

Welcome to inCourage

BUILDING A POSITIVE CULTURE PLAYBOOK

inCOURAGE 
WATCH. LEARN. PLAY.

incourage.com



WE ARE INCOURAGE

Using this Playbook, coaches will build a positive culture by learning how to effectively spot and stop bullying and hazing.

We are a team of experienced athletic directors, parents, coaches, educators, and sports psychologists working under the creative direction of an award-winning sports and business media leader.

We create engaging, informative videos, and other resources to help young athletes and adults improve the culture of youth sports.

We do this to keep young athletes playing sports. Too often they lose the love of the game because of overwhelming negative forces. Bullying, parental pressures, negative coaching techniques - they all take the fun out of the sport.

inCOURAGE
**BUILDING A
POSITIVE CULTURE
PLAYBOOK**

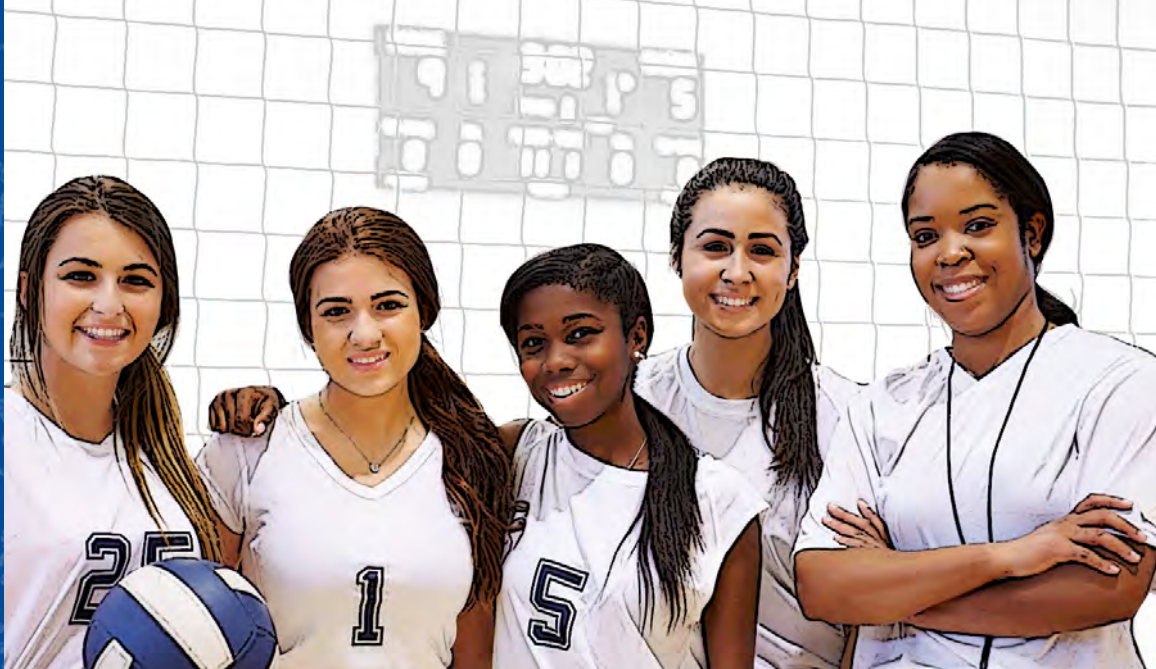


TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Power of a Positive Culture	3
Bullying.....	4
Part 1: Understanding Bullying	5
Part 2: Cyberbullying.....	9
Part 3: Bullies, Victims and Bystanders	11
Hazing.....	15
Part 1: Understanding Hazing	16
Part 2: Hazing vs. Real Team Building	18
Part 3: Team Initiation Activities	19
Solutions for Bullying and Hazing	21

THE POWER OF A POSITIVE CULTURE

Every person participating in sports has the right to enjoy an environment that is fun, safe and healthy. They should also have the expectation that they will be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

