

***PSSST ... ODYSSEY OF THE MIND
TEAM
PARENTS, FRIENDS, and
GUARDIANS!***

(Yes, **you**, the ones who are driving the carpools, forking out money for pizza, opening closets for major scavenging, waiting while the team cleans up after a meeting, postponing dinner because one more prop needs finished, and generally watching from the sidelines while the team "gets creative!")

DID YOU KNOW ·

You are the team's secret weapon for success??

You are the "wind beneath the wings" of the team and the coach??

You are a vital part of Odyssey of the Mind??

DID YOUR CHILD TELL YOU THAT YOU MAY NOT HELP??

That is absolutely **wrong!**

That is absolutely **right!**

(Well.. which is it???)

BOTH! You may do many things to help the team, but there are also things you might want to do that would cost the team penalty points. So... how do you know the difference? Here is your own handy, dandy, just-for-parents guidelines!

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

Transport the team to buy things

Transport the props

Teach the team members a skill IF the team asks, such as

- Sewing - Woodworking
- Calligraphy - Art
- Electronics - Engineering
- Principals of simple machines
- Welding

Help provide snacks

Bring spontaneous problem supplies

Help get props into the building for the Tournament, even to the staging area

Open attics, closets, basements for "garage sale value" materials

Provide lots of encouragement

Provide a place to meet/store props

Get everyone and everything to the Tournament

Applaud A LOT and help get props offstage afterwards

WHAT PARENTS CANNOT DO:

Suggest what to buy

Repair props if broken in shipping

Suggest to the team which skills to use to solve a problem

Suggest to the team which skills would result in a better-looking or better functioning solution

Give the teams any ideas for their problem solution

Sew anything, paint anything, do anything to contribute to the team's problem solution

Analyze why something failed

Expect perfection from a solution not done by adults (or from a solution done by adults, for that matter!)

Pack props for the team for easier use on stage

Suggest what materials to get from the attic, closet or basement

Tell them how to do things "better"

Fix anything that breaks

Criticize any part of a team's solution

Put emphasis on scores instead of fun

As you can tell, parents ARE important, as resources for leaning skills, helping get materials, providing moral support, supplementing working brains with nourishment, and generally facilitating the logistics of a working team. Without your encouragement, your child will not develop the self-confidence that Odyssey of the Mind promotes.

OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

- What parents may not do is provide the dreaded "Outside Assistance", for which the team will receive penalties at the tournament. Just remember that all ideas for the **long-term problem** solution, as well as all of the implementation of those ideas, must come from a team member.

However, there is NO "Outside Assistance" in Spontaneous Problem Solving, so feel free to assist the coach, practice at home around the dinner table, and have fun with your family doing spontaneous problems with your child and/or other children. (Everyone loves spontaneous!)

Thanks to: Lisa Love, Virginia VOICES Association Director,
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