Motivation

• Desire, intent, or drive to do something
• Involves multiple, interacting internal and external forces that induce kids to behave in various ways
• Is complex – what seems like a good idea may backfire in terms of kids’ motivation
• What is our role as teachers/coaches?

Why Do Kids Participate in Sport?

Basic Motivational Needs of Youth Athletes

- Stimulation/Challenge
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Emotional/Social Connection

Need for Stimulation and Challenge

1. Variety, novelty, and change of pace in practices (not routine and boring).
2. Quality and efficiency vs. long marathon practices
3. Keep coach talk time to a minimum
4. Display the focus and energy you want your athletes to show
5. Keep athletes constantly engaged
6. Invite and accept athletes’ comments and suggestions
7. “Hook” them - help them “fall in love” with the sport

Motivation Basics and Strategies for Youth Athletes

Robin S. Vealey, Ph.D.
Department of Kinesiology and Health
Miami University
Oxford, OH USA

A “Rage to Master” (Winner, 1996)

“Maybe it wasn’t the talent that the Lord gave me, maybe it was the passion.”

“No one ever had to tell me to practice.”

Wayne Gretzky

“I’ve not experienced the passion with which Katie trains and races. She’s doing it with fury. Where is the fury coming from? We don’t know, but the stove is running hot.”

Katie Ledecky’s coach

“He would kick the ball from the same spot for hours as a young child. His dedication was breathtaking. He lived on the local field.”

David Beckham’s father

Motivation

• Desire, intent, or drive to do something
• Involves multiple, interacting internal and external forces that induce kids to behave in various ways
• Is complex – what seems like a good idea may backfire in terms of kids’ motivation
• What is our role as teachers/coaches?

Why Do Kids Participate in Sport?

Basic Motivational Needs of Youth Athletes

- Stimulation/Challenge
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Emotional/Social Connection

Need for Stimulation and Challenge

1. Variety, novelty, and change of pace in practices (not routine and boring).
2. Quality and efficiency vs. long marathon practices
3. Keep coach talk time to a minimum
4. Display the focus and energy you want your athletes to show
5. Keep athletes constantly engaged
6. Invite and accept athletes’ comments and suggestions
7. “Hook” them - help them “fall in love” with the sport

Motivation Basics and Strategies for Youth Athletes

Robin S. Vealey, Ph.D.
Department of Kinesiology and Health
Miami University
Oxford, OH USA

A “Rage to Master” (Winner, 1996)

“Maybe it wasn’t the talent that the Lord gave me, maybe it was the passion.”

“No one ever had to tell me to practice.”

Wayne Gretzky

“I’ve not experienced the passion with which Katie trains and races. She’s doing it with fury. Where is the fury coming from? We don’t know, but the stove is running hot.”

Katie Ledecky’s coach

“He would kick the ball from the same spot for hours as a young child. His dedication was breathtaking. He lived on the local field.”

David Beckham’s father

Motivation

• Desire, intent, or drive to do something
• Involves multiple, interacting internal and external forces that induce kids to behave in various ways
• Is complex – what seems like a good idea may backfire in terms of kids’ motivation
• What is our role as teachers/coaches?

Why Do Kids Participate in Sport?

Basic Motivational Needs of Youth Athletes

- Stimulation/Challenge
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Emotional/Social Connection

Need for Stimulation and Challenge

1. Variety, novelty, and change of pace in practices (not routine and boring).
2. Quality and efficiency vs. long marathon practices
3. Keep coach talk time to a minimum
4. Display the focus and energy you want your athletes to show
5. Keep athletes constantly engaged
6. Invite and accept athletes’ comments and suggestions
7. “Hook” them - help them “fall in love” with the sport

Motivation Basics and Strategies for Youth Athletes

Robin S. Vealey, Ph.D.
Department of Kinesiology and Health
Miami University
Oxford, OH USA

A “Rage to Master” (Winner, 1996)

“Maybe it wasn’t the talent that the Lord gave me, maybe it was the passion.”

