

The Coaching Philosophy of
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Fall 2011

The Role of Sports

The role of sport has many facets to it. For those that compete through youth programs to professional athletics, sports provide participants with lessons in fitness, cooperation, competition, and how to handle adversity that life presents. Being active in sports also transfers to other areas of life. The ancient Greeks have a motto; "A sound mind in a sound body." Not only does sport have a positive influence on the areas just mentioned, but being active through sport helps people perform in intellectual endeavors.

Not only is sport beneficial to the participant, it also plays a huge role within the community and beyond. Its influence on the community and surrounding areas can be traced to the original Olympics as athletic competitions of all varieties were performed by the athletes between communities. Sports can serve to entertain, to educate, to provide an outlet for a community and can be used for a source of revenue for the community and businesses within.

The level of competition may also alter the role of sport. The higher the level of play of the sport and the resources committed to it, the more likely the desire to win will begin to influence all of those involved. Sports have provided a window into the values of society, business, leisure, and communities and are not inherently positive or negative activities. In the end, it is intended to be fun. Only those who participate or influence sport can make it a valuable experience for everyone involved.

The Function and Role of Sport at the Various Levels

The word sport comes from a word that means "to amuse and behave playfully." It also implies entertainment as sports are to many people. In any case, I intend to outline the role of sport through the various stages of development that are as follows:

- Pre-youth (0-8 years)
- Youth (9-12 years)
- Pre-varsity (12-15 years)
- Varsity level (15-18 years)
- College (19-25 years)
- Adult (25-40)
- Adult (40+ years)

Pre-youth (0-8 years)

The primary focus of the age bracket of people is motor development. As a child grows, much of the movement and gross motor skill development that occurs is through natural process and involvement in physical activity. This group of people learns the basic movements of running and other skills through practice and trial and error until they have developed sufficiently. They are not taught skills to start, as they often cannot do what a teacher asks of them. However, as they continue to grow and even practice some of the skills, a level of proficiency can be seen on the part of the athlete. In any case, the role of sport can be summed up by being active and having fun at this age level.

Youth (9-12 years)

Sport at this level is still about motor development and fun. However, skill development has now taken place and become more prominent. In *"The Inner Edge"*, Robin Vealey examines sport through the developing of an athlete's skills, preparing them to succeed when they compete against others, and providing a rewarding fun experience for all participants. The role of coaches in youth and developmental programs should be solely focused upon

development of skills that are essential to participation in the sport and to ensuring that the participants have fun in learning about the sport.

Another function of sport through this period is a social one. It is a great opportunity for athletes to meet each other and develop a common bond through the activity that they participate in, whether they are like-minded or they have a different opinion on things. The social function through this section is one where the athlete will make new friends and solidifies previously formed friendships through his/her involvement in the sport.

Understanding their own success through sport is another objective at this stage. This is a life skill that an athlete will hopefully develop and it is not just through winning that they experience this success. The understanding and learning of a new skill and the development through practice to a point where that skill can be performed continuously brings with it a sense of achievement.

Young athletes at this age should also be exposed to a variety of activities. This is important as the young athletes are still learning about their bodies and what they are good at as there is the continuation of physical development taking place. Physical development is just at its height throughout the earlier years. Some kineticists believe that the period from 9-13 is arguably the most important age for perfecting gross motor skills for children. (Roche & Annesley, 1998) Athletes at this age are still learning what they are good at and that process can be hindered when an athlete is forced to live out the dreams of others.

Pre-varsity (12-15 years)

At this point, an athlete is part of a program with the intention of competing at a high level and helping the program succeed. A number of the objectives that have been mentioned earlier are again relevant to this section. Now a respect for fair competition starts at this level.

Junior high school and high school programs usually play more expansive roles in their communities and tend to draw more attention within. As community members and increasing amounts of money become more involved in the sport, a greater emphasis on winning begins to emerge. Coaches at this level must still focus on skill development and all players having a positive, rewarding experience. However, there is now a greater focus on developing players within a program's system. As these same players approach the varsity level, emphasis on successful performance must increase along with focusing on winning, not just participating.

