

# **PARENT BOOK**

## **National Junior Basketball: Parent Guidelines for a Successful Season**

**"If a kid can't have fun playin' ball, then what's the point of playin'?"**

-Quote from a 75-year-old great grandpa, concerned organized sports are taking the joy and spontaneity out of youth sports.

### **The Power of Youth Sports**

Research shows that the longer kids stay in sports, the more likely they are to boost their self-esteem, to stay in school, to get better grades, to stay out of trouble, and to show better behaviors. Accordingly, National Junior Basketball wants to do everything possible to attract kids to the wonderful world of playing basketball, and most importantly, to get the kids to "come back next year", and to keep playing basketball throughout their childhood. NJB will be successful; not in terms of win-loss records, but in terms of whether the kids keep coming back! Recent surveys back up the wisdom in the quote of the great grandpa noted above, showing that the number one reason why kids play sports at a recreational level is to have **FUN!** Surveys also show that one of the major reasons why kids continue to play youth sports is positive parent support. So, just as the main goal of NJB is to make sure the kids have fun, one of the other main goals is to ensure positive parent support. Both for the program and the kids. Parents - do everything you can to make NJB a fun experience for your kids, while staying positive with them as they experience the wonderful world of NJB.



### **National Junior Basketball Headquarters**

**721 E Ball Rd Suite #101  
Anaheim, CA 92805**

**Office Phone: (714) 765-6567**

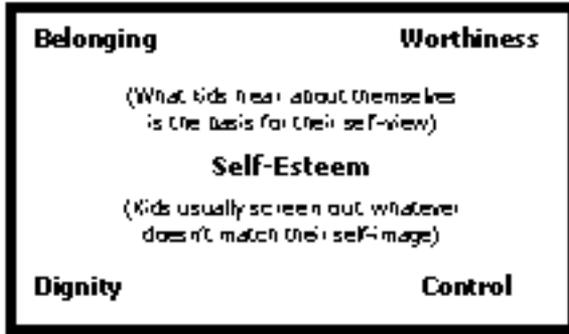
**Fax: (714) 765-6576**

**Email: [info@njbl.org](mailto:info@njbl.org)**

**Web Site: [www.njbl.org](http://www.njbl.org)**

## **NJB: A Place and Time for Building Self-Esteem**

NJB Basketball is a great opportunity for parents to help their kids to develop a strong sense of self-esteem. Think about it. Research tells us that there are four cornerstones to the development of self-esteem:



A sense of **BELONGING**, a sense of feeling **WORTHWHILE** as a person, regardless of looks, talent, wealth, etc.; a sense of **DIGNITY**, being treated with respect, without humiliation, sarcasm, etc.; and a sense of being in **CONTROL** of one's environment, future, destiny, etc. NJB contributes to each of these cornerstones. There's nothing quite like having a team uniform, a team name, and a team identity to give a kid a strong sense of **belonging**. In my early days of coaching, I had one kid sleep in his uniform the first day he got it. I had another say, *"I'm on a team, and I've got a uniform, now I'm a real person!"* As for feeling **worthwhile** as a person, NJB guarantees that **everybody plays**, regardless of skills. Every player is guaranteed, by the rules, to play at least two periods. A sense of **dignity** is also maintained because the emphasis is on positive coaching, with no public humiliation of players through sarcastic remarks, put-downs, etc. And finally, a sense of control begins to develop through NJB as the youngsters develop a sense of confidence and control (by learning how to shoot, pass, dribble, etc.), and learning the basic playing rules, and how to be in control of their emotions as they interact with other kids, taking turns, playing as a team and learning how to win and lose.

## **PARENT GUIDELINES**

The few months of NJB life can be a great opportunity for building some positive memories for kids, and for families. Here are some guidelines to help parents stay focused on giving their kids positive support during the NJB season.

Think of the phrase: "**A-N N-J-B P-A-R-E-N-T**"

**A**lways look for "Positives".  
**N**otice specifics when you praise.  
  
**N**ote any and all progress.  
**J**ust have FUN!  
**B**e enthusiastic when you praise.  
  
**P**ut yourself in their shoes. Empathize.  
**A**lways be a role model.  
**R**emember to promote team spirit.  
**E**xpect only what is reasonable.  
**N**ever criticize in public.  
**T**hink "Process", not "End Product".

