

Case Study 5: Your child plays in a league that mandates minimum playing time for each player. Your child consistently plays the minimum amount, and never when the game is on the line. The same players always play more than the minimum and are in at crunch time. You don't think this is fair. As a Second-Goal Parent, what should you do?

The most important objective here would be to help your child have a positive experience this season so he'll be likely to want to continue playing next year.

Here's what you can do:

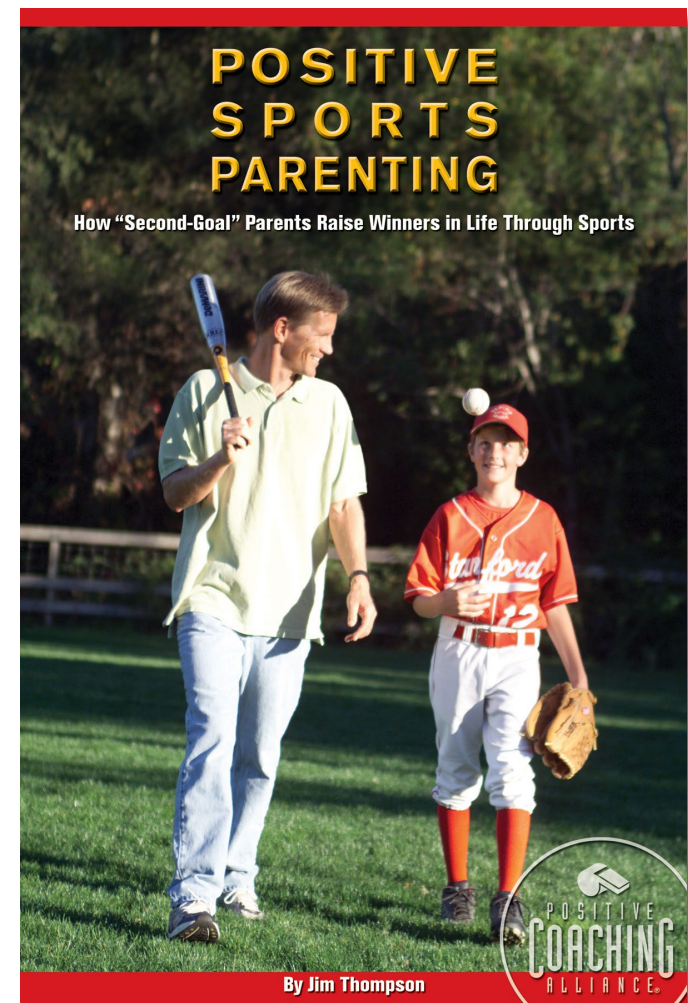
- Find out if this is problematic for your child. Although you are frustrated with his amount of playing time, he may not be. And you can do this without asking him. If you ask about whether he is frustrated by the amount of time he is on the field, you may be planting an unhelpful seed in his head.

Instead, watch him. Is he excited to go to practice and games? Does he have a lot to tell you about after games? These are signs that he is engaged and that he is not upset by his playing time.

- If you come to believe that he is indeed discouraged by not playing more, you can suggest that he approach the coach to see what he can do to get more playing time. Most coaches do not appreciate a parent coming to them to complain about playing time, but I have met few coaches who aren't open to a player asking them about it.

Imagine your child saying something like, "Coach, I'd really like to play more. Do you have any suggestions for things I can do to be able to play more?" This is much more likely to have a good result. The coach may give him exercises to work on outside of practice. He may look for more opportunities to increase his playing time now that he knows the player is hungry to play more.

Perhaps the best thing to come from such a conversation is that your child will have an experience talking with his coach that will be a model for dealing with supervisors and others throughout his life.



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