

SHIFTING FROM 'DEALING WITH PARENTS'

TO ENGAGING THEM

A process for coaches to engage parents at the beginning of the season

Ask each parent to put their name on 3 different note cards. Pre-made cards for printing are attached. Parents will answer a different question on each one, then leave the cards for the coaches to read after the meeting.

Name _____

Write at least one reasonable, measurable goal you have for your **child** this season.

Write at least one reasonable, measurable goal you have for our **team** this season.

CARD 1 (front & back)

PURPOSE:

- Determine parents' expectations for the team and for their child
- Allows for the outrageous to be addressed in a non-threatening way ASAP
- Most conflicts arise with players and parents due to unrealistic expectations. This process identifies those so that we can disarm them before the season even starts.

Goals need to be measurable and performance related. It's not possible to measure hard work, happiness, or getting along with others. Specific outcomes, such as being a starter, winning more games than we lose, qualifying for a provincial tournament, averaging a certain number of points per game, etc. are concrete.

Name _____

What do you want your child's experience to be like if they **CAN'T** accomplish any of the goals you wrote for them, or for the team, on the first card?

CARD 2 (front only)

PURPOSE:

- Determine what will make sport meaningful regardless of outcome

*Before moving to the final card, show parents what the players wrote in response to this question – What do you want if you **CAN'T** get what you want?*





Name _____

What do you want your experience to be like as a sports parent?

What can you do to help create that experience for other parents?	What can the coaches do to help facilitate that experience?
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CARD 3 (front & back)

PURPOSE:

- Validate the parent experience
- Combines the need for parents to be accountable to one another with the importance of coaches being vulnerable to receiving feedback

Few parents are comfortable sharing their answer to this question in front of others during the meeting. Compile responses and send them an email afterwards.



"The best part of this entire process is it provides us a road map for building trust. All relationships are built on trust.

...Does this mean we will never encounter another difficult parent? Probably not, but when that day comes, our hope is that trusting relationships will be in place that can weather disagreements."

- Nate Sanderson, Coach of the Varsity Girls Basketball Team at Springville High School in Springville, Iowa.

This process was adapted by the Sport for Life Society and Sport 4 Life Cochrane from an article originally written by Nate Sanderson & appeared on Breakthrough Basketball. To read the original article, scan or visit the URL below.

<http://changingthegameproject.com/coaches-stop-dealing-parents-start-engaging/>



[Insert your group's logos here]

1 Write at least one reasonable, measurable goal you have for your child this season. Name:

2 What do you want your child's experience to be like if they CAN'T accomplish any of the goals you wrote for them, or for the team, on the first card? Name:

3 What do you want your experience to be like as a sports parent? Name:

1 Write at least one reasonable, measureable goal you have for our team this season.

3 What can you do to help create that experience for other parents?

What can the coaches do to help facilitate that experience?