

Best practices:

How to get parents to buy into sport safety

Safety is a team effort that includes everyone, from the coaches and safety managers, through to athletes and parents. Yet, we all know that engaging parents in athlete safety can be tough. Here are five things your sports association can do to get your parents to buy into safety!

1. Hold a safety meeting

At the start of the season, hold a safety meeting with all your parents and coaching staff. This engages your parents in safety right away, and is an effective way to discuss emergency plans and safety procedures before your athletes start the season.

2. Keep lines of communication open

Be sure to encourage safety questions and suggestions from your parents. This helps them feel comfortable speaking up if they have any concerns, or simply asking questions so they can familiarize themselves with your safety plans. Plus, they are bound to have some great safety ideas that weren't considered before!

3. Involve them in education

Even if sport education is not mandatory for your parents, encourage them to take important training anyway. First aid classes, concussion training, and the Respect in Sport parent program are all great classes that will help keep safety top of mind for your parents.

4. Give them a job

No, we don't expect your parents to take on a full time safety job! Instead, have a list of quick safety tasks that involve your parents. Ask them to check the field for unsafe playing conditions, talk with their child every month to see if there are any injury or health concerns, or do a regular equipment check to ensure all gear is still in good playing condition.

5. Use the right tools

Parents are busy, so giving them the right tools and resources to learn about and ensure their children's safety is important! Using a tool like ePACT will provide them with an easy way to stay informed and to notify your sports association of any health or safety concerns.

If you have more questions about how your team can get parents involved in sport safety, be sure to ask ePACT on Twitter at [@ePACTnetwork](https://twitter.com/ePACTnetwork).

Looking for more great resources from ePACT and ViaSport? Check out our toolkits at viasport.ca/epact-toolkit