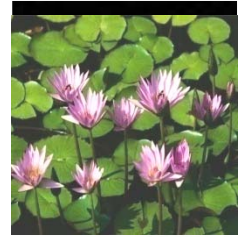
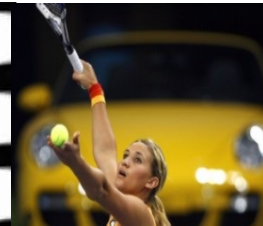




FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE DE TENNIS

Dealing with parents of young tennis players

October 24th 2008





According to an American study (March 06)

- Role parents play in young athletes's sport involvement:
 - much scrutiny today
 - reports of problems
 - « over-involvement »
- 36% of parents negatively influence their child development in sport
- Increase of overuse injuries among young athletes

Parent-child interaction problems in junior tennis

- Overemphasises winning
- Criticises child
- Lacks emotional control
- Parent's ego determined by child performance
- Unrealistic expectations
-

WHY?



UNDERSTANDING PARENTS...



Being a parent TODAY

- Values in today's consumer society: individualism, performance, wealth, celebrity, personal fulfilment!
- But success = uncertainty



Observed behaviour

- Some opt out...
- Others feel more confident
- Majority feels apprehensive...

↪ Birth of the performance cult?

Classical strategy

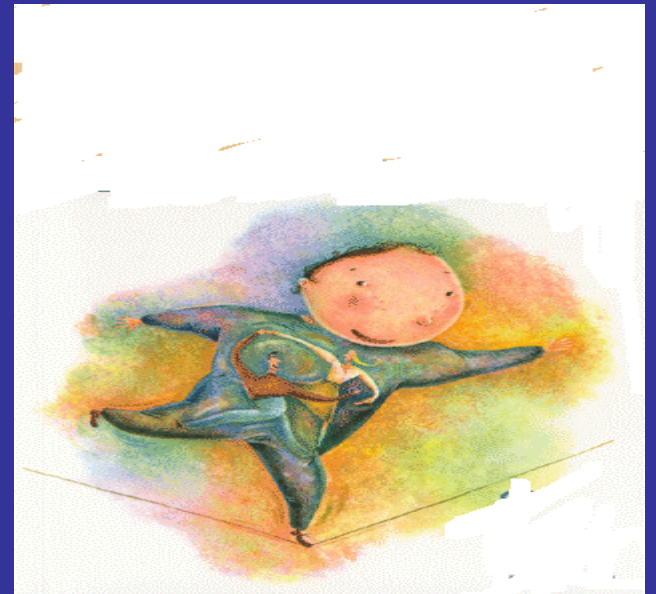
- Maximise potential at any cost

↪ Risk of having an almost mechanical vision of the child

= Psychological trap n°1

Innate parenthood

- Is the child pre-programmed in parent's imagination?



Myth of the ideal child :

- Before birth: projected image of awaited child nourished with :dreams, hopes and desires of the future parents.
- During competitions is child the narcissistic prolongation of the parent?
- ↪ While this image is both natural and legitimate, it can also be **trap n°2**

Trap 2: Becoming fixated on the ideal child

- Imagined child lives in imagination
 - Real child exists in real world =joy and deception.
- ↪ Parent with over-high expectations runs risk of being disappointed

...and by doing so risk trap n°3

- Child, dependant by nature, ready to go against her (or his) own nature ?

⇒ **Trap N°3: the stress of performance**

- Visible signs: eg:
never satisfied with herself,
self-critical,
have to be perfect to get love

Avoiding trap n°2:

- Focus on the real child...
- Set realistic goals and expectations



Love the real child:

- Observe her (him), spot her strengths in all areas of competence: physical, intellectual , social , and personal.
- Take into account difficulties and errors and consider them as temporary and as challenges to overcome.

Realistic goals and expectations...

- The goals need to conform to:
 - 1) interests,
 - 2) capacities
 - 3) rhythm of development

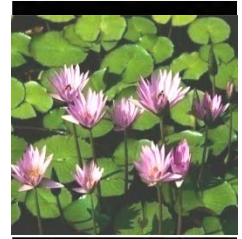


What can the trainer do?

EXPLAIN TO PARENTS...

