



PRIME SPORT PARENTING 505

Raise a Successful and Happy Athlete

Workbook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Class #1: Three Pillars of Successful Achievers	1
Class #2: Five Attitudes for Athletic Success	7
Class #3: Send the Right Messages	12
Class #4: Dos and Don'ts for Sport Parents	16

CLASS #1: THREE PILLARS OF SUCCESS ACHIEVERS

What's Good about Sports

- Physical/athletic: fitness, mastery, learn a lifelong skill, opportunity costs.
- Personal: passion, commitment, confidence, focus, emotions.
- Social: friendships, competition, teamwork, family ties.
- It's fun!

What's Bad about Sport

- Athletic/physical: injury.
- Personal: loss of motivation and confidence, competitive stress, burnout.
- Social: unhealthy competitiveness, pressure from others, relationships.
- It's NOT fun!

Sports are about Love

- Love for their sport.
- Love for you.
- Love for themselves.
- If they feel the love, they will succeed no matter what level they reach.

It's Up to You

1. Goal: most positive experience for child.
2. This goal depends largely on you.
 - a. Your values and attitudes toward sports.
 - b. The emotions you express.
 - c. Your reactions.
 - d. The messages you send.
3. Challenge: How to accomplish this goal?

Exercise 1.1

1. List the reasons why your children do sports.

2. What values, attitudes, and skills do you want them to get from sports?

3. What might prevent them from gaining these benefits?

4. What can you do better to ensure these benefits?

Three Pillars of Success Achievers

Introduction

1. What is a successful achiever?
 - a. Success and happiness are mutually inclusive.
 - b. Your child can't be successful without also being happy.
2. What are the three pillars of successful achievers?
 - a. Self-esteem.
 - b. Ownership.
 - c. Emotional mastery.

Self-esteem

1. What is self-esteem?
 - a. How children feel about themselves.
 - b. Do they feel loved, safe, capable?
2. Foundation of what they think, feel, and become.
3. Three contributors to self-esteem.
 - a. Love.
 - b. Security.
 - c. Sense of competence and control.

Red Flags in Your Children

- Avoids challenges and risks
- Competitive anxiety
- Gives up easily
- Self-critical
- Makes excuses and blames others
- Performs poorly in competition

Red Flags in You

- Prioritizing sports over family
- Micromanagement
- Comparing your children to others
- Focusing on results
- Extreme emotions to success and failure
- Conditional love

How to Build Self-esteem

1. Provide opportunities for success
2. Allow your children to fail
3. Encourage appropriate risk taking
4. Let your kids decide
5. Focus on the process, not the results
6. Praise them the right way

Exercise 1.2

1. What level of self-esteem do you think your children have?

2. In what ways have you strengthened or undermined your children's self-esteem?

3. What steps can you take in the future to build their self-esteem?

OWNERSHIP**Introduction**

1. What is ownership?
 - a. The connection that children have to their sport.
 - b. The sense that they are doing it for themselves.
 - c. Feelings of pride in their participation.
2. Ownership is a gift you give them.

Red Flags for Ownership

- Coaching them (when you're not the coach)
- Doing their "job"
- Talking too much about their sport
- Focusing on results
- Your emotions
- "We" syndrome

Create Ownership

1. Maintain perspective: Don't be seduced by the messages from our achievement culture that "it's all about winning."
2. "No superstar" assumption: Go under the assumption that your children won't be superstars in anything (but if you gave them good genes and they have the passion and determination, they could be).
3. Make sports about them, not you.
4. Let your children experience success and failure in their sport.
5. Let your children take responsibility for their sport.
6. Involve them in decision making.
7. Do your "job" and let your children do theirs.
8. Get a life!: Have a life of your own that is fulfilling and meaningful, so you don't place the burden of your happiness on their shoulders.

Exercise 1.3

1. How much ownership do your children have of their sport?

2. In what ways have you strengthened or undermined your children's ownership?

3. What steps can you take in the future to create ownership?

EMOTIONS

Introduction

1. Sports produce powerful emotions.
2. Emotions are two sides of the same coin.
3. Emotional mastery.
 - a. Fully experience their emotions.
 - b. Identify the emotions they experience.
 - c. Understand where they came from.
 - d. Express them in healthy ways.

