

TEAMWORK

Young students: Together, we get the job done!

Older students/teens/adults: Working together as a group to achieve a common goal.

TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More!

Dear Dr. Robyn,

My daughter is on a team that has some girls with a lot of talent but they don't tend to win...If I'm being honest, there is one real "star" to the team but she somehow makes the team do worse than better. She's talented but not a team player. I help out with the team and they've asked me what to do. Any ideas?

-- Mel T; NC

Dear Mel,

Creating a great team is so much more than putting together talented individuals. The overall success of a team is contingent upon character not just know-how.

When we construct a team, we want members who are going to be team-oriented; those who work together to compound strengths and round out weak spots, those who challenge but don't undermine and those who pull the team together rather than segmenting or creating a toxic environment. After all, this is what it means to be a team player.

Being team-oriented is necessary for children's teams as well as adult teams. According to Jay Hennessey, Commanding Officer of Basic Training Command, this is even true when choosing the right person to become a Navy SEAL! When asking a senior officer for feedback on this issue, he replied; "I don't really care how fast a guy is on a four-mile

run or two-mile swim as long as he is fast enough. I want to know if he is going to be a good team-guy. Will he have my back? Can I trust him?"

How do we create teams that work?

(1) Focus on strengths:

Encourage the team to name and recognize each team member's strength. What does each person bring to the team? While some strengths might help create more wins, other strengths might increase morale. Each strength is important. How can each strength contribute to the success of the team? How must the team adjust to utilize each strength?

(2) Name the toxin: If a team has talented individuals who don't work together as a team, back up. Relay to the team; "each member of the team needs to be a person of character, competence and contribution. How are you showing these three Cs? If someone is not showing character and being a positive part of the

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team, let that person know what you hope to see and give him/her a chance to demonstrate it.

(3) Cut ties: Sometimes, when a team member is unwilling to change and become team-oriented, we need to part ways. Talent is simply not enough. Does this person put the good of the team or the good of him or herself first? The answer will surely help you to make the right choice.

Here's to your success!

