





INTRODUCTION

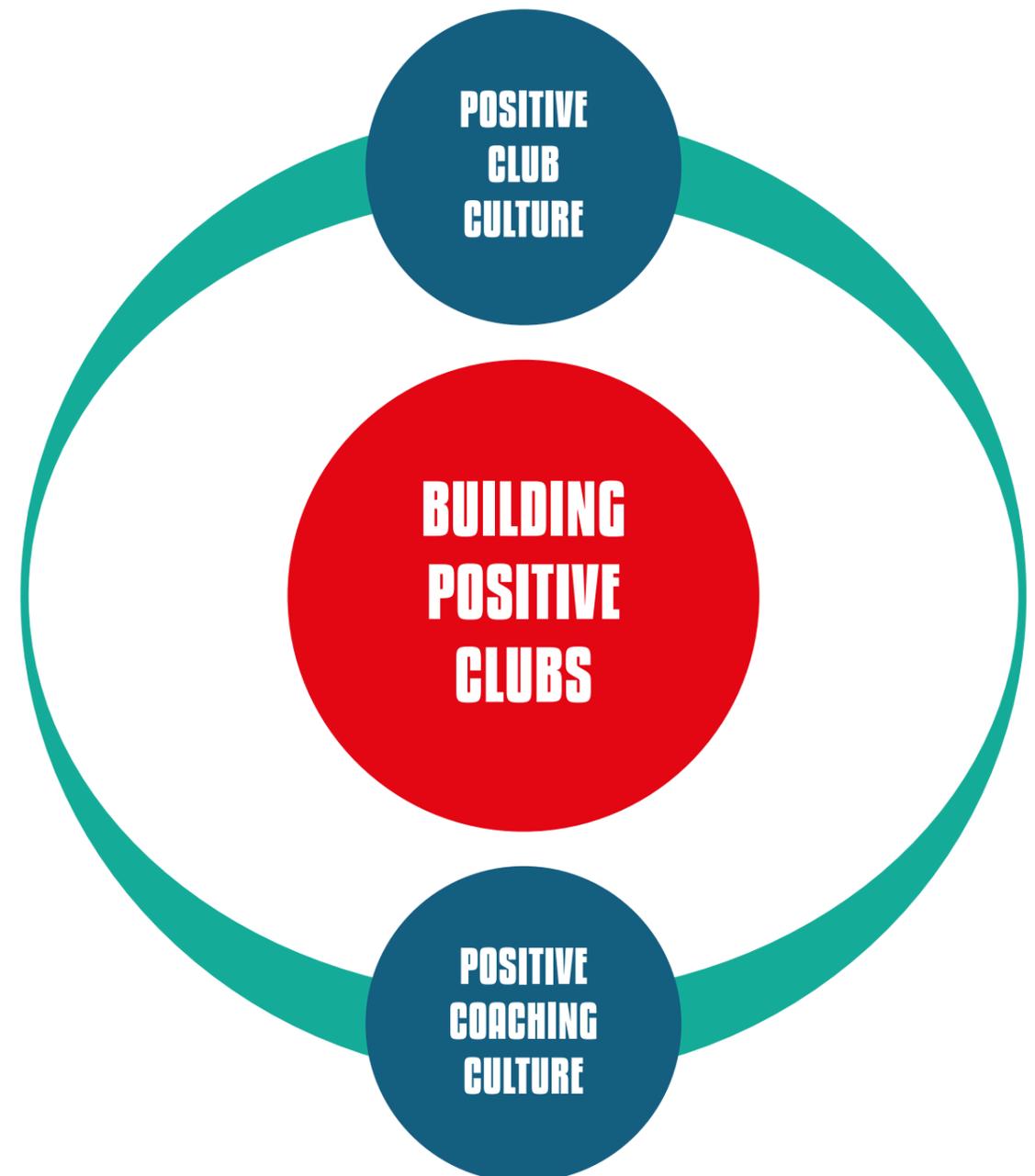
Sport is a powerful resource in all communities and can contribute hugely to creating a positive environment for everyone to enjoy, however at times the win at all costs and poor sportsmanship can take away from young people and adults enjoying sports applying unrealistic challenges and pressures. We hope that through this training resource we can support and guide sports leaders, parents, coaches, volunteers and athletes in creating a culture of positivity within their sporting clubs and community which will encourage and inspire young people into the future.

