



PLACT Coach Note: Young People Need Good (PLACT) Coaches

It seems that today's athletic culture is driven by the notion that sports is nothing more than an opportunity to assert physical dominance over an opponent. Winning has become the ultimate goal with little or no concern for the shrapnel that is left in the lives of the young people who are reared in this single-minded environment.

Ok, perhaps the first paragraph was a little strong... but here are some simple reasons why coaches are now more important than ever in the lives of young people.

- Only 3.8% of elementary schools provide physical education (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2009).
- Children are on the average spending over 50 hours a week on electronic media – television, video games, email, social media, etc. (Bloomberg Business Week, 2010).
- According to the Center for Disease Control, one in three children are likely to develop type 2 diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure due to sedentary lifestyles (Good Housekeeping, 2012).
- 58% of children age 2-5 can play simple computer games versus 44% who know how to ride a bike (CNN, 2012).

Heart disease...as a teenager? No P.E.? Kids don't know how to ride a bike? Fifty hours per week on electronic media? That's a full time job plus overtime on and above school related activities. Now more than ever the role of the coach is critical in helping shape the lives of



**Make sure that team
members know they
are working with you,
not for you.**

- John Wooden

young people. The critical question is: "What are our coaches teaching our young people?"

According to Play Like a Champion Today® philosophy, coaches are teachers using a different platform to educate. Instead of English, math and science they use practice time, discipline and teamwork to teach life lessons and moral development through sport.

That said moral development doesn't spontaneously happen through organized sports. Just as practices require "reps" to get better physically, coaches have to be deliberate about promoting moral development by taking "moral development reps" throughout the day. Here are a few fundamentals that will support anyone who is truly coaching their student-athletes for moral development:

- emphasize that moral values come before all else
- take time before each practice and game to call attention to moral values
- take time after each practice and game to evaluate how well the team lived up to its espoused values
- help players to develop their moral reasoning by discussing moral problems as a team

The wide world of sports has changed in many ways...the one thing that stays consistent is the need for good coaches to guide, mentor and love young people. Remember to Play Like a Champion Today®!