

Table 1: Relating Course Content to Communication Strategies Between Parents and Coaches

Topics from the Psychology of Coaching course were melded into communication strategies to help parents and coaches recognize their roles in youth sports. These communication strategies are at the heart of the YouthFirst parent-training program.

Course and Program Topic: Communication Strategy

- 1. Attributes of Athletes:** Understanding the developmental process of children with regards to psychomotor, cognitive and social/affective domains.
- 2. Coaching Styles:** Understanding that young athletes need more positive feedback and less micromanaging.
- 3. Anxiety:** Understanding how to make the practice and game field comfortable and helping the young athlete feel confident.
- 4. Arousal:** Understanding how to help athletes relax and have fun rather than being tensed and distracted.
- 5. Role of the Parent in Youth Sports:** Understanding that parents should support, encourage and reinforce a child's decision to play.
- 6. Role of the Coach in Youth Sports:** Understanding that young athletes choose to play to have fun, and quit when it is not fun.
- 7. Motivation:** Understanding that each child is different and plays for different reasons.
- 8. Aggression/Assertiveness:** Understanding that youth sports should be about fun, teamwork, sportsmanship and making friends.
- 9. Leadership:** Understanding that sports help children develop personal skills such as leadership and self-confidence.
- 10. Team Climate/Cohesion:** Understanding that teamwork is more than just fielding a team to play.
- 11. Realistic Expectations:** Understanding that parents and coaches place too much pressure and too many expectations on young athletes while not realizing that the sole expectation should be to allow the children to have fun.