As a program is in the process of being built, a sense of community between the athletes is encouraged. Their experiences are alike and a brotherhood (or sisterhood) is developed. For many, this is the start of a productive avenue to focus their energy as positive relationships are developed as well as success through competition. The end result of the program is to have a team of players that work together and challenge each other to succeed when they reach varsity level competition.

Varsity Level (15-18 years)

Varsity coaches and varsity programs must begin to emphasize winning. Communities now view their teams with tremendous pride. Successful teams and programs can provide some additional funding to athletic programs and schools and can develop community spirit that feeds off itself and leads to accomplishments in other aspects of the community. Additionally, varsity coaches may serve as a mentor to athletes who have aspirations of continuing their sport at the next level. All of these expectations upon a varsity coach and varsity program have raised the emphasis on winning in many communities.

While winning must be a primary goal for a varsity coach, emphasizing character and skill development are still the two building blocks of a winning program. Character

development of student-athletes within one's program is essential. In nearly every school in America the coach is a teacher first and a coach second. Additionally, state athletic organizations such as the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) include the character-building nature of athletic participation as one of the primary reasons for the existence of sports within public schools (MHSAA.com). Coaches have an obligation to teach lessons in cooperation, punctuality, tolerance, hard work, reliability, and commitment. These are all character traits that will serve participants well in their life after participation in competitive sport. Regardless of this emphasis on character development, it is at the varsity level that performance and winning must start to be emphasized. Unfortunately, everyone cannot play in every varsity competition if winning is a significant goal.

That does not mean that they cannot learn valuable life skills and have a meaningful, enjoyable time participating. It simply means that unlike junior high and developmental programs, everyone cannot play in every game. Both the MHSAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations emphasize character development and the life lessons of participation in their objectives and guidelines for participation. Everyone cannot win and everyone cannot play equally, but everyone can be positively impacted by participation in sports. Former Notre Dame and South Carolina Coach Lou Holtz said it best, "We want to impart habits that will lead them to excellence throughout their lives. Most of all, we want to teach them the value of loyalty, integrity, and teamwork. Once you know how to work with people, you can accomplish anything." (Holtz, 1998, p. 52). Every coach at every level should actively support the building of relationships and the fostering of skills that are transferrable to any career path. For members of an athletic team who play limited minutes, their overall experience and relationships will form the foundation of their memories of a sport.

College (19-25 years)

Because the majority of college athletes do not continue playing their sport in the professional level, the primary function of sport for college athletes is health related and towards the maintenance of their scholarship that provides the means of their education. The number of people in this age demographic that are involved in competitive college sport is very small. The purpose of winning in order to maintain scholarships fall to the very back of the field for the majority of this demographic.

For those who do not compete in the college level, sport is related to health, having fun and more for social interaction. Competition may continue at the intramural or club level but competition and skill development dwindles. Most of the development is self-developed and taught.

For those competing in the college level, the role of sport is about having success and maintaining the integrity of the program. The program can be a major source of entertainment and revenue for the school, depending on the sport. This cannot be said about all programs within a university but the success of a team is a source of pride from within the school.

It is also too often viewed that college athletics is used as an avenue to professional trajectories but this is not true because most college athletes no longer compete at a higher level. In the meantime, athletes are taught by specialist according to a position and will perfect their form to be used in competition.

Adult (25-40)

Very few individuals will be competing in a sport professionally. For those that do, the main role of sports is to entertain and represent their community. Not much development will take place as these athletes are now making a living doing what they are doing.

For the rest of the population, the roles and functions of sport changes little from those who do not compete collegiately. The maintenance of health or the improvement of health is the main objectives but enjoyment still is part of what draws their participation. Involvement in clubs through the community gives great opportunity to partake in many sporting opportunities. This demographic also uses sport for social purposes as it can be a great time to get together with friends and enjoy watching a game or bowling together with each other. Socialization takes place at and in sporting events. We also view sports as a source of entertainment.

Adult (40+ years)

The essential function of this adult group is the same for the previous adult group. The key similarity is that both groups consider health to be a major component of their objectives for taking part in sport. It is also true that even professional athletes have retired from professional competition and would use sport in the same way. Involvement in sport of some sort, golf, swimming, tennis or something similar is vital for health and at times socialization.

