



BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

MAY EDITION • 2021

Welcome to the May 2021 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.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 22-23, 2021
Junior and Senior National Squad Trials
Moraga, California

June 26 – July 3, 2021
2021 U.S. Junior Olympic Championship
Colorado Springs, Colorado

October 7-9, 2021
USAAS Annual Convention
Reno, Nevada

October 21 – 24, 2021
2021 U.S. Masters Championship
Las Vegas, Nevada

Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to Climb It, Go Through It or Work Around It.

- Michael Jordan



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.**

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. 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.

NEW: When you register with USA Artistic Swimming, you will receive instructions and the Access Code to complete the course.



Meet the USAAS Staff!

The USA Artistic Swimming staff is committed to providing the highest level of service and support to our members and the artistic swimming community.

Adam Andrasko – Chief Executive Officer, adam@usaartisticswim.org

Shari Darst – Education Director, shari@usaartisticswim.org

Baylee Robinson – Events & Membership Director, baylee@usaartisticswim.org

Alyssa Jacobs – Communications & Partnership Marketing Coordinator, alyssa@usaartisticswim.org

Monica Velazquez-Stiak – Athlete Safety & Membership Specialist, monica@usaartisticswim.org

Lara Teixeira – High Performance Manager, lara@usaartisticswim.org

New USAAS Mission Statement

Lead in the advancement of artistic swimming by empowering athletes to achieve competitive success, uniting our community & inspiring our membership to pursue lifelong excellence and involvement in the sport.

Train Like a Champion

15 Core Strengthening Exercises for Athletes – click [here](#)

11 Best Core Strengthening Exercises to Do at Home – click [here](#)

A 20-Minute Ab Workout Routine to Level Up Your Core Strength – click [here](#)



Exciting News!!!

The new Rising Star Camps and Clinics will be introduced summer/fall of 2021 – be on the lookout for more exciting news coming about these programs!

Be sure to fill out an application to be a Clinic/Camp Coach or to be a Host ASAP!

**WE ARE NOT A TEAM BECAUSE WE
WORK TOGETHER.
WE ARE A TEAM BECAUSE
WE RESPECT,
TRUST,
AND CARE FOR EACH OTHER.**



TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts/Webinars worth your time:

Cincinnati Synchronators Head Coach Ginny Jasontek sharing emotional memories from her 50 year career, click [here](#)

“How Coaches Can Learn From Others”, by John Kessel, click [here](#)

Great Reads



“10 Tips for Developing a Winning Mentality as an Athlete”, by 9INE Point, click [here](#)

“Win the Day”, by Jerry Lynch, PhD (purchase on Amazon)

“Every Moment Matters: How the World’s Best Coaches Inspire Their Athletes and Build Championship Teams”, by John O’Sullivan (purchase on Amazon)

Videos to Enjoy



“Why Winning Doesn’t Always Equal Success”, by Valorie Kondos Field, click [here](#)

“My Secret to Staying Focused Under Pressure”, by Russell Wilson, click [here](#)

“Pep Talk about Teamwork and Leadership” by Kid President, click [here](#)

“The Power of Teamwork”, by Tyler Waye, click [here](#)

“Value-Driven Behavior”, by Nadia Kya, MSW, click [here](#)



COACH TO COACH PROGRAM

**The May sessions will be run by
Kristen Smidstra**

Asst Coach Walnut Creek Aquanauts

Kristen has a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education/Fitness Leadership from the Univ of Alabama at Birmingham, and a Master of Arts in Kinesiology with a concentration in Sport Management & Exercise Physiology.

Kristen has been a USA Natl Team Manager for multiple National Teams & WZ All-Star Camp Clinician.

Topics for May Sessions

Webinar #1 – Monday, May 10th, 5:00 pm Pacific Time

- ❖ *Muscle Engagement and Technique for Land Training*
- ❖ *General Periodization Considerations*
- ❖ *Types of Land Training*
- ❖ *Designing a Land Training Program for all Phases of the Season*

Webinar #2 – date tbd

- ❖ *Injury Prevention*
- ❖ *Library of Synchro Specific Exercises*

**Due to the individualized work with each coach,
enrollment will be limited to 10 coaches per session,
so register now [HERE!](#)**

Cost for 1 month is only \$75!

**Registration for the May session
is now open.**

Step 1: First 1-1/2 hour webinar/workshop will be held.

Step 2: Coaches attending (attendees) will be assigned homework following the webinar/workshop.

