



To Push or Not to Push A Parent's Dilemma

With David Benzel,
America's Sport Family Coach



www.growingchampionsforlife.com

Today's Objectives:

- To describe the by-products of parental push;
- To distinguish between toxic Pressurized Push and true Optimal Push.
- To discover the most effective long-term strategies for your child based on his or her appetite.



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The Fundamentals

- The opinion that matters most to your children is what they *think* you think of them.
- Unconditional love and a standard of excellence must be taught in concert. The first is unearned and the second is earned.



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What is the Purpose of Parenting?

Why do we exist?

To serve our highest purpose...

Raise children who can:

1. Lead independent lives;
2. Maintain loving relationships;
3. Enjoy a sense of competence;

"The Price of Privilege" by Madeline Levine

Nine Negative Parent Behaviors

- Exhibit an outcome orientation
- Are critical, negative and overbearing
- Apply pressure to win or perform
- Make sport too serious
- Are over-involved and controlling
- Compare child to other athletes
- Distract child during competitions
- Restrict player's social life
- Too much sport talk

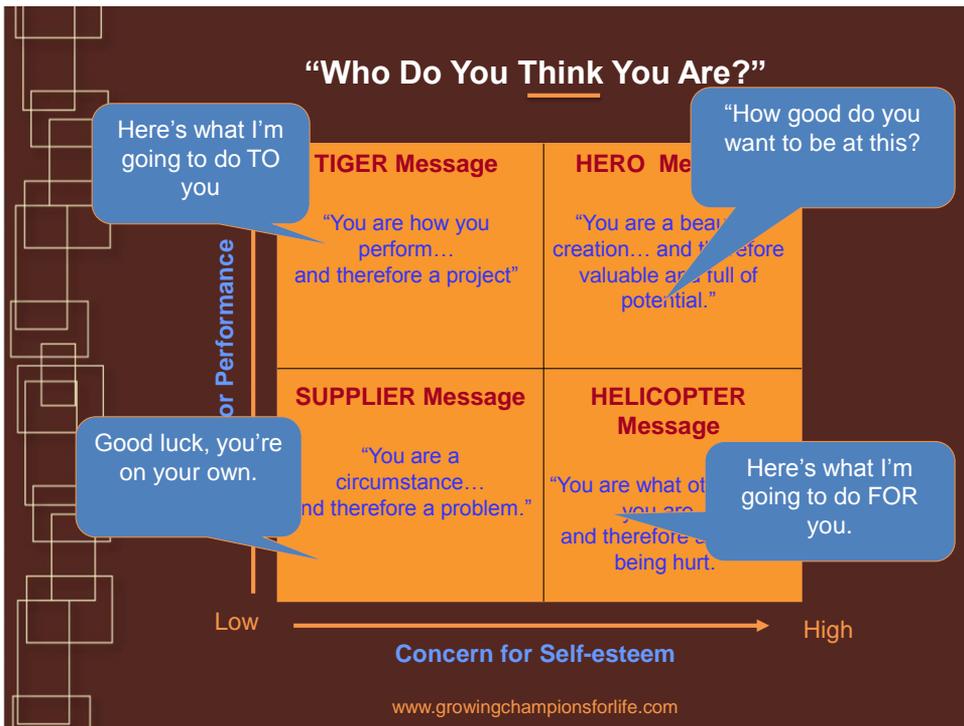
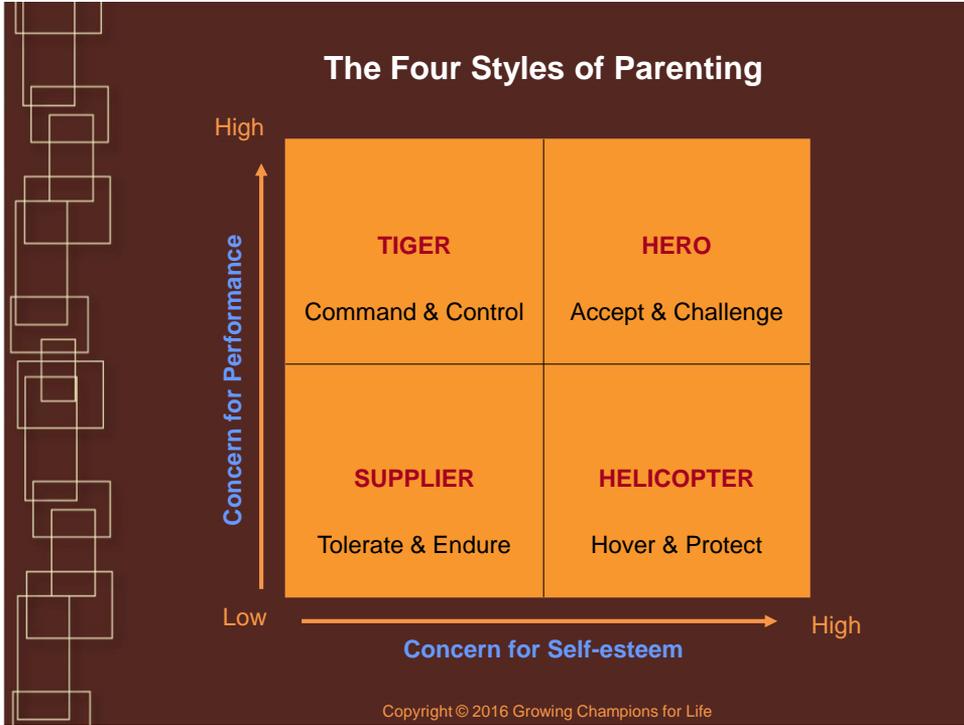


