

Advice For Coaches, Volunteers & Parents

1 Make It a Success!

If the player is having trouble with an activity think about whether you could adapt it so that they have a positive and successful experience.



Example:

If the goal is serving the ball over the net from 5 metres away, start a little closer! After 3 successful spikes at 2 metres away, move the cone back a metre, until you are back at 5. This is called making a 'reasonable adjustment'.

3 Interests Can Build Interest

Linking current or special interests to a new activity can help the player to feel more comfortable with trying something they haven't done before.

Example:

Their clothes, bag, drink bottle and sensory toys might give you a hint at what the player is interested in. If the child is into superheroes, like Batman or Spiderman, you could get them to 'fly up to spike the ball like Batman' or use a superhero in your examples when teaching concepts, 'how would Superman celebrate if he blocked the ball?' or 'how would Batman defend the ball as a libero?'



2 Your Words Matter!

Use positive and constructive language. Keep in mind that you are setting an example for good sportsmanship and inclusion in your team.

Example:

Instead of saying "Stop that Billy, that's cheating" you could say "I like how you spiked the ball over the net Billy, let's try that from back here at the cone next time"

Avoid words like - don't, fail, no, bad, naughty, difficult. Avoid labelling the person and avoid giving consequences. Use words like - "let's try this way (demonstrate)", "FIRST we set THEN we hit". Be positive when talking to a child with Autism and remember there are possibly other children and parents listening to your language when you are communicating with the child you are coaching / supervising.



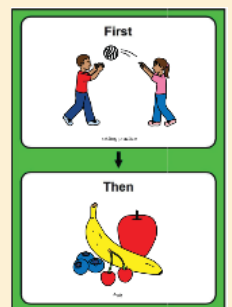
4 Add Visual Value & Reward Success

Use visual supports to help you get the message across.

Example:

Visuals are a very important tool for every volleyball club. A schedule of your whole session:

1. warm-up
2. setting
3. hitting
4. libero
5. game time
6. pack-up
7. bedtime



This will help reduce anxiety and give the player a clear structure of the session. FIRST – THEN, Reward charts, I'm working for - all these could be drawn up on a white board.

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5 Your Approach Matters!

Children will pick up on the energy of the people around them. If you are feeling stressed or frustrated and this is obvious in your approach, this could cause stress or agitation for a child. Likewise, if you take a positive, happy, friendly, fun and helpful approach this can make all the difference to a person's experience and success.

Example:

If the child is not engaged in the activity or appears agitated, instead of standing over them and yelling to redirect (as this could be quite intimidating), position yourself at their level - sit /kneel/ lay down and talk calmly to the child.

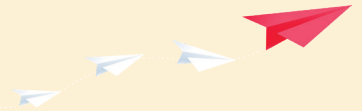


6 Motivation Makes a Difference

Find out what motivates the player and use that to get them involved and excited about the game.

Example:

If the child is competitive you could challenge them to see how quickly they can do an activity successfully 5 times. If the child likes to be a leader you could get them to help demonstrate the drill to the rest of the team.



8 Top Communication Tip: Stay Calm Like a GPS!

- Know where you are headed – be clear on what you are trying to achieve
- Provide directions that are clear, specific and well-structured
- Use a visual to support what you say (this makes it easier for the player to understand what is expected and that they are on the right track)
- Keep your tone calm and non-judgemental – have you ever heard a GPS raise its voice when you've taken a wrong turn?
- If something doesn't work out the first time 're-route'- instead of focusing on the negative, just concentrate on the next instruction. There are often many different ways to reach your destination!



7 Don't Forget the Fun Factor

We all find it easier to get involved in things that are enjoyable! By getting to know the players in your team, it will be easier to find ways that make the game enjoyable for them.

Example:

Simple things that could keep the game fun are high-fives for competitive games, and even simple ways of celebrating an achievement like a cool move (maybe the floss or the dab; or get the players to create their own).

