



Why Give Participation Trophies?

As the team parent, you need to choose participation trophies for your child's sports team. Another parent says to you, "When I was a kid, I had to EARN my trophies. They weren't just handed to us at the end of the season." So why do we give our children trophies for participating in sports? Is there value in giving trophies at the end of each season? Our answer is yes, but you can decide for yourself.

Recognition

Kids care about recognition. They want validation from their coach and parents for a job well done. Over the course of a season, each child on the team has most likely done something that they feel proud of and deserve recognition for. Awarding them a trophy gives them the praise that they deserve, and is a tangible item to remind them of that accomplishment.

Cost

A trophy doesn't need to be a big item or cost a lot of money to be meaningful. What it does need is good intentions behind it. A \$6-\$10 investment in awards will bring your child joy now and for years to come. What else can you buy for this relatively small investment for such a long payoff period?

Sometimes a teammate's family cannot afford to buy a trophy. Check with the other parents on the team to see if they're willing to contribute to that child's award. If not, please don't leave that child out of your awards party. Check with our staff about including an award for that child.

And Another Thing...

With increased concern about the environment, people are choosing to buy less and recycle more. Unfortunately, most trophy components cannot be recycled and must be either thrown away or reused. We have done some research and have located several places on the eastside of Seattle that accept donations of old trophies. They are cleaned and resold in their thrift stores. Visit http://trophies2go.com/fact_sheets/Recycling-Old-Trophies.pdf for more information. Other award options include medals or dog tags, both of which take up less space and use less material than traditional trophies.

Commitment

Most of all, participation trophies are a way to reinforce commitment. If a child signs up to play a sport and stays with it until the end of the season, that accomplishment deserves recognition. He or she made a commitment to join the team and stuck it out until the end. The children on your team have accomplished the goals of trying something new, learning about a new sport, working together, making new friends, and more. If you feel like this is your definition of success, then your players deserve meaningful recognition. Participation trophies are a symbol of this accomplishment – and they'll love them now and for years to come!

Sports do not build character. They reveal it. – John Wooden