2026-2027 FAMILY EDITION

No Mercy Parent Guide

Raising resilient kids. Staying on their side.



Wrestling gives children chances to try, struggle, learn and begin again. Your steady support helps those experiences become lessons they can carry into school, friendships and everyday life.

THE PROMISE THEY SHOULD FEEL

Win or lose, you can come to me. I love you, I am on your side, and we can figure out the next step together.

A practical guide for No Mercy families: understanding wrestling, building resilience, eating well and enjoying a full life beyond the mat.

Welcome to No Mercy

Welcome, new and returning families. Here is what you need for the season.

Season and practice times

November 3, 2026 through the end of June 2027. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at Rancho Buena Vista High School, Room 339. Starting November 3: 6:30-8:00 PM through March, until the high school season concludes. Then we return to 6:00-7:30 PM; the club will announce the changeover date.

Register again before the first practice

All wrestlers, including returning athletes, must complete the new-season registration, new waiver and both annual health acknowledgments before practicing, including the introductory week.

Register: nomercywc.com/register

USA Wrestling membership is required for practice

Required after the first week of practice and before sanctioned tournaments. California 2026-2027 Traditional Athlete (youth) or Open License (adult): $70, separate from club fees; expires August 31, 2027. The mailed plastic card is optional ($12 extra). Verify the final price at checkout. Membership includes secondary accident coverage for qualifying practices, subject to policy terms.

Buy or renew: usawmembership.com | Membership requirements and insurance details

$75 for the club season

Pay by Venmo @no-mercy-wrestling or cash. Every club fee goes back into supporting the kids: gear, tournament support and team activities. Coaches do not retain these fees.

Find what you need

What you are watching 3
Help them face a hard moment 4
Be the person they can come to 5
Support without taking over 6
Practice first. Tournaments later. 7
Build healthy food habits 8
Build an active, curious childhood 9
Keep the family rhythm sustainable 10
SafeSport & athlete safety 11
Optional resources and references 12
Words to grow with 13

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Bring water, practice clothes and coach-requested gear. Confirm footwear, viewing and pickup arrangements; share relevant support needs with the coach.

01 / UNDERSTAND THE SPORT

What you are watching

Wrestling is a sport of position, balance and control. Two athletes solve movement problems together under rules and supervision. Size, experience and readiness matter when partners are chosen.

Three useful positions

In neutral, neither wrestler has control. On top, a wrestler works to maintain control and turn an opponent. On bottom, a wrestler works to get free or reverse control. Our folkstyle practice helps children learn all three.

Words you will hear

A takedown brings an opponent to the mat with control. An escape gets a wrestler free from the bottom position; a reversal changes who has control. Near-fall points reward exposing an opponent's back toward the mat. A pin, also called a fall, ends the match when the referee confirms the required shoulder contact.

A learning room

You may see demonstrations, repeated drills, games and supervised live wrestling. Drilling gives a child time to learn a movement. Live practice adds an opponent who responds. Getting scored on in practice can be part of learning a new skill.

Watch for more than the result

Look for listening, safe partner behavior, an attempted new skill and willingness to try again. Ask the coach when something is unfamiliar. Exact scoring and match rules depend on the style and event; learn those with the coach when competition becomes relevant.



Jonathan Millner and Dayne Morton at the Cliff Keen Invitational, 2022.

Photo: Chris Hunkeler | CC BY-SA 4.0

A GOOD QUESTION AFTER PRACTICE

What did you learn or try today?

02 / BUILD RESILIENCE

Help them face a hard moment

Resilience is a cornerstone of our approach: learning to recover, adapt and keep moving with support. A caring relationship and manageable challenges help children practice those skills.

Start with connection

Get yourself calm before you speak. Come close, listen and acknowledge the feeling: "That was frustrating." A child can be disappointed and still be capable. Give them time to settle before asking them to explain or solve anything.

Make the next step small

Once your child is ready, ask what would help. They might ask the coach a question, try one movement again or return to the next practice with a simple goal. Let the child help choose. Your job is to support the step, not take over the problem.

