HELPING MANAGE STRESS

Guidance for Parents, Athletic Trainers and Coaches of Young Athletes

SCOTTISH RITE FOR CHILDREN SPORTS MEDICINE

CONNECT AND HELP PROBLEM SOLVE

When overwhelmed, teens may struggle to break down a situation into more manageable pieces. Talk to them and help them take one step at a time.

TIME YOUR CONVERSATIONS WISELY AND KEEP IT POSITIVE

Let emotions from games or practices settle before talking about performance or outcomes. Waiting a couple of hours to discuss these topics allows athletes to reflect on their performance with less stress.

REFRAME SUCCESS

Expectations from parents may add pressure to perform and affect self-confidence. Do your best and look for progress instead of focusing on the results or winning.

TEACH COPING SKILLS FOR LIFE

Kids and teens can learn coping skills for managing stress in their lives. Try yoga, taking walks, diaphragmatic breathing (i.e., belly breathing), progressive muscle relaxation (i.e.,tensing/releasing muscles) and other techniques to relax.

MAKE ROOM FOR BREAKS

Teach athletes the importance of downtime for rest and recovery. Helping athletes develop time management skills and minimize overscheduling will improve stress management.

ENCOURAGE LIFE OUTSIDE OF SPORT

Making time for other interests and hobbies apart from the primary sport, including fun activities and time with friends, helps create balance and build resiliency. Allow athletes to have a breadth of interests and hobbies to draw from when experiencing distress.

PROMOTE HEALTHY SLEEPING AND EATING HABITS

Stress is easier to manage and less likely to build up with healthy habits in place. A well-balanced diet and quality sleep support kids and teens in school, sports and social settings.

ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

Encourage kids and teens to talk through stressors with a licensed psychologist or mental health counselor. Talk therapy can be a healthy outlet for chronic stress and help athletes learn positive coping strategies to use in the future when experiencing negative stress.



MEET OUR EXPERT

Emily Stapleton, Psy.D.

Stapleton is a pediatric psychologist at Scottish Rite for Children. As a former athlete, she has a passion for supporting athletes' mental health for optimal performance, injury prevention and rehabilitation outcomes.



This material is for informational purposes only. It does not replace the advice or counsel of a health care professional.