

CAMPOLINDO

Swimming

2010

Parent Meeting – January 20, 2010

Growing as an individual and as an athlete ... as a Cougar



from youth and innocence



making friends & learning teamwork



developing a sense of focus & purpose



pursuing challenges & taking risks

Go Cougars – Cougar Pride

www.campoaquatics.com

Welcome

Welcome to the 2010 season for Campolindo High School Swimming. We are pleased to have the opportunity to coach another swimming season at Campolindo. We are fortunate to have been at Campo for many years. The continuity of coaching is important to provide stability in many areas, in particular, the team's attitude and expectations.

Our experience at Campolindo has been extremely rewarding and enjoyable beyond measure. We are grateful to the parents, the administration and to the swimmers for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this outstanding school and this special program.

We are truly looking forward to coaching this year's team. This group will be strong for many reasons. We have outstanding young talent and tremendous upper-class leadership. In our program, **leadership is invaluable to the team's success** and to the process of maintaining our **tradition of excellence**. Furthermore, the entire group, from freshmen to senior, is extremely mature. In terms of ability, the men's team is certainly a possible North Coast Championship team and the women's team is going to be one of the best we've had in many years.

While we have had much success on a competitive level over the last ten years, our primary objectives have included much more than achieving competitive goals. Our intention throughout has been to instill values that will have a lasting effect on our athletes long after they leave the program. We believe that our student/athletes have much to learn about themselves and about life through the sport of swimming.

It is our commitment to these values that has set the foundation for our success. And it is our intent to remain steadfast in our commitment to these values. Ultimately, we believe that each of us will, individually and collectively, be better off for being a part of Campolindo Swimming. Cougar Pride lives on.

Our women's team has won five NCS titles in the last nine years. Our men's team has won five consecutive North Coast titles. We have also won the unofficial Combined North Coast Team Title ten of the last eleven years. Beyond all this, we see our greatest achievement to be the growth in character and leadership skills that our athletes take with them from this program. We have been blessed with a talented, dedicated and enthusiastic group of young adults and we look forward to the possibilities in the season to come.

Note to the parents

We greatly appreciate your support throughout the season. The success of this program is a reflection of your continued dedication. We rely on you at meets and with activities. If you have questions on how you may help please contact the team's chairperson (Stacy Ashby).

Your time and energy is greatly appreciated!!!

Sincerely,

Ronnie, Dave & Tony

Coaching Staff:

Ron Heidary

Varsity Co-Head Coach

Twenty-six years of “rec” coaching (ten County Championships). Ron is Co-Head Coach and Founder of Orinda Aquatics. Ron was voted Pacific Swimming age-group Coach of the Year in 1998, NCS Honor Coach in 2005, and California Coaches’ Association High School Swimming Coach of the Year in 2006. Under Ron and Don’s guidance, OA has won Junior National and Far Western Championships and many of his swimmers have ranked among the best in the United States. This will be Ron’s 21st year coaching high school aquatics: 6 years at Pinole Valley coaching varsity swimming and water polo and 15 years at Campolindo coaching swimming. Ron is a 1984 graduate of UC Berkeley with a major in economics.

Dave Schurhoff

Varsity Co-Head Coach

Dave has 19 years of “rec” coaching experience and has been the Head Coach at Moraga Country Club for the past 9 summers. Under Dave, MCC has grown in size and is enjoying strong success. Also, Dave is an assistant with Orinda Aquatics, helping with the Senior Group and with dryland training. This will be Dave’s 13th year as the Campolindo Varsity Swim Coach. Dave has been an integral part of Campolindo’s success. His dedication to the swimmers’ development and to their personal growth has been invaluable to the overall success of Campolindo Swimming. Dave graduated from UC Davis in 1996.

Tony Ravnik

Junior Varsity Head Coach/Varsity Assistant

This will be Tony’s 2nd year as the Junior Varsity coach. Tony grew up in Piedmont and swam for Orinda Country Club for 13 years. Tony was an OMPA Champion and member of several County Championship Relay teams. Tony attended Bishop O’Dowd High School, where he was a Varsity swimmer for four years and NCS Consolation Finalist in the 100 Breaststroke. Tony graduated from UC Davis, with a Bachelor’s Degree in Rhetoric and Communication. Tony has been teaching swimming for nearly 16 years. In 2000, he became the Head Coach for Men’s and Women’s Water Polo at Bishop O’Dowd. In 2001 he also became Head Coach of Men’s and Women’s Swimming. In six seasons, Tony’s teams won 14 League Championships in swimming and water polo. Tony spent 2 seasons as the Head Coach for Meadow Swim and Tennis Club in the OMPA and last summer worked under Matt Ehrenberger at Sleepy Hollow. Tony has also worked the past three years with the Orinda Aquatics Fall Program.

Workout Schedule

The workout schedule should remain as planned. If there are any changes they will be minor and we will let you know as soon as possible.

Varsity Workout

Competition Pool	PM	Mon – Fri	3:00* – 5:15
Competition Pool	AM**	Friday	5:45 – 7:20

* Set the pool up for workout, stretch, in at 3:15.

** Morning workouts begin on Feb. 19

Junior Varsity Workout

Group (s)	AM/PM	Days	Times	Pool
Group A*	PM	Mon – Thurs	3:30 – 5:00	Comp Pool
Group B	PM	Mon – Thurs	5:10 – 6:30	Lap Pool
Both Groups	PM	Friday	3:30-5:00	TBA
Both Groups	AM**	Friday	5:45 – 7:15	Lap Pool

Tony will identify swimmers for each group.

Special Schedule

Holidays	2/12 & 2/15	Mon & Fri (JV & Varsity)	9:00 – 11:00 AM
	2/15 (Mon)	Mon & Fri (JV & Varsity)	9:00 – 11:00 AM
Spring Break	4/5-4/9	Mon - Fri (Varsity)	9:00 – 11:00 AM
	4/5-4/9	Mon - Fri (JV)	9:00 – 11:00 AM

The rewards for those who persevere far exceed the pain that must precede the victory.

Attendance:

The coaches will take attendance. ***Your attendance will affect the meets in which you participate.*** It will also allow the coaches to “accurately” assess the participation and commitment for each swimmer as the season progresses. The simplest way to deal with the attendance issue is to go to all the practices then there will never be a problem. If swimmers do need to miss a workout, please let the coaches know in advance.

