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Tips for Coaches

Coaches teach young people not only the rules and strategies of the game, but important life lessons as well. Here are a few ways coaches can help children succeed:

- Use the sandwich method of correcting mistakes; praise, then constructively criticize, then praise again.
- Catch kids doing things right.
- Insist that all team members treat one another with respect.
- Find ways for every child to participate.
- Plan a community service project for the team.
- Focus on helping players get better, not be the best.
- Always preserve a child's dignity.
- Have a clear code of conduct for athletes, parents and spectators.

Student-Athlete Success: Meeting the Challenges of College Life

by Carl Fertman, PhD, MBA, CHES

College student-athletes are extraordinary people. On the college campus, they are the most easily identifiable group of individuals. They are known by people they have never met and are held to high standards. They are expected to balance academic, athletic, career, personal, and community responsibilities while showing character, integrity, and leadership skills.

Student-athletes need support and help from parents, coaches, professors and athletic directors to flourish. However, not all student-athletes are successful. Some run into academic challenges, and the demands of getting a college degree take precedence over athletic commitments. For others, the physical demands of practice and competition and lack of proper sleep can, at times, undermine a student-athlete's best intention to attend class and to study. Physical injuries can often prevent full classroom and athletic participation. Sometimes, the demands of classes on athletes result in unhealthy

choices involving drugs, alcohol, violence, and sex.

High school student-athletes face challenges, whether it is balancing school, home, relationships, early morning practices, extra travel, or late night games and competitions while friends are able to sleep in and enjoy high school. College student-athletes face similar challenges but on an advanced level. The college academic demands are greater than high school with less support and structure. College students are expected to be independent learners. Likewise, the athletic competition and demands are greater. The skill level of college student-athletes is better than high school student-athletes. The physical demands of practice and competitions are greater. And for student-athletes on athletic scholarships the stress can be overwhelming.

College student-athletes talk about eight challenges: academics, pain and injury, nutrition, performance enhancers, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs, sex and relationships, gambling

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Coming This Winter

The Council's Annual Prevention Forum

Check our website for updates.

Executive Thoughts . . . Dave Bender, Council on Drug & Alcohol Abuse



In high school, I ran on a league championship track team. On the spring afternoon of one of our most important meets, our coach hit us with the news that our best quarter miler would not run. He had been skipping practices and getting high.

Were we mad at our teammate? Sure. Were we even more upset with the coach? Definitely. How could he threaten our championship year like that? Why couldn't he let this kid run in the meet and then punish him later? We wanted that win so badly that nothing else mattered.

One of my friends got up the courage to ask Coach how he could do this to us. He gave us a pretty fiery reply. "To you? I'm not doing anything to you. I'm doing this for you. This team is going to go out there and win or lose, I don't know which. Ten years from now you won't even remember whether you won or lost this meet. What you will remember is what I'm telling you now: that each of your lives is more important to me. . . and had darn well better be more important to you. . . than this win. If the only way you can win is by doing things the easy way, then this is not the team I've believed in all year. But if you go out there and do this thing the right way, you're already the championship team."

Actually, he said something a little stronger than "darn" and I definitely remember that. But far more than ten years later he is still right. I know we won the championship, but I really don't recall if we won that particular meet. All of the scores, records and stopwatch times have long ago faded, but his insistence on every life counting for far more than a W or L stuck with me.

This issue of our newsletter focuses on the needs of athletes and college students, but every day here at the Council we help people of all ages make the most important decisions of their lives. If you think you're in a no-win situation with alcohol or other drugs, pick up the phone and call us. Facing life straight up can be tough. Don't do it alone. Stand with our team and win back your life.



Personal Resilience at Thaddeus Stevens

This summer, freshmen at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology were the first to experience the Council's Personal Resilience course. This highly interactive personal exploration program was designed for incoming freshmen to further develop life skills and provide the information they need to make an informed decision about alcohol or other drugs (AOD). Learning goals for the students included:

- Identifying healthy and unhealthy ways to express emotion;
- Learning effective communication skills;
- Learning and demonstrating a five-step formula for decision making;

- Discussing childhood influences on life choices;
- Identifying the effects of AOD, its medical aspects and effects on the community.

Lectures, class discussions, writing assignments, role plays, community visits and quizzes and were used to reach the course goals.

