



What questions  
should parents  
ask when  
registering  
for a sport  
program? ►

◀ **S** hopping around for a good sports program is worthwhile in the long run. A child's early exposure to sport lays the groundwork for participation in the years to come. When registering a child in a sports program, consider these questions:

1. Are the coaches certified in the National Coaching Certification Program? What coaching experience do they have?
2. Is there a policy of equal playing time?
3. Does the program emphasize the development of skills?
4. Are the play areas safe and well-maintained?
5. What is the ratio of practice-to-competition? For example, three or four practices to one game is appropriate for young children.
6. Are the groupings and teams suitable for safe and enjoyable activity?
7. Are there lots of opportunities for children to play?
8. Are youngsters encouraged and congratulated for good efforts?
9. Are the needs of the children taken into consideration? For example, are practices at a convenient time and place? Are they limited to a reasonable length of time? Will time demands prevent the children from participating in other activities and assuming other responsibilities?
10. Are safety rules adhered to during practices and games? Is appropriate equipment available? Are children matched with others of the same size?

## Questions to ask youngsters after a game.

The first question parents usually ask their child after a game is, "Did you win?" Whether the answer is "Yes, we won" or "No, we didn't win," it doesn't really tell you anything about what the child has just experienced. Ask the right questions and learn from the answers.

- Did you have fun?
- What was your favorite part of the game?
- What didn't you like about today's game or practice?
- What did you learn?
- What do you need to work on?
- Can I help you improve any skill?
- Were you nervous during the game today?
- What did the coach say after the game?
- Were you a good sport?