Notice the recovery

Be specific: "You asked for help when you got stuck," or "You reset and tried again." The important moment may come after the mistake. Avoid fixed labels such as "a natural" or comparisons with another child.

Keep courage safe

Tears and asking for help belong in a learning environment. Resilience never requires hiding pain, accepting humiliation or staying silent about unsafe behavior. Address safety concerns immediately. For persistent dread, listen and seek help; if the concern involves the coach, contact club leadership or another appropriate responsible adult.

Practice it in ordinary life

Let your child work through a tricky school task, learn a household job or make a reasonable repair after a mistake. Stay available. When you make your own mistake, show how to acknowledge it, adjust and try again.

> **A SIMPLE RESET**
> Connect. Let the feeling settle. Choose one small next step together.

03 / WINS, LOSSES & THE RIDE HOME

Be the person they can come to

Be your child's trusted ally through the good days and the hard ones. They should be able to approach you after any result and know the relationship is secure.

Give the same warm welcome

Offer your attention before your opinion. "I'm glad to see you" works after a win, a loss or a rough practice. Ask whether they want a hug, a conversation or quiet. Take care of water, food and a moment to unwind.

After a loss

Allow disappointment without rushing to erase it. Skip "You should have..." and promises that they will win next time. When they are ready, listen to what mattered to them. Later, one question for the coach is enough; the car does not need to become a replay room.

After a win

Celebrate with them. Notice preparation, a brave attempt, respectful conduct or something they learned. Give the opponent credit and keep celebrations kind. A win can be exciting without becoming proof that your child is better than someone else.

Let the child lead reflection

Try: "What are you proud of?" or "Is there anything you want help with?" Accept a short answer or no conversation yet. Ask before sharing video or posting about the experience. A child's difficult moment is personal.

Keep the rest of the day familiar

Have the meal, enjoy the family time and talk about something beyond wrestling. Keep affection and ordinary family pleasures steady across results. If your own reaction was too intense, apologize clearly and reconnect.

> **WORDS YOU CAN BORROW**
> "I love you. I'm here. Do you want me to listen, help, or give you a little space?"

04 / YOUR ROLE & THE COACH'S ROLE

Support without taking over

Parents provide belonging, perspective and practical care. Coaches teach technique and guide practice. Children need room to become active participants in their own learning.

Be a calm presence

Encourage effort and respectful behavior. Competing technical instructions can confuse a child. Let the coach handle corrections, and keep your connection with your child bigger than sport.

Ask for a conversation

Arrange a time for routine questions. Describe what you noticed, ask what the coach sees and agree on one next step. Raise safety concerns immediately. If a concern involves the coach, contact club leadership or another appropriate responsible adult.

Give ownership in small pieces

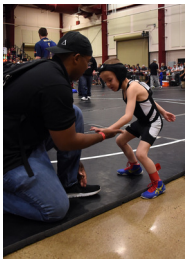
A younger child can choose a snack or put a bottle in the bag. Gradually let them pack equipment and ask questions with your help. Responsibility grows through supported practice; a forgotten item is a chance to learn.

When your child wants to stop

Listen for the reason: a hard day, a partner problem, pain, too much activity or a lasting loss of interest. Work out the next step together. Avoid deciding everything in the heat of the moment or using a commitment to dismiss a real concern.

If you also coach

Make the change in roles clear. During practice you serve the whole group; afterward, return to being their parent. Ask how that arrangement feels to your child and leave room for honest feedback.



Coach Morris Thomas encourages Ian Greer, 2016.

Photo: Debbie Lockhart / USAF | Public domain

KEEP THE DOOR OPEN

"You can tell me when something feels wrong. We will take it seriously."

05 / TAKE THE LONG VIEW

Practice first. Tournaments later.

At No Mercy, we recommend a few years of wrestling practice before entering any tournaments. We want children to build familiarity, confidence and a love of learning before adding tournament pressure.