Sport can also be a business-related activity. Whether it is networking while on the golf course, inviting clients to a box at a game or sponsoring the children's school team uniforms; business around sport is important at this age.

Defining Success

Winning and success are too often considered synonymous. At the youth level, it would be absurd to do so when scores and records are not kept. However, most youth league associations outline their criteria for success. In essence, all youth programs consider two essential measurements of success for youth sport: did the participants get better from the

beginning of the season to the end and did the participants enjoy their experience. Robin Vealey discusses balancing the coaching triad of achieving the desired focus on the areas of performance, experience, and development of the player (Vealey, 2005, p16). At the youth sport level, this triad should be heavily favoring experience and player development.

The measurement of success and winning is more difficult in the varsity and college levels. To those observing from the outside, they might only define it by wins and losses. This happens to often and has too much of an impact unfortunately because this would be a tragically narrow definition of success. At the high school and college level of coaching sport, coaches must still emphasize development and the overall experience of all participants. Realistically, these coaches must also direct much more of their attention towards performance/winning than coaches at the youth level. While winning should be a goal of a coach, coaching your players to perform as closely towards one's potential should also be a significant goal. Not every program has access to the same quality and numbers of athletes. Winning is still possible but dominance and consistent winning may depend more upon a coach's particular situation. In any case, the measurements of success are still tied to Vealey's Coaching Triad but must also include academic and athlete's character development and character of the team. Winning has an important role in sports and it is part of a coach's job to ensure that winning has its proper place and it is used in perspective alongside the rest of the program and the school or club as a whole entity.

A coach can still have a successful program if the players play and compete to the best of their abilities, and act as true scholar-athletes with good character representing their institutions. Along with that, another measure of success is strongly correlated to helping student athletes achieve success within the classroom and maturing as individuals. The vast majority of student

athletes will never be professional athletes. Teaching the lesson that hard work in sport can translate to hard work and success in the classroom is an invaluable lesson. Student athletes can earn academic, grant-based money while competing at their preferred level that they are capable of playing at. College coaches who ensure that their players are advancing towards graduation and graduating in a timely manner should also be considered successful coaches. This is especially true when NCAA keeps track of a school's APR.

One other significant difference between high school coaching and college coaching is (or should be if not for private school's defiance) recruiting. The presence of college scholarships, continuous communication, and the possible presence of alumni money call for another consideration in the measurement of a successful college coach. If a coach is able to produce hard working, student-athletes while playing within both the letter and intent of NCAA regulations they should be considered a success. Coaches that are able to compete in such an environment while adhering to both the intent and the letter of NCAA regulations are running successful programs.

Gender Equity

In this discussion about gender equity, I want to first adopt the position stated by the Indiana High School Athletic Association (<http://www.ihsaa.org>):

“One of the purposes of the IHSAA is to assure that every student-athlete has a fair opportunity to compete. That purpose can only be achieved when there is true equality of opportunity to participate in athletics. Athletic participation in an IHSAA member school is an extension of and an integral part of the educational experience for those young people who become student-athletes. These educational experiences should not be reduced in scope and significance by disparities which limit the participation of any athlete.

The IHSAA believes that gender equity is more than being in compliance with the law. It is a spirit. It is a personal ethic. It is a commitment to do what is right and fair for all student-athletes. It means creating an atmosphere and an environment where opportunities and resources are distributed fairly to boys and girls, an atmosphere where no person experiences discrimination on the basis of gender.

It is the position of the IHSAA that its member schools must monitor their athletic programs to ensure that athletic offerings are equitable and meet the interests and abilities of student-athletes.

While the IHSAA does not have the authority to provide specific interpretations or to rule on compliance issues regarding Title IX, it does believe that all concerned should take steps to be sure that the spirit and intent of gender equity is met."

I want to adopt this position presented by the IHSAA for its brevity and the fact that it is an official position.