2010 Meet Schedule

Day	Date	Team	Place	Time	Comments
Wed	March 10	Dougherty Valley	Home	3:45	--
Friday	March 19	Bye	--	--	--
Wed, Thur, Fri	March 24, 25 or 26	Alhambra	Home	3:45	League
Saturday	March 27	Mission Viejo Invitational	Mission Viejo H.S.	9:00	Varsity Only Four Swimmers/Event
Friday	April 2	Dublin	Home	3:45	League
Thursday	April 15	Acalanes	Away	3:45	League
Friday	April 23	Las Lomas	Away	3:45	League
Saturday	April 24	Palo Alto Invitational	Palo Alto H.S.	9:00	Varsity Only 18 entries per team
Friday	April 30	Miramonte	Away	3:45	League Senior Day
Saturday	May 8	JV Invitational Timed Finals	Miramonte	10:00	JV League Championship
Thursday	May 13	DFAL Varsity Trials	Soda Center	2:15	Varsity League Championship
Saturday	May 15	DFAL Varsity Finals	Soda Center	12:00	Varsity League Championship
Saturday	May 15	DFAL Diving	Soda Center	12:00	League Championship
Thursday	May 20	NCS Diving	TBD	TBA	*must qualify
Friday	May 21	NCS Trials	Concord Community Pool	TBA	*must qualify (max. 4 per event)
Saturday	May 22	NCS Finals	Concord Community Pool	TBA	Top Sixteen

* NCS qualifying times are listed on the following page

2010 North Coast Qualifying Times

Women's		Event	Men's	
Consideration	Automatic		Consideration	Automatic
2:03.99	1:53.48 1:56.06	200 Medley Relay	1:51.09	1:42.46
2:02.79	1:56.05 1:56.31	200 Freestyle	1:50.99 1:53.29	1:45.77 1:46.77
2:18.69 2:20.39	2:09.68 2:17.07	200 I.M.	2:08.69	2:00.71
25.99	24.32 24.67	50 Freestyle	22.89	21.80
255 Pts.	275 Pts.	Diving	240 Pts.	250 Pts.
1:03.69	57.68 58.87	100 Butterfly	57.29	52.57 52.71
57.09	53.45 53:70	100 Freestyle	50.49	48.31 48.52
5:32.09	5:07.87 5:13.00	500 Freestyle	5:08.99	4:48.06 4:51.25
1:51.09	1:42.21 1:43.69	200 Free Relay	1:38.09	1:30.03 1:31.89
1:04.89 1:05.99	59.00 1:00.43	100 Backstroke	59.29	54.65 55.00
1:11.79 1:12.59	1:06.57 1:07.59	100 Breaststroke	1:04.49 1:05.09	1:00.06 1:00.86
4:07.99	3:43.81 3:44.37	400 Free Relay	3:42.99	3:22.48 3:23.42

Note: For comparison purposes, the **top, bold time is the 2010 time**. The bottom, smaller time is last year's time.

Each team may submit four individual entries in each event (one entry per relay event). North Coast entries are submitted by the coaching staff on Sunday, May 10. If more than four swimmers qualify for an event, the coaching staff will make the final decision as to which swimmers will be entered in NCS. Criteria in this decision may include and may not be limited to: entry time, shaven or unshaven entry time, attendance, attitude, and commitment to the team.

The top 40 times submitted will qualify to swim in the meet. The list of NCS qualifying swimmers will be posted on the NCS website (www.cifnics.org) in the afternoon of Monday, May 17.

Swim Meet Information

Teachers will be notified if swimmers are to be excused from class. ***However, it is the swimmers' responsibility to make up any tests or missed assignments. All student athletes are expected to communicate with their teachers if and when they are to miss class.*** The coaches will make all meet entries.

If you are unable to attend a meet, please let the coaches know at least one day prior in writing.

Away Meet Time Table

2:10 PM* Varsity and JV team excused

2:20 PM Meet at Bus

3:45 PM Meet begins±

7:00 PM Approximate return to school

* If meet requires longer travel, swimmers may be excused earlier.

ALL swimmers are to remain at the pool until the conclusion of the meet.

Acalanes district regulations require all team members to ride the bus to and from the meet. However, a swimmer may ride home with his or her parents. Students are NOT allowed to drive to any meet if there is a team bus.

Order of Events

200 Medley Relay

200 Free

200 IM/100 IM JV

50 Free

Diving (10 minute break)

100 Fly/50 Fly JV

100 Free

500 Free

200 Free Relay

100 Backstroke

100 Breaststroke

400 Freestyle Relay

*There will be at least four heats for each event in the following order:
JV Girls, JV Boys, Varsity Girls, Varsity Boys.*

Entries may be limited to 3 or 4 swimmers per team per event.

*Each swimmer may swim up to 4 events but not more than
2 individual events.*

Specific Rules for High School Swimming:

Jewelry: Please be aware of the jewelry rule. A swimmer is not allowed to compete while wearing any jewelry (ear rings, necklaces, bracelets of any kind, etc.).

Breaststroke Pulldown: A downward butterfly kick is permitted after the pull and prior to the kick on the pull down.

Backstroke Turn: The turn can be non-continuous. Swimmers can glide and kick in to the turn.

School & Team Logistics

Athletic Clearance

Before you can begin working out, you must get clearance from the school's athletic director, Mr. Wilson. Get your **Athletic Clearance Sticker** as soon as possible.

Academic Eligibility

You must maintain a GPA of 2.0 or better. This has not been a problem with the prior teams however, if you think you may have a problem with grades please talk to the coach or your counselor. Some students have appealed a low GPA, but you must have a valid reason. You are allowed one appeal in your high school career.

Rules and Regulations for Athletes Form

Athletes must read and sign this form and be willing to comply with every rule and regulation.

General Information

Promptness

It is your responsibility to **be on time** for all team activities. As a team, we will do things together and that includes being prompt for practices, meet warm-ups, team meetings and social activities.

Objectives

The team will have many objectives. Winning as a team is certainly enjoyable but ultimately it is out of our control. The only thing we can do is **work hard and be as prepared as possible**. Our primary goals will be the following:

- ☞ to swim well and achieve our individual and team goals
- ☞ to grow personally from the experience of being on this swim team
- ☞ to have fun and enjoy the season

*To accomplish the above with any significance you will need **full participation**. Regarding the issue of **having fun, fun** on this team has been realized more through **team success** than from individual accolades. This is not possible to achieve without a commitment to **the team**.*

Training Philosophy

We have had success emphasizing strokework in conjunction with training. In terms of your training, we will work hard and focus on strokework. This should help all the swimmers.

