



Connector

Coaching Tip: Youth Sports & Self-Control

You've probably seen the video of a youth football assistant coach leveling a 13-year-old player in a game over Labor Day weekend.

Watching the video, you probably think, "That could never happen to me."

But emotion can get the better of anyone, especially if you feel your own children are being treated unfairly. The video shows a coach who apparently reacted to the late hit on his son, shown just before the coach rushes onto the field.

What the coach could have done, should have done and most likely would have done if he were a PCA-trained and certified Double-Goal Coach, is exercise a "Self-Control Routine" as we teach in our workshop, "Double-Goal Coach: Winning and Life Lessons."

A Self-Control Routine ensures you do not dishonor the game in the heat of competition. You might:

- take a deep breath,
- remind yourself of the discipline required NOT to react
- engage in self-talk ("I need to be a role model. I can rise above this!")
- turn away from the action
- count to 20 (or 50!), or
- quickly refocus on the next play.

The key is to develop your own Self-Control Routine ahead of time, so when you are tested (with a bad official's call, an opposing coach or player misbehaving, etc.), you can use it to remain calm and Honor the Game.

Then, you can use it as a teachable moment with your athletes: "I was pretty upset with what happened, but I controlled myself so I wouldn't do anything that would dishonor the game. And that's an important lesson I want you to learn from sports--how to develop your own self-control so you will always Honor the Game no matter what."

Our guess is that this particular coach wishes he had done just that!

TRANSFORMING YOUTH SPORTS SO SPORTS CAN TRANSFORM YOUTH