### **Always look for "Positives"-----**

It is said that kids' self view is based upon what they **hear** about themselves from the adults in their lives, especially their parents. It makes sense, then, that we, as parents, make every effort to think of ways to communicate positives to our kids, and to make sure they hear those positives, on the court of off. The idea is to catch our kids doing well! Research shows that, in healthy families, there is a 4-to-1 ratio of positives to negatives. In other words, for every time we confront our kids for some negative behavior, there should be four instances of praise, compliments, and encouragement. Some days it may be difficult to do, but our goal is to look for, and find the positives.

### **Notice specifics when you praise-----**

While we're working on keeping a 4-to-1 ratio of positives to negatives, it is especially important to remember to praise specifics. We want our kids to hear positives about themselves. General, vague remarks such as "*good game*" or "*nice try*" are less likely to register than more specific remarks, which kids can visualize and

remember later on. Kids are much more likely to hear and to remember specific remarks such as "Hey, I was really impressed with your speed. You were really flying down court to get back on defense!" or "You're really getting good at your outlet passes!" or "That's the way to use the backboard on your lay-ups!"

### **Note any and all progress**-----

One of the reasons kids may get discouraged in basketball is because they don't see themselves as getting any better. They compare themselves to other kids and it stops being fun. As parents, we can help our kids focus on their **progress** in any of the three areas: *frequency, duration, or intensity*. **Frequency** is helping them notice that they're doing more often (used that backboard on lay-ups twice, hustled back on defense, dribbled with either hand, etc. two times compared to one time, last game). **Duration** is helping them notice that they're doing something for a longer time (used the backboard on lay-ups twice in a row; made two consecutive free throws; got two consecutive rebounds, etc.) **Intensity** is the amount of energy expended (diving after loose balls; lunging for a steal; hustling back on defense to cut off a fast break' cheering loudly for the team; etc.). With all these possibilities, no practice or game should go by with out us helping our kids to notice some progress. And remember, any progress, no matter how small, is still progress.

### **Just Have fun!**-----

When you think of the hurried pace of life today, and the pressure faced by our youth at increasingly earlier ages, it is all the more imperative that we keep NJB Basketball as a haven for fun and games. The pressure of growing up hits all too soon. We certainly don't want to add pressure in the area of recreational sports. Research shows that dedication to a sport wanes when it stops being fun. We have to remember to **keep fun in focus**. Kids learn better if they're having fun. And, if the have fun; they'll be back for more. We have to make sure our kids are able to laugh. We need to help them so that they don't take themselves too seriously when it comes youth sports. The same applies to us as parents. Besides, laughter is healthy. It reduces stress, it helps relax, and it enhances performance.

### **Be enthusiastic when you praise**-----

We want our kids to hear our positives. We increase the likelihood of being heard if we praise with lots of *enthusiasm*. Kids pay attention to noise. They like action, commotion, and emotion. So, when you praise them, we've got to make every effort to give them lots of applause, lots of "high fives", lots of cheering. Unfortunately, we often save our animated emotional reactions for negatives and

mistakes. We would do well to monitor our reactions, and keep our enthusiasm and animated responses for positives. Animated praise, coupled with *calm* reactions to mistakes, will help build confidence in our kids and allow them to acknowledge their mistakes, and learn from them.

**Put yourself in their shoes.** Empathize-----

Two of the cornerstones of self-esteem are a sense of feeling **worthwhile** and a sense of **dignity**. It is very difficult for children to feel worthwhile or respected if the adults in their world don't seem to want to take the time to see the world through the eyes of the child. As adults we sometimes forget what it is like to be a kid. It's very helpful to make a concerted effort to *see the world through the eyes of the kids* playing NJB.

The way we communicate with our kids, on the court or off, is important. We have to watch our nonverbal messages. We have to remember that an intimidating tone of voice, or threatening finger pointing can be devastating, especially to a fragile young kid at the entry level of NJB. Making comparisons to siblings ("*Your older sister was dribbling with either hand at you age.*" "*Your older brother knew how to "box out" underneath when he was your age.*", etc.) , only serves to destroy self esteem. *Listening* is essential. Listening, with eye contact, while your youngster talks about feelings connected with fears of making mistake, fears of getting hurt, fears of getting made fun of by other players, can bring you much closer. We've got to remember what NJB is all about for kids. At the entry level, it's about learning to play with other kids. It's about learning to take turns. At all levels, it's about having fun, learning new skills, handling mistakes, all the while, hopefully, being buoyed up by empathic parents.

