

enced this feeling, the child is then encouraged to test their outside experiences to match their skill and experience "Flow" (playing in the zone) outside their home in activities of their own choice. This is where you hear stories from great athletes talking about training and playing as a profound source of joy. Read the stories of Wayne Gretzky and Mia Hamm and you will recognize the benefit of stable and encouraging families.

WHEN GOOD PARENTS GO BAD

Perhaps the most common pathway to destruction of a young player is the assumption that they want the same goals as their parents. Do you remember what the number one motivational factor is for children who play soccer? It is not winning or gaining a scholarship, it is being with their friends and having fun. This fun is often negated or taken away when a parent tries to define their child's motivations. By doing this, they unconsciously usurp control and motivation away from the child. You see this often once the game is over and the parent begins to coach the child in the car on the drive home. "You should have shot lower," explains the father. The child's head lists to the side and their

eyes roll back and they can't wait to get out of the car, "I know Dad." This interchange may seem harmless but think about the child's motivation. If they receive enough adult criticism they will lose control and motivation, and the pathway to quitting is established. This is a prime example of not allowing the child to play in The Zone.

FINDING WAYS TO REACH THE ZONE

Ultimately, it is the child that controls whether or not he/she is in The Zone, but parents and coaches have so many avenues of influence that can contribute to or hinder their reaching this pinnacle on a more regular basis. We should do our best to try and create a complex family to support our children and afford them the opportunities to make decisions that they are in control of and are motivated to do. This is not only beneficial to our children and their well being, but to youth sports in general.

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JETIX KIDS CUP 2004

Team USA / Cal South Bring it home!



The Jetix Kids Cup is an international youth soccer tournament and cultural exchange event for youth soccer players around the world and Cal South was approached by Disney/ ABC to send a talented group of Cal South 11 and 12 year old girls to represent the United States. What a chance of a lifetime!

Needless to say, the Cal South Girls came out on top in the 5 day event featuring 5-v-5 matches in Paris, France. Under the coaching of Michelle Myers, Cal South went undefeated and easily swept the Championship keeping their opponents scoreless.

Congratulations to the Girls Team for doing a sensational job in representing the United States and Cal South!