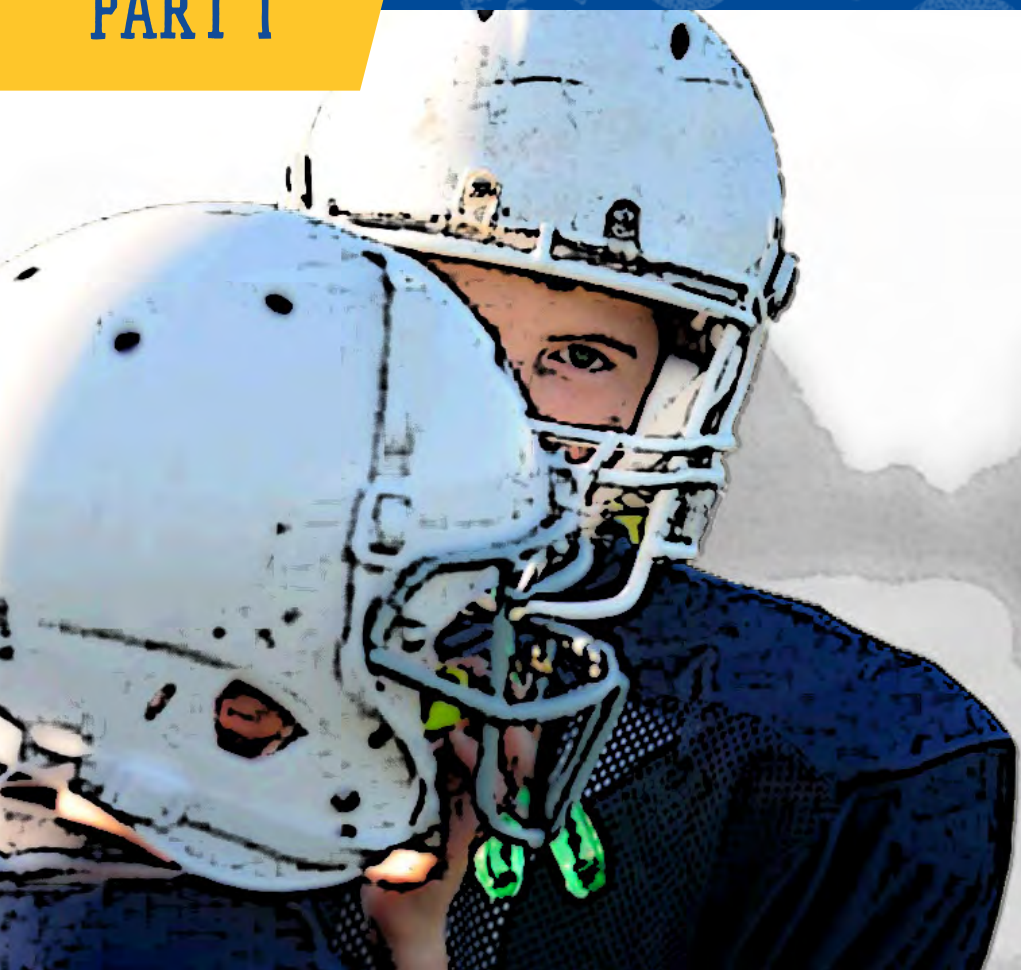
We recognize that a positive and respectful learning environment will not guarantee a successful season for any sports team. But we strongly believe that a negative and disrespectful learning environment will almost always guarantee a team's underachievement and lack of success.

Coaches who understand this reality and the importance of having a positive team culture, must be prepared to recognize and manage two of the most common forms of negative behaviors associated with sports teams, bullying and hazing.



BULLYING

PART 1



UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

BULLYING

Bullying is deliberately hurting a specific person either physically, verbally, or socially.

