



PARENT TIPS



How To Be A Good Goalie Parent

GOALIES ARE A UNIQUE BREED, and their parents should be as well. Here are a few tips on how to be a good goalie parent for your little puckstopper.

1. Properly Equip Your Goalie – Make sure your goalie has gear that fits and protects properly. Spend your money on quality, not fashion. Why spend \$250 for a fancy mask paint job when the goalie wears inadequate pants or arm pads?

Ensure that the goalie's stick fits and is not "worn out." Some kids use a stick for a season. They may never crack, but the heel is totally worn out. Keep your goalie supplied with "fresh" sticks.

Bigger is not better. Often in an attempt to "help," parents buy goalie gloves that are too large. A catching glove that is too large makes it tough to hold onto pucks. A blocker that does not fit hampers a goaltender's stick control.

2. Teach Your Goalie To Dress Him Or Herself – You are NOT helping by dressing your goalie when he or she is 10 years of age or older. Was you going to stop the puck for him, too? This is the start of teaching independence.

3. Make The Goalie Carry His Or Her Own Equipment – While parents may help the real young ones (8 to 10 years old) by carrying the stick or maybe leg pads, the goalie MUST carry or now wheel his or her own bag to and from the car. Again, it's about teaching responsibility and independence.

4. Be Realistic ... Remove The Pressure – While kids may get scared when home alone, kids are rarely scared to play sports, especially a goalie. It's the pressure that parents put on them that creates anxiety. Pressure to win, pressure to get a scholarship, pressure to make the team, etc. Assure them that you will love them and be there, regardless of the results. Do your best, try hard, compete ... but most of all, have fun.

We are trying to develop good citizens first, hockey goalies second. Remember the "big picture." Playing is a life lesson, not life or death.

5. Say The Right Things ... Teach Responsibility ... Blame No One – What a parent says, and how it is said can have a lasting impact on a child, goalie or not. Innocent statements, in an attempt to soothe your child, or "motivate" them, often do not turn out to be "support" at all.

It's simple. Do not let your goalie blame anyone else or make excuses. Take responsibility for the goal (regardless of how it occurred) good or bad and learn from it. Regardless of age, the goalie needs to be accountable, yet be able to "let go" after the goal and move on. You are not helping your goalie by encouraging him or her to play the blame game, or letting him or her get defensive with excuses.

6. Be Quiet In Public And At Games – Today, many parents get more worked up and more nervous than the kids. Chill out. Nothing embarrasses a kid more than hearing his or her parents yelling, ridiculing the other team or taunting the other goalie. Being loud is often confused with being supportive. It's counter-productive. Sit back, relax and enjoy the fact that your goalie is playing the toughest position in sports.

If handled correctly, these goalie experiences will help make him or her a good goalie, but more importantly, will help your son or daughter grow up to be a fantastic adult. ☆



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