



GROWING CHAMPIONS FOR LIFE with David Benzel



Winners' Connection

Volume 5, November 2009

“How to Create a Fearless Competitor” Evert Tennis Academy Parents' Workshop

Every athlete knows the crippling effect fear can have on a performance. As irrational as the fear might be, once it has a hold on an athlete's mind, the body ceases to cooperate as freely as it once did. The concept of mastering fear is so important that it led Tiger Woods to affirm, “I refuse to give in to fear, real or imagined, or to be afraid either consciously or unconsciously of anything or anyone.”

To assist parents at the Evert Tennis Academy on this topic, David Benzel recently conducted a workshop designed to provide insights into the sources of fear and how to help young athletes conquer fear.

Benzel explained the two “frontiers of fear.” “First of all parents and coaches should be aware of how some of the things they say leading up to a competition create fear in a child. It only serves to inject fearful feelings right before a match when parents say things like, ‘Your opponent today is really strong and quick.’” David went on to say, “The second frontier of fear is injected by an athlete's self-talk when the wrong questions are asked. ‘What if I double-fault?’ or ‘What if I lose to this opponent’ are questions that make an athlete inhibited and tight.” Benzel referred parents to a book by Dr. Gio Vilante entitled “Fearless Golf”. In the book Dr. Vilante advises that the best response to this private thought is a strong, positive question like, ‘What am I going to do about it?’ This question redirects an athlete's attention toward the process of playing well, rather than fearing an unpleasant outcome.

Benzel gave the Evert Tennis Academy parents three points of focus for their behavior leading up to and during an event. “The fearless tennis parent asks:

- What words will indicate my unconditional support?
- What actions will show my complete confidence in my child's overall success story?
- To what will I give my attention during this match that will keep me positive?”

Parents can play an important role in keeping fear away!

Why Growing Champions for Life is Job #1

Fifteen year old Josh announced he's quitting baseball and his parents are devastated. He's played since age four and had big dreams. Josh's father admits, "I know it's my fault – I was always critiquing and pushing." The tragedy here is not that Josh quit baseball. The real tragedy is what's happened to the relationship between Josh and his father. Fun and closeness has been replaced with resentment and guilt. Millions of families endure variations of this story.



The most important truth is that while the majority of parents love their children and want to help them be their best – they actually don't know how to effectively play their role as sport-parents. Many parents will discover too late that some of their efforts to improve their child's athletic performance are having the opposite effect. Growing Champions for Life is dedicated to teaching parents how to be Heroes to their children, rather than Sponsors, Managers, or Agents.

Visit www.growingchampionsforlife.org/parentquiz to take our new parent quiz and discover your primary sport-parent style.

With 50 million kids involved in youth sports in America the opportunity to teach parents and coaches the most effective means of improving performance while growing true champions of life.... for life... is endless.

We have met our goal when every athlete enjoys youth sports, and recognizes their parents as heroes for life! "A Hero in every parent – A Winner in every child."

Go to www.growingchampionsforlife.org/donations
To make a tax-deductible donation today!



Parenting a Preteen? Resource Tip: www.tweenparent.com

If you're looking for answers to a host of parenting questions while raising a preteen, www.tweenparent.com is the place to go. Co-founder Suzanna Narducci has assembled a vast library of articles by experts on the subject. Suzanna has also invited David Benzel to contribute sport-parenting articles from the Growing Champions for Life workshops.

"Her site tackles so many important topics for preteens" said Benzel. "It's a perfect compliment to our philosophy that promotes quality parent-child relationships."



“Coaching Character Playbook”

New Tool for Coaches at The Villages High School

Everyone seems to agree that physical skills alone will not take an athlete to his full potential. You’ve probably heard the experts in every sport proclaim the immeasurable benefits of having athletes who understand and practice self-discipline or emotional control with the same commitment as their jump shot, back-hand, or spiral.

In spite of the fact that even the casual observer can see the value of mastering the mental and emotional aspects of sport, few coaches actually take the time to teach the fundamentals of such crucial concepts as self-confidence or concentration skills. While there are many who know the importance of these skills, teaching the techniques for mastering them is hard to integrate into the rigors of weekly drills or team meetings without a plan or a roadmap.

