

Also, it may seem like a small thing, but as an elementary student many of my friends said that they would never wrestle because they would not wear a singlet. I knew what a singlet was because I watched my older cousin wrestle and saw pictures of my dad on his team. So a singlet was just the uniform and didn't seem like a big deal to me. But if the goal is to open up the sport to kids who haven't been raised watching it, maybe switching from a singlet to shorts and compression t-shirt, at least to start, may be a way to eliminate that as an excuse for not even trying.

Finally, many people refer to the wrestling community as a "family." I've found that to be true. Watching my coaches and teammates off the mat develop friendships with on the mat "opponents" has helped to develop my character. I know that when I'm out on the mat, younger wrestlers may be watching to see how I react, win or lose. Getting older wrestlers involved in helping out with elementary programs, I think is a positive way to keep wrestling strong. Plus, it seems that wrestlers who have supportive, encouraging coaches and fans, many times become supportive and encouraging wrestling coaches or fans themselves. This is why when you hear a certain last name, whatever it may be, many people identify it as part of "the wrestling family" whether you know them personally or not. I'd like to see the "family" continue to grow.