Step 3: Attendees will send in their homework for review by the presenter.

Step 4: The presenter will review the homework and will send feedback to each attendee.

Step 5: The 2nd webinar/workshop will be held.

Step 6: Attendees will be assigned homework following the webinar/workshop.

Step 7: Attendees will send in their homework for review by the presenter.

Step 8: The presenter will review the homework and will send feedback to each attendee.

EXPECTATIONS OR ASPIRATIONS...

What is the Difference?

By Matt Shaw, Performance Psychologist at InnerDrive

In sport we are often told to have high expectations and high aspirations to succeed. But the meaning of these often becomes confused. There is a subtle, but important distinction between aspirations and expectation – and if parents know the difference it can make a huge impact. So, what are the differences and how can we help nudge our children in the right direction?

Aspirations are about wanting to perform to the best standard, whereas expectations convey the belief about the likelihood of succeeding. It is great for your children to have aspirations, after all that's why we all play sport. However, just wanting to be the best does not always lead to that. Raising expectations can be good as it allows athletes of all ages to have a clear picture of what they should be doing but, if expectations are too low then motivation can be reduced and yet if they are too high then it can hinder confidence whilst increasing both fear of failure and nerves.

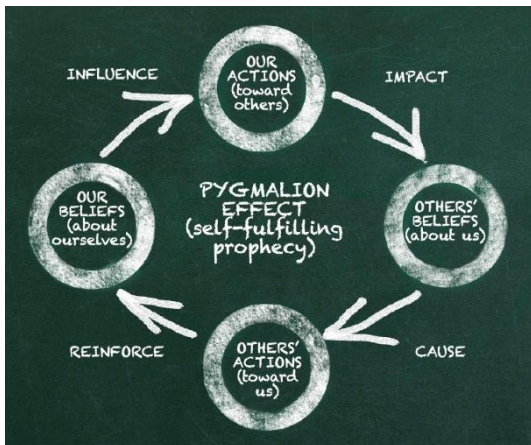
Two quite cool psychological effects show why expectations can be so powerful. The first is called the Pygmalion Effect. This is where people raise their achievements due to someone else's high expectations of them. On the other hand, there is the Golem Effect. This describes how having low expectations of someone can lead to them performing worse. Essentially, no-one rises to low expectations.

The entire article can be found [here](#).

How Can You Use the Power of Expectations Better?

- *Your voice is important
- *Encourage high self-expectations
- *More isn't always better
- *Use simple objectives

It is hard to flourish if no one believes in you. Equally, it is hard to perform when people demand too much from you. If expectations are pitched at the right level it will help your children perform at their best.



Lower or compromise your standards and you will lose the respect of those who are committed.

Maintain high standards and the committed will rise up and the uncommitted can change or leave.

www.proactivecoaching.info

4 WAYS PARENTS CAN SUPPORT THEIR YOUNG ATHLETES

By Coach Dris,
The Body and Mind Coach

If you are raising young athletes, the best thing you can do to help is to support them. Any sport will benefit your child as it teaches leadership, patience, discipline, and coordination. It also builds mental and physical strength.

But as a parent, how does one support a young athlete? What role should you play in their sports life? Here are some of the ways you can help your young athlete and become a winning parent.

1. Emotional Support

Young athletes are naturally competitive, so most of the time they want to win and they want to be the best. But it is inevitable that they may sometimes lose or feel that someone else is better than them at their sports. This is where you can come in to encourage and motivate your child. Motivation and encouragement don't mean you have to tell them they're the best or console them by bad-mouthing their opponents. Motivation means saying your child that losing is part of the game and there is no shame in defeat.

Motivation also means helping your child accept failures by guiding them to focus on what they can improve. You can encourage them to practice more. You can also take them to classes or to a sports coach who can better help them improve their performance.

Do's:

- Be there for them during competition.
- Watch them practice.
- Cheer for them during competition.
- Tell them that you love them and you value them for who they are, regardless of they win or lose the competition.
- Don't hesitate to give them a hug when they lose or make a mistake.
- Give them a pep talk before and after the competition.
- Be nice to their teammates.
- Work with their coach.

Don'ts:

- Scold them when they make a mistake.
- Compare them to other children who perform better than them.
- Overreact when they are called out for foul actions.
- Fight with the referee, their coach, or their teammates.
- Blame people for your child's defeat in the game.
- Blame your child for losing.
- Show your disappointment or express disapproval whenever they lose a game.
- Try to coach your child, unless you are a professional athlete yourself.