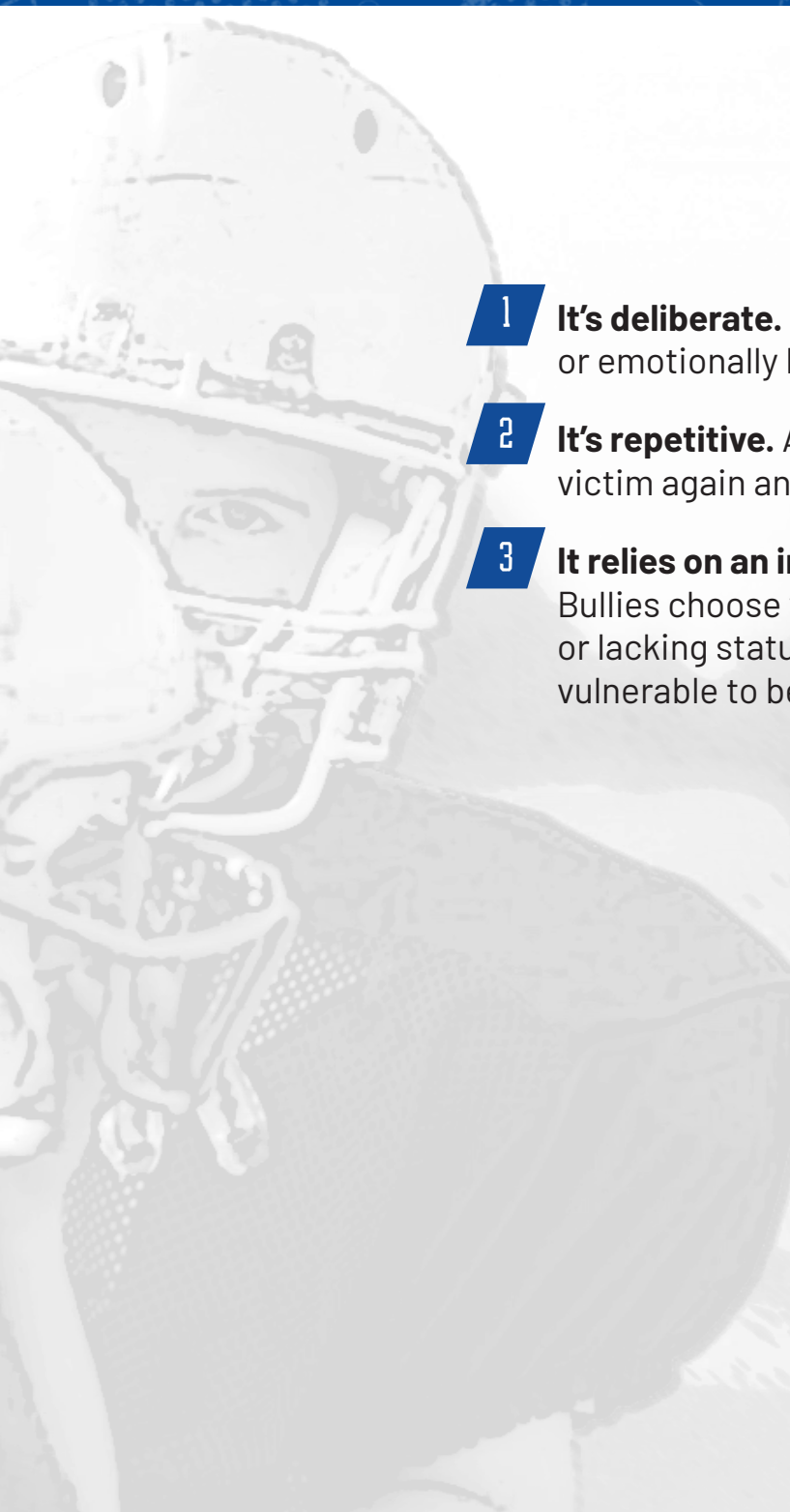
It involves a power imbalance where one person exerts power or strength over another. It can be carried out by one person or several people who are either actively or passively involved.

Bullying usually involves repeated actions or incidences. It can occur anywhere: at home, school, work, while participating in sports, or online.

**WATCH
THE VIDEO**

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLYING

BULLYING

- 
- 1 **It's deliberate.** A bully's intention is to physically and/or emotionally hurt someone else.
 - 2 **It's repetitive.** A bully will repeatedly target the same victim again and again.
 - 3 **It relies on an imbalance of power and status.** Bullies choose victims they perceive as vulnerable or lacking status. Younger athletes are particularly vulnerable to being bullied by older team members.

HOW TO IDENTIFY BULLYING

BULLYING

Bullying is not just one thing. It occurs in many different forms with varying levels of severity.

- **It can be physical.** Poking, pushing, hitting, slapping, towel snapping, tripping and head butting are some examples.
- **It can be verbal.** Yelling, taunting, name-calling, insulting, threatening to hurt someone are examples.
- **It can be anti-social (also called relational bullying).** Excluding team members from team activities is an example.
- **It can be online (also called cyberbullying).** Using the internet or cell phones to send hurtful messages, spread gossip or share embarrassing images are some examples.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TEASING AND BULLYING

Teasing is not characterized by a repeated pattern. It's generally between two people on equal footing.

Bullying, on the other hand, is intended to hurt.