Institute for the Study of Youth Sports – Dan Gould, 2007 Michigan State University

Top Consequences of Negative Interactions between Parents & Players

- Increased pressure on child
- Development of athlete inhibited
- Lack of motivation to perform
- Distracted on the court
- *Deterioration of parent-child relationship; fun and closeness are replaced with guilt and resentment.*

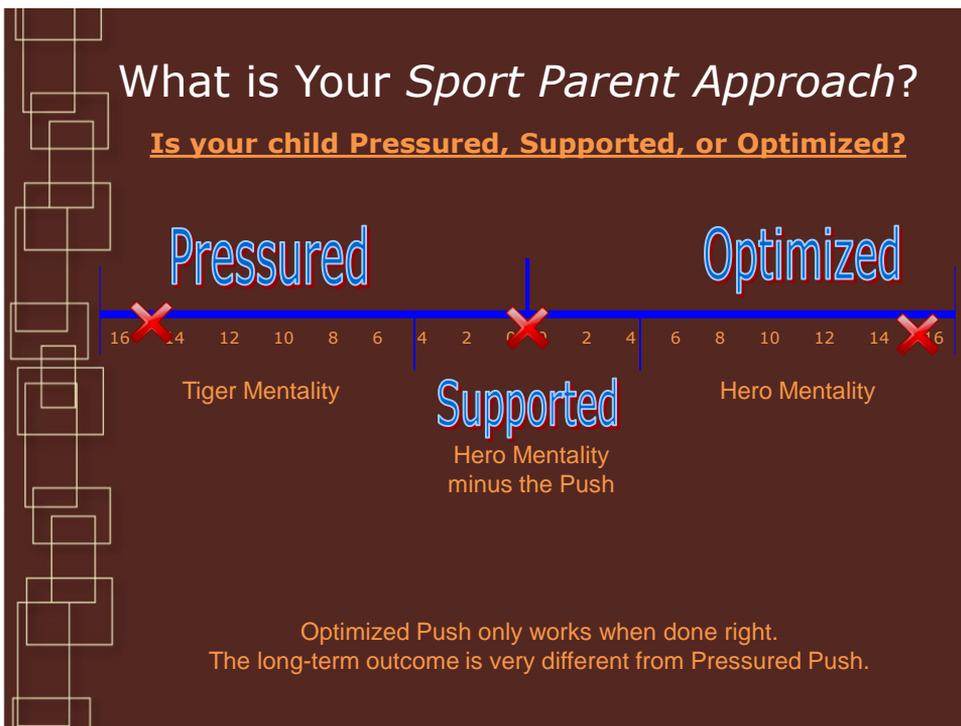
What does Andre' Agassi's story say to you?



The Trouble with Expectations

Parental Expectations	Child's Interpretation	A Better Message
"You shouldn't get a bad grade."	"If I get a bad grade I must be stupid."	Study hard to learn new materials.
"You should be a starter on this team."	"If I'm not a starter I'm really a loser."	Practice your stroke to earn a starting position.
"You should drop a half second in a month."	"If I don't drop a half second in a month I must be untalented."	Do the necessary work to drop a half second regardless of how long it takes.

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Two Styles of “Push” by Parents

“I am not sure you can get a great player without at least one crazy pushy parent.”
- Sport parent

Pressured

- Control used by parent
- Nagging about effort or time
- Conflicts over strategies
- Critical of child’s performance

= 's Lower Trust

Optimized

- Choices given to athlete
- Challenged to reach goals
- Collaboration on decisions
- Support for child’s vision

= 's Higher Trust

The Middle Option - To Support Without Pressuring or Pushing

Supported

- Provide opportunities, transportation, & equipment;
- Listen to concerns & triumphs without evaluating or comparing;
- Encourage effort & progress more than talents and gifts;
- Enjoy performances by attending and cheering, but not over-analyzing.

= 's Acceptance

My Personal Commitment Worksheet

Choose the course of action most appropriate for your child and plan your strategy for creating the most positive environment to match that choice.

Optimal Support OR Optimal Push

What opportunities could you provide that fit your child's interests and gifts?

What choices could you offer to your child that would give him/her a sense of control over training issues?

In what situations could you listen more and evaluate less?

In what way could you encourage your child's goal setting so as to inspire him/her to stretch to new levels?

What words of encouragement could you give regardless of the performance delivered?

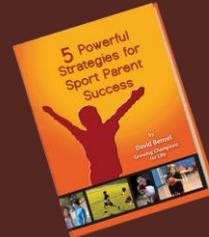
What discussions need to take place so your child feels involved in decision making about competition strategy?

How could you show your child that you enjoy watching him or her, win or lose?

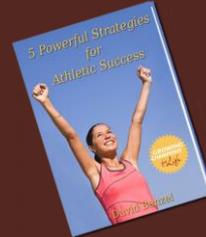
In what situations do you need to show your complete confidence in his/her overall success story as a person?



✓ "Five Powerful Strategies for Sport Parent Success"
(A parent's pocket-size guide for \$4.99)



✓ "5 Powerful Strategies for Athletic Success"
(A young athlete's pocket-size guide for \$4.99)



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