

Lesson

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parent decided to tell his child, "If they are going to call that cheap crap, then you might as well slam them and get your money's worth."

Another thing the parent said to his son was, "It's okay, son. If we were on the other court with those refs, we would have won." That parent had a lot to say that afternoon; those were just two examples.

For a parent to tell his son to slam an opponent in a basketball game was shocking to me. Luckily, the son did not take the father's advice; however, the son did commit a hard foul toward the end of the game that prompted the refs to end the game early to avoid any further unnecessary fouls.

I observed the unruly parent's son for most of the game. His body language, facial expressions, and attitude were horrible throughout most of the game and I have to expect it was due to him assuming that if his parent can act that way in the stands, it was OK for him to act

would hate for a kid to lose out on a scholarship offer because they were not taught how to control themselves.

The next issue that bothered me was the conversation I had with a parent about the difficulties his daughter was having with her AAU basketball team. His daughter is head and shoulders better than any other player on the team. She leads the team in scoring and assists. You would think a parent would be happy for a child performing so well on the court, but in this case you'd be wrong.

The father of the young lady told me his daughter was verbally attacked by two parents after a game. Of course, it was a game that neither he nor his wife was able to attend because of work. Apparently, the parents were saying his daughter was a "ball hog" and was "taking stats away" from their children.

The parents did not even have enough courage to say it to the young lady; instead, they spoke amongst one another loud enough to make sure the young lady could hear them. That was one of the

In the world we live in, anything and everything is capable of being recorded. Being as blatantly disrespectful as he was, he may have put his college football career in jeopardy. I'm sure this will be one of the first things college coaches mention if and when the time comes for this kid to get recruited.

The question I have is, where did this kid learn this type of behavior? I am not saying he learned it from his parents, but you have to wonder why he felt so comfortable being so disrespectful. I know everyone wants their 15 seconds of fame nowadays, but our kids must find a more constructive way of doing so.

The young man in the video did issue an apology, although it was too little too late, because the damage has already been done. Luckily, Newton decided to use this as a teachable moment instead of stooping to the young man's level. I just cringe every time I see a young person being disrespectful to an adult. I don't want to even think of the consequences I would have received from my parents had that have been me in the video say-



Photo by education.gov

According to some studies, there are roughly 45 million youth who participate in organized sports.

that way on the court. As a parent, if you can't control yourself, how can you expect your child to control themselves on the court?

The young man was no more than 12 or 13 years old, so there is time for him to grow out of that childish behavior. The thing that worries me is it's obvious the kid has talent, but if he never matures and continues to exhibit that kind of behavior on the court, it could turn some coaches and recruiters off on the next level. That parent is potentially hurting his child's future.

I couldn't imagine acting that way at a game my child was playing in. I just don't understand the logic in acting in that manner, because it's not like the ref is going to change his call. Ninety-five percent of the parents don't know the rules, which is another issue altogether. If they did know more of the rules, I think more parents would understand what the referee is looking at and why certain calls are made. Yelling gibberish from the stands only lets the ref know you don't know the rules and most refs just laugh while you're yelling things that aren't right.

Parents, do yourself and your child a favor and just cheer for your child or root for the team. You never know if there is a scout or coach in the stands. I

most immature and childish things I have ever heard when it comes to adult behavior. To stoop that low to talk about a child, but not have the guts to say it to their face is a punk move.

The father told me that his daughter no longer wanted to play for that team. Weeks later she informed him that she did not want to continue playing basketball for the remainder of the season. She is now questioning whether she wants to play for another team or switch to another sport. Her fear is that a similar situation may occur with a new team, because she will most likely be the best player on the team from day one.

For an adult to take the joy out of playing sports from a child is despicable. The father stated the coach and players on the team have reached out numerous times to change his daughter's mind. So far, she is content with sitting out the rest of the season, which is sad.

The last example that I wanted to discuss was the video of the young man at a camp engaging in a back-and-forth conversation with Cam Newton. The young man could be heard saying negative comments toward Newton in the video. He even could be heard using profanity. The young man did not make his parents proud during that video.

ing those things. Let's just say I probably would have had trouble sitting down for a few days, because my parents didn't play about respect toward adults.

I think what gets lost too often in youth sports are the youth. I am not speaking to all parents, obviously, but to those who go overboard like the above-mentioned ones. Please remember what youth sports are all about. Let's show the kids how to act as fans, so they will be better behaved on the court.

I am by no means trying to tell a parent how to raise their kids. I am simply wanting to bring youth sports back to a place where it's not all about winning, but more about the love of the game. We must put the focus back on the kids and the enjoyment they get out of playing sports.

I don't want parents to stop rooting for their kids, or even voicing their displeasure with a certain call on the court or field, but do it with some tact and respect because your kids are watching. As parents, our playing days are over, but for these kids, they are just beginning. Let's put them in the best possible position for success by showing them what class looks like on and off the court.

We can do better; we must do better.

Coach

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she wanted to participate and why. She responded that to the outside world, she is not biracial, she is Black and is treated as such.

"I am always proud when they accomplish things on the basketball court, but I was super proud of them for supporting me with this and taking part in it with me."

Crews said this is just the beginning of what he has planned for the year when it comes to his activism.

"This is my mission and I feel like this is my

place," Crews said about his plans for the year. "Yeah, I am a basketball coach and a basketball trainer and that's my calling, but also as an African American man that has seen a lot in this world, my goal is to have these kids make it to adulthood and educated. I am not telling them what's going on in the world to scare them, I just want them to be knowledgeable of what's going on. It could have been me or anyone else that we know."

"The last thing I told them was, 'When this is all said and done and you're playing in college or going on with your career in life,

if all you can say is I was a good basketball coach, then I didn't do a good job of being a good role model'."

Crews says he has been inspired by Malcolm X for quite some time. He said Malcolm's words encouraged him to use his voice for the greater good and wants to instill that same thing into his players.

During the pandemic, Crews said his business has continued to increase. He says if he has to be fake and pretend the things happening to Black and brown people don't matter just to make people do business with him, he doesn't need their money.

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