CYBERBULLYING

BULLYING

While most kids use the Internet responsibly, others are using the technology at their fingertips to threaten, humiliate or harass their peers.

Cyberbullying is a growing problem because increasing numbers of kids are using the internet.

With the prevalence of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter, digital comments, photos, videos and posts can be viewed at any time and by anyone.

95% OF TEENS HAVE
ACCESS TO A
SMARTPHONE

45% OF TEENS ARE
ONLINE ALMOST
CONSTANTLY

(Pew Research Center)



CYBERBULLYING CONCERNS

BULLYING

Cyberbullying has its own unique set of issues:

- Since the bully doesn't have to confront their target in person, cyberbullying can be easier to commit than other types of harassment.
- Cyberbullying can be particularly upsetting because it can be anonymous or hard to trace.
- The victim has no idea how many people have seen the messages or posts.
- The torment of cyberbullying can be overwhelming; the victims can be reminded every time they check their phone or computer.





3 ROLES IN BULLYING

Bullying involves people in three distinct roles:

THE BULLY

THE VICTIM

THE BYSTANDERS

(Majority of your team members)

BULLIES, VICTIMS AND BYSTANDERS

BULLYING

Bullying involves multiple players. Bullies, victims, and bystanders all play roles that contribute to bullying—and each can help stop bullying.

Bullies select and systematically train their victims to comply with their demands. They seek active encouragement, passive acceptance, or silence from bystanders. Bullies can be stopped when victims and bystanders stand up against bullying.

Victims reward the bully by yielding control and showing signs of intimidation. They often fail to gain support from bystanders and avoid reporting the bullying. Victims can learn to defeat the bully by responding assertively, rallying support from bystanders, or reporting the bullying to adults.

Bystanders play a pivotal role in promoting or preventing bullying. Often without realizing it, they may exacerbate a situation by providing an audience, maintaining silence, actively encouraging, or joining in. Bystanders can neutralize or stop the bullying by aiding the victim, drawing support from other bystanders, or obtaining help from adults.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING FOR THE VICTIMS

BULLYING

Bullying can lead to long-lasting problems. It can result in feelings of disgrace, embarrassment, shame or intimidation.

Bullying can also affect the victim's:

- Athletic performance
- Academic achievement
- Enjoyment of school life
- Physical and mental health



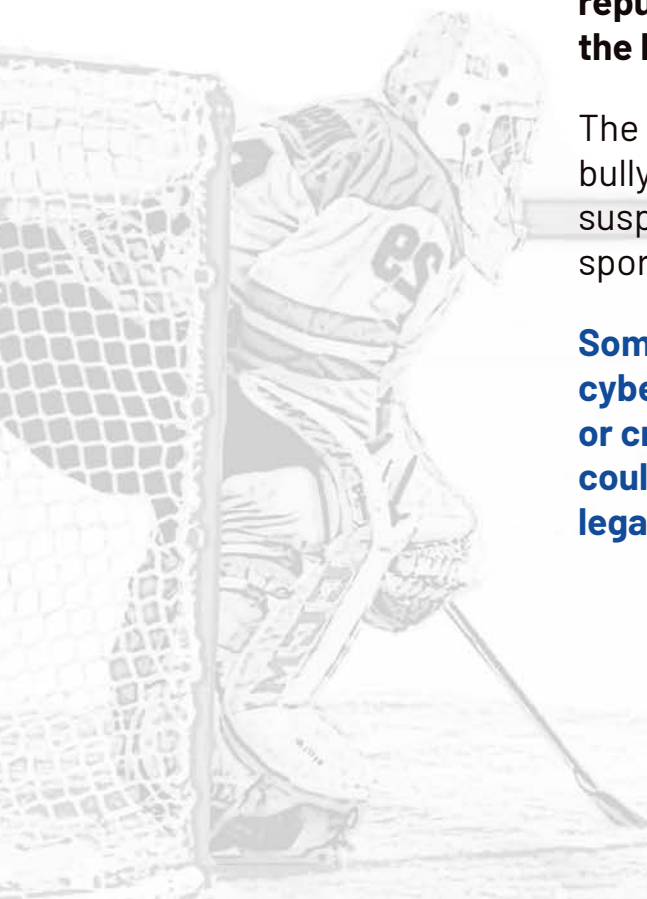
THE CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING FOR THE BULLIES

BULLYING

Bullying has a negative impact on the reputations of everyone involved – including the bullies.

