



# BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

JANUARY EDITION • 2022

**Welcome to the January 2022 Education Newsletter!**  
Our goal is to share information with you from experts, volunteers, coaches and officials. If you have suggestions to be included in future newsletters, please send them to [shari@usaartisticswim.org](mailto:shari@usaartisticswim.org).



*Thank you to everyone who participated in the Rising Stars Camps, facilities who hosted and the Clinicians!*

*There were a total of 6 camps, with 400 Athletes participating, and 75 Clinicians – including NT Coaches Megan Azebu, Andrea Fuentes, Anna Voloshyna, Olympians Anita Alvarez & Lindi Schroeder, Collegiate & National Team athletes.*

*“Success is where preparation  
And opportunity meet”*

*- Bobby Unser*

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

January, 2022  
13-15 AG NT Trials (Virtual)

February 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2022  
Boys in Sync Camp  
Las Vegas, Nevada

March 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Collegiate Championships  
Columbus, Ohio

April 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Junior & Senior National Championships  
Geneva, Ohio

April 6<sup>th</sup> or April 10<sup>th</sup>  
Junior Natl Team Trials

April 28<sup>th</sup>-May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022  
U.S. 13-15 Championship & 12&U Invitational  
Irvine, California

June 25<sup>th</sup>-July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Junior Olympic Championships  
Gainesville, Florida

## VERY IMPORTANT SAFESPORT MANDATE & COURSE INFO!!!

As mandated by The Center for SafeSport, ALL individuals listed on USA Artistic Swimming's required list (included on the last page of this newsletter), MUST complete the Full SafeSport course! **NOTE: there is a new requirement for 18-year-old athletes training or competing with minors, which states that they MUST complete the course. Masters athletes who practice at the same pool as minors must also complete the course.**

The full SafeSport course is approximately 90 minutes long. New users will be presented with the single course automatically. **Only Coaches need to send in the "SafeSport Trained" certificate to [coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org](mailto:coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org).** All individuals completing the course will be listed on the Certifications List, which is posted under Resources on the USA Artistic Swimming website, click [HERE](#) to see the list.

IMPORTANT: If your expiration date was in 2018 or earlier or have never completed a course (refer to the posted SafeSport completion or CCP lists), you will need to take the Full Course. After completing the Full Course, you will be required to complete a Refresher course every year going forward.

**Please watch your expiration dates for SafeSport! You are required to complete ONE Course per year. Refresher courses take approximately 15 minutes to complete.**

## Background Checks

*USA Artistic Swimming is proud of a working partnership with the National Center for Safety Initiatives. It is a top priority of USA Artistic Swimming that all athletes are afforded the opportunity to learn and compete in a safe environment. USA Artistic Swimming and the USA Artistic Swimming Foundation are committed to providing a safe place for our athletes and we hope you are too.*

*According to USA Artistic Swimming's revised application of the United States Olympic Committees athlete safety policy, Background Screens are now a requirement to be a member of USA Artistic Swimming in the category you are currently registered. Life Members that act in any of these capacities must also adhere to this requirement.*

*Contact Monica Velazquez-Stiak at [monica@usaartisticswim.org](mailto:monica@usaartisticswim.org) with any questions you may have about this process.*

## RoadMAAPP



The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) aim to help young athletes feel safe, supported, and strengthened—by limiting one-on-one interactions between adults and children, requiring abuse prevention training for certain adults, and promoting environments in which misconduct is less likely to occur. This animated series introduces the purpose of the MAAPP, as well as key definitions and requirements NGB members must adhere to. For more information about the Center's efforts to end abuse in sport, visit [uscenterforsafesport.org](http://uscenterforsafesport.org).

Click [HERE](#) to view the series of six easy-to-understand animated episodes.

## Train Like a Champion

10 Minute High Intensity Abs/Core Workout for Advanced and Beginners – click [here](#)

Ultimate Fitball Workout for a strong back and spine – click [here](#)

10 Minute Push-up Workout for Advanced and Beginners) – click [here](#)



Please remember that all changes to rules, figures and elements do not occur until the 2022-2023 season!

We will be holding a Boys in Sync Camp February 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> in Las Vegas. Information will be posted on the USAAS website soon.



Rocky Mountain Splash Masters bringing home the gold in team routine at the 2021 Masters Championships!

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**YOU DID NOT WAKE UP TODAY  
TO BE MEDIOCRE**

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## TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts/Webinars worth your time:

Raising Your Game Podcasts by Lewis Hatchett, click [HERE](#)

Athlete Maestro Podcasts, click [HERE](#)

“Love What You Play” by Owen McBride, click [HERE](#)



## Great Reads

“61 Motivational Stories for Every Coach of Every Sport” by Craig Faulkner & Joe Komaroski.