Examples:

- **Backstroke Stroke Balance – how to fix the problem**
- **Underwater technique and speed – all that is involved**

Practice Quality

You should perceive practices as **opportunities** to improve. Every day is a chance to become a better swimmer. Every workout missed is a lost opportunity.

It will be your responsibility to let a coach know in advance if you miss practice.

Priorities:

As a student/athlete, we know you will have a demanding schedule. Although it may be difficult, it is certainly possible to do the things that you want do and to do them well. You will need to be disciplined and keep your priorities in order. They should be as follows:

☞ **Swimming:** You have one opportunity to be a high school athlete. We want you to value it and get the most out of it. Regardless of your ability, **make the commitment and make the sacrifices** to reach your goals. High school athletics can provide many of the fondest memories of your life and, often, some friendships that will last a lifetime.

Why is swimming the MOST important? It encompasses ...

- **Discipline** - *the discipline and work ethic from swimming is invaluable for personal growth.*
- **Structure** – *less free time and more structure is good. Too much free time for teens is not good.*
- **Priorities** – *adhering to the workout schedule **forces** kids to prioritize their activities.*
- **Sacrifices** – *kids need to learn (be encouraged) to make sacrifices, especially social sacrifices. Often, the choice can be workout or socializing. Workout is better.*
- **Health** – *hard training is physically beneficial.*
- **Family** – *often, a sport such as swimming may be the (only) vehicle that allows parents to participate in their kids' lives and communicate (not coach), interact with, and support them.*
- **Academics** – *time management must be employed, and more often than not, grades are better during the athletic season because a demanding schedule often forces better time management and consequently better study habits.*

☞ **Sleep:** This is the foundation for your health, academic and athletic success, and emotional well-being. It needs to be a priority. Parents need to be aware of your kids' sleep patterns. Teenagers often think of themselves as indestructible.

☞ **Academics:** This is obviously extremely important, and it is the athletes' responsibility. We would want the kids to do the best they can with their ability, but always keep it in perspective. Your academic success will not guarantee employment or financial success, nor will it guarantee you happiness. **(Generally, kids are very good about being responsible for doing what they need to do academically).**

☞ **Family:** We would hope that the kids have some appreciation for their parents and the opportunities provided for them. At the least, there should be respect shown to the parents with regard to general interaction, house rules, chores, etc. Also, our swimmers who have younger siblings should be respectful and be supportive of their activities as well. We know that younger brothers and sisters are often “dragged” to swim meets and we would hope and expect that our high school athletes support and, when possible, attend their siblings' activities.

☞ **Social Activities:** They are important for balance in your life but don't let them be a priority. We believe that social activities, to a large degree, are included with school situations and definitely within the swim program. We don't think that extra-curricular social activities are critically important. The important thing is how much one values “social activities” in the context of what is important in their lives.

Drug Policy (Coaches’):

The opportunities in all areas of life are so extraordinary. Stories of overcoming incredible odds, achieving greatness or merely reaching a desired goal are all around us. We can never reach our human potential unless we remain disciplined, committed and maintain a sound mind and body.

Is our position simply that if you do drugs you’re off the team? Possibly. But it’s more than that. If you are doing this, you have a problem larger than your eligibility on this team.

Campolindo H.S. Policy:

Campolindo’s School Policy will be consistent with the Acalanes District Rules and Regulations and will be supported by the coaching staff.

Letter from Peter Varellas

Ronnie

Expectations are a big deal on a team. The expectation to succeed; the expectations to improve; the expectation to learn, grow and have fun; and the expectation to form friendships. Each individual surely has their own expectations for what they want to get out of their experience with a team. The fallacy, however, is that expectations are static. Many do not see that the norms, ambiance, and general sentiment of a team are constantly being reformed and re-evaluated. Some call it a tradition, but “tradition” carries with it the illusion of permanence. In my opinion, it is the function of the coach to monitor and influence the general atmosphere of the team. In many cases, as you know, the coach(es) will extend a great deal of this responsibility to some of the athletes themselves in the form of captains, leaders, or upperclassmen. Orinda Aquatics is no exception.

When I joined the team as a sophomore, the leaders of the team were immediately apparent. They set the “tone” and expectations for the team. I was fortunate enough to have a high quality group of leaders that, in addition to the coaching staff, taught me not just how to swim fast, but how to be a good person, and in turn how to be an effective leader as I became an upperclassman. I found that swimmers spend so much time together in the pool that it was quite natural to also spend a great deal of time together away from practice. Many of my friends were in fact swimmers. For me, high school social situations never included alcohol. Not only did I not drink, but alcohol was not even present when my friends and I would hang out. The question is, why?

Why, indeed? Is it just coincidence that I never had the desire to drink and that my teammates felt the same way? I doubt it. I feel that my own actions were strongly influenced by that same group of leaders I spoke of earlier. Whether you realize it or not, there is a definite attitude toward alcohol on any sports team. A personal choice is no longer merely personal when it affects the atmosphere of the team. “Peer pressure” may seem old and outdated but trust me, it is still at large. The actions of friends, teammates, and leaders, serve to create the expectations of what a social situation entails. In a team environment, a norm is developed that can often be directly attributed to the actions of its oldest members. A team is supposed to be composed of individuals who are brought together by certain commonalities. Don’t make one of the be alcohol.

Moral: You are constantly reshaping the expectations and general atmosphere of the team. Be sure that you understand how your actions relate to others.

A final note: Listen to your parents and coaches. These are the people who not only care about you most, but also have the knowledge of experience. These two forces combine to create your greatest assets as young people. The most important choices I have made in my life have been based largely on the advice of my parents and coaches.

Peter

December 6, 2005

General Information

Team Overview

- For decades, Campolindo has been a very competitive program.
- We have an outstanding tradition of quality swimmers and character athletes.
- We have, and will continue to have, the highest expectations for this program.