Make the early years valuable

A child can have a meaningful wrestling experience through practice: learning to move, being a good partner, making friends and recovering from frustration. They do not need a tournament bracket to prove that they belong.

Let progress take its own pace

Practice attendance, age or a good day in the room does not create an automatic competition deadline. Children develop differently. Compare your child with their own earlier self, and keep the focus on enjoyment, safe participation and growing independence.

Talk about readiness together

After that practice foundation, talk with your child and coach. Does the child want to try? Can they follow instructions, work safely with partners and ask for help? Can the family approach both results calmly? These are conversation prompts, not a pass-or-fail test.

Choose a suitable first experience

When the time comes, ask the coach about an appropriate event, divisions, rules, logistics and what support will be available. Set a simple learning goal. Plan food, water and breaks, and avoid making the day a judgment of the child's future.

Keep belonging unconditional

A family can choose to keep practicing without entering tournaments. If an event becomes overwhelming, respond to the child in front of you and discuss what to change next time. There is no medal deadline for childhood.

> **OUR CLUB RECOMMENDATION**
> A few years of practice before any tournaments. This is No Mercy's approach, not a universal rule or a guarantee of readiness.

06 / EAT FOR GROWTH & EVERYDAY ENERGY

Build healthy food habits

Help your child arrive fed, hydrated and ready to learn. Growing bodies need regular meals and snacks as well as enough food for activity.

Build variety into the day

Offer fruit and vegetables, grains or other carbohydrate foods, protein foods, and milk, yogurt or suitable fortified alternatives. Include healthy fats from foods such as avocado, olive oil or allergy-appropriate nut butter. Familiar, affordable foods can nourish an active child.

Make practice evenings easier

Plan an after-school snack if dinner will be late. Close to practice, a lighter familiar snack may sit better than a heavy meal. Afterward, have a meal or snack available instead of letting a late finish mean no food.

Simple family choices

Breakfast: oatmeal, fruit and milk. Before practice: a banana and crackers. Later: rice, beans or chicken, and vegetables. A sandwich or yogurt with fruit can be convenient too. Adapt these examples for allergies, preferences and your child's needs.

Keep water available

Send a filled bottle and encourage regular drinks before, during and after activity. Plain water is usually a good everyday choice for young athletes. Needs change with heat and exertion.

Protect growing bodies

Do not skip meals or restrict fluids to reach a weight class. Keep food separate from rewards or punishment for performance. Bring concerns about growth, eating or body weight to your child's pediatrician or a qualified dietitian.

AN EASY PREPARATION HABIT

Let your child help choose tomorrow's snack and fill the water bottle. Keep the focus on feeling nourished and ready to play.

07 / LIFE BEYOND THE MAT

Build an active, curious childhood

Wrestling can be one part of a rich childhood. Give your child time for other sports, free play, friendships and interests they enjoy for their own sake.

Make jump rope playful

Try a few comfortable jumps, then pause and laugh about the tangles. Count a shared streak, follow a rhythm or let your child make up a game. Choose a clear space and an appropriate rope. Stop while it is still enjoyable; this is an invitation, not a daily quota.

Choose variety together

Walk, ride bikes, swim with appropriate supervision, play catch or spend time at the playground. Other sports offer new skills, teammates and experiences. Ask what your child wants to try. Some afternoons can simply be open for play.

Try offseason judo at San-Shi

For a child interested in another grappling sport, we recommend exploring an offseason beginner class at San-Shi Judo Club in Vista. Visit together, observe and ask about age fit, instruction, availability, registration and equipment. Its official website is sanshijudo.org.

Make room in the week

Consider judo or another activity as a seasonal change, not an automatic addition to an already full schedule. Judo has its own rules and teaching methods; learn throws and falls with qualified instruction. Ask the dojo about its progression and competition expectations.

Protect other parts of identity

Art, music, reading, friends and unstructured family time matter too. Show interest in what your child loves away from wrestling. They should have many ways to feel capable and connected.

