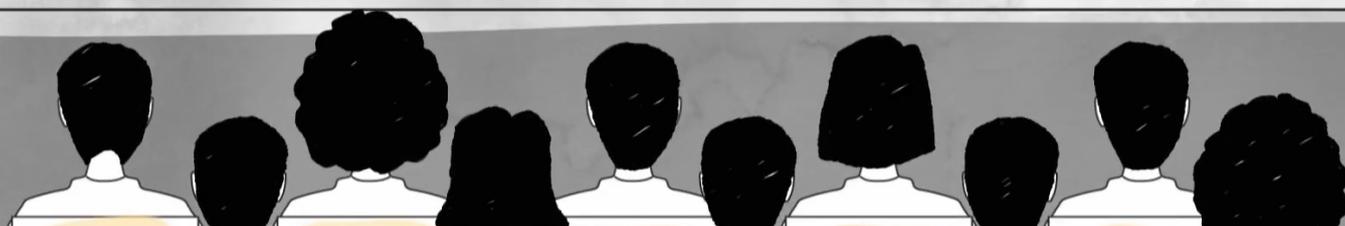
# We hope you enjoyed our tips!

You might like to check out our animated video, ABCs for Parenting on the NSW Office of Sport website.

Go to <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/parents-guardians-and-carers> to access this video and other parenting resources on offer by the NSW Office of Sport.



Positive parental support and guidance is key for an athlete's success, longevity and enjoyment in sport.



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