

## Parent Orientation Program Agenda

### Introductions (10 minutes)

Introduce yourself and any assistant coaches. Give a little background about yourself: why you're coaching, your experience in the sport, what you do for a living. Let parents know what qualifies you to coach and why they should trust you in taking responsibility for their sons or daughters. Have your assistant coaches describe their responsibilities to help parents get to know their roles and feel comfortable with them.

### Coaching philosophy (10 minutes)

Present a brief review of your coaching philosophy and refer parents to that section of the player handbook. You might want to reread part I of this book to prepare. Be sure to discuss at least the following points:

- The benefits their athletes are likely to derive from participation in the sport
- The methods you use to teach skills (you might describe a typical practice)
- The emphasis you give to winning; having fun; and helping athletes develop physically, psychologically, and socially

### Demonstration (10-20 minutes)

Parents may not know much yet about your sport. To help them understand and appreciate it, give a demonstration and explanation of the skills, scoring, and rules. Use the entire team or select a few players to assist you in the demonstration. Pitch the demonstration at a level that is appropriate for the knowledge of your parents. If you cannot arrange a demonstration, perhaps you can locate a good film or video. The demonstration is an opportune time to discuss the equipment for your sport. Emphasize safety when discussing equipment and the rules, and don't forget to mention the role of the referee in ensuring athletes' safety.

### Potential risks (10 minutes)

Be sure parents know the potential risks of participating in your sport. No one likes to hear about injuries, but it is your duty to inform parents of the inherent risks. They must make informed decisions about their children's participation. Be sure to be specific about the dangers of your sport. Keep your discussion upbeat by telling parents what precautions you take to minimize the risk of injury (see chapter 20).

### Specifics of your program (15 minutes)

Now you are ready to describe the specific program you will be conducting. Following are some things parents will want to know. You may think of others.

- How much time will their sons or daughters be with you?
- How often and when does the team practice?

(continued) 



- How long is the season?
- How many contests will there be?
- How do you decide who plays and who doesn't?
- How frequently does the team travel, and who pays the expenses?
- What equipment does each athlete need to purchase?
- Where is equipment available, and how much does it cost?
- What insurance requirements are there, if any?
- How do parents communicate with you or your assistants?
- Are medical examinations necessary for the players to compete?
- Who decides when an athlete is ready to play after an injury?
- Are there special instructions for pregame meals?
- What can parents do at home to facilitate the child's physical development or learning of sport skills?

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### Player policies (15 minutes)

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**Refer parents to the player handbook and review your team policies. Invite questions from both players and parents.**

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### Parent policies (15 minutes)

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**You may want to provide parents with a set of policies regarding what you expect of them. Here are some examples:**

- Be supportive of your child's participation on the team, but don't pressure your child.
- Keep winning in perspective, and help your child do the same.
- Help your child set realistic performance goals.
- Help your child meet his or her responsibilities to the team and the coach.
- Inform the coach of any medical or physical ailments that your child may have that may affect performance or health.

**Provide parents with guidelines for their behavior during practices and contests. See the miniposter for an example.**

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### Question-and-answer session (15-18 minutes)

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**Throughout the program invite parents to ask questions. If sufficient time remains at the end of the program, invite parents to ask any other questions they may have.**

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### Closing comments (2 minutes)

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**Thank the parents and players for attending and ask for their cooperation and commitment during the forthcoming season.**



## Parent Guidelines

**Remain in the spectator area.**

**Let the coach be the coach.**

**Provide only supportive comments  
to coaches, officials, and  
players of both teams.**

**Avoid any derogatory comments.**

**Do not coach your son or daughter  
during the contest.**

**Do not drink alcohol at practices  
or contests or come  
having drunk too much.**

**Cheer for your team.**

**Show interest, enthusiasm,  
and support for your child.**

**Be in control of your emotions.**

**Help when asked  
by coaches or officials.**

