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HOW TO T.E.A.C.H. YOUNG ATHLETES

*T*ake Growth and Development into Consideration

- Biological vs Chronological Age/ Early vs Late Maturers
- Performance may be affected during times of rapid growth
- Many factors affect skill development including: social factors, optimal learning periods, practice, environment, parents, coaches, teammates…
- Early sport specialization may hinder development of fundamental motor skills

*E*nhance Children's Skill Development

- Create a positive learning environment
    - Keep it fun!!
    - Total support of everyone by everyone
    - Reinforce effort and improvement
    - Focus on the positive
- Modify the sport for the age group
- Show and Tell- demonstrations are key
- Set Appropriate Goals-
- Set realistic process goals for practice and competition.
    - Make sure they focus on self-standards.
    - Deemphasize outcome

*A*ssist Athletes Equally

- Avoid the self-fulfilling prophecy (try to keep your own beliefs separate from your coaching
- Same amount and types of attention
- Don't give up
- Treat everyone equally
- Provide all athletes with similar types and amount of attention

*C*ommunicate Effectively

- Develop positive relationships
- Ask for player input
- Be honest
- Admit when you're wrong
- Discuss potential issues up front (ie, coaching your own child)
- Listen!!!

Giving Constructive Feedback

- Catch players doing things correctly
- Give praise sincerely
- Give prompt feedback
- Focus on players' observable behaviors
- Be consistent and fair
- Judge performance not personality
- Be concise and specific

> ### *Feedback Sandwich*
>
> - Give a sincere compliment
> - Give specific, future-oriented instructions
> - Finish with another compliment
>
> + Comment
>
> Constructive Feedback
>
> + Comment
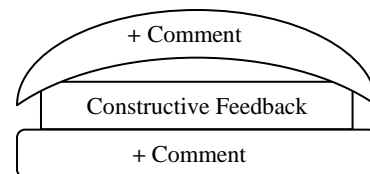
*H*elp Develop Life Skills

- Model positive behavior
- Teach values (respect, honesty…)
- Consistently reinforce and reward proper life skills
- Use bad behavior as teachable moments (being late, not being prepared…)
- Discuss "teachable moments" seen in the media (pros doing the right/wrong things)
- Each week have a "life lesson" that transfers to sport and life

SETTING AND EFFECTIVELY USING GOALS

Types of Goals
- *Outcome (winning/being best)*
  - Very motivating
  - Often uncontrollable

- *Performance (statistics)*
  - Focus is on self-improvement
  - Sometimes uncontrollable

- *Process (fundamentals)*
  - Totally in your control
  - Focus is on self-improvement
  - Keeps you motivated in the face of obstacles

Process → Performance → Outcome

Using Goals to Motivate
- Focus on and reward process goals (Most Improved)
- Goal buddies (someone who holds you accountable for working towards your process and performance goals)
- "Team Player" of the Week
- Daily reminders of group goal (motto)

Goal Setting Questions
the older the athlete, the more specific and measurable the goals should be

Goal: What are you trying to acoomplish/improve?
- What can you do to achieve this?
- What obstacles might you face and how can you overcome them?
- What will result from you achieving this goal?

Example weekly goals (youth):
- Practice Goal: Switch directions
- Game goal: Keep after the ball

- Practice Goal: Protect the ball (put body between defender & ball)
- Game goal: Defense (get in front of opponent don't run beside)

- Practice Goal: Respect the coach, Respect your teammates
- Game goal: Sportsmanship

- Practice Goal: Dribble with your head up (eyes up to see the field)
- Game goal: Teamwork, work together, not against

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