

Teaching Character Development

Being a Good Role Model

Caring

- You spend time after practice helping a player learn a skill.
- You comfort a player who is dejected after a loss.
- You help a player who is stressed manage that stress.

Honesty

- You tell a player that she's not executing a skill correctly and you'll help her.
- You tell a player when you don't know a rule (but you'll find out what it is).
- You tell a player when you make a mistake, such as misinterpreting who instigated minor misbehavior during practice.

Respect

- You listen to players attentively when they are talking.
- You bring the same energy and enthusiasm for teaching skills to all your players, no matter how skilled they are.
- You don't criticize players in front of their teammates.

Responsibility

- You show up on time and prepared for all practices and contests.
- You provide appropriate first aid for injured players.
- You closely supervise all practice activities.

Understanding Children's Moral Reasoning

Children up through the age of 9 usually think about moral questions in terms of obedience and punishment. They assume that fixed rules are set by powerful adults who can enforce those rules by punishment. Children are doing right when they obey the rules unquestioningly. Actions are judged by their outcomes, not by the person's intentions. Moral reasoning for children 9 years and younger is very -black and white. In baseball or softball, you might expect to see children interpret being hit by a ball thrown by an opponent personally- as an intentional attack- when it is most likely unintentional and a result of poor skill or lack of experience.

Using -Teachable Moments

- If one player yells at another for a mistake in play, talk to that player about respect.
- If a player does something dangerous during a game, have a brief discussion with that player about responsibility and caring for others.
- If a player helps another child who is hurt, praise the player for being caring.
- If a player raises her hand to admit she was tagged when called safe congratulate her for being honest.