The other three ways to support your athletes are:

2. Nutritional Support
3. Financial Support
4. Don't Be a Helicopter Parent

Please click [here](#) to read the rest of the article.



Parents – The Support Above the Water!

The Alvarez Family

10 TIPS TO RUN EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

By Glen Mulcahy

That time of the year where I get a break from various hockey hats after a whirlwind season with all the ups and downs of dealing with COVID-19 return to play, pivoting to running virtual coach clinics, coordinating coach evaluations that complied with safety protocols and marking a record number of written assignments due to ease for coaches to take clinics virtually vs. face to face in various parts of the province.

While it was top of mind, I thought this would be a good opportunity to share some tips for running effective practices based on this and past years evaluations for coaches that are generic to carry over to other sports, then late summer will share one specifically for hockey coaches as they ramp up for what hopefully will be a better normal than this past pandemic season.

#1 – Have a Plan

Depending on the level you are coaching, as the cliché goes, if you fail to plan you plan to fail. The practice plan is probably one of the most important things you need to run an effective practice and it should be based on what your overall season plan is (another blog in itself) but making sure that you are not a game reactive coach (i.e. focusing on errors that were made in a prior game, but staying the course to develop over the course of a season)

#2 – Ensure that every player has a full water bottle

Even during Covid-19 I have talked to several evaluators that observed practices where coaches did not pay attention to the number of water bottles that players had when they came to the practice, and as a result, players ended up sharing with their team mates. Regardless if cohort or not, but players must have their own FULL water bottle before practicing and given regular hydration breaks

#3 – Consider using computer software or an app

This will permit you to plan and share your practices in advance with coaches and players, ideally using ones that have video demos for drills so it will make your practices much more efficient

The other benefit, is everyone will be able to READ the practice plan, drill and key teaching points. Having marked hundreds of practice plans over the years, it amazes me how many coaches have the handwriting of physicians and practice plans are very difficult to follow.

#4 – Don't try to do it on your own

If you are just getting started coaching a sport or have for many years, I can't emphasize the importance of finding a coach mentor so you can pick their brain for drills, best way to identify errors and correct them connect with players, engage parents and so on. I have always argued that we should provide as much support for those starting out as they could have a positive or negative impact on kids early on when they are developing their core skills.

#5 – Watch/Listen to webinars/podcasts not only what, but HOW to coach

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.

The other five tips for running effective practices are:

#6 – Ensure that your practice plans adhere to your sports LTPD/LTAD model

#7 – P&R = Patience and Repetitions

#8 – Remove the joystick

#9 – Make it Safe to Fail

#10 – Smile!

Please click [here](#) to read the rest of the article.



GREAT ADVICE!

When asked what advice she would give someone who wants to get on the national team, Nikki Dzurko, member of the 2021 Senior National Team, she shared the following:

“Being a member of the National Team both past and present has taught me so many things that most people don’t have the opportunity to learn until later in life. In a sport where goal is to look as effortless and perfect as possible many people fail to realize the numerous uncontrollable factors we face on a daily basis. Throughout my career as an athlete I have faced far from ideal circumstances, this year especially. Whether it be an injury, illness, weather, contract, location, cancellations, or even a global pandemic, one piece of advice I can give is to focus on what you can control and that is your reaction.”

“Uncontrollable things happen, dwelling on what you wish had happened will make it that much harder to create a positive outcome. The next time you may find you’re in a tough situation take a breath and focus on what you personally can do. I really do believe there is a reason for everything, even if you are unable to see it now. That reason for me is representing my country, when I hear the USA chant on the international stage I know that I am making so many people proud, but most importantly myself.”



