



# Positive parental behaviour in sport

## How to support your child's safety, happiness and success

Sport is an incredible opportunity for children to develop confidence, resilience, and a sense of achievement. As a parent or carer, your support is vital in creating an environment where your child can thrive.

**Here is our tip sheet on supporting your child's safety, happiness and success in sport.**

1

### Prioritise your child's wellbeing

- **Emotional safety:** Foster open communication and emotional trust. By listening attentively to your child, you empower them to share their feelings, whether they're about challenges or successes in sport.
- **Physical safety:** Champion healthy sport practices by ensuring your child participates in age-appropriate activities. Encourage proper training, recovery, and injury prevention, so your child feels confident and supported physically.
- **Balanced approach:** Encourage your child to explore a range of interests, ensuring their involvement in sport enhances their overall development, not just their athletic performance.

2

### Promote respectful behaviour

- **Respect for others:** Lead by example in demonstrating respect for coaches, teammates, and opponents. When you model positive behaviour, you reinforce the importance of respect, teamwork, and sportsmanship for your child.
- **Zero tolerance for abuse:** Trust that every child deserves a safe space in sport. You are an advocate for your child's safety—be vigilant and proactive in recognising and addressing any form of abuse, bullying, or inappropriate behaviour.



3

## Focus on fun and enjoyment

- **Encourage joy and curiosity:** Celebrate your child's enjoyment in sport, not just the outcome. Praise their effort, growth, and the joy of learning, ensuring they associate sport with positive experiences.
- **Celebrate all wins:** whether it's a new skill, improved confidence, or developing friendships, take pride in your child's journey. This strengthens their sense of achievement and builds their self-esteem.
- **Create positive memories:** Be present in the moments that matter most—cheer them on, show up for games, and celebrate the fun in the process, helping them connect sport to positive memories and experiences.

4

## Be involved but respect boundaries

- **Foster autonomy:** Support your child's independence by giving them the freedom to set their own goals and decide how involved they want to be in their sport. Respect their needs, preferences, and choices as they grow.
- **Supportive coaching:** If you coach or volunteer, focus on encouragement, skill-building, and positive reinforcement. Your role is to nurture a supportive environment where every child can develop at their own pace.



5

## Advocate for your child's rights

- **Empowerment through rights:** Children in sport should feel secure, valued, and respected. Understand and support your child's rights, ensuring they are treated with dignity and that their voice is heard.
- **Act when needed:** If you observe any behaviour that contradicts these rights, take action. Reporting any concerns ensures that the child's environment remains safe and supportive, reinforcing their right to enjoy sport without fear or harm.



For information  
on how to report concerns  
or abuse in sport, please visit

**Unbreakable:**  
**The Jelena Dokic Story |**  
**Sport Integrity Australia**