Swimmer Expectations (from the coaches)

- **Maturity**
 - (including personality, attitude and language) Be mature in all dealings with coaches, parents and teammates.
- **Responsibility**
 - Adhere to all expectations. Take responsibility for everything.
- **Integrity**
 - Be honest with yourself, with the coaches, and with your parents. Teenagers often justify subtle deception but we would rather have them be honest and accountable.
- **Team Priority**
 - Understand and accept positively that the team, in most situations, comes first.
- **Leadership** (for upperclassmen) – **maybe the most important to the team**
 - Be a role model. Impact the younger swimmers in a positive way. It is more than an expectation. It is a **duty and responsibility**.
- **Excellence as a student/athlete**
 - Try to live up to what would be the highest standards of an outstanding student/athlete.
 - Swimmers are accountable to maintain their studies and grades. Laziness and poor time management are not reasons to miss workout in order to finish homework or study for a test.
 - Swimmers need to understand their priorities and make appropriate choices.
 - Swimmers need to be willing to make sacrifices. **A teenager cannot be a successful student/athlete if they do not.**

A true student/athlete is NOT a great student and a part-time athlete or an outstanding athlete and an apathetic student.

Team Expectations

- **Standard of Excellence**
 - Strive for excellence in every area
 - Attitude, Decorum, Enthusiasm
- **Competing**
 - Train hard
 - Prepare well
 - Compete intensely – good relay swim LB / bad relay swims Sr b
 - **Example of expectations - *Your Relay Swim Was Not Good***
- **Tradition**
 - Understand the history of excellence in competition and leadership
 - Accept the responsibility to maintain it for future generations
 - **To a certain degree, you are a product of the past and the link to the future**

The Coaches' Vision & Expectations

- How high of a vision should we have ... excellence, perfection?
 - What should we not just ask for but demand?
 - Should there be consequences?
 - Should they be enforced?
 - Will the kids accept them?
 - Will the parents support them?

It would be easiest to have a vision of mediocrity, of acceptance, of tolerance:

- We are ok to be a little above average.
- We should have integrity sometimes ... when it works for us.
- We should work hard when we feel like it.
- We should be supportive of our teammates only if they support us.
- Excellence is unrealistic, so don't demand it. It is not fair.
- Character is a fantasy. We should relax and have fun.

My personal experience with graduating seniors from Rec swimming vs national-level, year-round, swimmers

College Admission Letter (by a recent graduate)

Of all the things I have been through, none have been as important or as life-changing as my overall experience through swimming.

I am not a super-star, nor have I made it to Nationals, the Olympics, or other Big meets—instead, **my experiences took place within.**

It soon became apparent that I was not destined to be in the elite class of swimmers. For some time, I became frustrated. But slowly I came to understand that although I was not gaining the national status that had been my original goal, **I had gained something far more valuable—the opportunity to strengthen and build my own character.** My team placed a great emphasis on the theme of “Character First.” The ability to put the team first and to lead by example, and a willingness to sacrifice short-term values for the sake of long-term success were highly valued. We were given articles to read about people who overcame adversity. Practices were opportunities to encourage teammates through hard sets and set examples for younger swimmers. Even covering the pool bred responsibility.

As we have been told countless times, when we look back on our life twenty years from now, we won’t remember our grades, or our fastest times, or how many AP classes we took. We will remember our relationships with friends and family, and what kind of person we were. It does not matter whether we were the “perfect” kid or the kid who made all the mistakes. It matters that we established good relationships with the people we cared about, and it matters that we did our personal best in every activity, whether it be school, sports, clubs, etc. that was important to us, and accepted that that was enough and all that we should ask of ourselves. **Character traits such as love, integrity, perseverance, respect for others and oneself, and a desire to enjoy life are key.** These are the things that are important.

I have taken this message to heart. I’ve **been shown how to see this Big Picture, and that character really should come first.** With character comes success and the **self-satisfaction** that comes when you know you are the person you want to be. That self-satisfaction, to me, means much more than swimming the fastest, being the smartest, making the most money, etc. It is what brings the happiness that makes it possible to get the most out of life. It has taken me a long time to come to this realization, but as Ursula Le Guin said, “It is the journey that matters, in the end.” This journey has been the most important one I have made in my life thus far. I hope that someday somebody will look to me for the same things I was fortunate enough to gain on my team. I would like to give at least one person this same experience, and I believe that during my years at the University of California, I will have ample opportunities to do so.

The Need for Guidance

“If I had influence with the angels who are supposed to preside over the births of all children, I should ask that their gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout their life.” Rachel Carson
(and I would add “innocence”)

Personal Growth

Letter to graduating senior:

Swimming fast is very important to me. But I always keep it in perspective. **Personal growth and development are so much more important.** Swimming fast is great for now but **making yourself a better person** will last you a lifetime. Although you didn’t swim as fast as we wanted, and I apologize for that, I feel you have grown in other, important areas. And it is for those reasons that I am very proud of you.

In a world when everyone wants to look good, be popular or fit in, we **need to just be sincere, care about people and try to make a difference.** Whether its jealous school friends or issues with your parents, the answer is always love and forgiveness.

Parents

"To be a visionary parent, we need to keep working on ourselves, becoming forever new and improved." Mark Victor Hansen

“Leave a legacy. How will your children remember you? As one who sought all that life had to offer, using your gifts and talents to their fullest extent, leading the family with a zest for life, or someone settled for the average when you could have been so much more? Our children need to see that we dream and that we search for something better. They in turn will do the same!” Chris Widener

Excerpts from article: A Teacher’s Guide to Generation X Parents, written by a Generation X parent.

- If you want to know what's unhealed from your own childhood, have children. Key to decoding our parental behavior is understanding that we are, albeit often unconsciously, doing for our children what no one did for us.
- Generation X is looking to teachers and schools to heal childhood wounds,"
- We may look and act like adults, but there is a part of us that still feels like a neglected kid inside.

The Importance of Appreciation

"[Some people] have a wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, **freshly and naively**, the basic goods of life, with **awe, pleasure, wonder**, and even ecstasy." A.H. Maslow

Appreciate what?

- *Loving parents*
- *A comfortable standard of living*
- *Virtually unlimited education opportunities*
- *Health – the physical ability to be an athlete*

The Value of Hard Work

For anything worth having one must pay the price; and **the price is always work, patience, love, self-sacrifice**--no paper currency, no promises to pay, but the gold of real service. John Burroughs

"The true road to personal improvement is not miraculous; **it is slow and calls for a great deal of perseverance**, but it is indeed possible to progress along this road, and your effort will be amply repaid." David Fischman

"When schemes are laid in advance, it is surprising how often the circumstances will fit in with them." Sir William Osler

Dealing with Adversity

"I would never have amounted to anything were it not for adversity. I was forced to come up the hard way." J.C. Penny

"Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which, in prosperous circumstances, would have lain dormant." Horace

For Everyone: Character First & Doing the Right Thing

Why the development of character is important NOW...

