

Three Lies that Create Misery for Your Young Athlete

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We hate to see our children suffer emotionally. It goes straight to our heart. When we're objective about it, we admit that emotional struggles actually make our children stronger, and that we should not attempt to guard them from every emotional challenge. However, our young athletes need not endure some misery. The only reason they are tormented is because they believe three lies. Here they are, and the corresponding truths that you can share with your child to create a healthier and happier world view.

Lie #1: "I must be perfect"

This lie is based on a fear that anything less than perfect is unacceptable, and will cause a person to be labeled a failure. It ignores a fundamental truth: excellence has historically been achieved by those who embrace their mistakes as a welcomed pathway. "Thank you for another lesson today" is a more effective approach to SuperStar status in any sport than "I stink again today."

Lie #2: "I am only as good as I do"

In our performance driven society, it's common for kids to believe their value is directly linked to every grade, batting average, or ranking. But this lie creates a self-worth rollercoaster since student athletes are never capable of being the best at everything, or being the best every day. The answer is in doing the best we can on any given day, knowing that our true value is not tied to what we do, but who we are...and that your value was inherently placed in you at birth, and you must decide how to use your gifts.

Lie #3: "Life should be fair"

There's plenty of evidence in sports (and life) that things aren't fair. Bad things happen to good people and visa-versa. The problem is that believing this lie puts a child into a resentful state of mind that dwells on the injustice of a past event - something that is over and done. Reliving those unfair moments keep an athlete from enjoying and capitalizing on the present moments/opportunities. To avoid paying for unfairness over and over, our children must learn to let go of unfairness and move on, keeping the past separate from the present.