Donegal Sports Partnership (DSP) has developed this resource in partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) and is designed to develop the potential of sports clubs as settings for positive mental health promotion.



THE PRINCIPLES OF BUILDING POSITIVE CLUBS

The following 2 principles underpin this resource. We believe that one without the other will have limited impact. In order to build your sports club as a setting for positive mental health promotion both principles need to be adopted as a whole club approach.



DSP CHARTER FOR CLUBS: PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING THROUGH SPORT

Having reviewed International Models of Good Practice including the English Football Association, Positive Coaching Scotland, The Australian Sports Commission and The Gaelic Athletic Association, DSP began working on their own Charter for Sports Clubs which promotes positive mental health through sport.

The Charter encourages clubs to understand the importance of effort rather than the win at all costs attitude promoting inclusion, communication and most importantly enjoyment when partaking in sport at any level.

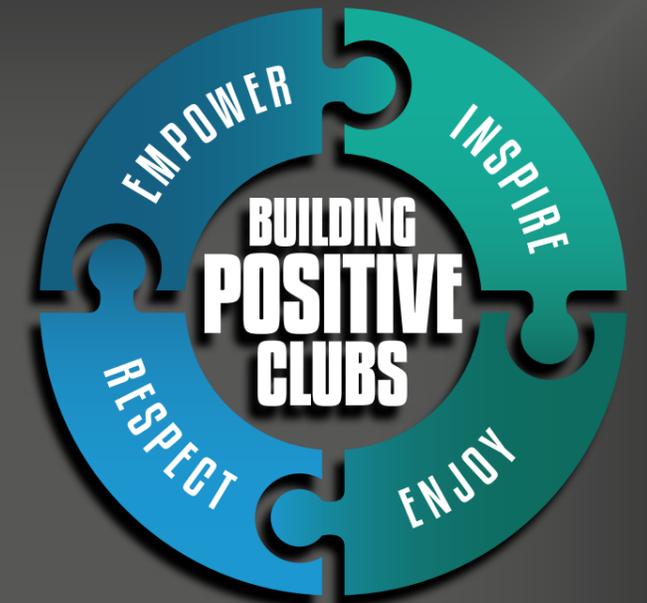
This toolkit has been designed to support the implementation of the core concepts of the charter and develop an overall ethos of respect within clubs



SECTION 1 POSITIVE CLUB CULTURE

Learning Outcomes

- ✔ What is the PACE of your club?
- ✔ Club Culture Health Check
- ✔ Becoming a Whole-Some Club



POSITIVE CLUB CULTURE

PEOPLE

Who is responsible for instilling and embedding your club culture? What are they specifically tasked with doing?

ATTITUDE

What is your attitude and philosophy, what do you want your sports club to stand for? Can you write down your clubs philosophy?

COMMUNICATION

How visible is your club culture? Can everyone see your values, beliefs and attitudes within your club?

EMPOWERMENT

Is your club whole-some? Is your club culture implemented by all coaches/parents and club members? How do you know?

POSITIVE CLUB CULTURE

The 'win at all costs' attitude adopted by many clubs and sports leaders has become a threat for sport - retaining young athletes and players as a result of negative sporting experiences is a challenge we are all familiar with:

