



Champion Moms: The Best Advice from Sports Moms

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May is all about celebrating mothers and for athletes, the support system that is in the stands and on the sidelines play a big role in an athlete's success. I got the chance to chat with some long-time sports moms here in our community and they shared some great advice to pass on to the next sports mom. Julie has a son that played baseball, basketball, football, and a daughter that plays volleyball and basketball while Jennifer has a daughter in softball.

1. What makes up your sports mom survival kit?

Julie: I have a backpack with snacks, first aid kit, ponytail holders, extra knee pads, and of course candy for the spectators. I rarely use anything out of it – but I always bring it!

Jennifer: My backpack must have include: an extra inhaler, hair ties, Advil and Band-Aids, sunglasses, sunscreen, baseball hat, snacks, phone charging unit, water bottle, and a sweatshirt. We also always bring our own chairs – splurge on a good bag chair and don't forget the car blanket for cold outdoor games.

2. What do you say to best encourage or motivate your child before and after competition?

Julie: My line to my daughter before the game is always "Play Hard, Do You and Play YOUR game". After the game – I don't highlight things that didn't go well – because she already knows that. I always say "great game – I'm proud of you!"

Jennifer: This is supposed to be fun... Learn from every play and always keep your head in the game!! We also emphasize compassion and being kind to the opposing team. It's best to let the coach – coach so I usually just tee up a couple of questions to get her thinking about improvements she could make. What did you learn? What would you do differently?

3. What is one piece of advice you would give to a first-time sports mom?

Julie: Enjoy every minute! It seems like a lot and you will give up things that you want to do – but don't miss a game and embrace it as Family time! If you travel – try to enjoy each location and do all the touristy stuff.

Jennifer: Take time to meet the other parents and encourage the team to get to know each other off the field.

4. Your kid joined a new team and you don't know any of the parents on the sidelines. How do you make friends with these new parents?

Julie: Each parent only wants what is best for their child – but that sometimes makes it difficult to connect. I've seen success in using a group communication tool (GroupMe is a great one) and including all parents on it. Don't rely on the Coach to connect the parents – his/her job is to coach your children – not plan get togethers!

Jennifer: Share snacks! Ask if they want to take a walk between games – often it is a lot of sitting.