

# YOUTH FIRST

## COACHES LEARNING ABOUT YOUTH SPORTS THE SPORTS EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AT UNLV

### Why It Is Important To Set Realistic Expectations For Your Young Lady Athletes.

Setting realistic expectations for your young lady athletes is important so they understand what they are capable of reaching or doing. First of all younger athletes in general have a strong need for adult approval. One of the major problems in a young ladies development is that the coach or their parents have unrealistic expectations for them. If they don't see this due to you or the parents unrealistic expectations then it can be a major source of low self-worth within them. Sometimes the coach or the parents expect something physically or emotionally possible from their athlete which is not possible. Another problem is that some parents grow up living through their children and expect good coaches skill expectations way to much out of them. A good coaches skill expectations are based on the knowledge that young lady athletes vary in their development of physical coordination skills, go through plateaus in their skill development, and have growth spurts which can affect their coordination expectations are based on the awareness that three things can effect a young ladies participation in sports. One, is that some young female athletes are playing because their parents enrolled them. Second, some young female athletes are playing because it's a social event allowing them to be with their friends. Third, some young females athletes are playing because they enjoy sports for sports sake. The main thing as the coach of young female athletes is to know where they stand in their development as an athlete. If you do this then you will be able to set realistic expectations for your young lady athletes.



### Unrealistic Expectations Can Lead To Unrealistic Self-Comparison With Other Athletes.

If you give your female athletes unrealistic expectations then they could wind up comparing themselves to someone that is a better athlete. If they start doing this then they could start comparing their skill levels to their peers. The danger behind this is that the fun of sports disappears and that the female athlete may be unable to compete against teammates whose skills are more advanced. The result of all of this is that the young female athlete ends up feeling bad about herself or ends up quitting the sport altogether.

### Young Female Coaches Behavior Checklist

- praise young female athletes just for participating.
- look for positives, and make a big deal out of them.
- I stay calm when my young female athletes make mistakes, helping them learn from their mistakes.
- I have reasonable and realistic expectations from all of them.
- treat my young female athletes with respect, avoiding put-downs, sarcasm, and ridicule.
- remind my young female athletes not to get down on themselves.
- I remember not to take myself too seriously during the game.
- I maintain a great attitude, with lots of laughter and sense of humor.
- I emphasize teamwork, and help my young female athletes think "we" instead of "me."
- I am a role model of good sportsmanship:
  - (a) Winning without gloating

Above is a checklist for coaches that measures the kind of behavior that represents how you interact with your young female athletes. Check each box that applies to you. The boxes that you don't check may be an indication of why you may have some unrealistic expectations for your young female athletes. Each of these factors above are important for coaches to uphold so they do set realistic expectations for their young female athletes. If you do not check a box try to work it into your style or the way you coach.

Quote for the coaches and athletes.



If you don't make a total commitment to whatever you're doing, then you start looking to bail out the first time the boat starts leaking. It's tough enough getting that boat to shore with everybody rowing, let alone when a guy stands up and starts putting his jacket on.

-Lou Holtz, College football coach