“No one ever had to tell me to practice.”

Wayne Gretzky

“I’ve not experienced the passion with which Katie trains and races. She’s doing it with fury. Where is the fury coming from? We don’t know, but the stove is running hot.”

Katie Ledecky’s coach

“He would kick the ball from the same spot for hours as a young child. His dedication was breathtaking. He lived on the local field.”

David Beckham’s father

Motivation

• Desire, intent, or drive to do something
• Involves multiple, interacting internal and external forces that induce kids to behave in various ways
• Is complex – what seems like a good idea may backfire in terms of kids’ motivation
• What is our role as teachers/coaches?

Why Do Kids Participate in Sport?

Basic Motivational Needs of Youth Athletes

- Stimulation/Challenge
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Emotional/Social Connection

Need for Stimulation and Challenge

1. Variety, novelty, and change of pace in practices (not routine and boring).
2. Quality and efficiency vs. long marathon practices
3. Keep coach talk time to a minimum
4. Display the focus and energy you want your athletes to show
5. Keep athletes constantly engaged
6. Invite and accept athletes’ comments and suggestions
7. “Hook” them - help them “fall in love” with the sport
Kids stay focused for one minute per each year of age. High school: 15 minutes maximum on any single drill. Transitions in practice – quick and efficient (planned well). Small-sided games: everyone involved, continuous action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Practices</th>
<th>Length of Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 6 years</td>
<td>1-2 days per week</td>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 8 years</td>
<td>2 days per week</td>
<td>60-75 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 10 years</td>
<td>2 days per week</td>
<td>60-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 12 years</td>
<td>2-3 days per week</td>
<td>75-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 14 years</td>
<td>3-4 days per week</td>
<td>75-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 16 years</td>
<td>4-5 days per week</td>
<td>90-120 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years and over</td>
<td>5-6 days per week</td>
<td>90-120 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Aspect of Competence:**

**Fixed vs. Growth Mindset (Carol Dweck)**

**Fixed Mindset:** believe abilities are innate and static. Focus on proving their competence.

**Growth Mindset:** believe abilities are something to be developed. Focus on improving their competence.

**Influence of Growth vs. Fixed Mindset Praise (Dweck)**

- **FIXED:** "You're really good at this." 67% chose the easier option next time. Majority give up early when given an impossible task.
- **GROWTH:** "You must have worked really hard." 92% chose the harder option next time. Worked harder and enjoyed working on the impossible task.

Found 50% difference in final performance based on the way kids were praised. Praise can make or break a young athlete's motivational mindset.

**DO PRAISE:** process, effort, preparation, persistence, work ethic

**DON'T PRAISE:** abilities and/or outcomes

**Praise for Controllable Behaviors**

1. Praise for effort, mastery, improvement, hard work NOT for performance outcomes.
2. Use process praise, not person praise
3. Praise small markers of individual improvement (not just performance outcomes)
4. Avoid attempting to boost kids' self-esteem through praise and over-attention. Self-esteem must be earned through success at optimal challenges.

COMPE TENCE is at the heart of motivation

- Humans' innate (inborn) quest for competence begins in infancy.
- Most crucial motivating factor in sport.
- We like and do things that we’re good at!
- Help athletes build their skills.

Growth vs. Fixed Mindset (Dweck)

**Fixed Mindset:** "Way to win your heat!"
- Child thinks: "You value me for my ability. I better not do anything to disprove that." 5/he plays it safe and choose easier tasks to preserve competence.

**Growth Mindset:** "Great race – your practice on your stroke and turns is really paying off!"
- Child thinks: "If I don’t take on hard things and work at them, I won’t grow." 5/he works harder and takes on more challenges to try to get better.

