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School Notes



By Heather Ramsey

After School Sports Options

School Resources for Parents

My child is at the age where I would like to enroll him in an athletic program. How can I be sure I choose the best activity?

I am always glad to hear parents say they want their children to be more physically active, be it through the schools or a private facility. There are myriad of benefits to children who participate in sports.

A child's self-esteem is enhanced through both the physical and mental aspect of athletics. Teamwork, making new friends, building mental and physical strength, the sense of accomplishment, and even losing, all add to life lessons. Additionally, many students who participate in sports are less likely to engage in drugs and alcohol.

There are many quality programs available to residents in our region. Activities range from swimming and

soccer, to basketball, baseball, ice skating and beyond. The YMCA is a great place to look for activities for young and blooming athletes and public and private schools also offer great, after school programs. Local businesses also cater to students of hockey, gymnastics and Tae Kwon Do. You can find a complete list of activities at http://www.albemarlekids.com/kids_recreation_year_round.htm.

The trick is finding the right sport for your child and to do this there are a few determining factors to keep in mind.

Experts suggest you ask yourself several questions before enrolling your child in a sport. The most obvious one is what is your child interested in? Does he or she want to stick with one sport or participate in several, seasonal ones? You'll also want to check your check book! What can you afford and how much time and commitment does

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the sport require? What is the coach's philosophy? Do you share the same values and beliefs about sports? Does the coach enjoy working with athletes at your child's level? Look around and determine if all the kids in the program are having fun. Are they all involved? And last, but not least, are all safety precautions being taken? What are the procedures should your child be injured?

If you can honestly answer all of the above questions, you will be off to a great start with integrating athletics into your child's schedule. Which, brings up another benefit of participating in athletics; it teaches your child commitment and time management. Studies show that many students who are involved in sports perform better in school as well.

The main focus should be on which activities fit your child, not trying to make a child fit a sport. If your child has any health issues, please be sure to consult with a pediatrician prior to beginning an athletic program. Play Ball!

Please send your "School Notes" questions to Editor@AlbemarleFamily.com or by mail 4282 Ivy Road Charlottesville, VA 22903.

Albemarle County School Board meets the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 6:30 pm. Room 241, County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road. Charlottesville City School Board meets on the 1st Thursday of each month (Study Session) and the 3rd Thursday (Business Session) at 7:00 pm. Charlottesville High School, Booker Reaves Media Center, 1562 Dairy Road.

Heather Ramsey is a UVA graduate with years of varied classroom experience. Her current position is an Instructional Specialist in Albemarle County.

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- The Blue Ridge School
- St. Margaret's
- The Covenant School
- Fredericksburg Academy
- Foxcroft
- Chatham Hall

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- Elon College
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- James Madison University
- St. Andrews College
- Virginia Tech
- University of NC, Asheville
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