The issue of gender equity in sport has always been a controversial and complex issue. This is not due to the need for gender equity in sport, but the reality of the situation of gender inequity that really is in sports today. In the last few decades, it has been acknowledged that there is inequity based on gender throughout the world in sports. According to research:

"Gender inequity in sport participation and recognition is an often-recognized reality, which has been attributed to various causes, including women's self-perception, lack of disposable income, time limitations and lack of opportunity." (Deem, 1988)

There have been many questions raised about gender equity. One of them has been a more recent concern and it has to do with whether or not men or women should have to prove their sex or gender orientation. I do not feel that it is appropriate at the youth level however I do feel so at the professional level. Currently, gender is measured by amount of testosterone that a person has. This test also includes looking for specific body parts for obvious reasons. What is interesting is that this test is similar to some tests looking for performance-enhancing drugs.

Another issue is related to cross-gendered coaching and other issues that might relate to the hiring of a coach. I first want to address the cross-gendered coaching issue. My stance is that the gender should not disqualify the coach from being hired. However, I do recognize complications where gender is an issue but I want to make my idealized stance. While coaches

of either gender can be just as qualified for coaching, there are other concerns outside of putting together drills and the like.

Let me present this hypothetical situation (which is based on the hiring of an area physical education teacher in a Lansing area school). In an inner-city school, bullying and other destructive behaviors are quite the norm. Much of the destruction takes place in closed quarters like the locker room. Would it be appropriate to hire a coach to coach the opposite gender in this situation? While there are ways to get around the issue, this is just to illustrate the complexity of the issue. In an ideal world, I do not believe that either gender is more qualified to coach the opposite gender. I believe the character of the coach and their understanding of the needs of the athletes they are going to coach is a better predicator of who is more highly qualified for the job. However, I want to recognize the different needs that might force a school to have a preference.

Along with that, the age of the coach, his/her marital status, or presence of children in any candidate should not play a role in their candidacy for a position. There are those who have a concern about being unfit for a coaching position for the opposite sex because they were single while others were considered a better candidate because they were already married. It first needs to be recognized that any relationship with the players is illegal. It needs to be acknowledged that being married is no indicator of whether they would participate in an illegal or unethical relationship anyways.

Additionally, the presence of children within a female coach's family or the possibility of it in the immediate future should not be considered in their qualifications for a position. It is not a factor in considering a male for hire; it should not be a factor for a female coach. Having children immediately puts physical pressure on coaches and athletes alike. In addition to a marriage, they require time, as does coaching or being involved in a team. The time requirements

that are placed on people because of involvement in these activities are great and exceptions could be made, along with allowances, in these activities. If a coach has children there are allowances that can be made by the organization in order to accommodate the coach as best as possible. If the coach cannot commit enough time, he/she needs to make it known so that a replacement can be found.

Racial and Social Equity

It is my belief that every person has the right to participate in a sport regardless of his/her race, nationality, or knowledge of English. Youth coaches need to learn to treat athletes who speak limited English the same as they treat any other athlete. Coaches at the high school level should encourage the participation of athletes from all different backgrounds and nationalities. Unfortunately, there are too many students who are encouraged to participate but have too many barriers that prevent them from doing so. Issues related to transportation are often an issue for high school players not from this country. Many of these athletes have few connections within the community that can help them to and from practice and competitions. Coaches should develop connections between families of players on their teams to at least make an attempt to help all those who wish to participate to do so. Failing to recognize the circumstances of a player can prevent them from participating.

The goal is for a coach to do what they can. I work in an inner-city school district and work with a very diverse population. Many of my athletes fit this category to a certain degree and we coaches usually help out when possible. We are fortunate enough to find that we can help all the athletes we have. However, our soccer coach is in a more difficult situation where very few of his athletes speak English as their first language. He and his one other coach cannot

help them all and so many of the athletes hang around the neighborhoods and get involved with gang-related activities. There is only so much he could do and we need to also recognize that our best may not be good enough.

Along with this, there is the issue related to racial discrimination within the sport. In football, this is a two-way street as many white participants in our school system are not given fair treatment in being provided an opportunity to compete. In any case, coaches can send very strong messages regarding race by who they hire for their staffs and by the treatment of persons of color they allow to occur on their teams. Our school has done a very good job of this as our staff is quite diverse. It needs to be said that it might not be in the best interest of a coach to seek as diverse a staff as possible whenever the opportunity arises.