**Always be a role model**-----

As parents, like it or not, our kids look to us as models for how to act when it comes to sports. If we want to teach them to have fun and to show good sportsmanship, we have to check our own behavior. The focus should be on *fun*, and the focus should be on the *kids* having fun. There is simply no place for parents who publicly challenge a coach about player time, strategy, etc.. There is no place for a parent who publicly berates a volunteer referee. There is no place for public "put-downs", sarcasm, or taunting at any recreational sports activity. These public displays of poor sportsmanship not only serve as poor examples, but they embarrass the kids, take away from the fun. We have to monitor our behaviors, and we have to monitor the other parents' behaviors as well, reminding everyone that the kids are watching. If we, as parents, have complaints about what is going on with our kids, we need to address our complaints in private, rationally, away from the kids. We'll get a lot more accomplished by calmly talking with the coach of Board of Directors than by yelling threats from the stands. Most parents are fine examples of good sportsmanship. It is important that they set the tone for that small percentage who "lose it".

## **Remember to promote team spirit-----**

The *team* concept really enhances a kid's sense of **belonging**. As parents, we can do a lot to promote team spirit with our kids. Attending the first team meeting at the beginning of the season, getting to know the other parents, getting to know the other kids, can really get the season off to a great start. Realistically, not all parents are going to blend together, but the atmosphere of togetherness sends a message to the kids. Parent can get actively involved with the coaches and team members, in coming up with nicknames for each player, and then cheering for each kid, by name, at the game. It's amazing what it does for kids when they hear another parent recognize them at the game, or at the supermarket. It takes special effort on the part of parents to get the kids to start thinking "we" instead of "me". Parents should discourage their kids from criticizing other kids on the team, and, of course, they should be aware of their own remarks about other kids. Singling out a different kid each week for a special positive recognition, so that each kid is recognized by the end of the season, also builds the sense of team spirit. Enthusiastic parent participation in team picnics, team pizza parties, team photos, etc., are all opportunities in building a sense of belonging among the kids on the team.

## **Expect only what is reasonable-----**

When it comes to youth sports, we must remind ourselves to be *realistic* in what we expect. Younger kids are usually anxious to please adults, and look to them for acknowledgment that they have met the adults' expectations. Likewise, they are easily disappointed in themselves if they don't meet those expectations. Keeping this in mind, it's important for us, as parents, to make sure that what we expect of our kid's is realistic, and within their ability to accomplish. Whether it's physical *coordination skills, attention span, motivation, or dedication*, we have to remember that we're dealing with kids. If a kid is shooting "air balls", it may be due to coordination skills at the early age, not because the kid is not trying. If a youngster has a hard time listening to the coach during time outs, it may be due to a short attention span, not because the kid doesn't like basketball. If a youngster isn't thrilled about shooting 100 free throws at home on the driveway basketball court, it may be because the youngster at this age is motivated by fun and action, not by dull, boring routine. We have to remind ourselves that the goal, especially at the entry level, is to make sure the kids associate basketball with having fun. If we're busy telling them how they're not living up to our expectations, it won't be much fun for them. The best rule of thumb is to praise your kids just for *par-*

icipation, regardless of their skills, attention span, motivation or dedication.

We also have to be realistic in terms of what we expect the coaches to achieve with our kids. A coach may or may not help kids to develop and hone their skills through organized practices and games. As parents, we can reinforce what the coach is teaching, by practicing the skills with our kids during the week, always in an atmosphere of fun and relaxation.

### **Never criticize in public**-----

Kids who play basketball will make mistakes. That's how they learn. One lesson that is hopefully learned in NJB is that it's okay to make a mistake. How do we teach our kids that's okay to make a mistake? The key is in our reaction to the mistake. If we yell, scream, humiliate, and publicly confront the kid when the mistake is made, the danger is that the kid may then become afraid of the reaction, and, out of fear, will avoid making any future mistakes by simply not trying. Or, they may become so preoccupied with not making a mistake that he/she becomes extremely tense, and loses concentration, becoming unable to perform. If we stay *calm* in our reactions, and if we talk to the kid privately, away from the crowd, there's a chance the kid will look at the mistake, learn from it, and try again. When giving constructive criticism, the **sandwich method** is most effective. That is the negative feedback is sandwiched between two positive remarks. For example, if a kid misses a lay-up because of not using the backboard, instead of repeatedly yelling, "*Use the backboard on lay-ups! Use the backboard on lay-ups!*" we might consider calling our kid aside after the game, and saying something like, "*I like the way you're taking it to the basket! I know it's hard to remember to use the backboard on lay-ups, but it really is easier to make lay-ups that way. We'll keep working on it in practice. I really like the way you hustled back on defense right away instead of pouting. You prevented a fast break.*" Remember, dignity, being treated with respect, is a cornerstone of self-esteem. No kid deserves to be publicly berated or humiliated. A good rule to remember is: "praise is public, criticize in private."

