



10 Tips for Coaches of Girls: Allyship, Co-Ed Considerations, and More

Included are considerations for those conducting co-ed sports, how boys and men and people of any gender can be allies, and tips for coaches of girls useful in a wide range of contexts.



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1 Coaching Girls in The Context of Co-Ed Sports

Focus on equal coaching habits

– If coaching a co-ed team, ensure girls are equally and proactively included in using the space, receiving support and coach attention, and play.

Be supportive – Provide girls equal playing time to develop skills, try different positions, and grow.

Set equal expectations – Coach the skill and experience level, not the gender.

Avoid double standards – Be aware of perceptions. Notice how boys and girls are coached. Is it the same or different? Why? In what way does adjusting help?

Include everyone – Create expectations that all kids play equally in engagement, playing time, instruction, support, and more. For example: create “pass to everyone” approaches in practices and games. Celebrate similarities and differences across players.

2 Allyship – Boys and Men (and All) Supporting Girls and Women

Allyship goes a long way – Boys and men are integral in advancing gender equity, along with people of any and all identities. The work of making girls and women, and all, welcome in sport spaces is on everyone’s shoulders-together.

Showing up matters – Boys and men can do a lot to support and promote girls and women in sports

For example: boys cheering on a girls’ team pep rally, men being engaged and dedicated coaches of girls; and boys and men as supporters and leaders attending girls’ games.

3 Connect With Your Players and Among the Team

Connect with team – Start each practice by circling up, sharing names and checking-in so everyone feels comfortable, welcome, valued, and connected.

Make Introductions fun – Introduction moments can be made engaging by asking each player to share their name or a favorite color, show, or movie.



games players can play at home (e.g., tossing and catching a ball) and playing sports games at recess, P.E., and lunch. Encourage watching local college and pro women's sports events.

Girls leading – Give girls responsibilities to demonstrate a skill or lead a drill to help girls get more engaged, build leadership skills, confidence, and connection. Try Captain of the Day!

4 Be Mindful of the Skill Spectrum from Brand New to Veteran

Gauge and connect to the level – Recognize some players (no matter their age) are brand new to the sport, and some girls have played several seasons or years.

Foundation – Ensure basics are clear from start (rules, techniques, practice and game approaches). Check what players know and help them build on the foundation.

Goal-setting – Help set gradual personal and team goals and tailor milestones, especially if the players are inexperienced. Create goals that are appropriately challenging for the players and the team.

5 Encourage Play, Practice and Sports Outside of Practice and Games

Support girls' access to sports in other ways outside of structured times – Recommend

6 Use Inclusive, Encouraging Intentional Language and Practices

Be inclusive – Avoid non-inclusive phrases like “hey guys” or “sir” when circling up players and coaches or getting their attention – Try “players, friends, everyone, and team.”

7 Connect to the Parents and Caregivers of the Players

Link up – Connect with parents/caregivers through email, text, league platforms and in-person to get to know players' and their families.

8 Make it Fun, Make it Positive, and Celebrate Often

Center on fun – Any kid enjoys an activity if they're having fun. You can have players sing while running laps and warming up, or pretend to be different animals, or use dance moves!

Change it up – Make sure to try different drills each week with new challenges.

Use coaches and helpers to keep things active – Split girls into small groups so they get more play time (vs. long lines), and ask parents/caregivers to assist (if permitted).

9 Be Available and Get Regular Feedback

Prepare – Arrive a little early to prepare, review team plans, and connect with girls and their families.

Check-in – Stay a bit after to cheer player progress, help those struggling, and ask for their feedback.

Understand your players' perspectives – Acknowledge their experiences may be different from yours, such as: home life, school, social and other challenges.

Be present – In practices and games, avoid distractions like cell phone use and side activities and conversations – ensuring your attention is 100% on the team and girls.

10 Make Space for Girls

Girls having physical and mental safe space for play is key. Ensure practice and game areas are clear and ready for use - other athletes and coaches should wait their turn for facilities. Politely remind anyone in the play space it's the team's time to play and get staff help if necessary.