

Successful Parenting/Coaching for the Student-Athlete LET THE 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR BEGIN!

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They can be a coaches best friend or thorn in the side of all parties involved. Today's parent brings many unique qualities to a sports program. Educating parents and athletes is a great way to prevent problems and increase success.

Some parents are simply the best. They are a positive extension of the program more valuable than words can express. They understand their roles and their responsibilities in helping their son or daughter.

I've been so fortunate in my life that my family has never been jealous of my success. They have shown true love and commitment to me by being supportive. They shared in it.

Mike Krzyzewski - Head Basketball Coach-Duke University

On the other hand, many parents mean the best for their child but harm their child with words or actions. **Actions** can be harmful, while **words** can have long

lasting negative consequences to the overall success of the student-athlete. Not taking the time to sit down with the student-athlete and their parent at a preseason meeting and go over roles and responsibilities can have disastrous consequences. Whether it be an overbearing parent or a parent who sabotages the athlete, coach or team, all have dire long term consequences. The pre-season meeting is time well invested with long term pay outs for all parties involved, so that everyone is on the same page.



Some stools have 3 legs. In order for the stool to stand, it needs all three legs doing their jobs. The same applies in athletes. One leg is the athlete, another coach and the final leg represents the parent. If each leg does their job and takes care of their responsibilities, the stool stands tall. The same rules apply for athletic teams. If the same principles are applied, success will follow.

Many components help create a SUCCESSFUL Student-Athlete. Here is a list of possible components or guidelines to help all parties involved.

1. Nothing will destroy an athlete's success more than the athlete-parent-coach mixing up their roles and responsibilities. When parents try to coach-----failure. When kids try to coach-----failure. When coaches try to parent----trouble for sure. Each person needs to understand their role and give maximum effort to help the team. Coaches do a great job with X's and O's but often times forget to educate parents on how to best help the athlete and the team. What we see on

TV is not always the best role modeling. When egos get involved, roles and responsibilities get mixed up.



2. The athlete needs some space after the competition. Most who compete need time to process the successes and failures of that competition so corrections can be made for improvement. Nothing is more frustrating for an athlete than having their performance dissected on the way home from the game or match by an overbearing parent. A simple word or sentence by a parent can completely destroy the self-worth of that athlete long term, whether it's said intentionally or non-intentionally. Destructive words are difficult to undo.

3. Parents can help the athlete with time management and prevent over-involvement syndrome. Today's society is moving faster than ever. Time management will be essential for success on the field, in the classroom and in life. Taking on too many activities can create mediocrity, burnout and frustration in all areas. The summer has to be down time for the athlete, for both mental and physical rest. Unfortunately for the athlete, this trend appears to be *more is better* in the summer.

4. Athletes, Parents and Coaches need to monitor the academic performance of the athlete. It's not the teachers fault when a student-athlete doesn't perform academically. **Parents and athletes** must understand this. Whether it be an academic struggle or laziness on the part of the athlete, an academic problem needs to be addressed and dealt with by the student first, parent second, and then the teacher.

5. Parents and coaches can help the athlete set realistic goals and support those dreams. *Goals are for the athlete*, not the parent who didn't realize their unmet athletic dreams and hope to live their missed athletic goals through their child or

for the parent to decide whether the athlete's goal is worthy and something they think is worthy. **It's about the student-athlete!**

6. Coaches can identify behaviors acceptable for competition for coaches, athletes and parents. Positive behavior teaches/creates more positive behavior. Parents have an obligation to model good fan behavior. The same goes for coaches. Seeing coaches or parents today out of control on TV at youth sporting events is becoming more common and should be addressed in the preseason meeting. Drive the message home early. This behavior *must not be tolerated* by anyone.

7. Parents must realize not every athlete will achieve an athletic scholarship. Word has it, there are plenty of academic scholarships for the taking. Hard work in the classroom can have some nice financial payouts for post-secondary education. Whether money be academic scholarship or athletic scholarship, **it's still money!** Ratio of academic to athletic scholarships is 100 to 1. Take advantage of the numbers.

8. All parties can encourage well rounded multi-sports athletes. What a great way to decrease overuse injuries and enhance complete athletic skills. Different sports bring different skills to develop that can enhance other sports and activities. Along with multi-sport athletes is the need again for some down time in the summer to recover physically and mentally. This will only change when all parties say, "***we've had enough*** of the year around sports."

9. Parents and coaches can help teach kids how to address the media and officials. What are the types of responses an athlete might say and how does that statement reflect on the athlete, school and community are very important? Saying **thank you** can be really powerful.

10. Parents and coaches can make sure their kids don't get *camped* or *fund-raised* to death. Coaches working with other coaches can best make sure financial stress or undo time stress isn't placed on the athlete and their family. Parents have to be willing to say NO! There is an enormous amount of pressure put on kids today to fund raise and go to camps in the summer. No one would doubt the need for more funds for programs in tough economic times. No one

would doubt the value of a quality camp. Both can be valuable if done in moderation.

Parents can have such a positive impact on the success of the student-athlete. With proper planning by the coach, a preseason meeting that defines roles and responsibilities for all parties involved, the athlete can have a solid, supportive foundation to build on for success, learning skills that will last a lifetime both in sport and in life.

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