



# For the Love of Sports

by Tammie Newman

When a child is introduced to sports, depending on the age, they either love it or just like it. Age comes into play when it is either romper room time as a toddler and nothing is off limits from the swing of a bat, swoosh of a ball or a stand & step develops into a sturdy trot before the inevitable fall. Children enjoy moving, structured and unstructured activity. As their minds and bodies develop into free-thinking machines, they finally determine if sports are for them. There is a buffet of athletic options for children of all ages to include team sports or individual sports. **Sportsmanship** must be a major part of learning to participate in either. Ability can only flourish when attitude matches one's respect for the competition, the officials, and the fans. Youth sports are saturated with talent coupled with passion for the game. There can never be an overabundance of sportsmanship from the athlete nor from the fans. Ask any official what the best part of their job is... you will hear a variety of answers from *they played the game as a kid, they love watching kids enjoy themselves, they wanted to stay involved, etc.* Ask an official what they detest the most and almost every reply will center around poor sportsmanship by the fans and/or the athletes.

It's a crisis across the nation- a lack of respect for one another during competition. Sports are for everyone, not just the players, but the fans and officials as well as sponsors who support your effort to better the community. Everyone involved in athletics do it for the best reason of all... for the love of sports.

Show love for your teammates, your coaches, administration, officials and most of all, those who are watching, marveling at your every move as a player, as a coach. Be the prime example South Carolina sports fans deserve.

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