



4700 W Lake Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025 ■ 800/344-2148 ■ 847/375-4800 ■ fax 847/375-6480 ■ www.ara.org

CONTACT: Susan Stoga/Kellie Lewis
(847) 884-0000

**SURVEY SHOWS SPORTSMANSHIP IS ON THE DECLINE,
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT ARE KEY**

GLENVIEW, Ill. (August 23, 2006) – As kids head back to school and fall sports gear up, a new survey on sportsmanship reveals that more than 63 percent of Americans believe that the current state of sportsmanship is worse than when they were growing up.

Just five percent of Americans believe that sportsmanship is better, according to the survey conducted last month by the Awards and Recognition Association (ARA) and TNS/NFO Research.

“We conducted this survey to learn more about the current state of sportsmanship in America, since it directly correlates with ARA efforts,” said Rich Zydonik, president of ARA. “We hope that drawing attention to this issue will help encourage good sportsmanship among athletes, coaches and parents.”

Additionally, age influences views on sportsmanship. Dissatisfaction with sportsmanship increases dramatically with age, as 81 percent of Americans age 60 years or older reported that sportsmanship is worse now, compared to 70 percent of Americans age 50 to 59, 54 percent of those age 30 to 39, and 45 percent of those 30 years or less who reported dissatisfaction.

According to the survey, Americans overwhelmingly believe that teaching good sportsmanship to children is a parental responsibility. More than 86 percent of respondents reported that a parent is the best person to teach sportsmanship, followed by coaches at 45 percent, teachers at 28 percent and friends at 17 percent.

“There is no doubt that all the rules, coaching and education can’t replace what happens at home,” said Coach LaVell Edwards, former BYU football coach, parent of three children and Chair of the ARA Sportsmanship Award Selection Panel. “Teaching good sportsmanship starts with parents, and they need to model behavior throughout the entire process.”

Other survey findings:

- The same amount of women and men agreed that parents were the best to teach sportsmanship.
- 73 percent of Americans stated that all kids participating in a sport should receive a recognition award/item for participation in the sport.
- 65 percent of Americans thought that the best way to recognize sportsmanship was through verbal recognition, followed by positive reinforcement at 54 percent and trophies and awards at 37 percent.
- Twice as many men than women thought that negative reinforcement was a good way to recognize sportsmanship.

The Awards and Recognition Association recognizes good sportsmanship in collegiate football players with its ARA Sportsmanship Award, presented annually to the athlete who personifies sportsmanship. ARA’s selection committee, headed by Coach Edwards, includes former collegiate and professional coaches and others, including Christine Brennan, Rod Commons, Lee Corso, Vince Dooley, Spike Dykes, Steve Hatchell, Don James, Roy Kidd, Bernie Kish, Dick McPherson, Don Nehlen, Tubby Raymond, Bo Schembechler, Gene Stallings, Grant Teaff and Rick Walls.

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ARA Sportsmanship

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To encourage good sportsmanship, ARA's selection panel created tips to help teach sportsmanlike behavior at all ages:

As a parent:

- Remind kids of the importance of sportsmanship and model that behavior during all competitive activities.
- Do not put pressure on kids to be the best; instead teach them to enjoy the game for the sport.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship yourself and ask others to do the same. Bad behavior on the sidelines or in the stands is just as bad as bad behavior on the field.
- Remember that good sportsmanship starts at home... teach children how to be good sports when playing games, whether in the backyard or at the kitchen table.
- Discuss the need for good sportsmanship with your child's teacher or coach.
- Request that school coaches and other parents address this early in the season.
- Set a positive example by incorporating good sportsmanship into your own life.

As a coach:

- Set an example by treating all athletes, coaches, officials and parents respectfully, and cheer on good plays when you see them, even if they're by the other team.
- Do not emphasize competition or winning; rather, emphasize skills and fair play, especially with younger athletes.
- Establish a sportsmanship award at the start of the season, letting parents and athletes know that good on-field behavior will be recognized.
- Implement a system of small rewards at every game or match to reward good sportsmanship.
- Praise positive and correct negative behavior immediately.
- Create a zero-tolerance policy for bad behavior... from athletes, other coaches and parents.
- Award year-end trophies and awards to commemorate teamwork and excellence in sportsmanship.
- Demonstrate how to celebrate victory without humiliating the competition, as well as how to lose with dignity.

ARA is comprised of more than 4,000 retailers and suppliers within the awards and recognition industry. Since 1964, ARA has been enhancing and supporting the awards industry through education, information, and networking opportunities. For more information about ARA, visit www.ara.org or contact ARA headquarters by phone at 800/344-2148 or via fax at 847/375-6480.

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