

# How to succeed with young athletes

(Sports Performance Bulletin)

## Coaches must:

- encourage athletes to have strong-minded attitudes and self-assertiveness
- structure the athlete's training programmes with realistic, achievable and progressive targets
- recognise the athlete's achievements with positive enthusiasm
- advise athletes on proper diet and training
- convince athletes that their successes are due to their own ability, attitude and training
- insist on correct technique at all times
- use appropriate well-balanced conditioning programmes
- display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance – be a role model
- place the well being and safety of the athlete above the development of performance
- treat all athletes with equality
- encourage athletes to ask questions about their training and tell you what they think
- accept responsibility for their conduct and discourage inappropriate behaviour in training and competition
- give all athletes in your training groups equal attention
- be sensitive to the non-verbal signals being transmitted by the athletes (their faces usually give a good indication of how they feel)

## Coaches must NOT

- over race or make the athletes compete outside their class
- criticise the physique of their athletes
- let the athletes think their success is due to luck or poor opposition
- ever 'give up' on an athlete e.g. tell them they are too slow to be a sprinter (they are still developing)
- encourage athletes to violate the rules of their sport
- promote or ignore the use of prohibited drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances