

The Odyssey of the Mind Coaches

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yes, even coaches have rights!

1. **You have the right to expect school-appropriate behavior and language from your team, whether they meet at school or not.** The rule of thumb is: "If you wouldn't do it around a teacher, you don't do it at OM meetings." If you are a parent-coach you may wonder how teachers keep their large classes under control, while your seven team members are swinging from the rafters at every meeting. It's simple: Teachers expect school-appropriate behavior, and so should you. Go over your expectations with the team and the team parents.
2. **You have the right to expect your team members to be at their regular weekly meetings.** If a child doesn't attend regularly, the whole team suffers. Give the team and their parents a calendar of monthly meetings, and expect team members to be at meetings on time.
3. **You have the right to expect the parents of your team members to help.** You are a volunteer coach, not a genie! You can't be in two places at once, you don't have four pairs of hands, and you only have two eyes. Let the parents know when you will be needing help, and they will respond.
4. **You have the right to expect parents to share in the cost of creating the solution.** How you go about it is up to you, but don't feel obligated to pay for everything. This also includes FOOD! When you make up your monthly meeting calendar, include SNACK ASSIGNMENTS along with meeting times.
5. **You have the right to remove a child from a meeting if she/he is unable to behave appropriately.** Find a safe place in the room for the child to sit, and insist that she/he stay there for the duration of the meeting. Don't leave her/him unsupervised.
6. **You have the right (and the responsibility) to call the child's parents if a problem occurs or recurs.** Do not let one or two kids ruin the creative energy of the team. You would want to know about your child's behavior, and so do parents. Don't be afraid to call.
7. **You have the right to remove a child from your OM Team if all attempts to modify his/her behavior fail, and it is clear that the team cannot proceed otherwise.** This is a last resort and should only happen with the child's parent's knowledge and involvement.
8. **You have a right to have a life outside of OM, especially during the last few weeks before the Regional!** (This will be news to some of you!) It's true - you can and should step back from your team and its travails and get some perspective. Is it still fun? Are you taking it too seriously? Are their problems becoming your problems? Do you want to "win" more than they do?

Our Advice:

Don't let Odyssey take over your whole life!
Remember, it's all about *the team's* journey toward *their* solution.