

ASPIRE FOR THE STRONGEST SKATER SUPPORT SYSTEM

Aspire offers strategies that help parents build a solid foundation with the support team through clear communication.

COMMUNICATING WITH COACHES

When contracting a coach, ask direct questions to have a clear understanding of their policies.

- What are your fees, cancellation rules and payment schedule? Avoid surprises and be up front about your budget so that the coach has the best information to best support your skater's success.
- What is the best way to communicate? Know the coach's communication preference: text, email or phone. If you request a face-to-face discussion, offer to schedule it in the last five minutes of your skater's lesson. Most coaches' work schedules are very compressed, and they don't have pockets of time to chat in between lessons.
- What time do I bring my skater to the rink for practice, competition or testing? Most coaches expect their students to be warmed up and ready to engage in a lesson at the scheduled time. Avoid unnecessary rushing and be on the same page with the coach for time management. Ask the coach for direction.
- What can I do to help? Have a clear understanding what the coach expects from you. Misunderstandings can be avoided if parents ask questions in advance about costumes, off-ice training programs or any practice expectations outside of the lesson. Ask the coach directly and avoid using the skater as a go-between.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR SKATER

Parents have the greatest influence in setting up a successful practice or competition experience by creating a nurturing environment. Be supportive without pressuring for results or expectations.

- A skater will have a more satisfying experience if the parent focuses on behavior over performance.
- Encourage good sportsmanship, patience and having fun rather than technical corrections. Parents aren't co-coaches.
- Avoid talking about or comparing your skater to others. Build confidence with positive acknowledgements.
- Give your skater time to relax and focus by refraining from discussing problems before a lesson or competition.
- Schedule a time away from the ice to talk with your skater see how they feel and listen if they have concerns.



A Parent's Guide

ASPIRE TO BE SUCCESSFUL

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR RINK

It is not uncommon for some skaters to train at more than one facility. It's important for parents to understand that policies and procedures may differ from one rink to the next. Most rinks allow parents to sit in a viewing section. Avoid being a negative distraction to your skater or others and stay positive. Skaters notice their parents sitting in the stands. A look of encouragement instead of worry from a parent can make a challenging lesson more manageable for the skater.

- Read the brochures or visit the rink's website. Learn about ice hours and fees and even cost-cutting offers.
- Read and understand the rules. Skating policies may differ for a public skate and a freestyle session.
- Know the chain of command at your rink and the appropriate person to speak with if any issues arise.
- Supportive parents are a great asset to a positive rink culture. Stay positive and avoid rink gossip.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR SKATING CLUB

Your local skating club needs supportive parents to cultivate a positive club experience. Skating is more than a sport, and it offers an opportunity to learn valuable life lessons and develop strong character.

- Clubs offer parents an opportunity to learn more about skating, cultivate friendships and feel supported.
- Skating clubs help instill a team mentality — not just for the skater but for parents too.
- Be a responsible club member and set examples for your skater by completing and submitting test forms on time.
- Skating clubs can feel like a supportive family with a wealth of knowledge and seasoned members ready to help.
- Get acquainted with your club's website. Look for ways to volunteer and do your part.