"Some day, in years to come, you will be wrestling with great temptation, or dealing with intense tribulation. But the real struggle is here and now, in these quiet weeks. Now it is being decided whether, in the day of your supreme temptation, you shall fail or gloriously conquer. Character cannot be made except by a steady, long continued process." Phillips Brooks

"Happiness is the reward we get for living to the highest right we know." Richard Bach

"There has never been, and cannot be, a good life, without self-control." Leo Tolstoy

"What it lies in our power to do, it lies in our power not to do." Aristotle

"Adulthood is defined by **the willingness to accept full responsibility** for where you are at in life; no longer blaming others or circumstances." Joe Westbrook

- *In your opinion, what has been my biggest obstacle? Your biggest obstacle has been your inability, in recent years, to be responsible in your life in the areas of swimming, academics and social. You have tremendous potential but you have not been committed to do the things you should be doing to allow yourself to be the best student/athlete you can be.*

Recent article regarding students' character:

"Local schools strive to build character in students with programs promoting ethical behavior."

Personal letter to graduating senior:

... the longer I do this, I know more and more that the only true value and joy for me is to work with young men and women who not only strive to be outstanding student / athletes, but who are also willing to live by the highest standards of morality and character. You have always been a person who has an innate sense of doing what is right – in every circumstance, regardless of difficulty or adversity. What makes you even more special is your humility - that you don't see yourself as special.

Working Toward Excellence

*In this program things may be very good, but nothing is ever good enough.
There is no room for arrogance or complacency.*

“If you are good, **be better.**” Anonymous

“Whatever you are, **be a good one.**” Abraham Lincoln

“**Do or do not.** There is no try”, Yoda from The Empire Strikes Back

“The highest reward for a person’s toil is not what they get for it, but **what they become by it.**” J. Ruskin

The Value of Leadership and Influence

“The first great gift we can bestow on others is a good example.” Thomas Morell

“... there are a group of athletes here that have the moral authority to establish and determine the behavior of the people that come into the program.” reference to the New England Patriots continued level of excellence

“There is a transcendent power in example. We reform others unconsciously when we walk uprightly.” Anne Sophie Swetchine

"You become that to which you are most exposed." Denis Waitley

Life is partly what we make it, and partly what it is made by the friends we choose.

--Tennessee Williams

Teammates

from a letter from a parent regarding the swimmers on this team ...

“They have always had a love for swimming and have improved under your guidance, but this program is something much more than that. The peers and upperclassmen on this team have ...

- Demonstrated healthy and positive **leadership**
- Been a nurturing **influence**
- Conducted themselves with **integrity**
- And have lived with **character**

... And ultimately, have had a profound influence on my child.”

Our Position on Unhealthy Social Choices

“Only one thing has to change for us to know happiness in our lives: where we focus our attention.” Greg Anderson

Our thoughts and concerns are:

- Poor social choices seem to be accepted more and more as normal, acceptable behavior.
- The kids of this generation seem to be overwhelmed by the media and internet with examples of poor social behavior.
- This prevalence and influence seem to give kids a **justifiable reason** for not making the right choices.
- If kids can maintain the self-discipline to make good choices in these difficult teen years, it will certainly strengthen their character and ability to make similar good choices in their lives as an adult.
- We as coaches can accept bad things happening as a part of growing up and learning life’s lessons, but we will not acquiesce to a decline in morality and character.

The Influence of the Media

“... drinking and smoking and sex are nothing new to teenagers, as I said before, these shows just tell **the truth of how most teenage guys’ and girls’ lives are today.**”

“Critics who are saying it's going to be too "sexy" for teens need to take a look at the teens in our world today. Sex and alcohol are definitely not new for them and **I'm sure they're mature enough to handle it.** The age for sex and alcohol to start is getting younger and younger now... so I wouldn't be surprised if 12 year-old girls watch this show.”

Quotes from the show, “The Simpsons”:

“Son, when you participate in sporting events, it's not whether you win or lose... it's how drunk you get.” Homer Simpson

“Kids, you tried your best and you failed miserably. The lesson is, never try.” Homer Simpson

From an SF Chronicle article by Joan Ryan, 2005

*“Today’s teens have the best of everything and, in some ways, the worst of everything. They have amazing access to knowledge. They have conveniences we never dreamed of. But they have also been cheated of large chunks of childhood, **pulled by movies and television, music and marketing, into an adult** world for which their brains are not developmentally ready. They are faced with decisions about sex and alcohol and drugs at ages when we were just beyond pushing around baby-doll strollers and Tonka trucks.”*

Money/Finance

Current economic conditions make this an ideal environment for parents and educators to instill in our kids the value of frugality and to help de-emphasize the need for material items just to fit in or to achieve some form of happiness.

“Too many people spend money they haven't earned to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like.” Will Rogers

“I have learned to seek my happiness by limiting my desires, rather than in attempting to satisfy them.” John Stuart Mill

“Perhaps now is an opportunity to reassess what really matters.” from article

Why Do You Shop? From “The Guide to Enlightenment Through Shopping” by Eve Eliot

Eve Eliot suggests ways to make your shopping a path to personal growth. A first step is to assess why you may shop for the wrong reasons. Here are some possibilities.

- Shop to fit in
- Shop as a way to feel in control because every shopping decision is yours
- Shop as a way to deny anger, grief, fear, guilt, shame or any other unwanted emotions
- Shop as a way to provide stimulation when bored
- Shop to have something to obsess about so you can avoid something else
- Shop as a form of self-nurturing
- **Shop to "transform" your life with the perfect shoes, clothes, etc.**
- Shop to spend money in order to feel powerful
- **Shop to bolster the belief that beauty and perfection are, finally, attainable**
- Shop to escape

This teen is done with Facebook

BAY AREA NEWS GROUP, 11/04/2009

I'M DONE with Facebook.

After five months, a hundred status updates and just as **many wasted hours**, I pulled the plug on my Facebook account. I started using Facebook in the middle of my freshman year, about a year later than most of my peers who were actively posting updates by eighth grade. It didn't take long for me to get **addicted**. Within a week, I was hooked.