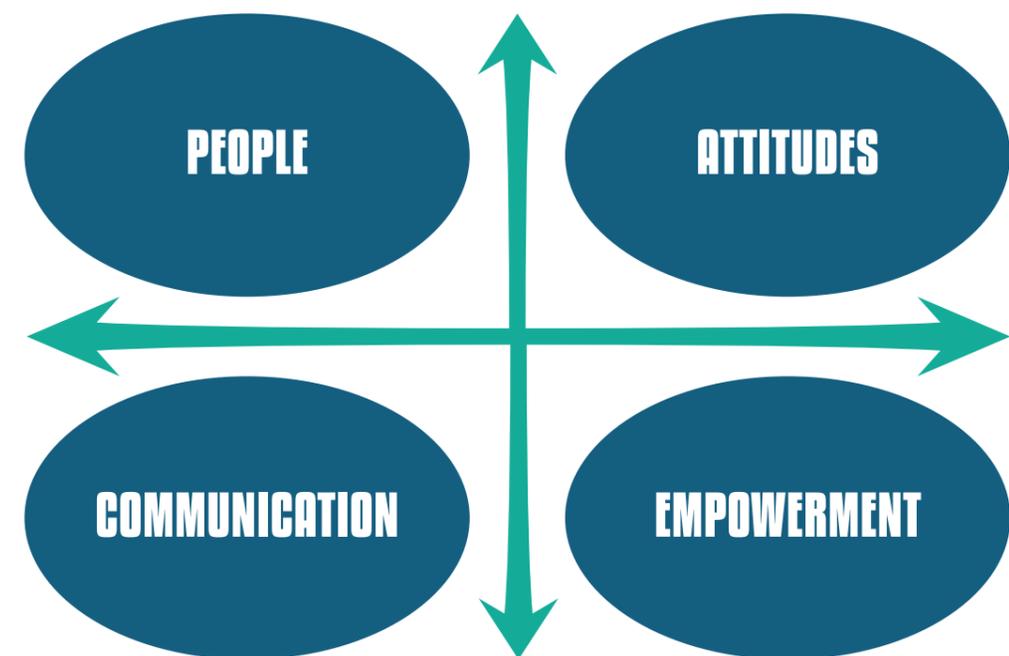
- Athletes who are afraid to make mistakes because of an excessively vocal coach focused on winning at all costs
- Intrusive parents pressurising children to 'do better' because of a desire to win
- Athletes disrespecting referees and officials

A Positive Coaching Culture seeks to address these issues, but we believe that a Positive Club Culture must come first; one without the other simply doesn't work.

Club culture can be explained as the way a club characterises what is important. It is often an expression of its philosophy.

Research suggests that for sport to be effective in promoting positive life outcomes. Sports participation must occur in settings where individuals are: 1 - physically safe, 2 - personally valued, 3 - morally and 4 - economically supported and 5 - personally empowered.

This theory shapes the 4 corners of club culture –
What is the PACE of your club?



HOW MUCH PACE IS IN YOUR CLUB CULTURE?

Question

1	Yes = 3 No = 0 Not sure = 1	6	Yes = 3 No = 0 Not sure = 1
2	Not very visible = 0 Somewhat visible = 1 Not sure = 0 Visible = 2 Very Visible = 3	7	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 = 1 4 = 2 5 = 3
3	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 = 3 4 = 2 5 = 0	8	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 = 1 4 = 2 5 = 3
4	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 = 1 4 = 2 5 = 3	9	Yes = 3 No = 0 Not sure = 1
5	Yes = 3 No = 0 Not sure = 1	10	1 = 0 2 = 1 3 = 2 4 = 2 5 = 3

Maximum Score = 30

If you score 20-30 your club culture is operating close to full PACE

If you score 10-20 your club culture is operating at half PACE

If you score between 0-10 your club culture needs an injection of PACE

BECOMING A WHOLE-SOME CLUB

In order for a positive club culture to work properly, the whole club needs to be involved. Too often, the good intentions and efforts of one or two club members are diminished because there is a lack of commitment from the wider club. So how do you ensure everyone is involved?

Positive Culture Officer

Role model, engages with parents, distributes and ensures codes of conduct are adhered to, engages coaches to promote positive messages, challenges inappropriate behaviour, actively promotes the club philosophy and 4 corners of club culture (PACE)

Social Media Policy

Distribute consistent messages related to participation, effort and fun

Communication

Make your club philosophy visible as much as possible. Install signage at your club with your key message, ensure it is visible on your website/communications, could it be attached to your branded gear

Guidelines

Developed and shared with parents, coaches and players. Make sure they include top tips to deal with difficult situations, advice on positive language and behaviour

One Good Adult Policy

Engage parents, coaches, club leaders and others in awareness raising regarding the importance of one good adult

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE IN CLUBS

POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING THROUGH SPORT

OUR CLUB recognises the important role which sport plays in promoting positive mental wellbeing. Respect forms the basis of our club and members will encourage enjoyment, teamwork and discipline. We adopt the values within this charter and will make every effort to ensure that these are reflected in the overall operations of our club.

