Sport Psychology
U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship Series

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Adding to What You Already Do Well...

• What keeps them (and us) going...
  • Principles of Motivation

• Improvement, Achievement, & Too Much...
  • Goals and Burnout

• So what do I say when...
  – Communication: When, Where, How
A Parable: Grumpy Guy

• The Kids Played Soccer
  1. To be with friends
  2. They thought they were good at it
  3. They got to decide where, when, and how to play their game
  4. All of those
Motivation

- SDT: Self Determination Theory
- Intrinsic & Extrinsic Motivation
  - Autonomy
  - Affiliation
  - Competence
    - ...How we judge our competence
My soccer player knows they have improved when they can see they are better than others.

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Somewhat Agree
D. Neutral
E. Somewhat Disagree
F. Disagree
G. Strongly Disagree
My soccer player knows they have improved when they can see they are learning skills and understanding the game

A. Strongly Agree
B. Agree
C. Somewhat Agree
D. Neutral
E. Somewhat Disagree
F. Disagree
G. Strongly Disagree
Burnout in Youth Athletics is Associated With...

- A. Too Much Choice in Athletic Activities
- B. Multi-sport Athletic Participation
- C. Trying to Prove Oneself by Beating Others
- D. Gauging Improvement Compared to Oneself
Goal Setting Priority for Elite Athletes is...

A. Consistency
B. Rock Star
C. Development
Setting Goals...

- Rock
- Star
- Development
- Consistency
A Cheer by Any Other Name...

• My Friend John...
• Kat’s Run...
• My “Cheer”
My “Cheer” diminished Kat’s...

A. Autonomy
B. Competence
C. Feeling Cared About by Me
D. All of the above
A Cheer by Any Other Name...

• A Cheer is a Reward That:
  – Happens after something obviously good
  – Is not prescriptive
  – Supports Autonomy, Competency, Affiliation or Belonging
Communication

• What to ask
• When to ask it
• What to expect
At home, we talk about soccer

A. Right after practice or games
B. During the ride home
C. On a non-soccer night, maybe over dinner
Talking About Soccer

• Try this...

• When: Over Dinner on a Non-Soccer Night

• Ask: When is it best to talk about how soccer is going?

• What would you like your child to tell you about?

• Expect...

• You Build: Belonging and Autonomy
Talking About Soccer

• My Personal Favorite...

• ...”it’s fun to watch you play.”
Being a Safety Net

• Help develop a checklist
• Surprise! I have an extra bottle of water!
• Let them....
  »...fail
Mirroring

- It’s about Emotional Development
- Emotional expression of people we are attached to develop our sense of self
- Emotions tell us What’s Important to us
- Words describing what’s important are Values
How Our Soccer Players Want to Be Known

• Dedicated
• Hard Working
• Loyal
• Honest
• Humble

• ...and more...and not just as soccer players
What will your athlete remember?

• How do you want to be known?
• As a parent of a soccer player?
• As a parent of a student?
• The parent of your son or daughter?
• What words do you hope they will use to describe you?
Mirroring

• “What you get is what they’re seeing.”
We Help Develop Children...

• ... with broad brush strokes.
Light Bulb

• How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb?

• Only One...
  —... but the light bulb has to really want to change.