### **Think "Process", not "End Product"**-----

Finally, part of getting into our kid's world of sports is realizing that they're more into "process", while we, as adults are more into "end products". When an adult sees a kid coming off the court after a game, the typical questions are "*Who won?*" "*How many points did you have?*", "*Did you get any rebounds?*", "*What was the score?*". But when you hear kids talking to each other you hear things like "*Did you see their cool uniforms?*" or "*Your Mon always brings the best snacks!*" If we stay focused on the end products, we're bound to be disappointed that our kids aren't achieving

the goals that we have set for them. But, if we see each event in the context of a total process as they move through their NJB experiences, we'll help avoid our disappointing looks and remarks, and we'll stay focused on the fun and enjoyment of NJB basketball.

In fact, as we participate with our kids, we would do well to put everything in perspective. Each season is a process that will take our kids through the various levels of skills and involvement in NJB. Hopefully, we can keep our kids involved in the process over the years. Hopefully, by keeping our focus on helping them experience the fun in basketball, at the end of the year, regardless of skill development, we will have contributed to getting them to want to come back next year, and continue the process as they continue to develop skills, and above all to have fun playing NJB!



## About the Author...

Dr. Darrell Burnett is a clinical and sport psychologist, a dad and a youth league coach. He has worked with youth and families in his private practice in southern California for over 20 years, and is a published authority in *positive parenting*, including two audiocassette seminars with accompanying booklets: **Raising Responsible Kids: 5 steps for Parents, and Parents, Kids Self Esteem: 15 Ways to Help Kids Like Themselves** (Funagain Press). He also authored a Manual and Workbook for parents and teens, **Improving Parent-Adolescent Relationships** (Accelerated Development, Inc.)

In the area of youth sports, he has written numerous articles in newspapers and magazines, including *USA Today*. He was cited as an authority on youth sports in *Sports Illustrated*, and has been featured in Internet articles on *ESPN.com*, *USA Today.com*, *WebMD.com*, and others. He belongs to a panel of experts at The Center for Sports Parenting, located on the Internet ([www.internationalsport.com](http://www.internationalsport.com)), responding to emailed "sports parenting" issues. His publications include **It's Just a Game (Youth, Sports & Self Esteem: A Guide for Parents)**, published by iUniverse.com, an audiocassette, **"Hey, Mom & Dad, It's Just a Game!"** (Funagain Press), and a positive coaching booklet series with audiocassette, **Positive Coaching: The Art of Being a Successful Youth League Coach** (Funagain Press). His other works include a chapter, *Kids & Tee Ball: What's a Parent to do*, in **The T-BALL USA Official Family Guide to Tee Ball**; *A Coach with Soul*, in **Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work**, and *Challenger Baseball*, in **Chicken Soup for the Unsinkable Soul**. He was a primary contributor in the **Playbook for Kids: A Parent's Guide to help Kids Get the Most Out of Sports**, published by the Gatorade Company.

Dr. Burnett has also applied youth sports to the workplace, with a booklet and audiocassette, **The Positive Corporate Manager: Lessons from Coaching Kids**. (*How to Build Employee Self Esteem in the Workplace.*)

The University of Rhode Island's Institute elected Dr. Burnett as a 1996 National Sports Ethics Fellow for International Sport, in recognition of his "considerable effort at promoting ethics and fair play in youth sports."

Besides his private practice, Dr. Burnett is active on the lecture circuit, both in local youth sports coach's clinics, and as a speaker at regional and national conferences. Dr. Burnett has made numerous appearances on radio and TV. He can be reached through:

Funagain Press, P.O. Box 7223, Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-7223

1-800-493-5943

Fax - (949) 495-8204

E-Mail -[djburnet@pacbell.net](mailto:djburnet@pacbell.net)

Website - [www.djburnett.com](http://www.djburnett.com)

# Parents and Sportsmanship

By Darrell Burnett

Pick up a sports page and you get a stark picture of a world of competitive sports - corporate sponsorship, fierce competition and a win-at-any-cost mentality.

For decades recreational youth sports has been the beacon of hope for maintaining the purity of sport, where unsportsmanlike conduct has been the rare exception. And yet, even at a level where over 20 million youngsters play in leagues throughout the USA, the signs of decline in sportsmanship are evident: talking trash, challenging officials, refusing to shake hands with the opponent after the game, making excuses after every loss - - and that's just the *parents!*

We reveal our true selves through sports. And like it or not, our kids are watching us... looking to us as role models of good sportsmanship.

