



Don't force your passion, your child will find their own

By Allyson Tufts

As the hockey season gets underway and you're feeling the jitters of a new team, a new coach and a new list of hopes for your young player, take a moment to remind yourself that this is your child's experience and you're lucky to be along for the ride.

One of best examples of when I forced my passion in my book was the story of when my son stepped on to the ice for his first hockey game. I had loved hockey so much that I assumed he'd love it too. I really felt that my passion for the game would be enough for both of us. I learned quickly I was wrong. Here is an excerpt from the book from Lesson #1 about our son's first hockey experience.

"He started to shuffle towards me; again, I looked away, thinking if I didn't make eye contact with him he'd skate the other way. But in his determined way he got to me and started to yell, "I hate it here! When can we get Tim Hortons?" I smiled as if it was super cute when I really found it super annoying, I'd woken up at an ungodly hour, dressed him in his hockey equipment, all because this was going to be a memory dammit! I, the woman who loved hockey, was going to come and watch my son skate through all of the players and score on his very first day. In the end, the only thing he scored was a Timbit. I hated the whole experience."

Once we surrendered to the fact that his passion was going to be something he'd have to figure out, the stress was no longer an issue. As soon as he found his own love for the game the rest was easy and I think that's true of any child in whatever passion they choose.

I think Jim Facette said it best in the video when he said, "It's ok to want to be concerned, it's right to want to be involved to some extent, but at the end of the day it's about the young athlete, it's not about Mom or Dad or Grandma or Grandpa or anybody else, it's their experience."

I never knew where to draw the line from being a supportive protective parent to being a parent that got in the way of his experiences. The problem was that I confused passion for knowledge. I realized that just because I loved him unconditionally and felt I knew him better than anyone else, that did not make me an expert in everything he was involved with. I needed to be the parent, not the coach, not the teammate, and most importantly not the nut case on the car ride home that went over every play in the game.

The good news for all of you is that you are at the beginning, the beginning of a new season and the beginning of many new memories with your kids. As I said earlier, this is your child's experience and you are blessed to be along for the ride. The best part is that the ride is amazing. You're able to embark on a year of long talks in the car, exciting moments when they score their first goal or make that great save. This is the beginning of you learning to share in your child's experiences, not take over them, not manipulate the outcome, simply share in them and enjoy every moment of their passion.

Ry, our young hockey player in the video said it best when he said, "Don't push them too hard, don't ruin the game, tell them fun is the number one priority." Basically, don't force your passion, your child will find their own.

Stay tuned for the next video in the series, "Let go of the control you never had in the first place"