Red Flags for Emotions

- Competitive anxiety
- Emotional overprotection
- Extreme or out-of-control emotions
- Fear of failure
- Unhappy successes

Help Your Children Develop Emotional Mastery

- Know your emotional baggage
- Be a healthy role model
- Allow your children to feel all emotions
- Emotional coaching
- Be real about emotions

Exercise 1.4

1. What emotional red flags, if any, do you see in your children?

2. In what ways have you strengthened or undermined your children's emotional lives?

3. What steps can you take in the future to develop their emotional mastery?

Class #1 Challenge

- Commit to positively developing the three pillars of successful achievers.
 - Examine what impact you have on your children related to the three pillars.
 - Identify red flags you might see in your children.
 - If you're having a negative influence, change how you approach their sports.

CLASS #2: FIVE ATTITUDES FOR ATHLETIC SUCCESS

Attitude is the foundation of athletic success

1. The attitudes that your children have about sports will make or break their experiences.
2. You have the most influence on their attitudes: words, emotions, actions.
3. Goal: Remove unhealthy attitudes and instill healthy attitudes.
4. Five attitudes that make a difference.

Attitude #1: Life or Death

1. Death.
 - a. Sports can feel like life or death.
 - b. Every time athletes perform, they are putting their 'life' on the line.
 - c. This is not physical life or death, rather self-identity, self-esteem, goals life or death.
 - d. Their 'survival' requires consistent success.
 - e. Failure threatens their athletic survival.
2. Life.
 - a. Even if athletes don't achieve their goals, they will feel disappointment, but they will survive.
 - b. No matter what happens, they will be okay!
 - c. If athletes can accept this deep down, they will be free to perform their best.

Exercise 2.1

1. Does your child view sports as life or death? If so, why?

2. What messages are you send about sports being life or death?

3. What do you need to change?

Attitude #2: Process or Outcome

1. Outcome.
 - a. Winning, results, rankings, competitors.
 - b. Having an outcome focus actually reduces the chances of achieving the desired outcome.
 - c. If your children are focused on the outcome, which happens at the end of a competition, they aren't focused on their performances.
 - d. But let's be realistic: Results matter and you can't expect your kids to not think about results.
2. Process.
 - a. What athletes need to do to perform their best.
 - b. Ensures total preparation to reach the outcome.
 - c. Process is controllable.
 - d. Builds confidence, reduces worry and anxiety.
 - e. Acknowledge outcome focus.
 - f. Shift to process focus: Ask "What do I need to do now?"

Exercise 2.2

1. Does your child focus on the process or the outcome? If the outcome, why?

2. What messages are you sending about the process or the outcome?

3. What do you need to change?

Attitude #3: Success or Failure

1. Fear of failure is epidemic among young athletes.
2. Belief that failure will have bad consequences.
3. Failure feels like a mountain lion (but it's actually just a kitty cat).
4. Three ways to avoid failure.
 - a. Quit: Your children can't lose if they don't play.
 - b. Self-defeating behavior: They do things to ensure failure (e.g., lack of effort, giving up easily), but have an excuse to protect them.
 - c. Safety zone: Get far away from failure by being somewhat successful, but unable to be truly successful.
5. Total failure.
 - a. Your children giving it everything they've got.
 - b. Children say that total failure is the worst thing because then just not good enough.
 - c. But total failure is actually a good thing.
 - d. Total failure or total success means that they did everything they could.
 - e. Ultimately, that's all they can do.
 - f. Some success is likely to happen.
6. Success.
 - a. Giving their best effort.
 - b. Going all out.
 - c. Having fun.
 - d. Improving.
 - e. Performing as well as they can.
 - f. Progress toward goals.
 - g. Results will come.

