



QUALITY SPORT | ATHLETES

The premise of Long-Term Athlete Development and Long-Term Player Development is that they are frameworks or roadmaps for age and stage appropriate steps towards quality movement in sport and life. When parents and coaches try to force too much too soon in an attempt to get you to the top level in a specific sport, they risk ruining your experience through burnout, injury, or removing the fun from your journey.

Holistic athlete development means educators, parents, and coaches are focused on your entire development versus only your physical or technical / tactical abilities. To help simplify this, it has been broken down into the 5C's.

- Competence – physical ability such as speed, strength, endurance, etc. +
- Competence – technical/tactical abilities such as dribbling, passing, etc. +
- Character – mental/psychological ability such as respect the game, teammates, opponents, etc. +
- Confidence – mental/psychological ability such as resilience, grit, mental toughness, etc. +
- Connection – social/emotional ability such as having fun, relationships with teammates, etc.

You may not realize now, but youth sport is a dress rehearsal for real life. Sports are where you can learn skills and feelings like winning, losing, roles, responsibility, communication, and feedback in a supported environment. Just ask any adult about the impact that a positive youth sports experience had on their current day-to-day job and life challenges.

TOP FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR YOUTH SPORT EXPERIENCE:

1. Fun. If it is not fun, you will not find value in it, no matter what level.
2. A safe environment. Safe from verbal, physical, and sexual abuse.
3. Development opportunity. Regardless of gender, race, orientation, or beliefs.
4. Quality Coaching. A coach who supports you to become your best.
5. Positive Support. From your parents, peers, coaches, and sport organization.

TOP FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAXIMIZE YOUR YOUTH SPORT EXPERIENCE:

1. Try them all. As many different sports as you can until you find the ones you enjoy the most.
2. Set goals. Regardless of level of competition, be the author of your own story.
3. Work hard & smart. Always give your best. That's the one thing you control.
4. Speak up. If you have a question. If something doesn't seem right or feel right.
5. Ask for feedback. Ask your teammates & coaches what you could do more of and less of and then implement it.

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