> **AN OFFSEASON START**
> Choose one activity your child is excited about, protect downtime, and reassess together after trying it.

08 / DAILY HABITS THAT MAKE IT WORK

Keep the family rhythm sustainable

A good routine makes it easier to show up, recover and keep enjoying the sport. Build a rhythm your family can maintain instead of filling every available hour.

Before practice

Leave room for food, schoolwork and an unhurried arrival when possible. Help your child check clothes, equipment and water. Ask one small question: "Is there anything Coach should know today?"

After practice

Change out of used gear, clean equipment as directed and put clothing in the wash. Share a meal or snack and ease into the evening. Protect a consistent bedtime and enough time to rest.

Across the week

Keep space for school, friends, family and doing nothing in particular. Notice whether the overall schedule leaves your child looking forward to activities. If stress or reluctance keeps returning, talk about what needs to change.

Count the progress that lasts

Notice a child introducing themselves, asking a question, helping a partner, trying again after frustration or taking care of their bag. These are useful accomplishments even when nobody is keeping score.

Check in without an interview

From time to time ask: "What are you enjoying? What feels hard? What would you like more or less of?" Listen before suggesting changes. The answer can change as your child grows.

> **THE FAMILY COMPASS**
> Stay connected. Notice effort and kindness. Make room for rest and play. Let your child help shape the journey.

SafeSport & athlete safety

We have SafeSport® Trained coaches on our team.

Keep the conversation open

Listen calmly and take concerns seriously. Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult when something feels wrong. Ask a coach about routine practice questions; raise safety concerns promptly.

Report abuse or misconduct directly

Parents can report suspected abuse or misconduct directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport. You do not need club permission or a conversation with a coach before making a report. The Center accepts anonymous online reports.

Report a concern: uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern

Report by phone: 833-587-7233.

Urgent safety concerns

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, report it to local authorities before reporting to the Center. If someone is in immediate danger or facing a life-threatening emergency, call 911.

Resources for parents and athletes

The Center offers free parent and youth courses, information about recognizing abuse, and access to its public disciplinary database. These resources can help families ask informed questions and support a safer sports experience.

Parent resources: uscenterforsafesport.org/parents

No Mercy athlete safety resources

> **WORDS YOUR CHILD SHOULD HEAR**
> You can tell me when something feels wrong. I will listen, take you seriously and help you get support.

Reporting guidance and parent resources: U.S. Center for SafeSport, checked October 16, 2026. Links above open the official resources.

Optional resources and references

This guide stands on its own. You do not need to read or buy any other book to use it. The links below are optional resources and acknowledge information used to prepare the guide. Suggested conversations and family routines are practical examples, not quotations.

A Guide to Resilience

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University | developingchild.harvard.edu

Supportive relationships and coping with manageable challenges.

3 Mental Skills Children Need for Sports

American Academy of Pediatrics | healthychildren.org

Emotions, motivation and identity beyond sport.

Parent Toolkit (in the Grassroots Hub)

U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee | usopc.org

Listening, parent and coach roles, ownership and support.

Is Your Child Ready for Sports?

American Academy of Pediatrics | healthychildren.org

Individual readiness, enjoyment and varied experiences.

Feeding Your Child Athlete

Nemours KidsHealth | Reviewed April 2026 | kidshealth.org

Everyday food, fluids and growth; individual needs belong with a clinician.

Rethink Fats

USDA MyPlate | myplate.gov

Familiar sources of unsaturated fats.

11 Ways to Encourage Your Child to Be Physically Active

American Academy of Pediatrics | healthychildren.org

Enjoyable activity, jump ropes and family participation.

San-Shi Judo Club: classes and visiting

San-Shi Judo Club, Vista | sanshijudo.org

Local option. Confirm current details and ask about progression directly.

Folkstyle Overview

Georgia USA Wrestling | teamgawrestling.org

Basic positions and terms. Follow your coach and event rules for details.

