

Coach Casale's Corner

Youth Sports Philosophy and Psychology (briefly)

We will have three main coaching objectives: 1) having fun, 2) development, and 3) winning.

Having fun – The first and most important goal is for the athletes to have fun. Young athletes thrive on enthusiasm and encouragement. Coaches will always be positive and praise athletes. Athletes will be able to participate without fear of failure or ridicule.

Development (physical, psychological, and social) – The second goal is development in these areas. Physical development involves learning skills and improving conditioning. Psychological development involves learning to control emotions and develop positive self worth, both on and off the practice field. Social development involves learning to cooperate in a competitive context and display sportsmanlike behavior.

Winning – The final goal is developing a competitive spirit in the athletes by encouraging them to “play to win”. Each athlete should derive primary satisfaction from “playing”, improving, and achieving personal goals (not related to winning). Our Coach's Golden Rule is:

ATHLETES FIRST, winning second.

All three objectives will incorporate 3 areas of sport psychology, which will promote a positive self-image for the athlete. These interrelated areas are communication, motivation, and goal setting.

Communication – Communication skills are the essence of effective coaching. Communication consists of observation, verbal/non-verbal interaction, “just being there”, and also communicating to the parents who also influence the athlete.

Motivation – Young athletes are motivated to fulfill their own needs (more than the needs of the coaches or parents). The coaches will be sensitive to the athlete's needs, which will promote athlete self-confidence and self-worth. However, this does not mean giving them everything they want. Athletes will learn to evaluate their self-worth/self-confidence on the basis of improvement and effort, not on the basis of winning or losing.

Goal Setting – Coaches will help each athlete formulate realistic goals for performance. Setting realistic performance goals will promote motivation and athletes will experience success. **True motivation only comes from within the athlete**, usually as he/she reaches incremental goals. Coaches will focus the athlete's motivation on specific and measurable goals and have the athlete committed on a goal sheet.