



YouthFirst

Coaches Learning about Youth Sports

The Sports Education and Leadership Program at UNLV

Realistic Expectations

Every body should have goals and expectations for themselves; it is what keeps you and me going everyday. Even coaches should have expectations for their athlete. By having certain expectations for ones athletes you can have something to strive for as a coach for your athletes. For example, if you believed that they could improve their defense before the season actually started then you would give yourself initiative to work with them harder on their defense. However if you don't expect anything out of them then you may become lazy and find no worth in coaching anymore. Having expectations can be dangerous however. A coach can make their expectations to high and the team will inevitably fail. This brings about discouragement to the team, each player, and even the coach. So it is very important for the coach to make realistic goals for the team, and the team should also agree upon the goals for the team. Another danger in expectations is the fact that a coach can have not enough expectation for the team that they are coaching. This can be harmful to a coaches effort put into the team. If a coach doesn't expect much and the team reaches the little goal he or she wanted than they are getting better but there is no challenge and suddenly the sport becomes boring instead of fun. So it is crucial that a coach understands their players and team before going and having expectations that are just going to let themselves and the team down.

Word of Advise from:

Realistic Goals and Fun Keep Kids in Sports Carleton Kendrick Ed.M., LCSW

Sports psychology expert Rick Wolff, ", stresses that parents of kids ages 5-12 shouldn't be concerned with their child's performance at sports skills. He says that the level of performance is unimportant. He believes that the key element is having your child develop love for the sport. Parents and coaches need to be aware of what kids can accomplish at their differing developmental levels - physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Don't make unrealistic expectations concerning your child's sports performance - be it in the area of muscle coordination, dedication, or attention span. Many kids lose their passion for youth sports during these years because they feel they can't live up to their parents' and coaches' expectations.

Some Fun Warm Ups

All kids love to run especially at the second and first grade levels. What makes it more fun is having a race. Simply set up an easy relay race dividing the team fairly so it can very well result in a tie.

For basketball you could have them run to the other side of the court and dribble the ball ten times then run back and tag there partner until everyone has went



True Story! When Expectations are too High

When I competed in gymnastics we were the best team in town (and still are). State competition was coming around and we had no worries; after all we just won every other competition we were in for the season. So we went there with our heads high and nothing to be afraid of. Well as the competition went on we were all having a good time laughing and not too serious. That's when we started making mistakes, falling on easy skills, losing points here and there. But still no worries. We were so use to winning that it didn't even slip our minds. Coaches comments were ignored and noses were still in the air. That was until, of coarse, the award ceremony came around. We sat there sure to hear our team called up on the first place stand. In fact before they even said our names the team was standing on their feet cheering. Then the worst happened, the didn't say our team. We looked like fools, however we deserved it. In the end our expectations were way to high and our efforts were non-existent. It taught us all a big lesson. We never did that again. We went there realizing we could easily get beat with no effort. Our coach was pretty upset too. Another reason we didn't do it again...fear!

Expectations for Young Athletes

Focus on improvement no matter what level they are at
Behaving themselves should be a concern
Learning a new trick whether easy or hard should be awarded
Expect your young athlete to have fun at what they are doing
Expect them to become more sociable with others
Expect them to pick up on team work

A Rule of Thumb

From Mark A. Ashnel

- If expectations are too high than the amount of effort is too low.
- Successful expectations are motivated by perceived ability of the opponent.
- Competitors optimally motivated when they feel they have a 50/50 chance of success.