“Throw Like a Girl: How to Dream Big & Believe in Yourself” by Jennie Finch

“Great Sports Minds Athlete Journal: Think. Believe. Achieve.” by Ann Zaprazny

## Videos to Enjoy



CoachTube by Leilani Torres, click [HERE](#)

“There Are No Shortcuts”, from Paradigm Sports, click [HERE](#)

USA 13-15 National Team at the Team Youth Championships in Clearwater, FL, click [HERE](#)



# FIVE THINGS GOOD SPORTS PARENTS DO

By Barbara at  
[sniperskinsports.com](http://sniperskinsports.com)

The following list of practical strategies can help you avoid common mistakes in sports parenting, and aid you in guiding your athlete into a fun and fulfilling youth sports experience. Remember, we're all on the same team!

## THEY DO NOT LIVE THROUGH THEIR CHILDREN

Many parents today grew up playing sports. They had big dreams of making it to the NHL, MLB, NBA, etc., but for one reason or another it didn't pan out. That is a tough break, but it's more common than not. As parents we need to be able to set that aside when raising a new generation of athletes.

## THEY REMEMBER THAT A GREAT ATHLETE STARTS IN THE CLASSROOM

It is true that participants in sports need to work hard, physical strength and endurance is important. Equally as important is keeping up with grades. Setting clear expectations on classroom performance, and even disciplining when the mark is missed, is an imperative part of parenting an athlete

## THEY TEACH GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

The definition of 'sportsmanship' is "fair and generous behavior or treatment of others, especially in a sports contest." When it comes to youth sports, it's more than just about being a gracious when losing, it's being kind, and as the dictionary tells us, 'generous' in our behavior. The best way to teach this to kids is to model it ourselves.

## THEY TEACH GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Part of the natural process of growing-up is learning to respect authority. Honor the coach's decisions, even if you think you can do better.

## THEY AVOID THE COMPARISON TRAP

Comparing ourselves to others is a very normal thing, most of us do it without even thinking about it, and kids are no exception. As unintentional as it may be, comparing your child to others can truly damage their confidence, but if we remind them that they too have extraordinary gifts and qualities, we can foster a positive self-image, and help them to appreciate unique talents in others.

Remember, young athletes need their parents on their team, they can't be successful without you!

*More of this article can be found on the USAAS website.*



# FEEDBACK IS A GIFT

By Dr Michael Gervais

Feedback is a gift. But you need to train for it. Untrained minds will hear criticism and feel that we under-performed and we're inadequate.

Trained minds are able to split out the constructive feedback and criticism, and use the feedback to improve.

Our brain often responds to critical feedback as a threat – to our identity (who we think we are, versus what someone is reflecting back to us) or to our survival (I'm going to lose my job.)

When that happens, the stress response begins in the brain and a predictable cascade of neurological and physiological events get triggered – and in a feedback situation, can prevent us from learning.

Someone who has trained the mental skills of calm, confidence, control and trust is better equipped to receive feedback.

Calm – enables us to emotionally regulate.

Confidence – how we speak to ourselves.

Mindfulness – observe our thoughts and body sensations.

Self-trust – the believe that we can rely on our own inner emotional, mental, and physical resources to navigate that moment.

Remember this next time you're receiving (or giving!) feedback.

# REVISITING GOALS: ARE THEY REALISTIC?

An excerpt from *Preparing for Competition*  
E-Guide written by Barb Nesbitt, H2o Performers

Going into a competitive season with realistic goals adds motivation, direction, and purpose.

Going into a competitive season with excessively high expectations adds pressure, anxiety, and distraction. Throw any sort of adversity into the equation and things change drastically (and NOT for the better!).

**Have you taken the time to set your individual goals for this season?**

**What about your team or overall club goals?**

If not, check out my [blog post](#) for some tips on how to write S.M.A.R.T. goals to properly set your intentions for the season.

Once your goals are lined up, it is important to remember they are just like the choreography in your routines: adjustable, pliable, flexible, and should be revisited and tweaked occasionally.

For example, an unavoidable circumstance strikes, such as an injury or a scheduling issue with an upcoming competition. You can and should adjust your goal accordingly.

Maybe you need to extend the date on which you want to accomplish your goal ... do it! Goals should NOT be written in stone or feel like expectations.

## EXPECTATIONS vs GOALS...*What's the difference?*

Let's clarify...

Expectations are rigid. They are usually written in statements such as:

**I have to...**, **"I must..."** or **"I need to..."**

When it comes to expectations, there is no flexibility. No matter the circumstance, the expectation remains the same.

Expectations generate tension, anxiety, and pressure.

These are the very things that interfere with performance and cause you to feel that you are constantly falling short. These feelings also do not enhance your performance during practice or competition. When athletes with unrealistic expectations come to roadblocks or difficulties, feelings of devastation and failure often follow.

It is also important to note that every athlete will experience some degree of adversity in his/her career. Keeping expectations to a minimum is key to avoiding subsequent negative feelings.

Athletes with realistic goals feel they still have some degree of control within a world that is seemingly void of control and can alter their objectives in a way that keeps them working towards something positive. Working towards a well-defined, measurable, attainable, and adjustable objective helps athletes motivated, confident, and positive through a wide range of circumstances regardless of the result.

So, as competition season is nearing and you are dusting off that list of goals, double-check to see if these items continue to be realistic for you this season. If not, adjust them!

**Remember: The focus is on goals, not expectations.**

For more on this topic and more, check out my website: [www.h2operformers.com](http://www.h2operformers.com)



# HOW TO BECOME MENTALLY STRONG

By Coach Dris  
Body & Mind Coach

*In times of adversity and challenges, people tap into their mental strength. The problem is mental strength is often misunderstood. Some people try to project toughness instead by masking their insecurities, putting their self-worth in the hands of others, and overestimating what they can do. But acting tough and pretending you're in control doesn't make you mentally strong.*

## **What is Mental Strength**

*Depending on the level you are coaching, as the cliché goes, if you fail to plan you plan to fail. The practice plan Mental strength is your ability to perform at your best despite challenges and difficult circumstances. It's being able to acknowledge your emotions and manage them so they don't control you. When you are mentally strong, you can make better decisions, adapt to change, and grow from your mistakes. You feel good about yourself, despite your weaknesses.*

## **How to Increase Mental Strength**

### **#1 – Have a purpose**

A purpose will give you a sense of direction and motivation to achieve things. Create goals that are connected to your purpose and create a timeline for these.

### **#2 – Have a mantra**

Write your own mantra to remind you to stay focused and grounded. An example of a mantra is: "I am a warrior, not a worrier."

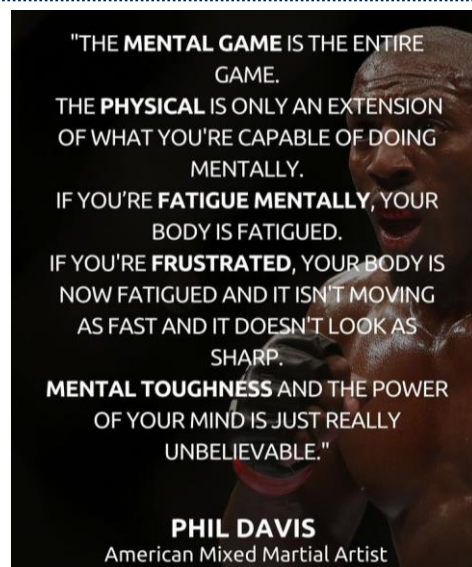
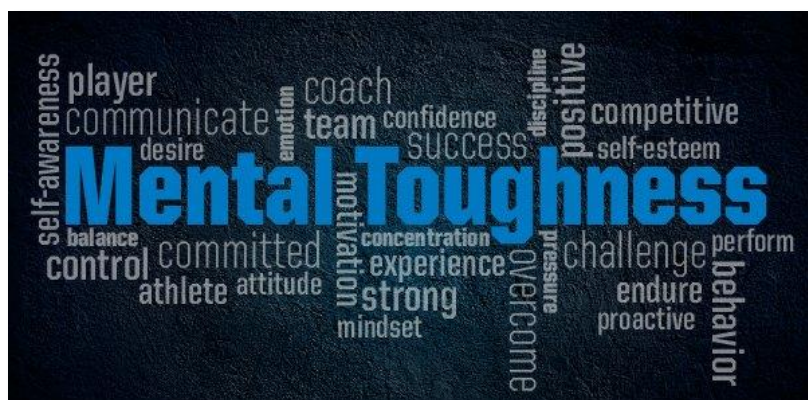
### **#3 – Push yourself out of your comfort zone**

Learn to take risks, even if it makes you uncomfortable. Being comfortable with discomfort is a sign of mental strength. Embrace challenges and see them as opportunities for learning and growth.