RESPECT

Everyone in the club will treat others with respect, courtesy and consideration, avoiding negative attitudes or behaviours. All members of the club, committee, coaches, volunteers, parents and athletes/players will treat others as they (themselves) would like to be treated recognising and appreciating diversity in gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, ability and skills. Positive sporting behaviours will be encouraged at all times with decisions accepted with grace and not grudge.

ENCOURAGE

The club will ensure that everyone is treated equally, fairly and encouraged to do their best. Members of the club will support and promote positive reinforcement, ensuring learning and development of athletes/players. New members will be welcomed and afforded the opportunity of having a full and active role within the club. Players/athletes will be encouraged to make positive lifestyle choices.

SUPPORT

The club will ensure that all members are aware of and encouraged to use the support system that surrounds them. Coaches, club mates, family and friends can help, and for more serious issues we will seek help from external organisations who are available to offer supports for the club.

PARTICIPATE

Everyone is welcomed to participate within our club and we understand that each member and player has an important role to play. Every player/athlete will be inspired to do their best, it's not all about the winning but also the taking part.

ENJOY

Everyone has the right to enjoy sport as a spectator or player in a fun, safe environment. Enjoyment is one of the main reasons why people participate in sport and players/athletes will be encouraged to enjoy both training and playing or competing. Young players will be safeguarded within the club and helped to participate and have fun, with recognition of both effort and achievement.

COMMUNICATE

Everyone within our club will be listened to, allowed to input and given an opportunity to express their opinions without reprisal or judgement. We know that we can speak out if our club members, athletes or players are threatened in anyway by actions or words which are inappropriate or if we feel they need help.

TOLERATE

An element of discipline will underpin our club to ensure that our sport is controlled and that values such as honesty, equality and fair play are promoted at all times. We take pride in our club; negativity or disrespect towards others within our club or opposing teams will not be tolerated. We will be modest in victory, gracious in defeat and tolerant towards others.

STEPS YOUR CLUB CAN TAKE TO PROMOTE POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING

POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING THROUGH SPORT

OUR CLUB has adopted the positive mental wellbeing charter for sports clubs. The charter has at its core the belief that all members of our club have the right to participate, enjoy and contribute without prejudice. As a club we have highlighted a number of things we can do to ensure everyone within the club is valued, respected and included.

IT'S A WHOLE CLUB APPROACH TO PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH OUR CLUB WILL...



SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

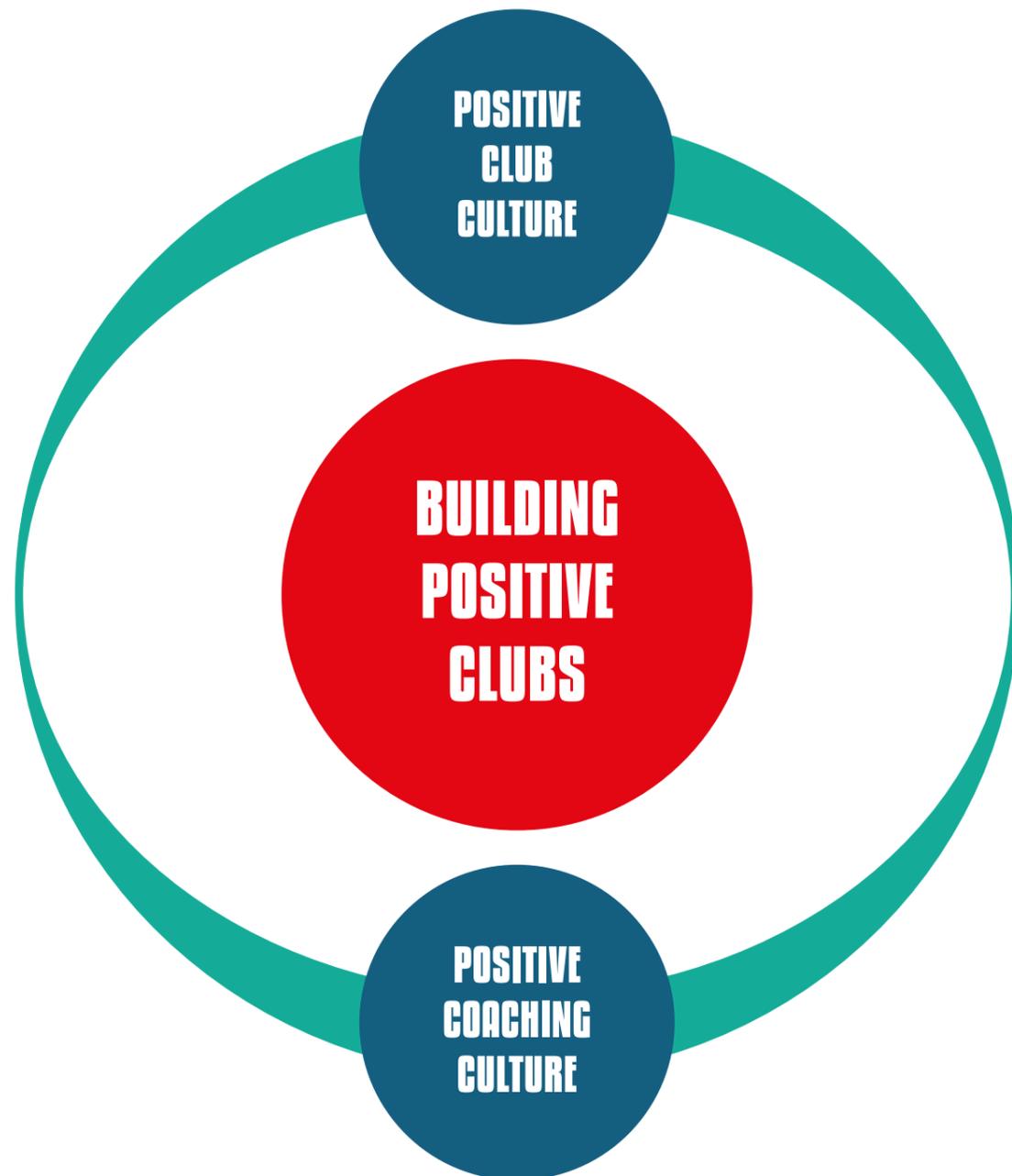
Voluntary Organisation / Informational Website
 • **Reach Out:** www.ie.reachout.com | **Tel:** 01 7645666 | **Email:** info@inspireireland.ie
 • **Mental Health Ireland:** www.mentalhealthireland.ie
Tel: 01 2841166 | **Email:** info@mentalhealthireland.ie

Suicide Prevention

• **1 Life:** www.1life.ie | **Tel:** 1800247100 | **Email:** info@1life.ie
 • **Aware:** www.aware.ie | **Tel:** 1890303302 | **Email:** wecanhelp@aware.ie
 • **Console:** www.console.ie | **Tel:** 1800201890 | **Email:** info@console.ie
 • **Samaritans:** www.samaritans.org | **Tel:** 1850609090 | **Email:** jo@samaritans.org
 • **Grow:** www.grow.ie | **Tel:** 1890474474 | **Email:** grow@hse.ie
 • **National Office of Suicide Prevention:** www.nosp.ie | **Tel:** 01 6352139 | **Email:** info@nosp.ie

THE PRINCIPLES OF BUILDING POSITIVE CLUBS

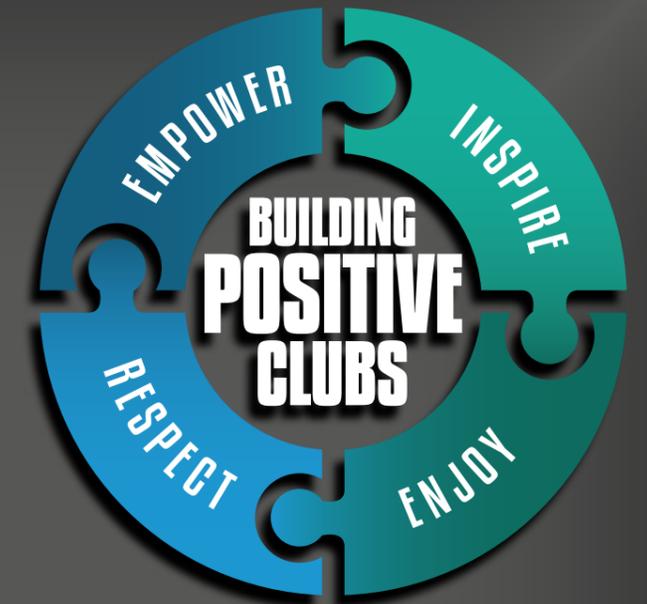
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SECTION 2 POSITIVE COACHING CULTURE