Exercise 2.3

1. Does your child focus on success or failure? If failure, why?

2. What messages are you sending about success and failure?

3. What do you need to change?

Attitude #4: Outcome Goals or Expectations

1. Expectations.
 - a. Strong belief that something will happen.
 - b. Feeling of certainty (birthday present).
 - c. All or nothing.
2. Emotional reactions to expectations.
 - a. Before: fear and pressure to achieve.
 - b. After success: relief ("dodged the bullet").
 - c. After failure: devastation, despair.
3. Goals.
 - a. Outcome goals: something that you want to achieve.
 - b. Feeling of possibility, not certainty.
 - c. Degree of attainment.
4. Emotions related to goals.
 - a. Before: excited, inspired.
 - b. After achieving goal: elated, proud, even more inspired.
 - c. After not achieving goal: disappointed, but determined.
5. Immediately shift to process goals.

Exercise 2.4

1. Do you and your child have goals or expectations? If expectations, why?

2. What messages are you sending about goals and expectations?

3. What do you need to change?

Attitude #5: Challenge or Threat

1. Threat: failure.
 - a. Physical: anxiety, muscle tension, discomfort.
 - b. Thoughts: negative, doubting, helpless.
 - c. Emotions: fear, anger, frustration, despair.
 - d. Focus: on results (particularly failure).
 - e. Goal: avoid failure.
 - f. Reaction: flight.
2. Challenge: to push themselves, achieve their goals.
 - a. Physical: relaxed, energized, generalized comfort.
 - b. Thoughts: positive, motivated.
 - c. Emotions: pride, inspiration, excitement.
 - d. Focus: process and present.
 - e. Goal: achieve success.
 - f. Reaction: Bring it on!

Exercise 2.5

1. Does your child experience their sport as a challenge or a threat? If threat, why?

2. What messages are you sending about sport being challenge or threat?

3. What do you need to change?

Class #2 Challenge

- Commit to instilling healthy attitudes in your children.
 - Examine each of the five attitudes.
 - If you're communicating unhealthy attitudes, change the attitude messages you're sending your kids.

CLASS #3: SEND THE RIGHT MESSAGES

How Do Your Children Become Who They Become

1. Nature: They are born with a certain set of genes that contribute to who they become.
2. Nurture: How they are raised contributes to who they become.
 - a. Family.
 - b. Peers.
 - c. Culture.
3. You are most present in your children's lives!
 - a. You send the earliest and most messages.
 - b. You create their physical and social worlds.
 - c. You control early messages, peers, and sports culture.

Why are Messages so Important?

1. ***Your children become the messages they get the most!***
2. You send messages to your children all the time.
3. Your children receive messages from many sources.
4. You want healthy messages to get to them first.
5. Messaging is a HUGE responsibility!

Bad Sports Messages are Everywhere

- Cheating.
- Drugs.
- Winning is the only thing.
- It's all about fame and fortune.
- Excessive celebration.
- Fighting.

What are Your Goals for Messaging?

1. All sports parents want the same thing for their children.
 - a. Have fun.
 - b. Feel loved, safe, and competent.
 - c. Learn valuable life skills.
 - d. Find success, happiness, and meaning.
 - e. Be decent human beings.
2. The challenge is how to accomplish these goals when so many messages kids receive.

You Need to Ask This Essential Question

1. "How can I be sure I'm sending the healthiest messages to my children?"
 - a. Know what messages you want to send.
 - b. Know what messages you do send.
 - c. Are they aligned?
 - d. Develop your skills in conveying healthy messages.
2. Only by asking and answering this question can you be sure that you are seeding the healthiest messages to your children.

Exercise 3.1

1. What are the primary messages you're sending to your children about sports?

2. Which of those messages are healthy and which are unhealthy?

3. What different and healthy messages do you need to send?

4. How and in what situations can you send the different and healthy messages?

Message Conduits

- What you say
- What you feel
- Your body language
- What you do
- Who you are
- What your children do

Message Blockers

- Send/receive disconnect: “But I didn’t mean that.”
- Infrequent messages: “You still don’t get it?”
- Inconsistent messages: “You can this time.”
- Conflicting messages: “But Daddy said.”
- Social world: “I need to keep up with my friends.”
- Sports culture: “You better win!”

