

Parents make the difference

The most influential people in All-Stars are the parents of the players. By their attitude, effort, cooperation, and contributions, it gives your child and their team an opportunity to succeed. Here are five brief suggestions for parents in all stars.

First, do not coach your child - particularly during the games. Do not sit in the bleachers and shout instructions, comments, or suggestions. Leave all of this to the coaching staff. If you struggle with this, sit in the outfield out of earshot of your child.

Second, do not criticize the coaches or any teammates. Be careful about playing time comments or casual remarks. Remember, playing time is the crucial and controversial issue in All-Stars. The manager is staying awake late at night stressing about who, when, and how to play all his players. These are never easy decisions. Give them the benefit of the doubt on their decisions and help your child do the same.

Third, be flexible. All-Stars is a very complex process. It is seldom a smooth process. Despite intense efforts to make detailed plans, things sometimes change quickly. Be patient and contribute to solutions to problems as they arise.

Fourth, provide unyielding support for your child. Root them on during the game and give a hug when it's done - win or lose, hero or goat. In the long run, your support will be more meaningful to them than the results of any baseball game.

Finally, be sure your child eats and sleeps properly during All-Stars. As they develop new friendships they will want to be together more often. Encourage these new friendships but keep in mind this is a time of extensive practicing and mentally exhausting game play. They will be tired and need rest. So have your child home in bed at a proper time. The friendships and bonds they create during this experience will last long past when All-Stars is over.