Most coaches embrace these concepts in theory, recognize them when demonstrated, but aren’t sure how to coach them in a practical way. The question is: “How can we help athletes learn self-mastery – not just sport-mastery?”

That’s why Growing Champions for Life created the Coaching Character Playbook which is currently being used by the coaches at The Villages Charter School, The Villages, FL.

Coaching Character is a five month program designed to give coaches a roadmap for teaching weekly lessons to athletes about the mental and emotional aspects of competing. Through discussions, exercises, and Q & A, coaches are guided through a weekly 15 minute lesson that will create an athlete’s awareness and skill development in five essential areas that compliment physical performance.

The program provides the guidelines for reinforcing lessons about these five themes:

- Self-motivation
- Self-confidence
- Self-discipline
- Concentration
- Handling emotions

Each topic offers approximately four weeks of once-per-week team discussion &/or homework exercises. Coaches serve as facilitators of a learning experience that can have a positive impact for years. By investing 15 minutes per week coaches can become the coach who is not just remembered, but revered for the self-mastery lessons taught.



Heartbeat WRHB Radio Talks Positive Parenting

A Five Part Radio Interview with David Benzel

Tiffani Cyr has her own childhood athletic story to tell. She and her brother were national-level triathletes as youngsters until the fun went out of it and they moved on to other things. Perhaps that's why as a radio talk-show host for WRHB 1410 AM in Leesburg, FL, Tiffani called David Benzel and invited him to do a five-part series on keeping sports fun for kids. Tiffani has two boys of her own now, so she and her husband want to give them a positive youth sport experience while keeping it fun.

The series started in mid-October and will continue on Mondays, from 1:30 to 2:00 PM Eastern. The Live Stream broadcast attracts an audience from all over the world and you can catch it at www.heartbeatradiousa.com on the Internet.

Each Monday David and Tiffani will discuss one of the chapters from David's most recent books, "Five Powerful Strategies for Sport-Parent Success" and "From Chump to Champ." Tune in and join in the discussion during the call-in portion of the show. Follow it live at www.heartbeatradiousa.com.



“From Chump to Champ - How Individuals Go From Good to Great”

A Book for Parents & Athletes, by David Benzel

For many people, letting go of old ways is scary. However, the primary reason for this fear is the absence of a strategy for becoming something new. Without a good plan or road map for change, it's easy to assume the transition will be the equivalent of a year wandering in the wilderness – danger, suffering, with no relief in sight and a strong possibility of failure.

But what if you had a plan to follow? What if there was a road map? Not only could you conquer the challenge before you today, but the art of becoming something new and improved could be a constant, lifelong activity, repeated over and over. Any area of your life could open to a chump-to-champ transformation. Every relationship, every activity, and every career opportunity would contain a doorway to champ-like status. You would never have to settle for mediocrity.

“From Chump to Champ” is designed to provide you with a personalized road map for your future. It guides you through a systematic four-step process that will give you answers for reaching the desires of your heart. The stories and exercises in each chapter will give you direction on how to move from the parent or athlete you are today to the champ-like parent/performer you wish to be.

A personal autographed copy of David's book is available for you at www.growingchampionsforlife.org/products.

“We cannot become what we want to be by remaining what we are.”

--Max DePree, Author



For more information about Growing Champions for Life, please visit www.growingchampionsforlife.org or call (352) 267-5344.

Resource Tip: www.tweenparent.com

WRHB Radio: www.heartbeatradiousa.com

Products: www.growingchampionsforlife.org/products

Growing Champions for Life (GCFL) is a non-profit organization promoting cohesive families, healthy teams, and principle-centered athletes.

If you'd like to make a tax-deductible donation today, please call (800) 616-1193 or visit www.growingchampionsforlife.org/donations.

Your support makes it possible to reach more schools and clubs to promote the parental message of unconditional love and share coach-inspired life lessons.

Non-profit organization 501(c) (3)