During the summer, I checked Facebook multiple times each day, updating my status every few hours, chatting with my friends and occasionally playing games — like the ridiculously popular Farmville, in which you care for your own virtual crops and livestock. I spent **an hour or two every day attached to my computer**.

Wasting time

Then in mid-September, I finally started to think about my Facebook habit. It certainly wasn't more excessive than many people I know, who log on as soon as they drop their backpacks after school and **log off at 2 a.m.** when they finally crawl into bed. But it was too excessive for me.

A few months earlier, my family and I had stopped watching TV. We were tired of the constant, **brainwashing messages from the media**, so we "unplugged" and never looked back. Now that I am not glued to the television, I wonder how I managed to watch even an hour of TV each day. I am so busy that I can't imagine fitting that meaningless hour into my day.

I began to feel the same way about Facebook. **My time was too valuable to be wasted. Although I think Facebook can be beneficial, I was abusing it. All the time Facebook should take out of a day is a few minutes, not a few hours.** That precious time should not be thrown away by talking to someone online you see every day such as your best friend or mom. Yet I continued to do just that, never thinking about what I was doing.

Then one day, suddenly I was sick of Facebook. I was tired of feeling obligated to update my status a few times per day, even though I knew no one would care that I just finished reading "Little Women" and never wanted to study for another math test again. I did not want to be addicted to Farmville or chat with my sister who was sitting five feet away from me.

Deciding to quit.

So I decided to quit. I deleted my account, and although I suffered withdrawal for a few days, I was never sorry I unplugged. Unfortunately, too many **people are too far in to ever get out**. Whether their weakness is for television, texting or the Internet, **most teens are addicted to technology**. This unhealthy habit consumes them. They waste countless hours in front of a screen when they could be doing much more practical, even meaningful, things.

Without Facebook, more balance has been restored to my life. **I finally finish my homework on time, which allows me to go to bed at 10:30 p.m.** I talk to my friends and family when I need something, and I don't use chat-speak. I no longer waste hours of my life in front of a screen, but do something worthwhile, like reading a book or riding my bike. If the world would sign off their Facebook accounts, close their computers and turn away from their screens, what would happen? Maybe without Facebook our lives would be better. Mine is. Now if I could only get rid of YouTube ...

The Life in Perspective board is made up of teens who write feature stories and columns for TimeOut. Kristen McDeavitt is a sophomore at Foothill High School in Pleasanton. Reach her at lip@bayareanewsgroup.com.

Participation in Activities Offer Benefits

- High school athletes have higher **grades and lower dropout rates** and attend college more often than non-athletes. *Women's Sports Foundation Survey*
- Students who participate in activities average **3.32 GPA** while non-participants average 2.48. Further, participants miss an average of 4.9 days of school (including .7 for activities), while non-participants miss 10.8 days per year. -*North Dakota High School Activities Association*
- Grade-point averages of athletes improve the grade-point average of the general student population in every school in every category (in-season, out-of-season, minority).-South Bend, IN Community Schools
- **"High-activity" students** (those involved in four or more activities) average **3.05 GPA**, while **"low-activity" students** averaged **2.54 GPA**.-*Indiana University study*
- Athletes averaged 86 percent compared to 79 percent for the general population (based on 4.0 GPA as 100 percent). Athletes averaged four absences versus seven for the general population. Eleven percent of the athletes had discipline referrals, compared to 25 percent of the general population. No athletes dropped out of school, while 3.7 percent of the general population dropped out.-Randolph County (N.C.) Schools
- University of Chicago research suggests: A) By a two-to-one margin for males and a three-to-one margin for females, student-athletes do better in school, do not dropout and have a better chance to get through college. B) Student-athletes take average and above average courses. C) Student-athletes' parents are more involved with their educational process. D) **Student-athletes tend to focus more on long-term life accomplishments than short-term goals.** E) **Student-athletes are more self-assured.** F) Ninety-two percent of participants do not use drugs. G) Ninety-five percent of school principals believe activities programs contribute to the development of "school spirit" among the student body. -Indiana University study
- Extracurricular participation is a school's best predictor of an adult's success.-"Fulfilling lives-Paths to Maturity and Success" by Douglas H. Health, based on a 40-year survey

The Praise Craze

Children are getting too much flattery and not enough moral instruction. By [DANA MACK](#)

Even at age 12, Chris is a skilled basketball player. He scores at will for his recreational league team -- but he doesn't get many assists, because he's a ball hog. His teammates sulk during games, waiting for passes that never come. Parents watching from courtside aren't too pleased, either, except for Chris's stepfather, Mike, whose pleasure in the boy's performance is undimmed even when a parent complains to him about Chris's selfishness. Mike later confides to the father of another player that he's not going to talk to Chris about trying to be a more generous player. His stepson has a learning disability, Mike says, "and this is the only place where he can shine."

Mike didn't know it, but he was providing grist for his interlocutor's next book. Richard Weissbourd, a psychologist at Harvard's School of Education and the Kennedy School of Government, recounts the anecdote about Chris's over solicitous stepfather in "**The Parents We Mean to Be.**" It is just one of many illustrative stories that Mr. Weissbourd has gathered over the past two decades. He and his assistants -- including two high-school students, who presumably had good rapport with other teenagers -- surveyed three Boston-area high schools, conducted focus groups, made "informal observations" of families in cities across the country, and interviewed sports coaches, teachers and mental-health professionals.

