



PARENTING FOR SUCCESS

Winter Sport Parent Information



The right gear makes all the difference. Here are some gear tips to be ready for the first day:

The boots are a very important piece of equipment. Proper fit and flex are essential. Boots will pack out some with wear, so they should be tight to begin with. Let your child walk around the house before their first training day to get their feet used to the boots. Foot pain on the first day isn't that unusual, if it persists after the first few days, a shop can help. Be sure to have bindings adjusted to the new boots before they show up for training.

Make sure your child dresses warmly and in layers. Not only will your child have an unpleasant day if they are underdressed, but the whole group will be impacted as the coach ends up spending more time in the lodge than in teaching. Some common mistakes: cotton socks, gloves with little insulation or waterproofing, and goggles that fit poorly in the helmet leaving a gap of exposed forehead. Put your child's name and phone number on everything.

Protect their head. You want your child to train hard, so they need to wear a quality helmet at all times that meets competition regulations. As with boots, a snug fit is important for proper function and comfort. Take care of those helmets. Don't let your child carry it outside their bag; pack it inside to decrease the chance it will hit hard on the floor to keep it from losing its ability to protect your child in a crash.

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FIRST DAY TIPS

The first day on-snow of the new season is fast approaching. It should be a day of excitement and fun for your skier or snowboarder, something they've been looking forward to ever since the leaves started changing. The first days of the season are very important in many aspects for your child. Whether you are new to the club or have been at it many years, these tips will help you prepare your child to have a successful start to a great season.

- Be ready with the right gear. Check with your coach or program director if you're unsure what is needed.
- Get your lift or trail passes before the first day of training if possible. Otherwise expect long lines and arrive early.
- Boost your child's energy. The first day may involve an early wake up call, and a long day outside. Ensure your child gets enough sleep by having things ready a day ahead of time, so they can go to bed early. Encourage hydration by having your child drink plenty of fluids the day before. Prepare a healthy dinner with plenty of carbohydrates. In the morning, allow time for a healthy breakfast. Pack some easy to eat snacks in your child's pocket that won't freeze or get hard in the cold weather. Even though your child may not sweat in the cold, winter weather, they will become dehydrated. An insulated water bottle on a belt can be good to keep with them.
- Set expectations and ground rules for your child's participation. Identify what things are your child's responsibility when it comes to getting ready for ski or snowboard practice. They should take on more and more responsibility as the season goes along. Help by making a list of what your child needs to have packed for the day and have them post it somewhere they can check each day.
- Discuss the other expectations you have of your child to participate in their sport – keeping grades up, working on their fitness, eating right and staying hydrated, and helping out around the house all may be part. Come to an agreement before the first day of training.
- Learn what your child's goals and motivations are so you can support these over the course of the season.
- Get involved. The first step is to genuinely show interest in your child's involvement. Talk to them about it, watch them at events (and at practice too), and get to know their coach. A great way to learn more about the sport is to volunteer to help at competitions.
- Understand that the first several practices are usually spent working on fundamental skills and generally are not on the normal courses. Plenty of this foundational work is essential for success when they move into the courses later.
- After practice, greet them with a warm hello first and ask them how it went. Ask them if they had fun and if they made new friends. Ask the coach if things went well.

Remember, a successful first day is one where they are excited for the next day!