

How to Help with Preparation - A Parent's Guide

1. You're on 4n6 U, that's a great start!
2. The first step in helping your student is knowing what event he or she does. This is invaluable information, as each event is different and has it's own quirks. If you're not sure what event your student does, ask. Seriously, this is important.
3. Check out the event page on 4n6 U for whichever event your student said. Pay special attention to the ballot links that are on the page. Knowing what the judge sees as he or she is evaluating your student is really helpful in getting a sense of how your student should be preparing.
4. Offer to watch your student perform his or her pieces. However - this is important. Don't evaluate it as his or her parent, but think about it from a judge's perspective. Consider downloading the ballot for that event, so that you know exactly what it is you should be looking for and commenting on.
5. Help him or her pick an outfit. Students in Forensics wear business attire. Suits, blazers, and skirts are the norm. Helping your student to supplement his or her closet for a birthday or holiday gift can go a long way to show your support towards participation in speech and debate. (This kind of outfit is also just nice to have in case of a college interview or other formal occasion too).
6. Give him or her a ride. Even if your student drives, a speech and debate tournament is an extremely long day. Showing your student you're willing to wake up in the wee hours to drag him or her to the school, and then are there for pick up means not only are you helping mitigate how tiring this activity is every weekend, but you're also there for the ride home. You can ask how the tournament went in real time, and really get the full low down on the day.

How to Show your support

1. Help out around the team! Teams are always looking for parents to help chaperone, drive to tournaments, and provide snacks. Feel free to ask the coach of your team what you can do to help out.
2. Show the administration of the school that speech and debate is important to you. There are many ways you can do this. Sending an email might be the easiest, quickest, and most visible. Tips for sending an email are on 4n6 U, if you're looking for ideas.
3. Learn how to judge! Teams are always looking for more judges, especially if there are a lot of students involved or the coach can't make it one weekend. We have a How To Judge Packet that you should check out if you're considering this route!