Youth sports are supposedly an avenue to teach values to kids: teamwork, hard work, and practice; handling and learning from mistakes; developing confidence; and winning and losing gracefully.

Most parents are conscientious about their parenting role. And yet, it constantly amazes me what some parents "reveal" about their character when it comes to their behaviors in youth sports. Some examples:

- A team of 8 and 9-year olds lost a baseball game in the last inning after the right fielder dropped a fly ball. One of the dads on the losing team said, loud enough for the coach and the right fielder to hear, *"We would of won if the coach would have played that kid in the middle of the game. Everybody knows he can't catch the ball. Why did the coach put out there with everything on the line?"*
- The mother of a girls basketball team that won 51-19 in a tournament for 11 and 12-years olds, in full earshot of the parents of the losing team, said, *"I guess that team has never seen a real full-court press before. I can't believe their coach didn't teach them how to beat a press. Oh well, maybe it taught them not to come to this level of a tournament until they're ready!"*
- I was doing baseball umpiring on the bases for a game of 10-year old boys. A small group of parents from the home team was berating a boy at the plate from the visiting team who had gone hitless his first two times at bat. As he came to bat the third time, the parents yelled to their pitcher, *"Here's an automatic out! He swings like a girl! He's afraid up there! Blow it by him!"* The batter lowered his head. He struck out a third time for the third out. As the pitcher came off the mound, the same group of parents shouted, *"If they had more players like that you'd have a no-hitter!"*

Why do parents lose it at youth league games? Sport Psychologist Thomas Tutko and others feel that parents get too wrapped up in the competition because they are living vicariously through their children. Other experts feel that parents might be filled with unrealistic expectations, hoping their child will be the next superstar. Consequently, they place too much emphasis on making sure their kid "wins" or "has a great time" or "looks good".

Here's hoping we remind ourselves of the significant role we play in the lives of our kids at their sporting events, and at home. - USA Today (3/6/96)

# Parent Sportsmanship Checklist

By Darrell J Burnett, Ph.D.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I maintain a "Fun is Number One" attitude in youth sports.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I treat officials, coaches, my kids, their teammates, & their opponent, with respect, avoiding put-downs, ridicule, or sarcasm, on and off the field.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I praise my kids, their teammates, and their opponents just for participating regardless of their athletic skills.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I remember to look for, and make a "big deal" out of positives with my kids, their teammates, and their opponents, on and off the field.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I remain calm when my kids or their teammates make a mistake, on the field or off, helping them learn from their mistakes.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I remind my kids and their teammates not to get down on themselves when things don't go well in youth sports.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I try not to take myself too seriously when it comes to my involvement in youth sports, reminding myself that there is life beyond youth sports.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I remind my kids and myself to laugh and keep a sense of humor, on and off the field.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I emphasize teamwork in team sports with my kids, teaching them to think "we", instead of "me".
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I teach my kids by giving them a good example of good sportsmanship: winning without gloating, and losing without complaining.

\*Adapted from the Parent Checklist in Dr. Burnett's book, Youth, Sports, & Self Esteem: A Guide for Parents, and audiocassette, "Hey, Mom & Dad, It's Just a Game!" Dr. Burnett, clinical and sport psychologist can be reached at Funagain Press, 1-800-493-5943 FAX (949) 495-8204. Email: [Funagain@pacbell.net](mailto:Funagain@pacbell.net)  
Web: [www.djburnett.com](http://www.djburnett.com)

# SIDELINE GUIDELINES

## (10 Things Kids Say They Don't Want Their Parents to Do)

by Darrell J. Burnett, Ph. D.

