



NORTHEAST COMMUNITY CHALLENGE COALITION COMMUNITY-WIDE ASSET INITIATIVE



Asset Building Ideas for Coaches

Coaches teach young people not only the rules and strategy of games but important lessons about life as well. You can help young people develop confidence and self-esteem, help them learn to resolve conflicts peacefully, teach them ways to take care of their health and well-being, and help them develop skills for communicating with others. Here are a few ways coaches can be asset builders:

- Create and maintain a positive attitude and atmosphere. Two top reasons young people participate in sports are to have fun and to spend time with their friends. Winning is not one of their top reasons.
- Focus on helping players get better, not being the best. It will reduce players' fear of failure and give them permission to try new things and stretch their skills.
- Know that highly competitive sports can often cause a great deal of stress for young people. Stress can sometimes lead to unhealthy outcomes such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and/or eating disorders. Learn about the warning signs of possible problems
- Care about your athletes' lives outside of the sport and show them that they are valuable people as well as team members.
- Adapt your teaching style and language to the players' age level.
- Set goals both for individuals and for the team. Include young people in setting these goals..
- Catch kids doing things right. Be quick to praise a player's efforts. The best feedback is immediate and positive.
- Use the sandwich method of correcting a player's mistake. First praise, then constructively criticize, then praise again.
- Always preserve player's dignity. Sarcasm does not work well with young people. They may not always remember what you say, but they always remember how you said it.
- Insist that all team members treat one another with respect. Then model, monitor, and encourage respect. Have a zero-tolerance policy for teasing that hurts someone's feelings.
- Be specific about a code of conduct and expectations for athletes, parents, spectators, and team personnel.
- Encourage athletes to do well in school and to be motivated to achieve.
- Find ways each player can participate, even if he or she is not particularly skilled in the sport.
- Listen and encourage your athletes' dreams, concerns, and desires-sports related or otherwise.
- Develop leadership skills in youth athletes by giving them opportunities to lead practice drills and develop a team code of conduct.
- Split up cliques on the team by mixing up groups for drills or scrimmages.
- Plan a community service project for the team. It teaches players to give something back to the community.
- If you have an end-of-season gathering, take time to say a few positive things about each player.
- Encourage older athletes to be mentors, role models or tutors to younger athletes.
- Promote and support clear boundaries, positive values, high expectations and healthy behaviors for all children and youth.

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