The stages throughout a career
when it often works...

example of the experts sport's
story



The example of the experts

individual	Initiation Phase	development Phase	Expertise
High performance Individual	happy Curious Enthusiastic Special	Hooked Devoted	« Obsessed » Responsible Good self image
Trainer	Kind Enthusiastic Focused on learning	Disciplined, intense Respectful/ rigorous Recognised as competent Competition/evaluation	Successful Respected Emotionally involved Rigorous analysis
Parent	Offers support Patient Transmits values linked to the discipline	Financial Support Moral Support+++ Limited activity Positive	Supporter

The example of the experts

- Expertise is achieved in general after 10 years of **deliberate** practice
- Lengthy training =not enough
- Quantity and quality of commitment +++

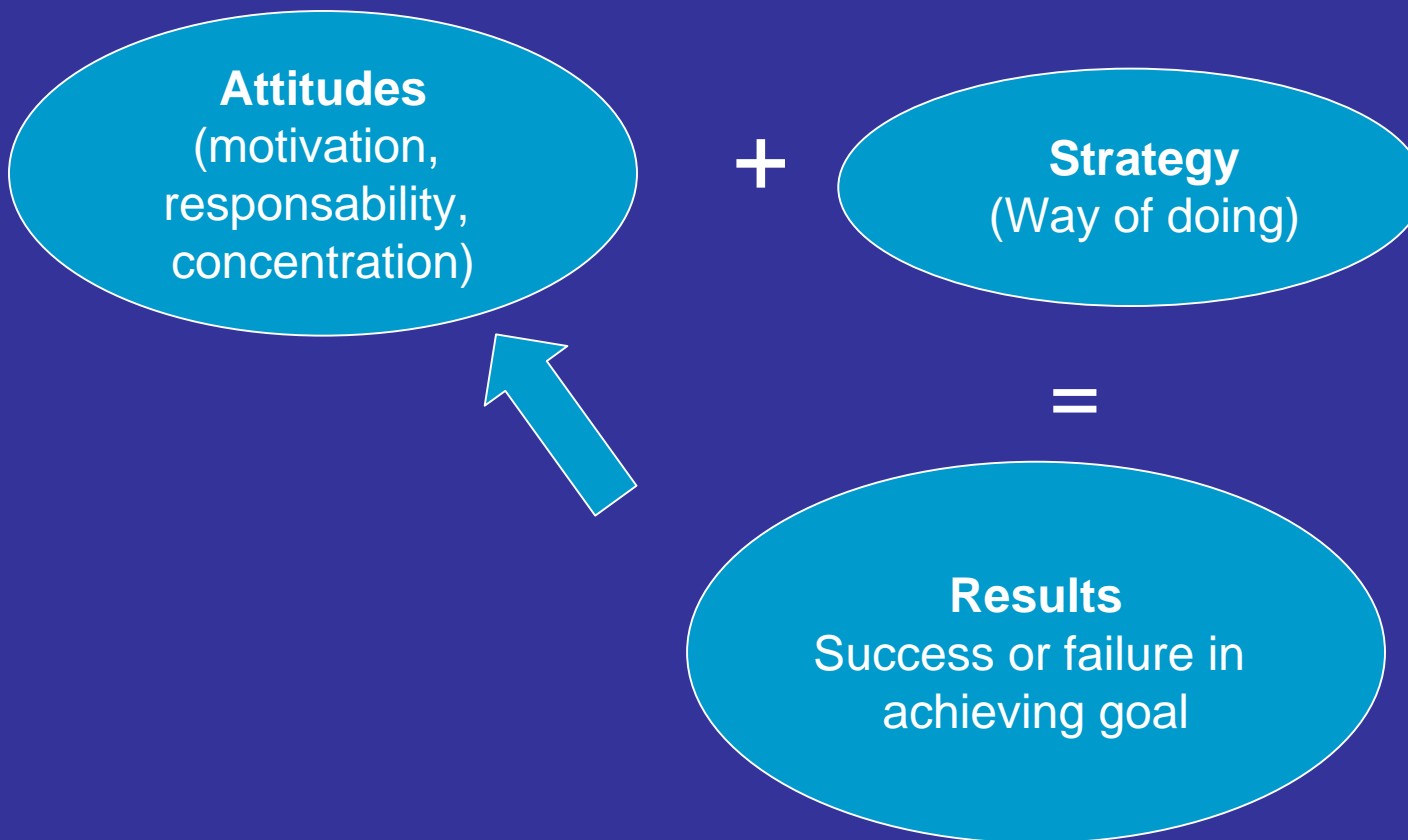


To sum up...

1/ Positive parental behaviour

- Provides unconditionnal love and support (encouragement)
- Provides logistical and financial support
- Holds child accountable for behaviour on court
- Emphasises positive attitude
- Models values (respect, sociability, determination...)
- Emphasises hard work
- Creates a positive achievement environment

2/ Educating parents: informing them that





3/ importance of self-esteem



How to create a good self-esteem ?

- Depends initially on positive (constructive) reactions expressed by those whom child considers important.
- By highlighting child's successes, they confirm child's value.

- 
- Source of self-esteem is extrinsic.
 - Over time, in regularly receiving positive reactions, child interiorises a good self image which is intrinsically fed by her interior monologue.



- If people close to her (him) attach importance to who she (he) is

- If they value her (him)

==> integrate a positive self image, and set herself challenges.

- Self esteem can be constructed at any age...



L'ÉTAT D'ESPRIT ET LES QUALITÉS MENTALES DU CHAMPION

**ESTIME
DE SOI**





Thank you for your attention