Humans’ innate (inborn) quest for competence begins in infancy.
Other Strategies for Competence

1. Remind kids of why we’re here and what the focus is.
2. Modify the action – lots of variation and opportunities to succeed.
3. Be a great teacher – creative and focus on mastery, fundamentals, and individual improvement.
4. Give kids “permission” to make mistakes
5. Patience and support in coaching kids through obstacles

Importance of Autonomous Motivation

- Not all aspects of sport participation will be intrinsically interesting to kids
- Extrinsic motivation isn’t always driven by demands of others
- Often, extrinsic motivation is autonomous (choosing to train)
- This autonomous extrinsic motivation is important for young athletes to develop – they need it to commit to more intensive training

Basic Motivational Needs of Youth Athletes

- Stimulation/Challenge
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Emotional/Social Connection

Youth sport leaders need to be autonomy-supportive!

A S means that youth sport leaders:
- listen to and attempt to understand their athletes
- Provide them with opportunities for input and choices
- Minimize demanding or controlling behaviors

Not independence, but some choice and voice within the structure of your program

The way decisions are made, the way information/feedback is provided, and the way that coaches interact with athletes

Autonomous forms of motivation work best!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low self-determination</th>
<th>Controlled Extrinsic Motivation</th>
<th>Autonomously Extrinsic Motivation</th>
<th>Intrinsic Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure why</td>
<td>My parents want me to play.</td>
<td>I value what I learn in sport.</td>
<td>It’s fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m questioning why I’m doing it</td>
<td>Feel pressure from others to play</td>
<td>I’m not self-disciplined</td>
<td>I enjoy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would feel like a failure if I quit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to feel like I’m improving.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ideas for being Autonomy-Supportive in Youth Sport

1. Personally connect in non-performance conversations with athletes.
2. Provide purposes of drills and rationale for your decisions.
3. Ask for athletes’ input and provide choices within your team structure.
4. Designate Player-Coach occasionally
5. Optimal Push (challenge + support/care)
Ideas for being Autonomy-Supportive in Youth Sport

6. Minimize controlling feedback and praise
7. Ask questions, as opposed to always correcting athletes’ mistakes
8. Be smart and have the right motivation in using discipline
   – Avoid “I gotcha” or looking to catch them doing something wrong
   – Avoid creating coaching “dog-houses”
   – Consequences should be logical, not illogically punitive

Tendency for Extrinsic Rewards to Decrease Intrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic rewards have the tendency to decrease intrinsic motivation

Overjustification effect:
when you give an extrinsic reward for behavior that is already intrinsically interesting, it can change motivation from intrinsic to extrinsic

Changes perception about “why am I doing this?”

Guidelines for Giving Rewards in Youth Sport

1. Downplay the controlling aspect of rewards (“you better keep it up”)
2. Help young athletes process what extrinsic rewards should mean to them
3. Extrinsic rewards should be earned and given contingent on specific accomplishments
4. The best type of extrinsic rewards are creative and small
5. Personalize rewards based on unique contributions

Emotional/Social Connection

• Young athletes desire an emotional connection with their coaches.
• Connections with peers are essential in keeping kids in youth sport
• Adult leaders should thoughtfully and intentionally plan activities and strategies to build relatedness

Coach Bates

Middle school athletic director Ms. Jefferson has received several complaints about Coach Bates, who coaches the 8th grade girls’ basketball team.

Coach Bates knows the game very well, having played and coached at both the high school and college levels. She is intent on building a strong program, and has implemented a conditioning program that requires players to attend every morning at 6 AM during July and August prior to school starting. She has implemented a fitness test (distance run for time) that all girls must pass before they are allowed to try out for the team, which has scared many girls away from trying out for the team. She teaches complex offensive sets, and the players struggle to learn and remember what to do on the floor. They look robotic, timid, and hesitant when they play.

Coach Bates really wants to develop a strong program, and is confused about why her players don’t like basketball and why parents are complaining. How could Ms. Jefferson help Coach Bates?

Extrinsic rewards affect motivation based on the meaning of these rewards to kids.

• Rewards have the potential to increase intrinsic motivation if delivered in the right way (but can also decrease intrinsic motivation)
• Rewards may be viewed as
  – Informational (good) – a positive indicator of my competence
  – Controlling (bad) – coercion to keep me involved in sport