What did Mr. Weissbourd's research tell him? That nowadays "well-intentioned adults undermine children's moral and emotional development." **Parents have abandoned the "moral task" of rearing children, he says, and are more concerned about fostering their happiness than their goodness. Therapeutic interaction takes precedence over moral instruction; intimacy is maintained at the cost of authority.**

"Blaming peers and popular culture lets adults off the hook," Mr. Weissbourd writes. "**The parent-child relationship is at the center of the development of all the most important moral qualities, including honesty, kindness, loyalty, generosity, a commitment to justice, the capacity to think through moral dilemmas, and the ability to sacrifice for important principles.**"

Among the trends that Mr. Weissbourd finds particularly harmful is the fixation of parents on building "self-esteem" (the "praise craze," as he calls it). A psychologist he talks to tells him that by age 12 some children have been so over praised that they regard compliments as implicit criticism: Empty flattery must be compensating for their lack of talent or be meeting a need for extra encouragement. Other children become "praise sponges," Mr. Weissbourd says. In either case, he wonders, what's so great about self-esteem? "Though some violent children have high self-esteem, the self that is being esteemed is immature, incapable of empathy." Children's moral development is decided by many factors, including not only media and peer influences but their genetic endowment, birth order, gender, and how these different factors interact. [Read an excerpt of "The Parents We Mean To Be".](#) **Mr. Weissbourd is also dismayed by many parents who put subtle but unrelenting pressure on their children for academic and extracurricular achievement. He talks to a 16-year-old who says that his parents make an elaborate display of saying that his getting into a "high-status school" is not important to them, that they just want him to learn and be happy. "But then they pay for SAT prep courses and expensive college counselors," the boy says. "There's already huge pressure on me to achieve."** Parental hypocrisy and insincerity do not constitute moral guidance.

Mr. Weissbourd rightly identifies the praise craze and the achievement obsession as a reflection of parental status anxiety. **It seems that the more successful parents are, the more likely they are to worry about their children's possible failure to live up to that success.** One of the author's most arresting contentions is

that the children of immigrants "fare better than their American-born counterparts" in almost every measure of mental and moral health. American-born parents would have a lot to learn from immigrants, Mr. Weissbourd insists. They are comfortable with imposing authority and discipline, and they are optimistic about their children's future.

As a psychologist, Mr. Weissbourd is at his best when he analyzes the all too familiar phenomenon of the overzealous sports parent. In a high-school cafeteria, the author sat in on a meeting between about 30 parents and a sports consultant, who was warning them about becoming over involved. A parent raised his hand and made a confession: "I remember my son's last day playing youth soccer. The game was over, and I remember standing out on the field and thinking to myself: 'What am I going to do with my life?' " The first step toward moral education for kids, Mr. Weissbourd says, is for parents to separate their own needs from their children's and to start regarding parenthood as an opportunity for their own moral growth.

Good advice. But parental self-awareness is hardly more than a baby step on the path toward producing tomorrows productive and caring adults. Mr. Weissbourd identifies some of the more daunting barriers to healthy enculturation -- among them the breakdown of the two-parent family and the decay of standards for public and private behavior -- but he never really gets beyond superficial solutions to these vexing social problems. Urging pediatricians to encourage fathers to attend their children's check-ups, or suggesting that ministers "ask noncustodial fathers how many times they have seen their child in the last month," is unlikely to convert legions of estranged fathers into engaged parents.

Mr. Weissbourd also tends to gloss over the institutional failures that have driven many parents to passionate advocacy for their children: the failure of public schools, for example, to uphold high academic and behavioral standards. The influence of the media and celebrity culture on children's mores and material expectations is also far more profound than Mr. Weissbourd would admit. And just who is ultimately responsible for the excesses of the self-esteem craze -- parents or the psychologists and educators whose books parents read for advice?

One effect of parents' over-involvement in their children's lives has been the demise of those arenas of childhood that were once inviolably the province of children themselves: unsupervised play, neighborhood baseball games and other settings where children first exercised their moral imaginations and were forced to cope independently with their own shortcomings. Parents who lament this turn of events may welcome Lenore Skenazy's "**Free-Range Kids**," which, like Mr. Weissbourd's book, argues that adults should not always try to protect children from failure.

Ms. Skenazy, a humor columnist, believes we should give "our children the freedom we had without going nuts with worry." She lampoons safety-obsessed parents who see a threat-filled world, from metal baseball bats and raw cookie dough to Halloween-candy poisoners and kidnapers. She advises turning off the news, avoiding experts and boycotting baby knee pads "and the rest of the kiddie safety-industrial complex."

Ms. Skenazy gained a certain national notoriety after she wrote a column about allowing her 9-year-old son to ride the New York City subways by himself. Even parents fed up with our child-coddling culture might blanch at the thought of turning a third-grader loose on public transportation. But Ms. Skenazy will find plenty of supporters for her contention that, in a world where the rights of chickens to roam freely are championed, it's time to liberate the kids.

Ms. Mack is the author of "The Assault on Parenthood" (Encounter).
Printed in The Wall Street Journal, page W12

Competency, not self-esteem, happiness, should be goal of education

By Tom Purcell, [Posted: 01/06/2009](#)

My second-grade teacher would be at once shocked and proud. Maybe I better explain.

According to Britain's Daily Mail, yet another trend is under way in which we're turning our kids into a bunch of softies. Many schools within the UK have barred teachers from marking student papers in red. This trend has also been documented in Australia and the United States.

As it goes, correcting pupils with red ink is considered too confrontational and unpleasant for the children. Many teachers prefer to grade in more soothing colors, such as green, blue, pink and yellow. Red ink surely wasn't banned at St. Germaine Catholic School in the 1960s and '70s.

That school was all business, and the wonderful sisters who taught there were too busy ramming knowledge and values into us to worry about our sensitive little egos. It is true that the sisters were more favorable toward the better students. Who could blame them. We had 40 kids or more packed into each class. The sisters, many of whom entered the convent during the Depression years and were getting on in years by the 1970s, were exhausted. They had little patience with underachieving runts such as me.

Whereas the better students, usually girls, were always attentive and eager, I was always off daydreaming in another world. I couldn't wait until recess. I couldn't wait until we played keep-away, as I was good at that. I returned to class sweaty and rumped and resumed daydreaming through the rest of the afternoon.

I was a continual disappointment to my second-grade teacher (we called her Sister Mary Brass Knuckles) and, boy, did she let me have it. When she called me out of my daydreaming world to approach the chalkboard and complete an equation, I was lost in left field without a glove. Sister never let me off easy. She never let anybody off easy, because she saw it as her duty to ram math, science and grammar into our noggins.

She didn't worry about our self-esteem or how good we felt. She knew the only way to attain self-esteem — the only way to function as an adult — was to be accurate and correct. She marked up my English compositions as though she were getting paid to use red ink. Nobody knew it then, but she was way ahead of her time.

A recent study by the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution found that **"a nation's level of student 'happiness' and 'confidence' is negatively correlated to student achievement when compared to other nations."**

The study concluded the following: "That America's infatuation with the 'happiness factor' in education may be misplaced, and could, in fact, be hurting, not helping, American students when it comes to maintaining an international competitive edge." In other words, America has some of the most smug and self-assured — and least accomplished — students on the face of the Earth.

