

PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY®

CHAMPION COACH NOTES

Coaches Focus on Relationships

Welcome to the 2015-16 Sports Season! As your season begins, it is important for you to get to know your players, for your players to get to know you, and for your players to develop positive relationships between team members. As the coach, you have the opportunity to establish a climate of camaraderie and friendliness within the team which leads to developing trust. As *Play Like a Champion* highlights, positive relationships and high group cohesion increase team stability, individual and team performance, and player satisfaction.

- Hold an Introductory Meeting for everyone (parents included!) to get to know one another.
- Utilize Team Building Activities like Human Knot or Relay Races (contact *Play Like a Champion* for additional suggestions at plc@nd.edu)
- Have your team establish team rules in a team discussion - write them on a poster board to display throughout the season.
- Have players write their individual goals on an index card and hold a team meeting for players to share their goals as they relate to the team.
- Hold a weekly team meeting to check in with the athletes: how are they doing progressing toward goals and relating to one another.
- Engage in a team service project.
- Attend mass together as a team.
- Hold a team retreat (*Play Like a Champion* offers a template for this)
- Assign season buddies – pair players up with one another. They can be a secret or known. Each person is responsible for providing their buddy with support and motivation over the course of the season. Motivation can be anything from spoken encouragement to written notes.
- Have your team wear their uniform jersey to school on game day (with administrative permission).
- Create a team “family” that each player feels a unique and valued role within.
- Use inclusive language “We”; “Us”; “Our” so that everyone feels ownership over the team family.
- Write weekly (or occasional) notes to the parents to inform them of the team’s progress and highlights so far in the season.



Often players have already developed strong bonds on your team, but as the coach, you need to establish a climate of camaraderie and friendliness with the team as a whole. It is important to discourage cliques and build relationships among team members of different grades and social groups. It is also your opportunity to establish a positive partnership between the coaches and parents.

In your *Play like a Champion* Coach Manual, review the pages on the “R” (Relationships) of the GROW approach for character development through sports.

Here’s an [inspirational video](#) on teamwork to start the season.

**Make it a great sport season and
Play Like Champions Today!**



Play Like a Champion Today
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