The punishment for bullies can be serious. Some bullying may violate school codes: schools may suspend bullies and they may be dismissed from sports teams.

Some types of bullying, particularly cyberbullying, may cross the line into unlawful or criminal behavior. That means the police could get involved and a bully may face serious legal trouble.



HAZING

PART 2



UNDERSTANDING HAZING

HAZING

Hazing is taking the same harassment, embarrassment or humiliation of bullying and using these tactics as a way to initiate new team members. It relies on active or passive participation by new team members.

Hazing is any act committed against someone joining, becoming a member of, or maintaining membership in an organization. It is humiliating, intimidating, demeaning, and can endanger the health and safety of the person.

Typically, hazing peaks just before the start of the regular season, and can spike just prior to playoffs if younger players are brought up to the varsity.

Many players – and some coaches – mistakenly think that hazing will build a sense of team. But in reality, hazing undermines the very essence of what it means to be a team. Don't get them confused: hazing is not real team-building.

**WATCH
THE VIDEO**

UNDERSTANDING HAZING

HAZING

Hazing creates an environment in which dignity and respect are absent.

Prevention measures are much more effective than reaction.

Clearly defining what is and is not acceptable behavior will help overcome excuses for the toxic behavior.

Hazing is sometimes justified by calling it pranks, stunts, antics, traditions, initiations, rites of passage, bonding, etc.

“Severity” is not always measured in observed harm – mental distress can be just as devastating to the individual as physical injury.

Tolerance for a little hazing usually leads to Big Hazing. Where there is a power imbalance, there is a risk of coercion. Treat all athletes with respect as equal members of the team. Open honest discussion, with strongly enforced policy, prevents hazing.



HOW TO IDENTIFY HAZING

HAZING

- 1 Humiliates and degrades team members
- 2 Tears down individuals
- 3 Creates divisions and isolates team members
- 4 Humiliates and degrades team members
- 5 Is a power trip at someone else's expense
- 6 Creates an environment that lacks dignity and respect

vs.

REAL TEAM BUILDING

- 1 Creates pride and integrity
- 2 Supports and empowers
- 3 Creates a shared positive experience
- 4 Can lead to positive lifelong memories
- 5 Creates real teamwork
- 6 Promotes respect and dignity

QUESTIONABLE INITIATION ACTIVITIES FOR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

HAZING

- Yelling, cursing, or swearing at new team members
- Wearing embarrassing clothing
- Tattooing, piercing, head shaving, or branding
- Participating in calisthenics not related to a sport
- Associating with specific people, not others
- Acting as personal servant to players off the field, court
- Depriving oneself of food, sleep or hygiene
- Consuming extremely spicy/disgusting concoctions
- Consuming alcohol



ACCEPTABLE INITIATION ACTIVITIES FOR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

HAZING

- Attending a banquet, picnic, lunch table, or food event
- Going on a trip, camp, ropes course, or preseason practice
- Being a mentor, Little/Big Sister or Brother, or buddy
- Testing for skill, endurance, or performance in a sport
- Keeping a specific grade point average
- Dressing up for team functions (besides uniforms)
- Doing volunteer community service
- Taking an oath or signing a contract of standards



SOLUTIONS TO BULLYING AND HAZING

While educators, coaches and parents work together to address the problems of bullying and hazing, these continue to be important issues. A clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and hazing is important, as is ensuring through established policies that all incidents are taken seriously.

The most effective way to end bullying and hazing are to stop them in their tracks.

SOLUTIONS



3 TIPS FOR MANAGING BULLYING & HAZING

SOLUTIONS

- 1** **Involve your team members** in creating your team's anti-bullying and hazing policy.
- 2** **Have an adult present in your team rooms before and after practices and games.** If gender differences exist between players and coaches, use your team captains to monitor the behavior in these areas.
- 3** **Always provide opportunities** for your athletes to talk to you in private.



WATCH
THE VIDEO

BE CLEAR WITH YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Coaches play a pivotal role in the climate of the team by determining whether bullying and hazing will be promoted, tolerated, or prohibited.

By emphasizing enjoyment, team work, sportsmanship and skill development, and having no tolerance for bullying and hazing, athletic directors and coaches may be able to prevent this behavior.

SOLUTIONS



ROLE OF THE ATHLETE: TAKE THE PLEDGE

A pledge, like this example, can be used to outline your expectations and rules around bullying and hazing.

