

**PLAY LIKE
A CHAMPION
TODAY**

Character Education Through Sports

Champion Parent Note

Educating Parents and Developing Champion Athletes

GROW and the Cardinal Virtues



Champion sport parents can recall that a core tenet of our philosophy is the GROW approach, designed to develop the whole athlete and prepare him or her for success both on and off the field.

GROW is based on a simple equation:

Goals + Relationships + Ownership = Winning

Your child's coach should be following this formula to help their players have the best opportunity to grow as both quality persons and fine athletes. In order to develop your kids into Champions, parents also play a key role in the GROW process by considering how the Cardinal Virtues relate to GROW.

Cardinal Virtues:

FORTITUDE –Pursuing goals with courage and persistence
(related to **GOALS**);

JUSTICE --Treating others with care and respect
(based on building **RELATIONSHIPS**);

PRUDENCE –Sound decision-making based on the good
(when athletes exercise **OWNERSHIP**);

TEMPERANCE –Keeping sports in perspective, maintaining control,
and leading a balanced life (**WINNING** in the right way).

Virtues, like specific sport skills, should be taught and are best gleaned through a positive sport climate. Sport parents play a major role in encouraging these virtues in their athletes.

Fortitude encompasses many of the virtues we associate with sports: hard work, effort, perseverance, courage. Sports build the virtue of fortitude by putting young people in challenging situations in which they must overcome obstacles and put forth maximum effort. Also key to fortitude is understanding that sometimes athletes will be successful and other times, they will fail. Both accepting success and enduring failure help young people develop fortitude.

Justice is the most important of the virtues because it concerns fairness in human relationships and is the building block of charity. An ego-centered athlete views success and failure only in terms of winning and outperforming others. This type of athlete places



him/herself above all others on the team. Athletes who embody the virtue of justice understand that the team and the whole development of every member on the team is most important in the "Champion" philosophy.



Prudence is the virtue of making good choices. In the realm of sport, giving ownership is a necessary condition for choice. Sport parents, give your children room to control not only of their personal actions, but those of the team in order to develop the virtue of prudence.

Finally, by associating **Temperance** with winning, we understand that we must teach our athletes to have a proper attitude toward winning and losing. Applaud your athlete when s/he plays with "composure". Temperance

does not mean moderating one's desire to win but keeping the outcome in the right perspective.

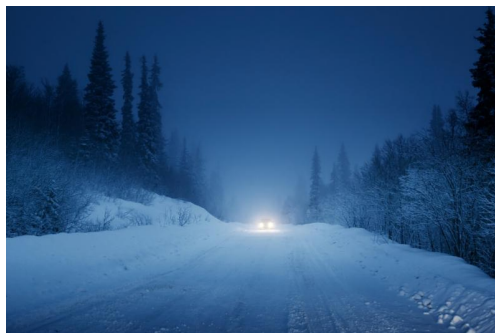
While following the **GROW** approach as a sport parent, encourage virtue-development with your children throughout their sport journeys. By placing an emphasis on GROW and the cardinal virtues acquired through sport, you will maximize the enjoyment and potential of your kids as athletes and encourage them to grow as Disciples of our Church.

Prudence for Sport Parents

As sports parents, it's important that we remember the game belongs to our children and we should let our children guide their own sport journey.

Rod Murrow of the Johnson & Wyandotte CYO provides a thoughtful perspective on "[Lighting the Way from Behind: A Lesson for Coaches and Parents](#)".

Rob reminds us, "the best chance for a kid to succeed at something they are passionate about is by allowing them to struggle, fail, learn to think for themselves, become a student of their sport, and then develop the grit to find a way to succeed."



A Sport Parent's Prayer for Perspective



Dear Lord,

Thank you for the gift of sport in our family's life. May we always be grateful for the opportunity our children have to be physically active and have a team experience to learn and grow from. Help me have the Fortitude to guide my child in setting Goals that develop physical skills as well as help my child to be a better person through sport. I pray that I have a deep sense of Justice in supporting the entire team that they may be safe and successful in their play while

forming close Relationships with each other. Help me to have the Prudence to support my child as s/he has challenges and failures, allowing my child the Ownership to work through these circumstances independently with my love and your guidance Lord. Finally, help me to have Temperance in keeping sports in the proper perspective by honoring the game and my child's play as praise for our Creator. Amen.

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