Learning Outcomes

- ✓ One Good Adult
- ✓ The Double Goal Coach
- ✓ RAISE your Coaching Culture
- ✓ The 'Winning Formula'
- ✓ Positive Coaching Tools

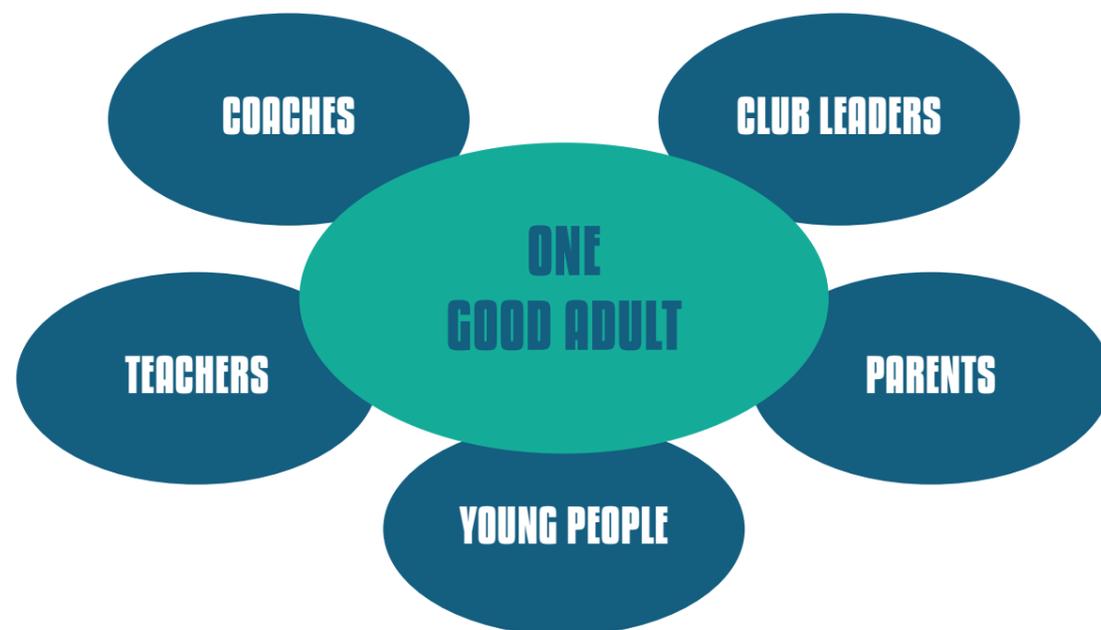


THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE GOOD ADULT

In 2012, Headstrong and the UCD School of Psychology conducted the My World Survey, a National Study of Youth Mental Health. The survey allows us to see how different elements and experiences of a young person are related to their mental health.

14,500 young people participated in the study and the key findings suggest that mental health difficulties emerged in early adolescence and peaked in the late teens and early 20's. A major emerging finding from the study indicates that **"One good adult is important in the mental well being of young people"**, the presence of one good adult has the following impacts:

- One caring adult in a young person's life can buffer against stress and lead to positive psychological functioning
- One good adult instils higher levels of optimism and increased self esteem (self esteem plays a major protective role for mental health)
- The presence of one good adult enhances the ability to cope and increases likelihood of active coping (talking etc) as opposed to destructive coping (alcohol misuse)
- Low levels of support from one good adult correlate to low levels of life satisfaction
- Low levels of support from one good adult correlate to significantly higher levels of depression and anxiety



POSITIVE COACHING CULTURE

The ambition of this resource and a key contributor to the DSP strategy is to assist clubs to develop a cohesive, inclusive and valued coaching system that promotes positive mental wellbeing and sustains participation in sport.

Only a very small number of young athletes (less than 1%) reach elite level in their chosen sport, the onus is on sports clubs and sports coaches therefore to ensure that all young people have the chance to reach their potential as people as well as athletes.