WE ARE ONE: A respectful community of athletes where character matters. We welcome, support, respect and value our teammates by our actions and the words we speak.

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your team community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship and personal conduct established by your parents and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, team mates and fellow students. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Who better than you can understand all the hard work and team effort that is required of your sport?
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that you would like to be greeted following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all people at the event.
- Treat all team members with respect by personal actions and words spoken.
- We will not accept bullying/hazing/name calling or disrespect on our team.
- Our Team goal is to create a safe, caring and respectful community of leaders.
- We agree that it is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying.
- Report bullying to an adult.
- Refuse to bully others.
- Be responsible upstanders who are part of the solution.

To the best of my ability I, _____ agree to adhere to the conduct guidelines as listed above.

GOOD DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

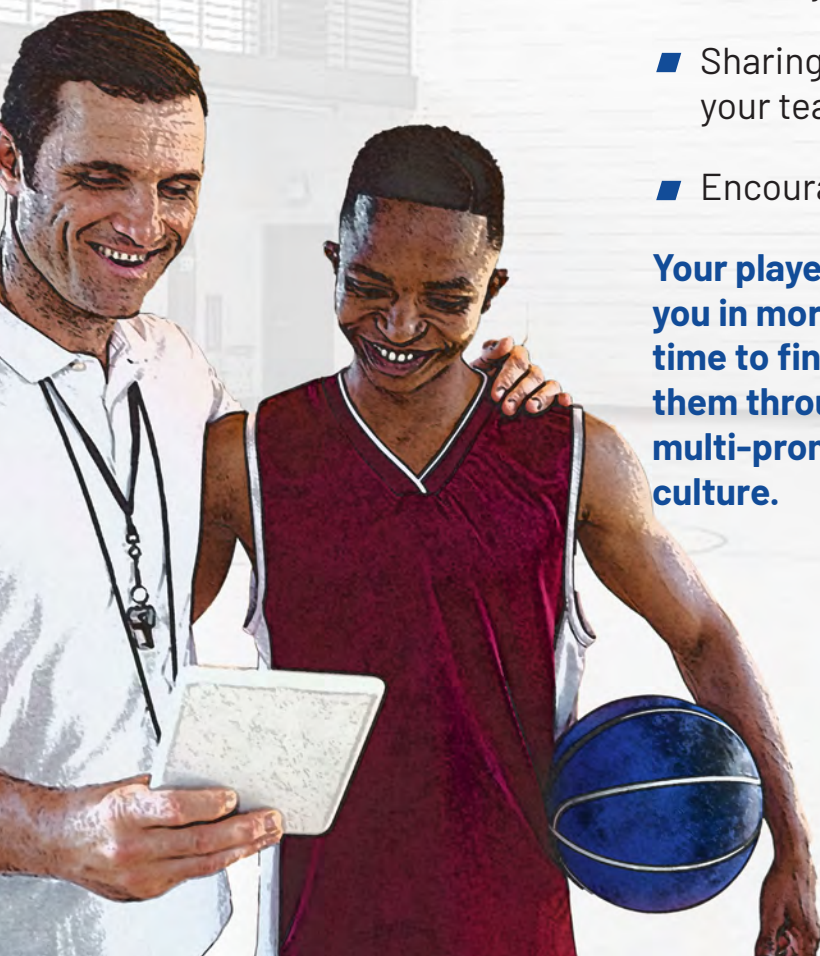
SOLUTIONS

Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook are the mediums in which players today communicate and live.

As a coach, you can use show your players, by example, how to use social media as a positive force by:

- Actively promoting your program online.
- Sharing the positive things happening with your team.
- Encouraging others to support your program.

Your players are watching and learning from you in more ways than you may think. Take the time to find ways to encourage and inspire them through social media as part of your multi-pronged approach to building a positive culture.





SHAPING THE TEAM CULTURE

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

No team is immune to some form of negative team behavior but, as coaches and parents, we do have the power and responsibility to shape a team culture that reduces the likelihood of it occurring.

How we treat our young athletes – the words and language we use to motivate them – the personal conduct that we display and demand of them and what we choose to ignore or tolerate, will eventually become the standard that our young athletes use when interacting with each other.



inCOURAGE
WATCH. LEARN. PLAY.

incourage.com

COPYRIGHT © PERSONAL BEST MEDIA, LLC 2019