Exercise 3.2

1. Which message conduits do you use well and which do you need to improve on?

2. Which message blockers do you need to remove and how will you remove them?

Key Messages to Send Your Children

- Give your best effort.
- Be a good sport.
- Have fun.
- Support your teammates.
- Listen to your coaches.
- If you win, icing on the cake.
- We love you!

Four Rules of Messaging

1. Use multiple conduits.
2. Use loudspeaker and stealth messages.
3. Let your children help shape your messages.
4. Be active.

Exercise 3.3

1. Identify three healthy messages you want to convey to your children.

2. Describe the conduits you are going to use to communicate those healthy messages.

Five Messages I Want You to Get

- Your children become the messages they get the most.
- Take control of your kids' messages in sports.
- Know what messages you want to send and send the messages you want.
- 3 Ps + 1 R: patience, persistence, perseverance, relentless.
- Why? Because your children are listening!

Class #4 Challenge

- Commit to sending healthy messages to your children.
 - Identify 3 messages you want to send to your children.
 - Choose 3 conduits through which to send them.
 - Remove any message blockers that are stopping your messages.

CLASS #4: DOS AND DON'TS OF SPORT PARENTING

Your Behavior Matters

- What you say
- Your emotions
- What you do

Don't for Yourself

- Care too much about how your children perform.
- Base your self-esteem and ego on your children's athletic success.
- Lose perspective about the importance of your child's sport.

Don't for Other Parents

- Don't work at cross purposes with other parents.
- Talk about others in the sport community, talk with them.
- Make enemies of other parents.

Don't with Coaches

- Interfere with their coaching during training and competitions.
- Work at cross purposes with your children's coaches.
- Create conflict or ill feelings with your children's coaches.

Don't for Your Children

- Place expectations or put pressure on your children before competitions.
- Show negative emotions while attending competitions.
- Ask your child to talk with you immediately after a competition.
- Be critical of your kids' performances after.
- Talk about results.
- Compare your child's progress with that of other children.
- Expect your children to get anything more from their sport than fun, physical fitness, love of a lifetime sport, and transferable life skills.
- Think of your children's sport as an investment for which you expect a return.
- Live out your own dreams through your children's sport.
- Make your child feel guilty for the time, energy, and money you're spending and the sacrifices you making for their sport.
- Badger, harass, use sarcasm, threaten, or use fear to motivate your children.
- Expect anything from your children except their best effort and good behavior.
- Ever do anything that will cause them to think less of themselves or of you!!!

Exercise 4.1

1. Reviewing the Don'ts just described, write down those that you are fulfilling and those that you aren't.

2. For the latter, indicate how you can change and do better in the future.

Do for Yourself

- Get vicarious pleasure from your children's sports.
- Enjoy yourself at competitions.
- Be positive and calm when watching your children compete.
- Have a life of your own outside of your children's sport.

Do with Other Parents

- Create a shared set of values, attitudes, and behaviors for parents to follow.
- Be a good role model for other parents.
- Make friends with other parents at competitions.
- Volunteer as much as you can.
- Police your own ranks.

Do with Coaches

- Leave the coaching to the coaches.
- Give coaches any support they need.
- Communicate with coaches.
- Keep coaches informed.
- Make coaches your allies.
- Express gratitude to the coaches..

Do with Your Children

- Show interest in their sport.
- Provide encouragement and guidance.
- Assist them in setting realistic goals in their sport.
- Emphasize fun, skill development, and other benefits.
- Provide a healthy perspective about success and failure.
- Emphasize process over outcome and reward effort rather than results.
- Intervene if your child's behavior is unacceptable.
- Understand that your child may need a break from sport occasionally.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Make your children proud of you.
- Do express your love for your children no matter how they perform!!!

Exercise 4.2

1. Reviewing the Dots just described, write down those that you are fulfilling and those that you aren't.

2. For the latter, indicate how you can change and do better in the future.

Class #4 Challenge

- Do the dos and don't do the don'ts.
 - Choose three dos that you aren't doing and three don'ts you are doing.
 - Commit to doing the dos and not doing the don'ts.



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