



YOUTH FIRST

COACHES LEARNING ABOUT YOUTH SPORTS

The Sports Education and Leadership Program at UNLV

Key Attributes coaches need to look out for in young women athletes:

- 1) Self-esteem
- 2) Leadership
- 3) Independence
- 4) Pride
- 5) Confidence

Attributes Which Constitutes a Winning Attitude in Young Athletes.		
<p>You as coach may describe your athletes in many different ways. Whether you are coaching young boys or young girls it may be hard to distinguish what qualifies your athletes as winners. A recent poll taken by researchers at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles asked 658 coaches of young athletes from 43 different sports to decide which attributes defined winners. From this poll the top five answers for young athletes that</p>	<p>have winning attitudes are that: (1) they love to play their sport, (2) they have a positive attitude not only in sports but in life, (3) they are teachable and coachable, (4) they are self-motivated, and (5) they have the discipline and drive to take the necessary steps needed to improve their game. One attribute that coaches usually think is really vital are the athletes physical skills. Astonishingly in the poll “the</p>	<p>natural physical athlete” came in 19th on the coaches list of attributes that constitute a winning attitude. As a coach, it is really significant to put an emphasis on psychological aspects when describing a winner. Being a physical athlete can only go so far, athletes have to have the mental edge too.</p>

Ways The Coach Can Help Their Athletes Look at Their Own Attributes:

Have your athletes write these down on a piece of paper and hand it into you.

- *Identify and list the positive attributes of a professional athlete.
- *Identify similarities in attributes of a professional athlete and a Special Olympics athlete.
- *Identify ways in which positive attributes of an athlete help people be successful outside of sports.



Taking a Look at the Psychological and Physical Intensity of Competition Among Young Girls.

Coaches of 7th and 8th grade girls may lower the intensity of their workouts because they do not believe his or her athletes can handle that much pressure. According to the Youth Sports Directory and Research Guide, young girls are just as capable as young boys in dealing with intense sports competition. There should be no reason to believe that young women can not handle that kind of psychological and physical demands of the sport.

A Look at Self-Esteem and Body Image in Young Girls.

Middle school coaches of 7th and 8th grade children need to be aware that they are in the process of becoming adolescents. This period in ones life is usually a time of confusion and a decrease in ones self-esteem. Young girls are particularly acceptable to a decrease is self esteem because of society's interest in beauty and being thin. This self esteem issue can lead to young girls getting sicknesses such as bulima and anorexia. As coaches of these young girls we need to keep on boosting their self-esteem by setting them up for success, giving them positive feedback, having confidence in them, and making them feel important to the team.

Are There Any Differences in Coaching Young Girls and Coaching Young boys?

Coaches should not fear any differences when coaching young girls. They are just like coaching young boys, in that they need to learn the fundamentals of the sport you are coaching. Just like with any 7th and 8th grade coaching job, you are really going to drill the basics of the sport over and over again. Young girls may be physically different then young boys, but mentally they are the same. Just remember to teach young girls the skills of the game just like you would teach young boys.



Important statistics

- * If a girl does not participate in sports by the time she is 10 years old, there is only a 10% chance she will participate when she is 25 years old.**
- * Girls drop out of sports at a rate six times higher than boys.**

A Fact For Girls Who Participate In Sports:

- * Half of all girls who participate in some kind of sports experience have higher levels of self-esteem and lessen depression.**