

Parent Guide

Episode Theme: Sports as a character builder (resilience, teamwork, mentors, healthy choices)

Ages 6–9 (Use WITH the Explainer Video)

Before Watching (2–3 minutes)

- “Today’s video is about how sports can help kids build strong brains and strong character—not just strong bodies.”
 - “While we watch, listen for **three super skills: teamwork, bounce-back, and mentors.**”
 - “What’s one activity that makes you feel energized or happy—sports, dance, playground, biking, anything?”
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During Watching (Pause Prompts)

Pause #1 (after “win with kindness / lose with grit”):

- “What does ‘lose with grit’ look like?”
- “What could you say to a teammate who’s upset?”

Pause #2 (after “mentor”):

- “Who is a caring helper in your life?”
 - “If you could pick a ‘team grown-up,’ who would it be and why?”
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After Watching (5–8 minutes)

1) The “Bounce-Back Plan”

- “What’s something hard you’re working on right now?”

Build a simple 3-step plan:

- Step 1: “When it’s hard, I will...” (take a breath / ask for help / try again)



- Step 2: “One small practice I can do is...”
- Step 3: “A helpful phrase I can say is...”

Examples:

“I can’t yet, but I’m learning.”

“One more try.”

2) Teamwork at Home

Ask: “How can we be a better team this week?”

Pick **one** habit:

- high-five after effort (not just success)
 - “good teammate” compliments at dinner
 - “try again” moment when something goes wrong
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3) Healthy Choices Script (simple + realistic)

- “No thanks.”
 - “I’ve got practice tomorrow.”
 - “I want to feel good for my body.”
 - “I’m sticking with my plan.”
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The “Toxic Coach Test” (Kid-Friendly Version)

Explain simply:

“Most coaches want to help kids grow. But sometimes a coach isn’t very kind or safe.”

Ask:

- “Does your coach help you learn... or make you feel scared?”
- “Do you feel safe talking to them?”
- “Do they yell to teach... or yell to hurt?”
- “Do you feel proud after practice, or bad about yourself?”



Tell your child:

“If a coach ever makes you feel scared, embarrassed, or unsafe, you should always tell me.”

Optional “Car Ride Home” Questions

- “What was one moment you were proud of your effort?”
 - “Who was a good teammate today?”
 - “What’s one thing you want to try differently next time?”
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Ages 10–13 (Use **WITHOUT** the Video)

Conversation Starter

“Sports and movement can teach skills that help with school, friendships, stress, and making good choices — even if you’re not trying to be a pro athlete.”

Discussion Topics

1) Bounce-Back & Resilience

- “What’s something that feels hard for you right now?”
- “What helps you reset after you mess up?”

Create:

- When it’s hard, I will...
 - One small practice I can do...
 - One phrase I can tell myself...
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2) Teamwork Beyond Sports

- “What does being a good teammate look like at home or at school?”
- “How do you want people to describe you as a teammate or friend?”



3) Mentors & Safe Adults

- “Who makes you feel more confident or understood?”
 - “What makes someone a good mentor?”
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4) Healthy Choices Script

Practice calm responses:

- “No thanks.”
 - “I’ve got practice tomorrow.”
 - “I want to feel good for my body.”
 - “I’m sticking with my plan.”
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The “Toxic Coach Test” (Middle School Version)

Ask together:

- “Do you feel respected by your coach?”
- “Can you ask questions without being embarrassed?”
- “Does your coach correct behavior or attack you as a person?”
- “Do you feel motivated after practice... or anxious and sick to your stomach?”

Explain:

“A tough coach isn’t the same as a harmful coach. Tough coaches push you. Harmful coaches shame you.”

Parent note:

Use difficult-but-safe coaches to teach coping and communication skills.
Step in if there is humiliation, threats, favoritism, or emotional harm.

Ages 13+ (Use **WITHOUT** the Video)



Conversation Starter

“Sports and movement can act as protective factors — they build resilience, accountability, connection, and help with decision-making under pressure.”

Deeper Discussion

1) Bounce-Back Plan (Ownership)

- “What’s one challenge you want to handle better?”

Create:

- coping strategy
 - practice habit
 - mindset phrase
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2) Identity Balance

- “You are more than your sport or activity — what else defines you?”
 - “If that part of your life changed, what would still ground you?”
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3) Mentors

- “Which adults actually bring out your best?”
 - “Who do you trust to be honest with you?”
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4) Healthy Choice Language

- “No thanks.”
- “I’ve got practice tomorrow.”
- “I want to feel good for my body.”
- “I’m sticking with my plan.”



The “Toxic Coach Test” (Teen Version)

Go deeper:

- “Do you feel psychologically safe with your coach?”
- “Can you make mistakes without being humiliated?”
- “Does your coach develop you as a person—or only care about winning?”
- “Do they respect boundaries?”
- “Do they isolate or control players?”
- “Are you afraid to speak up?”

Explain:

“Tough training builds skill. Fear-based control breaks confidence.”

Support options:

- talking to athletic director / school counselor
- switching teams or roles
- choosing another activity
- documenting behavior

Optional Low-Pressure Questions

- “What effort are you proud of today?”
- “Who did you support?”
- “What’s one thing you’d change next time?”