Positive Coaching Scotland and the Positive Coaching Alliance call this theory The Double Goal Coach. We have adopted this theory as a core pillar of our resource

The Double Goal Coach ethos has two main aims

1. Teaching young people vital, character building life skills through sport that can contribute to positive life outcomes

- Resilience
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Commitment
- Respect

2. Winning

- Learning to compete fairly and honestly
- Wanting to win, but not at all costs

**"TELL ME AND I FORGET,
TEACH ME AND I MAY
REMEMBER, INVOLVE ME
AND I LEARN."**

POSITIVE COACHING CULTURE

Coaches play an incredibly influential role in the lives of athletes. Often players spend more time with their coaches than anyone else outside of the home environment. This carries a huge responsibility. As a coach you will directly determine the type of experience that a player has be that positive or negative.

We know that only a small number of players go on to become elite level athletes, so we have a responsibility to ensure that all participants develop skills that can assist them in whatever journey they find themselves on encouraging long term participation.

The **RAISE** approach provides a guide to a positive coaching philosophy



You should support participants to accept setbacks as part of a learning process. Encouragement and positive language can make a big difference.



Reduce anxiety and fear of losing or making mistakes. Encourage fun, experimentation and creativity.



Implement the 4 corners of club culture, inspire positive behaviour through positive behaviour, be prepared to challenge inappropriate behaviour when necessary.



A participant self esteem has a major impact both on their application in their sports club, but also in other settings such as school, in their community and at home. Self esteem is a major protective factor in sustaining mental health.

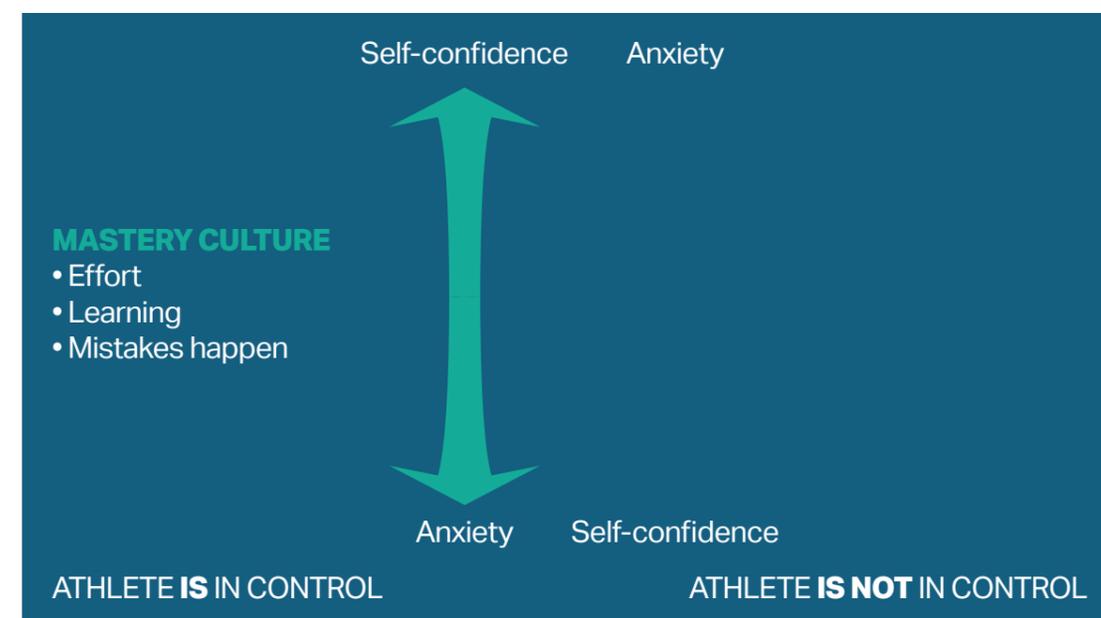


You should take every opportunity to raise self esteem at crucial moments by praising and rewarding effort and application. Positive body language can play a role here.

THE 'WINNING FORMULA'

The Positive Coaching Alliance and Positive Coaching Scotland explore redefining winning. The 'win at all costs' culture looks for short term achievements at the expense of an athlete's long term development.

The Winning Formula requires a transformation of focus from winning and results (out of the athlete's control) to effort, learning and an acceptance of mistakes (within an athlete's control).



This resource adopts the PCA and PSC **ELM** principle.