On a more daily basis, coaches need to take the opportunity to address racism in all forms regardless of their intent. A zero tolerance policy may be necessary for racial comments by members of the team and members of the staff. It is my belief that you need to act a certain way to represent your school and community. Too many of our athletes talk like they do at home around us and we continually address the issue to put a stop to it. This is a very difficult situation because I coach in the inner-city.

Another major concern is related to social equity in participation. Too many participants are unable to level with their peers in training because their family is at an economic disadvantage. In my school, we do not have a pay-to-play policy to address the issue but we must still fundraise as our only means to actually support our program. But even this is difficult for many. I do not have an answer to these issues. As mentioned earlier, our school does not require pay-to-play but this results in less resources than all other area schools. I agree with our stance but I also recognize the drawbacks of it. The only solution, knowing that money is an

issue, is to put together fundraising opportunities that the coach could do with the players. In an ideal world, we can make sure money is not an issue. However, that might be the main reason why this might be the last football season ever for Lansing Eastern High School.

Cutting Players

As a football coach, I am fortunate enough to not have to make cuts at our school. The same thing is true of most other high schools as well. The only issue that I have is related to when I need to remove players to benefit the rest of the team. There are only a few things that I require from my athletes that may cause us coaches to remove a player. They must:

1. Attend at all practices.
2. Participate with their best effort and show sportsmanship at all times.
3. Communicate directly with the coach ahead of time when a conflict causing a student to miss a practice or team meeting is unavoidable.

This is crucial for a student to demonstrate if they would like to be part of a team. I do not want to gloss over this issue, I just want to make it known that I do not have to worry about making cuts. For other sports, this is a heated issue. I do not like the nature of cuts but I recognize when it is necessary. Some sports require only a certain number of athletes to compete and so cuts will have to happen. I also recognize that the coaches are the ones responsible for the athletes while they have them. In this case, it might be asking too much of a coach to operate with a certain number of athletes. There are times when it is necessary. It is the responsibility of the coach to carry it out in a sensitive and supportive fashion.

Pay to Play

This issue has been discussed in the section of "**Racial and Social Equity**", see above.

Personal Ethics and Sportsmanship

Coaches have a duty and an obligation to model proper professional ethics as well as to model and facilitate good sportsmanship within their programs. The National Federation of State High School Associations asks for coaches to:

“...uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct”

(<http://www.nfhs.org/content.aspx?id=2825>).

Ethically, a coach cannot focus so intently on something like winning that they abandon the principles and ethics of the game. For example, a coach at any level should not encourage, nor ignore the use of performance enhancing drugs by one of his/her athletes. A coach should not knowingly allow a player to play in an athletic competition that is not academically eligible or has a concussion. In fact, there should be no question in the coach's mind over the participation of athletes if they are not fulfilling their role as students or should not compete due to injury. This applies to all levels of competition.

It also seems to be another acceptable practice to hire a coach with a checkered past at the college level. This practice is even taking place in the youth and high school level when it should not. Colleges routinely hire coaches who have had ethical lapses in their career and on the part of the college, for their unethical practices. This is probably not the best practice, but there is a difference between exposing a college athlete to such a coach and exposing an adolescent to the same coach. Youth and high school players are in such a period of moral and ethical development that the utmost care must be exercised in who is chosen to coach them. Unfortunately, this is not always done.

In this day and age of "School of Choice", a view on ethics in coaching must discuss recruiting or competition for players at the high school level. Unfortunately, winning-at-all-costs is very prevalent at this level. In Michigan, at the high school level there is the ability in a school to legally "recruit" players. In Lansing, we are seeing a rise of spectacularly good athletes going to nearby suburban schools as part of school of choice. In fact, this has led to competition for players in some regions but has been kept quiet.

What is even more amazing are the programs that some schools put together to ensure that some of these athletes will remain academically eligible. Some of these methods are related to the abuse of alternative schools to allow ineligible athletes to acquire the necessary credits to compete the next year. Such methods of recruiting and getting a competitive edge with nearby schools are regrettable but there does not seem to be any wrong doing according to the law. It is just suspicious and unethical. Athletes are also taken advantaged of in college in similar fashions as well.