Club practice details and the recommendation for a few years of practice before tournaments come from No Mercy. San-Shi is an independent club. Web resources checked October 8, 2026.

Words to grow with

Learning, joy and perspective belong at every level of wrestling. These words offer three reminders to carry with your family.



Jordan Burroughs

"You can learn just as much from a win as a loss."

USA Wrestling interview, 2013

Photo: Meghdad Madadi / Tasnim News Agency | CC BY 4.0

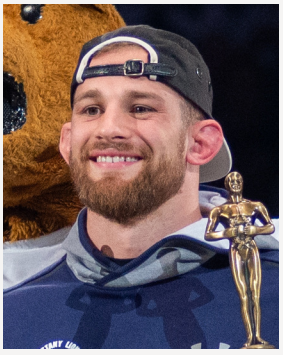


Kyle Dake

"Have fun and learn from as many people as possible."

NBC Olympics athlete questionnaire

Photo: Sgt. Shaehmus Sawyer / U.S. Marine Corps | Public domain



David Taylor

"It's not necessarily pressure -- it's an opportunity."

NCAA Championships press conference, 2014

Photo: Noah Riffe | Public Domain Mark

BRING IT HOME

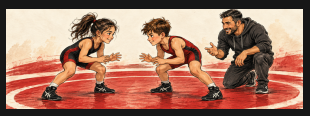
Notice what your child learns. Protect the joy. Help them approach the next challenge knowing you are on their side.

Photos retain their published frames; resized and compressed for print. The cover illustration depicts fictional people. Quotes and images do not imply endorsement of No Mercy.

NO MERCY WRESTLING

TUESDAY

OFFENSE



6:30-8:00 PM | 90 MINUTES

1. WARM-UP JOGGING

2. CALISTHENICS - IN ORDER, 1 THROUGH 18

Bigger kids: RIGHT side of the room | Shrimps: LEFT side of the room

01 Forward rolls
02 Shoulder rolls
03 Diving forward rolls
04 Backward shoulder rolls
05 Cartwheels facing the window
06 Cartwheels facing the walls
07 Roundoffs facing the window
08 Roundoffs facing the wall
09 Paladin - hop on left leg
10 Paladin - hop on right leg
11 Bear crawls
12 Duck walks
13 Duck hops
14 Crab walks
15 Army crawls
16 Sprawl > Sprint
17 Sprawl > Shot > Sprint
18 Bridges

Paladin: opposite hand holds the opposite leg; hop on one leg.

JOG BACK AFTER EVERY MOVE!

STANDING

1. Stance and motion
2. Hand Fighting (Snap, Drag, Push, Pull)
3. Pummeling
4. Single legs
5. Double legs
6. Duck unders
7. 2-on-1 series
8. Arm spins
9. Head locks

ON THE MAT

1. Spiral Ride
2. Arm Breakdown (knee drive)
3. Half nelsons / Arm bars
4. Chicken wings
5. Barbed wires
6. Bar Arm Tilt
7. Leg Rides

TIME (PM)	MIN	PRACTICE
6:30-6:40	10	Warm-up jogging > Calisthenics
6:40-7:10	30	Standing offense
7:10-7:15	5	Water + transition
7:15-7:35	20	Mat offense
7:35-7:45	10	Situational wrestling
7:45-7:50	5	Conditioning
7:50-7:55	5	Game
7:55-8:00	5	Cool down + recap

Practice blueprint: pick a few listed moves and repeat them.

Effective November 3, 2026 through the high school season in March. See page 2 for schedule changes.

NO MERCY WRESTLING

WEDNESDAY

DEFENSE + ESCAPES



6:30-8:00 PM | 90 MINUTES

1. WARM-UP JOGGING

2. CALISTHENICS - IN ORDER, 1 THROUGH 18

Bigger kids: RIGHT side of the room | Shrimps: LEFT side of the room

01 Forward rolls
02 Shoulder rolls
03 Diving forward rolls
04 Backward shoulder rolls
05 Cartwheels facing the window
06 Cartwheels facing the walls
07 Roundoffs facing the window
08 Roundoffs facing the wall
09 Paladin - hop on left leg
10 Paladin - hop on right leg
11 Bear crawls
12 Duck walks
13 Duck hops
14 Crab walks
15 Army crawls
16 Sprawl > Sprint
17 Sprawl > Shot > Sprint
18 Bridges

Paladin: opposite hand holds the opposite leg; hop on one leg.