EFFORT



Effort – coaches should encourage effort and set effort related goals. These goals should be achievable and help to build self confidence. This focus on effort will ultimately help to secure an outcome.

SETTING EFFORT GOALS

Effort goals help athletes and performers focus on things that are under their control, this type of goal helps to motivate players. Self confidence also increased when athletes feel in control, and when self confidence increases, athletes tend to work harder and increase their effort.

When athletes feel in control, they have reduced level of anxiety which means they are less likely to worry about failing.

In contrast, outcome goals such as (winning the game) can be influenced by a range of other factors – e.g. referees, other team, weather etc.

Some examples of effort goals are presented below:

Effort Goals	Outcome Goals
Football – attempt to get at least 5 touches of the ball in the opponents box	Score 2 goals today
Athletics – attempt to clear all of the hurdles and remember the technique we practised during the week	Win the hurdle race
Swimming – focus on keeping a relaxed state of mind before the race	Achieve a personal best time
Golf – remember to practice and focus on your correct set up before you take your swing	Hit the fairway with your drive

LEARNING



Learning – young athletes don't learn from the result on a scoreboard. They should be made aware that every effort, every pass, every jump, every stroke is an opportunity to think and learn

MISTAKES HAPPEN



Mistakes Happen – Coach athletes to accept that mistakes are an important part of their development. They teach players and athletes to learn and provide an opportunity to practice resilience.

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK POSITIVE LANGUAGE

Research suggests that 60-80 % of initial opinion is formed in less than four minutes as athletes make judgments whether or not the coach is approachable (interpreted as easy to talk to, friendly, amicable, sociable, open) or unapproachable for that day (perceived as distant, unfriendly, grumpy, aloof, cold, and/or standoffish). This is informed by the type of language and body language used by the coach in those first 4 minutes

COMMUNICATION



COACH AT THE RIGHT TIMES

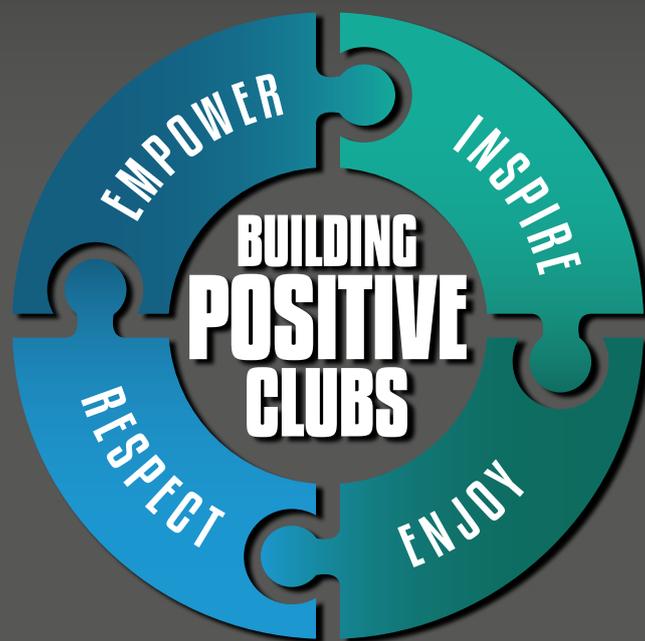
Building on the silent sidelines concept, why not introduce a coachable moment's policy at your club. This means that during games, all coaches, parents and club officials remain silent and allow the performers to make their own decisions

With the sidelines quiet, players have the chance to concentrate, make their own split-second decisions and learn by them. Instead of being distracted by the stream of noise that usually exists, the kids on the pitch get the opportunity to communicate with one another, deciding who will take the throw ins, the goal-kicks, free-kicks and/or the corner kicks in the game. This also gives them time to think and focus on what they are about to do.

Some key points about your coachable moment's policy;

1. Ensure all parents and coaches are aware and adhere to the policy during selected matches
2. Clapping and cheering are allowed for effort and goals scored
3. No questioning of the official at any times
4. No coaching, shouting or 'advice' from parents during the game
5. Small amount of direction from coaches is allowed but this should be primarily body language
6. Coaches speak to their players at the start, half time and at the end of the game – these are your coachable moments
7. Ask the participants for feedback and to identify what they managed to learn





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