



Institute for Sport Coaching

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NEWS RELEASE

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NEW NATIONAL COACHING REPORT STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF QUALIFIED COACHES FOR EVERY ATHLETE

WASHINGTON, DC, August 6, 2008 – The Institute for Sport Coaching recently reaffirmed its commitment to quality coaching education, and is one of only 15 youth sport organizations profiled in the *National Coaching Report*, the only comprehensive report addressing both youth and interscholastic sport coaching education requirements in the United States. The report was released today by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) in partnership with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). With over 50 million children under the age of 18 participating in organized sport programs, the purpose of the report is to educate the American public about the training and qualifications currently required to coach athletes whose quality sport experience is of number one concern.

Released only days before the start of the 2008 International Olympics in Beijing, the report stresses the importance of qualified coaches for every athlete. Many Olympians' positive athletic experiences were a result of the influence and impact of their coaches.

“An optimal sport experience requires caring and professionally trained coaches,” says NASPE President Fran Cleland, P.E.D., professor of kinesiology, West Chester University (PA). “Parents across the country send their children to practices and events with the expectation that adult supervision will bring positive sport outcomes, maximal learning and skill development. Yet horror stories persist about dramatic increases in winning-obsessed parents, sport injuries, over-specialization of young athletes, and children quitting sports because they simply aren't fun anymore.”

North Carolina Congressman Mike McIntyre, Chairman of the Congressional Youth Sports Caucus, stated, “Quality coaches are key to a successful youth program. We should all work together to make sure that every young person has the opportunity to be positively influenced by a qualified coach. The lessons of sportsmanship, individual and team effort, dedication, and working toward a

goal are key to youth sports and key to a successful life. Good quality coaches can and should be a part of that formula.”

The *National Coaching Report* provides a baseline of what is being done to train coaches at the youth and interscholastic sport levels. Sport officials, State Board/Department of Education administrators, legislators and parents can now view the requirements set forth by state legislation, mandates, or sports organizations for coach preparation in each state and the District of Columbia.

Jody Brylinsky, Ph.D., professor of sport studies, Western Michigan University, and chair of the National Coaching Report Task Force, presented the results today at a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. According to Dr. Brylinsky, “The *National Coaching Report* clearly illustrates the need to increase the quality of training adults receive prior to engaging in coaching responsibilities. It also serves as a resource and advocacy tool for developing policy and legislation that requires coaching education.”

This small portrait of youth sport organizations suggests:

- There are youth sport organizations earnestly seeking ways to design and implement training for adults who wish to serve as coaches.
- Most youth sport coach training is currently designed for entry level coaches with emphasis on athlete-centered coaching philosophy, ethical conduct of coaches, and maintaining a safe environment.
- There is a strong trend to require background checks for all coaches in youth sport.
- Volunteer-dependent youth sport organizations are willing to mandate some form of coach education or training as an incentive to coach.

Recommendations for Action

NASPE recommends that all coaches be required to complete a quality coaching education program prior to working with athletes. In addition, NASPE recommends that decision makers:

- Recognize that the role of the coach requires specialized skills and knowledge that must be developed through formal training based on the *National Standards for Sport Coaches*
- Promote communication between the local sport leagues and quality coaching education providers
- Develop an infrastructure to track and record the number of youth sport coaches and the number of coaches who have completed coaching education programs
- Develop recruitment and selection procedures that identify persons with high moral character and integrity for coaching positions.

As a public service, NASPE is providing a full copy of the report online on its website at www.naspeinfo.org/coachingreport. Printed copies of the report may be obtained by calling 800-321-0789. The price for the 156-page publication is \$24.

Methodology

In late 2007 NASPE requested information on coaching education mandates and practices for high school sport coaches from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data pertaining to interscholastic coaching requirements was gathered from published documents provided by the state activities associations, state Boards/Departments of Education, and the NFHS. Each state profile includes among other things: participation rates, legislative requirements, teaching and coaching education requirements and adjustments, timeframes and recommendations for action.

Youth sport organizations that had either initially endorsed the *National Standards for Sport Coaches* (NASPE, 2006) or were part of the coaching education database developed and maintained by NASPE were contacted in an attempt to gather information on coaching education/training criteria in youth sport organizations.

NASPE

The preeminent national authority on physical education and a recognized leader in sport and physical activity, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) is a non-profit professional membership association that sets the standard for practice in physical education and sport. NASPE's 16,000 members include: K-12 physical education teachers, coaches, athletic directors, athletic trainers, sport management professionals, researchers, and college/university faculty who prepare physical activity professionals. The mission of NASPE is to enhance knowledge, improve professional practice, and increase support for high quality physical education, sport and physical activity programs through research, development of standards, and dissemination of information. It is the largest of the five national associations that make the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (AAHPERD).

---Institute for Sport Coaching---

The Institute for Sport Coaching, headquartered in Acton, MA, is a national, non-profit 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to developing and delivering educational experiences and leadership tools critical to the advancement and improvement of sport coaches in the United States. The Institute develops and nurtures professional, intercollegiate, interscholastic and youth sport coaches, and prepares them to provide positive experiences in sport and teach life skills to athletes. The Institute's goals include combating obesity and inactivity among America's youth and creating safe and quality sports experiences for young athletes through a network of quality sport coaches. Please see www.instituteforsportcoaching.org for more information.