Since they were babies, caring adults and educators assured them they are intelligent, attractive and wonderful — even though nobody asked them to break a sweat earning their wonderfulness.

So it turns out the proponents of the anti-red-ink movement have it wrong. The good sisters at St. Germaine had it right. All those red marks on my second-grade composition papers were unpleasant at the time, but they did me good in the long run. Sister would be at once shocked and proud to learn that this daydreaming pupil eventually woke up and went on to write a nationally syndicated newspaper column.

WSJ Article: Myth of the Overscheduled Child, FYI

By LAURA VANDERKAM, WSJ

No one would accuse Erika DeBenedictis of having a light schedule. Ms. DeBenedictis, 17, recently finished her junior year at the Albuquerque Academy in New Mexico, where she took A.P. Physics, A.P. Chemistry and a multivariable calculus class simultaneously. When she wasn't doing homework, she worked on computer-programming projects for science fairs, entering several over the course of the year.

She practiced the piano for 30 minutes most days and got up early to sing in a choir, too. In other words, she could be the poster girl for the "overscheduled child" phenomenon that parents and educators like to work themselves into a stew about every time the calendar flips to September. Kids feel so much pressure to build a college-worthy résumé, the story goes, that they're sleep-deprived and anxious-or as psychiatrist Gail Saltz put it at a lunch I attended recently: "You might have a child who really wants to learn Mandarin . . . but if they are pushed too hard, you will likely wind up with a child who speaks perfect Chinese . . . on Xanax!"

So is Ms. DeBenedictis facing a nervous breakdown as she enters her senior year? Hardly. "I'm very happy when I'm busy," she tells me. It's when she doesn't have enough to do that she starts "moping around." She's onto something worth pondering in this back-to-school season. **Studies find that for all the angst about overscheduling, most kids spend surprisingly little time on homework and organized activities.** Only a few young people do as much with their time as Ms. DeBenedictis and, **in general, the evidence for these high-achievers is positive.** Indeed, **we'd be better off if we figured out how to get kids to do more and have a little less of the unstructured free time that the scolds tend to extol.**

The appearance of these scolds mourning the loss of play and leisure time is nothing new; as far back as 1939, a report in *Childhood Education* complained about the decline in leisure caused by an increase in organized activities. David Elkind continued the argument with his 1981 book, "The Hurried Child." Modern pundits write books lamenting "hothouse kids" or "overachievers" and making "the case against homework," to quote the phrasing from some recent titles.

Much literature in this genre is based on impressions-but, fortunately, we have some data about how kids spend their hours. In recent years, researchers from the University of Maryland have analyzed findings from the continuing Panel Study of Income Dynamics, which documents children's time use. They found that teens spend 30 of their weekly 168 hours in school. With the 12- to 18-year-old set sleeping 65 hours per week (a little more than nine a day), that leaves 73 hours for other things. Homework took up a mere 4.9 of these hours (about 42 minutes a day), and sports 3.9 hours. "Organizations" (like youth groups) filled 1.2 hours.

These are, of course, averages. Some children spend more time playing sports or doing homework, but some do less, too. Joseph Mahoney, an education professor at the University of California, Irvine, estimates **that about 40% of children aren't involved in any activities. Unfortunately, these young people tend not to fill their free time with the high-quality unstructured play that pundits praise. Many are at home, by themselves, watching TV-the "dominant leisure activity," Mr. Mahoney calls it-and eating junk food, which is probably why he finds that participation in organized extracurricular activities correlates with better academic performance and even lower body-weight.**

But surely there is some tipping point, where kids do too much and slide toward Xanax? If so, it's a long way down the curve. Only 6% of children spend more than 20 hours a week on extracurricular activities, Mr. Mahoney reports, and even these kids don't suffer the feared effects. "Contrary to popular notions that these activities are undermining parent and child relationships," he says, "there's no evidence of lower parent-child communication, and no evidence that 20 hours of activities is related to reduced frequency of eating meals together." Which makes sense. If you are in school 30 hours a week, do 20 hours of activities and double the average teen's homework load, this comes out to 60 hours. There is still time in a 168-hour week for daydreaming and family meals and-in Ms. DeBenedictis's case-for pursuing meaningful independent projects. (She has won thousands of dollars in scholarships for her computer work.)

Of course, some children are pushed to anxiety through too many résumé-boosting activities. The problem is when this tiny sliver of American children sets the cultural narrative, chipping away at support for additional study time and the after-school activities that less-privileged children need. Already, districts facing budget crises are putting sports and after-school programs on the chopping block. It's like college health centers fretting over anorexia when the greater risk for most students is obesity. In a world in which only 23% of ACT-takers show scores that indicate "college readiness" in math, English, reading and science, **and when studies peg the average teen television time somewhere between 15 and 24 hours a week, most children are not at risk of being overscheduled. They're at risk of having too little to do with their time and thus never learning the joy of being, like Ms. DeBenedictis, happy and busy.**

-Ms. Vanderkam is the author of the forthcoming book "168 Hours."

The Pressure to Cheat

What's causing the growing hole in our moral ozone? Why are cheating and lying so common in schools, on the sports field, and in business and politics? Apparently it's a thing called pressure.

Kids are under pressure to get into college, athletes and coaches are under pressure to win, and according to a survey by the American Management Association, the pressure to meet business objectives and deadlines is the leading cause of unethical corporate behavior. The desires to further one's career and protect one's livelihood are the second and third reasons people lie or cheat.

In other words, we take ethical shortcuts to get what we want. DUH!

Why are we so willing to shift responsibility for every form of human weakness from ourselves to the system? We don't blame the liar; we blame the law. We don't blame the cheater; we blame the test.

The implication is: Don't expect me to be ethical when personal interests are at stake.

Please!

What we call pressures today used to be called temptations. Everyone knew that the test of character was our ability to resist them. Calling enticements pressures doesn't change anything.

We must believe in and expect integrity and moral courage and not surrender when our principles are challenged. We need to expect good people to do what's right, even when it's difficult or costly.

Yes, lots of people act dishonorably in the face of pressure. **But pressure is an explanation, not a justification. Pressures, temptations – call them what you will – are part of life. Sure, it would be helpful if we had less pressure, but it's far more important that we have more character.**

This is Michael Josephson reminding you that character counts.

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