As a coach of an inner-city team, it might seem like I am just bitter. However, I do feel that recruiting could be done in an ethical fashion in both the high school level and college. Ensuring that any recruit must meet the same academic standards, as any other enrollee, is a great way to do so. Recruiting athletes who understand the character expectations of the program is another. Nor should a coach allow a player to participate who has already been suspended from or been ruled ineligible at another district. Finally, an ethical coach would be open and honest about the opportunities for a potential player to contribute to his/her program.

A coach's approach to sportsmanship should permeate a program from the bottom up. Youth programs and coaches should emphasize proper treatment of the opponent, playing well and losing with dignity, and competing while honoring one's opponent. Proper treatment of

officials and referees should also be exhibited. The focus on competition can bring out the best and the worst of players and coaches alike.

An additional character challenge for a coach involves the support of their players in other sports and activities. There is a tremendous amount of pressure on high school coaches to win and this has led to an unhealthy amount of pressure placed by coaches upon players to focus more and more of their time on one sport. Focus on one sport is not necessary until the athlete competes at the collegiate level. Even if they do not compete at the next level, coaches should encourage involvement with other sports as it could only help provide a better experience for the athletes while they are of age to compete. For this reason, I believe that coaches should actively support and celebrate the participation of their players in other sports.

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Sources for Coaching Philosophy:**Youth Organizations:**

1. Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA)

http://www.maha.org/Youth_Home.aspx

The Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) is the governing body for amateur hockey in the state of Michigan.

The purposes of this Association are:

- To develop and encourage sportsmanship between all players for the betterment of their physical and social well-being.
- To encourage and improve the standard of ice hockey in the State of Michigan
- To affiliate with the USA HOCKEY and other hockey associations.
- To conduct ice hockey tournaments and to select representative teams for other tournaments.
- To do any and all acts desirable in the furtherance of the foregoing purposes.

Youth Hockey helps develop smart, active, great kids. Hockey is a very skilled sport and the development of these skills instills a sense of accomplishment and confidence in players of all ages. Hockey is great fun too! To find Hockey in your area simply use our Find Hockey in Michigan program locator at the left.

2. Mid-Michigan Youth Football League

<http://www.mmyfl.org/home.html?page=home>

Mid Michigan Youth Football League's philosophy is to promote family, strengthen our community, teach good sportsmanship, build character, promote academic success, and enhance the physical and mental abilities of our youth. The nature of MMYFL is instruction in the fundamentals of football and cheerleading. We are continuously striving to provide an exceptional experience to all that participate. The purpose of the MMYFL is to operate a non profit youth football league and to promote good sportsmanship to all players, coaches, parents, and fans.

We want our youth to demonstrate character at the highest level. After they have demonstrated exploits of greatness on the field, we want to continue to read about our kids, the accomplishments and contributions they are making to society. We want our kids to become adults who don't forget the sacrifices made for their success. We want our kids to be great role models, great parents and great citizens.

Mid Michigan Youth Football League will not turn away any kid who wants to participate in football or cheerleading regardless of ability to pay. Football teaches life lessons while getting youth in shape and away from the video games. Kids should play outdoors with their neighbors. Mid Michigan Youth Football League helps to develop relationships on and off the field.

High School Organizations:

3. Michigan High School Athletic Association

<http://www.mhsaa.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=xBH-iIRgsbc%3d&tabid=948>

Beliefs

"First, we believe that the nature of a nation's sports program reflects, to a large degree, the nation's physical well-being and its physical interests. We accept the statement that competition on the fields of Eton made a great contribution to the welfare of the English people over a long, long period of time.

