



1381 W. Massey Rd. Memphis, TN 38120 Office: (901) 474 1035 [www.soccerole.org](http://www.soccerole.org)

**Constructive dialogue is pertinent to your relationship with your young soccer player. US Youth Soccer's Positive Parenting published the article *Dear Mom or Dad* in a letter format, written from the child's perspective to the parents concerning what the child wants and needs from the parent for effective communication.**

### **Dear Mom or Dad...**

When you encourage me, I feel confident and proud of myself. When you recognize things that I do well, I will repeat them. When I repeat them, I need for you to notice. I need to know the *specific* things that I do well on the soccer field.

I know when I have made a mistake – you don't need to remind me. I feel embarrassed and belittled when you call attention to my mistakes in front of other people. I learn from my mistakes with my coaches and my team - but you are not my coach, so when you criticize me, it makes me feel like a failure as your child.

As my parent, you are my most important role model. Please support me, support my friends and teammates, the referees and even the opposing team through positive, constructive comments. If you have a negative opinion about anyone or anything that happens in my game or practice, please keep it to yourself...even on the way home in the car. The most important thing you can say to me is, "You played great...did you have fun?"

I want to show you the skills I'm developing, how I'm improving, and ultimately what a great soccer player I am becoming. I can't remember everything and there's so much to share, so please ask me *specific* questions about what I've learned!

Examples:

- Wow, you really get good distance on your throw-in's/goal kicks/corner kicks/passes - how do you get it to go that far?
- Way to lead your teammate down the sideline with your throw-in/goal kick/pass - that really seemed to set him/her up for a run at goal or a shot on net...did you do that on purpose?
- Great job keeping the ball close to you body as you dribble - the other team had a hard time trying to steal it from you, didn't they?
- I can see how you pick your head up when you dribble to look for your teammates - how can you keep and eye on the ball at the same time?
- You're very good at pulling the ball backwards when you're in a crowd - do you just sense that there is nobody behind you, or do you actually check and see first?



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- What do you call that turn when you change direction with the ball?
- Was that your left foot I saw you shooting with?!
- Boy, you are just relentless on defense, aren't you? You're like a mosquito around the other team when they have the ball - you just don't give them any space to pass or shoot!
- It's great to hear everyone calling for the ball - how do you know where to pass the ball when everyone is calling at the same time?
- What do you like about being on Offense?
- What do you like about being on Defense?
- What's easier when you're the goalie...punting or throwing the ball?
- After you scored that goal, it was great to see you first high-five your teammate that passed you the ball - how do you think it made your teammate feel when you did that?
- Would you like to go out into the yard and show me what you've learned?

There are many, many more!