

Setting Out the Mat

Creating a welcoming environment is the first step in building positive relationships with families. Some families are nervous about coming to Young Athletes community programs. They don't know what to expect or how their child will participate. Here are some tips to make families feel at home at Young Athletes.



Say Hello

A simple "hello and welcome to Young Athletes" goes a long way. If you can, say the family's or child's name when you greet them.

Introduce Yourself

Tell families who you are. Share a little about your self too. What do you do when you aren't coaching? How long have you been coaching? What are your favorite YA activities? You can also send an email before the session starts.

Create a Welcome Card

Have an index card with some basic information to hand out at the first session or to new families that join your session anytime. Include some basic information about your program (We do a group activity together and then you can have free play time), assurance about participation (Don't worry if your child doesn't participate right away. Sometimes it takes a little time to warm up), and an invitation to say hi to another family (When you are ready, please introduce yourself to another family).



Sing a Welcome Song

There are many welcome songs and rhymes that are simple and easy to follow. This is also a great way for everyone to learn each other's names and work on social skills. Not musically inclined? Use prerecorded music.



The Informal Chat

Walk around during the session (provided the environment is safe and volunteers are running activities). Chat with the families. Get to know what is important to them. Are there other children at home? What do they like to do as a family? What are their plans for the weekend? Don't be afraid to ask questions. Families will appreciate that you are interested in them.