

How Would You Address a Demeaning Soccer Coach?

FEATURED RESPONSE

What Would You Do?

At your daughter's high school game one of your fellow parents is more and more loudly contesting the umpire's balls and strikes calls. Do you do anything, and if so, what?

I would move over by him so I could talk to him where not everyone could hear me and I would tell him that the umpire appeared to me to be calling the same strike zone for the opposing team as he was for our team. I would also tell him that the umpire was closer and in a better position to call the pitches than we are. I would also tell him that the umpire works hard to call a softball game and he doesn't need us yelling and hollering at him that he is out there for the girls to give them a good game. If the parent still persisted I would then ask him if he has ever called a game and tell him that we are always looking for good blues and let him know how he can become an umpire.



What Would You Do?

Responsible Sports Scenario Question

Responsible Sports Scenario Question

"Your daughter's friends are all playing on a travel team whose coach has a bad reputation for demeaning kids, despite winning many tournaments. How would you handle this situation?"

Sound familiar? Hopefully not! This one question actually raises many more...

- Is the "bad reputation" warranted? Should and how would you confirm?
- Do you discourage her from trying out? If so, how do you explain this to your daughter?
- Do you talk to the parents of your daughter's friends on the team?
- Is winning the most important factor for your child?
- Is a travel team right for your child?

All of these questions and more were addressed by Responsible Sports Community peers, including youth soccer parents and coaches, in their responses to last week's Responsible Sports Scenario Question at ResponsibleSports.com.

[Check out the responses!](#) >>

As indicated in many of the posted responses, it may require tough conversations to address this issue – with your child and with the coach. When it comes to your child, it's important to discuss your goals for playing. You may be surprised to find that your goals for them and their own goals are actually very similar! As for the coach, approaching them can sometimes be a difficult and intimidating task. Responsible Sports features resources to support both of these conversations.

We ultimately want our children to get the most out of their youth soccer experience. We want them to improve and excel on the field and learn "life lessons" that playing soccer, and other sports, uniquely can provide.

Determining Goals for Our Kids in Sports

The life lessons portion of Responsible Sport Parenting starts with getting on the same page with our kids. A great time to do this is at the beginning of the soccer season, when you can establish and set goals for the season. Ask them:

- Why do you want to play youth sports?
- Why do you want to participate?

Those answers, your child's and your own, are a great way to establish common ground for conversations that will help get you and your child off to a great start for tackling issues that may come up throughout the season. It's important to recognize where you and your child agree and differ and factor those in when talking.

[Sample exercises and goal-setting suggestions](#) are available in the Responsible Sport Parenting coursework. ▶▶

Building Effective Parent/Coach Partnerships

Youth soccer has no place for a coach who verbally or physically intimidates athletes. You would never allow a teacher to bully or humiliate a student, and you must not allow it from a coach, even one who often gets a pass due to scoreboard success. Meeting the coach early in the season and establishing a positive relationship will make conversation easier if a problem like the one in the scenario question arises during the season.

Here are some additional pointers:

- Observe a “cooling off” period.
- Prepare for the conversation.
- Pick a time and place where only the coach can hear you.
- Have specific examples.
- Listen to what the coach says in reply.

The [Responsible Conversation: Parent & Coach](#) section in the Responsible Sport Parenting coursework goes into more depth on these pointers and provides even more tips and resources, including a downloadable PDF, Parent & Coach Intervention Strategies, for reference. ▶▶

This one weekly scenario question brought up several interesting youth sports discussion topics. Thanks to the many responses from members of the Responsible Sports Community and the advice and resources in the Responsible Sport Parenting coursework, powered by Positive Coaching Alliance, we hope you are now more prepared to address similar situations, should you encounter them in the future. Together as a community and with your help, we believe we can ensure a safe, positive, character-building youth softball experience for our kids.

- Take a moment to provide your perspective on this week's scenario question. ▶▶
- Have an issue for consideration as a future scenario question or “Ask the Expert” feature on ResponsibleSports.com? [Submit a scenario question](#) today! ▶▶