### **#4 – Meditate**

Too often I have seen coaches short and long-term goals focusing on the what (skills/drills/tactics) but not on how to coach (leadership, communication, interpersonal skills). Having surveyed thousands of coaches over the years, the characteristics they have shared of the greatest coaches they had did not have to do with the what, it had to do with the how ... how much they cared about them as people, how they connected to them as individuals, how they taught them valuable life lessons and so forth.

*Mental strength is your ability to perform at your best despite challenges and difficult circumstances.*



# GREAT ADVICE!

Junior National Team member Elisa Brunel, shares her thoughts on “Opportunity Knocks”. (*Elisa is also a former team member of the Austin Angelfish*)



Chance. Possibility. Luck. All these are common explanations for why people achieve success. But to be successful you also need something else: will. Success is not just luck or chance—success is when opportunity meets a will and a goal. Opportunities are everywhere—you just need to look for them. You can go through life waiting for your dreams to come true, but they will not become a reality until you take initiative.

With big dreams and coming from a small artistic swimming club, I knew that finding opportunities would be my path to success. I made connections with those around me. I established good relationships with my coaches and teammates through their respect. I kept working hard and searched for opportunities to reach my goals. These connections combined with my hard work became easy access to finding and taking opportunities. I was introduced to new high-level coaches and trainers, worked on skills that I had never been exposed to before, and took advantage of training plans that athletes at more competitive clubs participated in. I even trained for and ran a half-marathon! My will and desire to achieve my goal is what sent me looking for the opportunities. Now the floor is yours. Opportunity is knocking; all that’s left to do is to open the door.

### Flip a Coin Workout

Heads	or	Tails
Jumping Jacks	or	High Knees
Pushups		Squats
Leg Lifts	or	Lunges
Jumping Jacks		High Knees
Plank	or	Burpees
Squats		Crunches
Jumping Jacks	or	High Knees
Lunges		Pushups
Burpees	or	Leg Lifts

### "Deck of Cards" Workout

- Shuffle a deck of cards
- Draw a card
- Follow the number and suit and perform the related exercise
- Go through as many cards as you can in 25 minutes!

**Exercises:**  
 Diamonds = Squats  
 Clubs = Crunches  
 Hearts = Push-ups (knees or toes!)  
 Spades = Lunges (on each leg)

**Summary:**  
 - If you pull a 7 of clubs, you will perform 7 crunches  
 - If you pull a queen of hearts, you will do 30 seconds of jump squats or jumping jacks  
 - Modify as needed and listen to your body!

Jacks, Queens and Kings = 30 seconds of jump squats or jumping jacks!  
 Aces = One minute plank!

\* Always check with your doctor before starting a new exercise program  
 Jessica Valenti Pilates

## WORKOUT FUN WITH FUN WORKOUTS!

### SPELL YOUR NAME AND DO THE WORKOUT!

<b>A:</b> 15 PUSHUPS	<b>N:</b> 10 PUSHUPS
<b>B:</b> 50 JUMPING JACKS	<b>O:</b> 20 LUNGES (TOTAL)
<b>C:</b> 20 CRUNCHES	<b>P:</b> 10 TRICEP DIPS
<b>D:</b> 10 BURPEES	<b>Q:</b> 20 JUMPING JACKS
<b>E:</b> 60-SECOND WALL SIT	<b>R:</b> 60-SECOND PLANK
<b>F:</b> 20 ARM CIRCLES	<b>S:</b> 30 BICYCLE CRUNCHES
<b>G:</b> 20 SQUATS	<b>T:</b> 60-SECOND WALL SIT
<b>H:</b> 30 JUMPING JACKS	<b>U:</b> 40 HIGH KNEES
<b>I:</b> 60-SECOND PLANK	<b>V:</b> 30 SQUATS
<b>J:</b> 20 MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS	<b>W:</b> 15 TRICEP DIPS
<b>K:</b> 40 CRUNCHES	<b>X:</b> 10 MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS
<b>L:</b> 12 BURPEES	<b>Y:</b> 12 JUMPING LUNGES
<b>M:</b> 15 JUMP SQUATS	<b>Z:</b> 30 CRUNCHES

### FIT DICE

Roll 2 dice to determine which exercise (yellow), then roll the orange # of dice shown to determine reps.

By: Mike Ginicola @PhysEdDepot

# Exercises for Glute Strength and Ballet Legs



This position and figure require a lot of strength. The athlete needs to have a strong core, lower back and upper back strength in order to have the best horizontal extension possible. This also requires endurance to maintain vertical height in the Ballet Leg. Coaches should have athletes do a lot of Back Layout, Bent Knee Back Layout, Ballet Leg and Double Ballet Leg laps and endurance work. Core and glute land training is also key.



