TEAM USA Sectional Camp

“Navigating the Junior Tennis Pathway as a Parent” - Self-Evaluation Exercise

Rate on a 1 to 5 scale the questions below relative to your parenting of your child in tennis. Think about how your child or your child’s coach would rate you. When finished, total your ratings and read the associated notes. Then pick three of the questions that intrigue you the most for possible discussion as a group.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not like me</td>
<td>Characteristic of me</td>
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1. Do I emphasize the development of my child and having fun more than winning?
2. Do I have expectations that are realistic for my child as a tennis player?
3. Do I rarely criticize my child for his/her tennis?
4. Do I allow my child to be responsible for their tennis preparation (meaning I do not do everything for my child including carrying bags, getting water, calling others to practice, preparing equipment)?
5. Do I avoid trying to coach my child when he or she has a coach?
6. Do I provide love and support regardless of the on-court outcome?
7. Do I emphasize the importance of hard work with my child?
8. Do I expose my child to different sports?
9. Do I keep success in perspective?
10. Do I display a positive and optimistic parenting style?
11. Do I avoid allowing tennis to dominate my child’s entire life?
12. Do I hold my child accountable for poor or unsportsmanlike behaviors on court?
13. Do I appropriately push my child when he or she is lazy and does not work hard?
14. Do I encourage my child to seek out new challenges and opportunities?
15. Do I avoid exerting pressure to win?
16. Do I model an active lifestyle?
17. Do I emphasize core values like ‘if you are going to do it, do it right?’
18. Do I provide transportation, financial, and logistical support?
19. Do I provide considerable encouragement by recognizing what my child does right?

20. Do I try to make tennis fun?

21. Do I avoid focusing the majority of our conversations at home on tennis?

22. Do I act calm and confident in my child as he or she plays the match?

23. Do I avoid considering my child’s tennis as an investment and that I should receive something in return?

24. Do I treat my child the same following wins and losses?

25. Do I provide my child ample opportunity and resources to be successful in tennis?

26. Do I allow my child some “say” in tennis-related decisions?

27. Do I attempt to keep my own interests in tennis secondary to my child’s?

28. Do I avoid getting caught up in tennis and making it over-important?

29. Do I consider my child my son or daughter first, and an athlete second?

30. Do I avoid critiquing my child immediately following the match or during the car ride home?

TOTAL SCORE ______

120-150 Great job mom/dad! Your responses suggest that you are parenting your child in junior tennis very effectively. Your approach is positive and helping your child develop the habits of a happy, healthy, successful tennis player. Because of your parenting your child is more likely to stay in the game and compete long-term because his or her intrinsic motivation and passion for the game has been nourished. Keep doing what you are doing and don’t fall prey to rising expectations to achieve short-term outcomes.

90-119 At times you are effective parenting your child in tennis, but there are some behaviors that may be negatively influencing your child’s experience in tennis. Review your ratings and then set a goal to improve scores below a 3. Continue to excel in those areas you’ve scored high on.

89 and below Your answers suggest that you could be negatively influencing your child’s tennis experience. It is important to put your child’s development ahead of your interests. Reflect on your goals and your child’s goals for tennis. Furthermore, reflect how your child is responding to your tennis parenting. On further examination, you may find that a more negative, pushy approach is not fueling the passion and motivation of your child. Look closely at your scores and choose the 2-3 things that you must change to positively enhance the tennis experience for your child.