1. **Don't yell out instructions.** During the game I'm trying to concentrate on what the coach says and working on what I've been practicing. It's easier for me to do my best if you save instructions and reminders for practice of just before the game.
2. **Don't put down the officials.** This embarrasses me and I sometimes wonder whether the official is going to be tougher on me because my parents yell.
3. **Don't yell at me in public.** It will just make things worse because I'll be upset, embarrassed, or worried that you're going to yell at me the next time I do something "wrong".
4. **Don't yell at the coach.** When you yell about who gets to play what position, it just stirs things up and takes away from the fun.
5. **Don't put down my teammates.** Don't make put-down remarks about any of my teammates who make mistakes. It takes away from our team spirit.
6. **Don't put down the other team.** When you do this you're not giving us a very good example of sportsmanship so we get mixed messages about being "good sports".
7. **Don't lose your cool.** I love to see you excited about the game, but there's no reason to get so upset that you lose your temper! It's our game and all the attention is supposed to be on us.
8. **Don't lecture me about mistakes after the game.** Those rides home in the car after the game are not a good time for lectures about how I messed up- I already feel bad. We can talk later, but please stay calm, and don't forget to mention things I did well during games!
9. **Don't forget how to laugh and have fun.** Sometimes it's hard for me to relax and have fun during the game when I look over and see you so tense and worried.
10. **Don't forget that it's just a game!** Odds are I'm not going to make a career out of playing sports. I know I may get upset if we lose, but I also know that I'm usually feeling better after we go get a pizza. I need to be reminded sometimes that it's just a game.

(from Playbook for Kids: A Parent's Guide to Help Kids Get the Most Out of Sports. The Gatorade Company)

# A Coach's Letter to Parents

By Darrell J. Burnett, Ph. D.

## Dear Parents,

Here are some hints on how to make this a fun season, with lots of positive memories for your kids and your family.

1. Make sure your kids know that, win or lose, **you love them**. Be the person in their life they can always look to for support.
2. Try to be completely honest with yourself about your kid's' athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship, and their level of skills.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach your kids on the way to the game or at the breakfast table. Think how tough it must be on them to be continually inundated with advice, pep talks, and criticism.
4. Teach your kids to enjoy the **thrill of competition**, to be out there trying, to be constantly working to improve their skills, to take physical bumps and come back for more. Don't tell them that winning doesn't count because it does, and they know it. Instead, help them develop a healthy competitive attitude, a "feel" for competing, for trying hard, for having a good time.
5. Try not to live your life through your kids. You've lost as well as won, you've been frightened, and you've backed off at times. Sure they're an extension of you, but don't assume they feel the same way you did, want the same things, or have the same attitude.
6. Don't push them in the direction that gives you the most satisfaction. Don't compete with your kids' coaches. A coach may become a hero to your kids for a while, someone who can do no wrong, and you may find that hard to take. Conversely, don't automatically side with your kids against their coaches. Try to help them understand the necessity for discipline, rules, and regulations.
7. Don't compare your kids with other players on their team - at least not within their hearing - don't lie to them about their capabilities as a player if you are overly protective, you will perpetuate the problem.
8. Get to know your kids' coaches. Make sure you approve of each coach's **attitude and ethics**. Coaches can be influential, and you should know the values of each coach so that you can decide whether or not you want them passed on to your kids.

9. Remember that children tend to exaggerate. Temper your reactions to stories they bring home from practice of the game about how they were praised or criticized. Don't criticize them for exaggerating, but don't overreact to the stories they tell you.
10. Teach your kids the meaning of courage. Some of us can climb mountains, but are frightened about getting into a fight. Some of us can fight without fear, but turn to jell at the sight of a bee. Everyone is frightened about something.  
**Courage isn't the absence of fear. Courage is learning to perform in spite of fear.** Courage isn't getting rid of fear. It's overcoming it.
11. Winning is an important goal. Winning at all cost is stupidity.
12. Remember that officials are necessary. Don't overreact to their calls. They have rules and guidelines to follow representing authority on the field. Teach your kids to respect authority and to play by the rules.
13. Finally, remember, if the kids aren't having fun, we're missing the whole point of youth sports.

(From **Youth Sport Coach**, newsletter of National Youth Sports Coaches Association.) Dr. Burnett can be reached at 1-800-493-5943.

Email: [djburnet@pacbell.net](mailto:djburnet@pacbell.net)

website [www.djburnett.com](http://www.djburnett.com)

## NJB Spectator Pledge

\_\_\_\_\_ I will remember that children participate to have fun, and that the game is for and about kids, not adults.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be a positive role model, and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy to players, coaches and other spectators.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will encourage the players to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will respect the officials and their authority and will not confront them at the game.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will never ridicule or yell at any of the players for making a mistake or losing a competition.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct such as booing, taunting, cursing, threats, or physical assaults.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will refrain from any unauthorized coaching of the players during games.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will communicate to the players that doing one's best is the goal of each game, regardless of winning or losing.

I understand and accept the league policy that if I violate the pledge I may be asked to leave the game. I also understand that continued violations of the pledge will result in my being banned from further attendance at games for the remainder of the season.

Please put your initials next to each item of the pledge and sign your name below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Spectator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date