## Glute Bridges

Bridges are one of the best glute exercises and should form some part of any glutes workout.

- Lie on your back, knees bent, feet hip width apart
- Clench your glutes and slowly raise your buttocks up of the floor into a bridge position and hold
- Don't let your back arch or your buttocks dip

There are loads of different variations and ways to challenge yourself more with bridging exercises as your glutes get stronger.



**Heel Bridge:** Push down through your heels as you bridge (can lift toes if that helps)

**Waist Band Bridge:** Hold down an elasticated band around your waist

**Knee Band Bridge:** Loop elasticated band round knees. Once in bridge position, push knees out against band and slowly bring them back in

**Ball Bridge:** Hold and squeeze a ball between your knees as you bridge – also targets VMO so great for knee problems.

**Frog Bridge:** let your knees drop out with your feet touching. Press through feet and raise buttocks

# Concussions - Causes & Symptoms

Concussions most commonly occur in organized contact sports such as football, wrestling, and soccer, but they can also occur in synchronized swimming. Because, concussions can lead to serious health consequences, it is essential that synchronized swimmers, coaches, parents, and healthcare providers learn the signs and symptoms of concussion and what to do if a concussion occurs.

The rest of this article can be found on the website under **Coach Resources**.

Signs Observed by Others	Symptoms Reported by Artistic Swimmers
Confusion	Headache or "pressure" in head
Foggy	Nausea, vomiting, numbness or tingling
Forgetful	Balance problems or dizziness
Disoriented	Double or blurry vision, ringing in the ears
Lack of coordination	Sensitivity to light and noise
Slow to respond	Increased emotional behavior/irritability
Brief unconsciousness	Concentration or memory problems
Mood, behavior, or personality changes	Feeling sluggish, low energy, foggy, or groggy
Inability to recall events prior to hit or fall	Confusion
Inability to recall events after hit or fall	Does not "feel right" or "feeling down"
Seizures immediately after the hit/fall	Problems with insomnia or excessive sleep



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"We are refining new acrobatics and practicing tighter patterns with faster, sharper moments. If each of us trains in a Hammer Head, we can minimize head injuries and maximize our time in the pool as a team."

-Anita Alvarez, 2x Olympian and 2021 Athlete of the Year

"Hammer Head is more than a swim cap partner. Their brand and product is committed to athlete safety in the same way USA Artistic Swimming is."

-Adam Andrasko, CEO USAAS

# **SAFESPORT – IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

*Everyone has a role to play in creating a healthy environment for our sport and our athletes. SafeSport helps raise awareness about misconduct in sport, promote open dialogue, and provide training and resources. Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of athletes is a high priority for USA Artistic Swimming. **The FULL course must be completed the 1<sup>st</sup> year, Refresher courses are mandatory 1 per year for 3 years after that. The cycle will then repeat with the Full Course & Refreshers.***

PLEASE NOTE: It is now **MANDATORY** for the following individuals to complete the course.

## **USA Artistic Swimming**

(Staff, Board Members, Support Staff, and Consultants)

## **National Team**

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

## **National Talent, Olympic Development Camps & National Elite Camp**

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

## **National Team Athletes**

All National Team Athletes currently listed in the USADA Registered Testing Pool

## **All members of all USAAS Committees, Subcommittees and Boards**

(18 years old and over)

## **Club Teams**

(Any Coaches, Chaperones, Support Staff and Volunteers who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes,

(This includes, but is not limited to: Dance, Acrobatics, Flexibility, Swimming Staff, etc., at any national or local Training Facility)

(Any Athlete 18 years or older who practices or competes with minor age athletes)

## **Approved Club Options/Private Invitations/ICE Program Participants**

(All Staff - including Coaches, Managers, Chaperones and Adults who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes while traveling with the athletes, excludes Adults who are attending as fans)

## **All Judges**

(Levels 1 through FINA A & Emeritus)

## **Optional but highly recommended**

Club Teams - BOD members

USA Artistic Swimming has added an area on the website solely dedicated to SafeSport. Under Resources, you will find information on how to take the course, the complete list of individuals who have taken the course, information on the US Center for SafeSport, and USA Artistic Swimming's Abuse and Harassment Policy.

SafeSport for Parents is not an accepted certification, nor is any other outside program.

If you have any questions, please contact [monica@usaartisticwim.org](mailto:monica@usaartisticwim.org)

*When we work as a team, we can build a game plan to make sport safe for everyone.*