

What Questions Should I Ask Our Club/Club Coach?

As a parent, we often find it easy to trust coaches and club leaders with the safety and well-being of our children. Before we take that leap of faith, consider asking your coaches (at any level) these questions:

12 Great Questions for Your Club/Coach

1 - What does the written mission statement of the club (and the staff) look like? Are they posted online?

If a gym can't explain their mission, your child's experience and possibly even their safety could be at jeopardy. Ask how important winning is to this gym vs helping your child have fun and develop life skills like nutrition, goal setting, emotional growth, etc...



2 - Can all coaches provide proof of background checks, SafeSport certification, and USA Wrestling coach certifications (Copper for 12U, Bronze for 13+, Silver and Gold as advanced options)?

3 - How long have the coaches been coaching (both at this gym and total years)? Can you get references for all coaches from previous gyms or from other parents for the coaching staff?

4 - Does this gym have an Athlete Development Model (ADM)? Periodization Plans for training volume and intensity throughout the training period?

5 - What is the strategy for athlete setbacks (injuries, mental development, physical growth, vacation and recovery time off, etc)? If a club or coach talks about your youth athlete (12U) "cutting" weight, consider looking at different clubs.

6 - How soon does your club/coach expect athletes start competing? Do they expect the athlete to only participate in only one sport? USA Wrestling recommends multi-sport participation for all 12U athletes.

7 - What forms of communication does the gym use (Email, calls, newsletters, texts, social media, etc...) and how frequently? How does the gym handle conflict with athletes, coaches, parents, etc?

8 - Does the gym and staff provide detailed evaluations and growth strategies for your athlete? If so, what do they look like? How often are they reviewed?

9 - What is the ratio of athletes to coaches? Does this number safely fit in the facility? Will your athlete get personal attention? Do private lessons cost more?

10 - What does the liability release and team handbook look like?

11 - What is a parents role in your gym and how does the club expect parents to act/interact? Does the

club support community engagement programs or fundraising events?

12 - Does the club/coach help parents learn about wrestling's rules, scoring, and what to expect?

Bonus Questions:

- Gym Appearance: Was it brightly colored, safe, clean, and kid friendly? Was the front desk and staff nice, smiling, and helpful? Was the equipment new/old, clean, etc?
- Does club staff attend yearly coaching conferences? If so, which ones?

As you review these questions, other important questions may arise. Just because a club exists, that doesn't guarantee your child is going to a safe and productive environment.

Doing your due diligence as a parent will help ensure your athlete has a fun, safe, and rewarding experience in our sport.

Never allow a club, coach, or group to say that abusive behavior is "just a part of training." Our sport is demanding and challenging enough on its own without putting our athletes in an environment that might risk their physical or emotional safety.

Ask the tough questions and make sure you get an adequate answer. Professionalism in coaching is key for your child's overall sport experience. Our job, as parents, is to ensure these professionals follow the best practices for coaches.

Check out TEAM USA's Quality Coaching Framework info [CLICK HERE](#) (or search for USOPC QCF).

Thank you!

USA Wrestling's National Coaches Education Program (NCEP)