JOG BACK AFTER EVERY MOVE!

STANDING

1. Hand Fighting (Snap, Drag, Push, Pull)
2. Single leg defense
3. Double leg defense
4. Headlock defense
5. Arm spin defense
6. 2-on-1 defense
7. Front head lock series
8. Knee tap rolls

ON THE MAT

1. Stand-ups
2. Petersen
3. Switch
4. Granbys
5. Break wrist control
6. Get hips away
7. Gut wrench / tilt defense
8. Leg ride defense

TIME (PM)	MIN	PRACTICE
6:30-6:40	10	Warm-up jogging > Calisthenics
6:40-7:10	30	Standing defense
7:10-7:15	5	Water + transition
7:15-7:35	20	Mat defense + escapes
7:35-7:45	10	Live wrestling
7:45-7:50	5	Conditioning
7:50-7:55	5	Game
7:55-8:00	5	Cool down + recap

Practice blueprint: pick a few listed moves and repeat them.
Effective November 3, 2026 through the high school season in March. See page 2 for schedule changes.

NO MERCY WRESTLING

THURSDAY

COACH TANIA / OFFENSE + DEFENSE



6:30-8:00 PM | 90 MINUTES

1. WARM-UP JOGGING

2. CALISTHENICS - IN ORDER, 1 THROUGH 18

Bigger kids: RIGHT side of the room | Shrimps: LEFT side of the room

01	Forward rolls	07	Roundoffs facing the window	13	Duck hops
02	Shoulder rolls	08	Roundoffs facing the wall	14	Crab walks
03	Diving forward rolls	09	Paladin - hop on left leg	15	Army crawls
04	Backward shoulder rolls	10	Paladin - hop on right leg	16	Sprawl > Sprint
05	Cartwheels facing the window	11	Bear crawls	17	Sprawl > Shot > Sprint
06	Cartwheels facing the walls	12	Duck walks	18	Bridges

Paladin: opposite hand holds the opposite leg; hop on one leg.

JOG BACK AFTER EVERY MOVE!

STANDING

OFFENSE

Stance and motion / Pummeling
Hand Fighting (Snap, Drag, Push, Pull)
Single legs / Double legs
Duck unders / 2-on-1 series
Arm spins / Head locks

DEFENSE

Single leg defense / Double leg defense
Headlock defense / Arm spin defense
2-on-1 defense / Front head lock series
Knee tap rolls

ON THE MAT

OFFENSE

Spiral Ride / Arm Breakdown (knee drive)
Half nelsons / Arm bars
Chicken wings / Barbed wires
Bar Arm Tilt / Leg Rides

DEFENSE + ESCAPES

Stand-ups / Petersen / Switch / Granbys
Break wrist control / Get hips away
Gut wrench / tilt defense
Leg ride defense

CHOOSE: single leg | gut wrench | over / under. Start on the whistle.

TIME (PM)	MIN	PRACTICE
6:30-6:40	10	**Warm-up jogging > Calisthenics**
6:40-7:05	25	**Offense + defense review / fun moves**
7:05-7:10	5	**Water + transition**
7:10-7:35	25	**Situational wrestling** Choose a move; set the position; start on the whistle.
7:35-7:45	10	**Footwork + conditioning** Agility ladders / hopscotch rings / cone footwork / low hurdles.
7:45-7:55	10	**Games - ring toss / beanbag toss**
7:55-8:00	5	**Cool down + recap**

Coach Tania picks the move. Get set; start on the whistle.

Effective November 3, 2026 through the high school season in March. See page 2 for schedule changes.