"Second, we believe in competition. It is beneficial for the highly skilled to compete, for the less skilled to compete, for the moderately skilled to compete. A desire to win is good, and most benefits occur when extreme effort is made; casual effort does not result in desirable benefits! We believe that there is a difference between recreational sports and competitive sports. **And we believe further that competition should be regulated by standards.**

"Third, we believe that we should win **according to the rules** and that ethical practices should not be abused or voided in order to win. **A program that is properly administered, even though it is competitive, will give the educational benefits we are striving for.**

"Fourth, we believe that a program with both breadth and depth is needed. There should be a great many sports opportunities for high school students and students should have a choice of the activity in which they want to participate. We believe that there is need for many teams on various levels. Not all students want to participate in programs that are highly competitive. Some students do not care about this kind of activity; some are not interested in making the sacrifices that are necessary if they are to excel.

"Fifth, we believe that sportsmanship is taught and that the objectives we hope to attain can be reached only when sportsmanship is given a consideration. We believe that current approaches to sportsmanship are often 'namby-pamby.' Even with the fear of oversimplifying this important area, we suggest that there are three standards for sportsmanship. You can have acceptable sportsmanship generally if you will play the game according to the rules, both the spirit of the rules and the actual rules. If you win, you do not gloat over it. If you lose, you do not alibi. We believe that some 'window dressing' is insincere in the sportsmanship area, that it is unnecessary. Furthermore, it contributes to a weakness or a fault of our competitive program. We think that it is artificial and we believe that sportsmanship is dependent upon sincerity.

"Finally, we believe that personal and social values can be attained in sports competition but that **these objectives are not automatic and, to a great degree, they depend upon leadership.** In addition to those values that are classified as personal and social, there are others which are classified as physical and spiritual. An attitude of sophistication that has developed in the country since World War II is making it more difficult for sports programs to obtain the results which we hope they will. This attitude prevents participants from making sacrifices to accomplish what should be accomplished in sports program. We believe that this attitude of sophistication has contributed to a weakening of moral fiber.

4. National Federation of State High School Associations

<http://www.nfhs.org/content.aspx?id=2825>

Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she were the coaches' own, and his or her welfare should be uppermost at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFCA Board of Directors.

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student-athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

The coach shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

Before and after contests, coaches for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration. A coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

Coaches:

5. Lou Holtz when coaching at Notre Dame.

“We are on the field and in the locker room to teach our players how to win. Not just on the gridiron, but in any profession they choose. We want to impart habits that will lead them to excellence throughout their lives. Most of all, we want to teach them the value of loyalty, integrity, and teamwork. Once you know how to work with people, you can accomplish anything.” (Holtz, 1998, p. 52).

Holtz, L. (1998). *Winning every day: The game plan for success*. New York: Harper Collins.

6. Coach Brian Baggott (High School Football Coach)

http://www.athleteassessments.com/articles/coaching_philosophy_examples.html

“Many people want to know if I coach like I outwardly appear to be which is assertive, aggressive, energetic and effusive. Many times I have been called a straight shooter. Some act like that is a bad character trait. I feel it is better to deliver honest news and clear and concise assessments rather than wishy-washy blather meant to assuage an individual's self-esteem. When given the opportunity I would rather “go through the front door rather than run around the barn”.

I coach high school football and the last thing a 15 to 18 year old kid needs in his life is a coach constantly in his ear reminding him of how much he is wanting. He already has parents, friends, teachers and others to fill that role. I am an observer and I am a teacher. I use the inevitable failures of the game to instruct proper technique and game savvy.

Above all, I am a teacher, a father and a coach and want my kids to understand that their “life life” is longer than their football life. We all make mistakes, learn from them.”

7. Steve Parker – Youth Football Coach – Ft. Worth TX / Keller

<http://coachparker.org/>

“What is my philosophy as a youth football coach? Well, I am old school. If you do not set high expectations for your players then you should not be coaching. People will rise to your expectations. If you set the bar too low, then your players will always be crawling and not walking. I want my players running and scoring. I set the bar high, just above where I think my top players are at that season. I am always surprised at how much kids will achieve when you challenge them to push toward a tough goal. So, expect more or suffer the loss.”

8. TED: Ideas Worth Spreading

http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/john_wooden_on_the_difference_between_winning_and_success.html

John Wooden

“I coined my own definition of success. Which is: peace of mind attained only through self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do the best of which you're capable. I believe that's true. If you make the effort to the best of which you're capable, try and improve the situation that exists for you, I think that's success. And I don't think others can judge that.”