Additionally, eleven students built on the sense of community created by the class and formed the coalition SURVIVE, which means Sustaining Urban Resiliency via Inspiration, Virtue and Education. The

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Alcohol & Sports: They Don't Mix!



#1 Sports-Related Alcohol Myth:

Alcohol is a good source of calories for athletes.

In fact, the calories in alcohol are used by the body for heat production, and aren't converted to glycogen, the main fuel for muscles. In other words, they're useless for athletes.

As little as two or three standard drinks can cause the following problems for up to 48 hours after drinking:

- Decreased strength
- Impaired reaction time
- Impaired balance & eye/hand coordination

- Increased fatigue
- Poor muscle repair
- Decreased ability to utilize oxygen
- Extra rapid depletion of calcium, which promotes bone growth and wound healing.

Small amounts of alcohol can affect grip strength, jump height and running performance.

Don't lose your edge; avoid alcohol!



Challenges of College Life, con't.

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and money. The challenges are all familiar. Each one has the potential to derail the academic and athletic career of even the most promising college student-athlete. They are part of everyday life.

How do college student-athletes deal with the challenges? In college, many student-athletes feel that they are now an adult; they should be able to deal with life challenges on their own. However, most adults have a support system and ask for help and guidance from older adults such as their parents, friends, peers. Student-athletes have these supports plus coaches, professors, and athletic directors. Likewise most colleges have a learning support and academic development center offering academic support, mentoring and learning aids.

One successful approach to working with college student-athletes (as well as high school student-athletes) to meet the challenges is to use a four pronged approach: frank discussion, self assessment, accurate information and action steps to meet goals. Do not assume that the young person has problematic health behaviors, but rather emphasize that positive health changes can be made if he or she does have

issues. Focus on the development of competent and capable student-athletes who perform well in the classroom and on the playing field. It will encourage development of positive assets and protective qualities that lead to resilient, caring individuals in both their academic and athletic pursuits.

Work with college student-athletes to find resources on campus and the surrounding community. Focus on asking for help. Asking for help is difficult for many adults. And it can be particularly hard for college student-athletes who might perceive asking for help as a weakness rather than a strength. Finally, help the student-athletes to build and strengthen their support system. Cultivating social support can take some effort. Finding resources, asking for help and building support cannot guarantee success for college student-athletes, but can get them pretty far down the road to meeting their academic and athletic goals.

Carl Fertman is an associate professor of education at the University of Pittsburgh. This article was adapted from his book "Student-Athlete Success: Meeting the Challenges of College Life", published by Jones and Bartlett Publishers (2009) www.jbpub.com.



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Celebrating over 40 years of helping reduce the harmful use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Lancaster County!

We're grateful for the financial and technical support provided by the Lancaster County Drug & Alcohol Commission.

Stevens Tech, con't.

(continued from page 2)

goals of the group are to eliminate peer pressure at Stevens to use AOD by creating alternative activities and forums for campus-wide discussion, and also to provide mentoring to boys at Lincoln Middle School in the School District of Lancaster.

The Lincoln students will be referred by teachers, counselors and other staff, and the program will be offered on the middle school grounds. The college students are committing to spending one hour per week with their mentees throughout the school year.

Coalition members hope to present positive values to the middle school students by modeling

alternatives to negative behaviors and providing trusting, mutually satisfying relationships.

Training for the mentors will be provided by Janice Thomas, Youth Support Group (YSP) facilitator, and part of the teaching team, along with Council employees Stephanie Roy and Jim Bender, for the Personal Resilience class.

SURVIVE will make its campus debut during Stevens' homecoming weekend; members are excited about introducing the campus to this premier student organization, and hope that it will become a benchmark for other colleges in Lancaster County and across the Commonwealth.

SURVIVE
Sustaining Urban Resiliency Via Inspiration, Virtue, & Education.



Red Ribbon Week October 23-31

"Celebrate
Life Drug Free"

Red Ribbon Week is an ideal way for communities to take a visible stand against drugs through the symbol of the red ribbon.

In 1985, Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a DEA agent, was murdered while investigating Mexican drug traffickers. This began the tradition of wearing and displaying red ribbons as a symbol of intolerance towards the use of drugs.

As part of the celebration, we hope you will join others across the country to support and encourage our youth to stay free from drugs.