



Kids Speak Out

While I was evaluating players at an Advanced 16 tryout session last week I noticed a woman who was pacing the length of the rink behind us. It was apparent that when her son was on the ice she was moving back and forth following the play occasionally stopping to focus in on the action. She was obviously very nervous and anxious about every shift her son took. I suspect she was exhausted by the end of the session. In the same week I received an email from an NHL coach who recently watched some bantam and pee wee games in Minnesota. He commented that the parents at one bantam game nearly came to blows in the stands and at a couple pee wee games the parent behavior was so bad that most should have been removed from the building. He was appalled by the parents at the games.

While watching my son play lacrosse last summer a parent of one player was running the sidelines shouting instructions to the players. During a break in the action I asked him if he played lacrosse growing up and he replied that he did not. My next question was “why are you yelling instructions to the boys?” He said because he felt that he was telling them what the coach wanted them to do and since he was closer to the players on that side of the field he was helping out. My next question was, “What if it is not what the coach wants them to do?” To that he had no answer. I then commented that my rule is never to say anything out loud that might embarrass my son or his teammates. After thinking about what he was doing for a few minutes he spent the rest of the summer quietly enjoying the games. Sometimes parents get caught up in games and react without thinking about the consequences.

The Minnesota State High School League surveys 5,000 student athletes every 4 years on a wide variety of issues related to high school sports. The results are interesting and speak for themselves. The entire survey is located on the MSHSL website along with quite a bit of other valuable information. www.mshsl.org

Here are the results of two questions in the survey as they apply to parent involvement in sports.

7. Rank the *THREE* things that you appreciate ***MOST*** about your parents' attitudes toward your participation in athletics.

4105 (#1 – 27%)

A. They encourage me

1076

B. They don't push me

3177 (#2 – 21%)

C. They attend most of my games