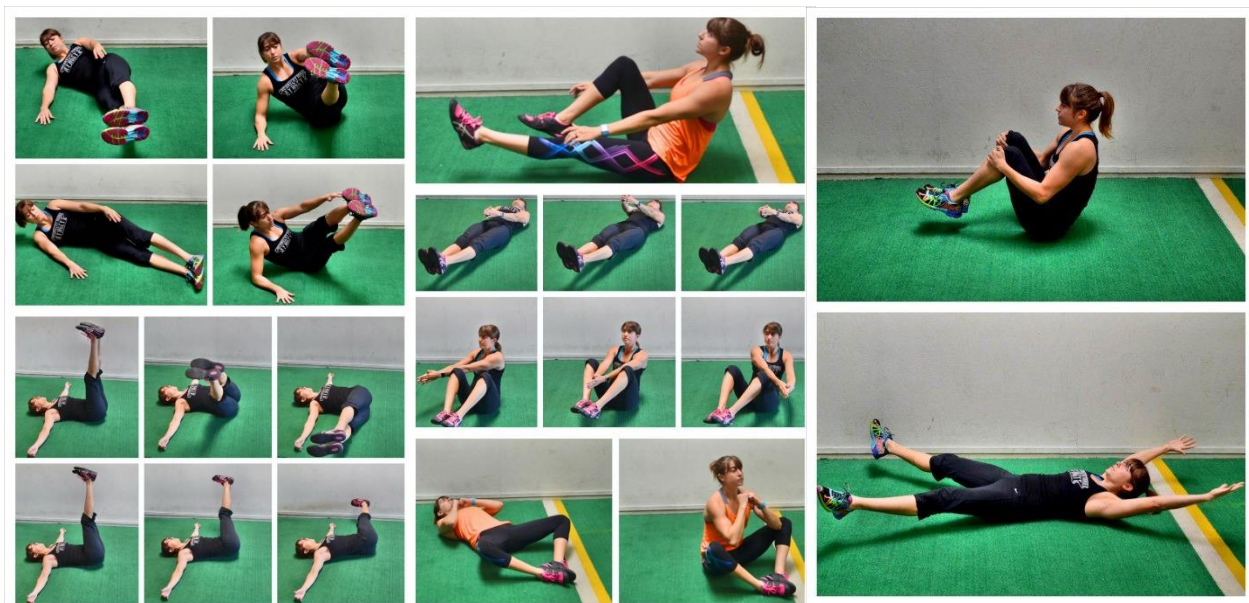
The Crunch, 15 Min Abs Workout by Caroline Girvan, click [here](#)

Ab Crunch Challenge by Holly Dolke, click [here](#)

How to do a Crunch properly by Howcast, click [here](#)

10 Minute Abs Workout by FitnessBlender, click [here](#)

WORKOUT FUN WITH CRUNCHES



IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION, HARD WORK AND SACRIFICE

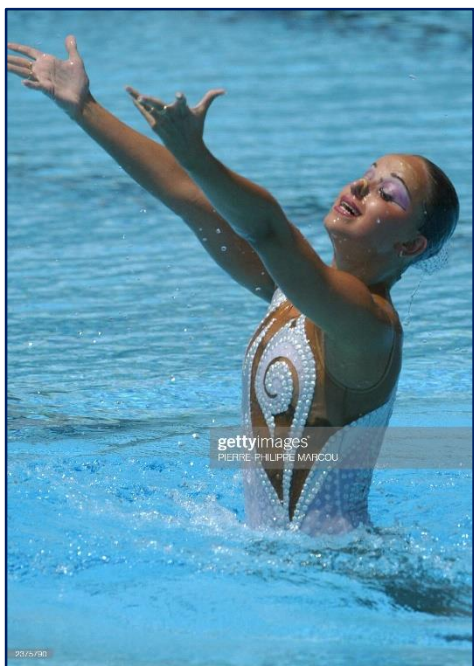
For me it was always very obvious that there is no success without a goal, without the dreams. But sometimes I meet people who affirm that they don't need a goals and motivation at all. Well, everyone has a right to have own opinion but I'm not so sure that this can suit for real life.

Even very mindful people who managed to achieve a lot in their life are saying that: life without the goal is like a body without soul. Going through life without setting goals is like going on a road trip without a map.

Goals and motivation don't need to be always just struggling and running. Having a dream to make the world happier with a goal of helping people or helping a church is also the goal and trying to achieve it you follow your dream and as result become a motivated person and so happy one because you have something to live for.

On my experience the goals, dreams and motivation are those 3 mountains without which you can't move forward.

When I was a little girl I always set the goals from very little at the beginning to very big at the end. I was setting all these goals because I had a dream. These goals were for me like the stairs to climb up. These goals created a big motivation to move forward. To achieve every goal, I needed to work hard and sacrifice on my way. It was a price for making my dreams true at the end of this path. And when finally, I got it, I continued dreaming and setting new goals. This is the life wheel. This what make us stronger, wiser and more mature. This what gives us personal development and growth.



Anastasia Ermakova is from Russia, and one of the most decorated artistic swimmers in history with a combined 19 gold and 2 silver medals at the Olympic Games, World Championships, World Cups and World Trophy.

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 1st 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 adam@usaartisticswim.org

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