

# YOUTHFIRST

## COACHES LEARNING ABOUT YOUTH SPORTS

The Sports Education and Leadership Program at UNLV

Volume 1, Issue 4

Grade 3-4

### Inside this issue:

How Arousal Effects Performance	1
Signs of Arousal	1
How to reduce the levels of Arousal	2
How to raise the levels of arousal	2

### Special points of interest:

- *Finding the optimal level of arousal for each player will enhance their performance.*
- *Raising and lowering the levels of arousal is a key aspect in being a coach.*
- *When working with youths you must prepare them for games by helping them deal with stress and arousal, they might not know how to deal with it.*

## How Arousal Effects Performance

Arousal is a major factor during pre-game warm ups and game time situations. Arousal can be interchanged with such phrases as a person's drive, readiness, or excitement.

There are two levels of arousal, extremely high levels where it is hard for a player to concentrate and make effective decisions, to extremely low levels of arousal such as sleeping. It is up to us as coaches to be able to establish the correct

amount of arousal for each of our players. As coaches we should use the Inverted-U Hypothesis to establish an effective relationship between our players arousal and their performance. If a players excitement is too high then they tend to make abnormal decisions during game situations and their performance will drop dramatically. On the other hand if their excitement is not high enough, they will fail to be productive.

## Signs of Arousal

When coaching youths that are brand new to organized sports, they may be very excited and hyper before games. They may have the tendency to run around and exert mass amounts of energy be-

fore the game begins. They will most likely not be able to sit still and will be loud and sometimes quite obnoxious. It is our duty as coaches to reduce this arousal and get them ready to have fun

without be authoritative or putting any kind of unnecessary stress and or anxiety on them. Keep things positive and make sure to focus on fun with the new youths.



**Developing optimal arousal for each player is the one of the most important ability that a coach can possess.**

Determining how to control the level of your athletes arousal will be key in helping your team provide the highest amount of energy while keeping focused on the game.



**By reducing arousal players are able to concentrate more on the skills that they are using and the tasks that need to be completed to achieve success.**

## How to reduce the level of Arousal

There are several ways to reduce the amount of arousal in players. Here are a few strategies to get you started. Because every player will prepare differently for competition. Some are vocal, some are quiet and get focused mentally, you as a coach must make sure that everyone is preparing mentally for the contest in the way that they

feel the most comfortable. Another way to take some of the arousal off of players is to promote them with task familiarity. Let them know that all they need to do is play exactly the same way that they have played in practice all week. Let them know if they focus on the skills learned in practice, that they will be great.

Also, build high self-confidence by focusing on strengths of the team and of players, as well as focusing on the weaknesses of the other team. This will help your players feel more relaxed and will calm them down because they know what they need to focus on to achieve success.

## How to Raise the levels of Arousal

*Athletes that are new to youth sports may have a hard time getting aroused for a game. It is up to you to get them ready and set them up for success.*

In pre-game situations there may be certain situations where there is not enough arousal in your players. When the kids are new to sports and they have never competed in games, they may not be excited or ready. As a coach there are certain strategies that you can do to excite your players, even if they are youths. One way to help increase intensity in your players is to increase the volume of your voice. Be careful when dealing with youth

players, they may take your loud voice as a sign of anger. When raising your voice, keep in mind that you want your players to focus on their skills that they have learned and make sure that they are focused on having fun. Be upbeat, not angry with your players, when they are young they might not be able to tell the difference. If the arousal level is low you may also want to have your players engage in light physical activity to get their

blood flowing and to get them in the mind set of the game. One last thing to help increase the arousal level of your players is to set goals for the team and for players. When you do this the players are aware that they have a goal to achieve and they then begin to create plans and strategies in their head about what they want to get done, and what they have to get done. They tend to get very excited and aroused when they are given goals.