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Sean A. Fullerton & Rowan Ramsay

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Youth Coaching Strategies to Foster Enjoyment and Intrinsic Motivation:

A Theory-Driven Approach

By Sean A. Fullerton  and Rowan Ramsay

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Youth participating in sports can experience various health-enhancing benefits, a sense of belonging, and increased academic achievement, with such positive outcomes fostering a disposition toward sport and physical activity (PA; Balish et al., 2014). However, research reports that approximately 30% of youth participants ages 5 to 11 drop out yearly (Balish et al., 2014). This statistic is corroborated by Gardner et al. (2017), who found the same percentage (30%) of 11- to 15-year-olds drop out of sports each year, also reflected in a recent report from the Physical Activity Alliance (2024). In this article, the term “youth” is used to refer to preadolescent children, who typically range in age from six to 12 years old. Importantly, what is developmentally appropriate in a sports setting cannot be determined solely by age; other factors, such as physical and emotional maturity and training age, should also be considered.

Sports experts and applied social scientists have stressed leveraging established empirical research to reshape youth-sport environments to reduce attrition rates (Balish et al., 2014; Petitpas et al., 2005). Gardner et al. (2017) found that the most frequently cited reason youth drop out of organized sports is a lack of enjoyment. Coaches directly influence the enjoyment their athletes experience, and, far too often, the environment created by youth coaches hinders enjoyment and continued participation rather than cultivating it. Due to the lack of formal training of volunteer coaches and little governance of coach education, adult sporting practices—including an emphasis on winning, individualism, and competition—are often imposed on youth athletes. An environment that emphasizes these outcomes has been termed a *performance climate* (Jakobsen, 2021; Petitpas et al., 2005). Performance climates are linked to negative emotional experiences, including decreased intrinsic motivation and greater intra-team rivalries, increasing the likelihood of athletes dropping out of sports (Jakobsen, 2021). Due to the decline in youth-sport enjoyment contributing to dropout and the lack of coach education in this area, the purpose of this article is to provide youth coaches with strategies for creating a sports environment that enhances youth enjoyment to improve retention rates. Achievement goal theory (AGT; Nicholls, 1984) and self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000) have been widely utilized to understand personal, social, and contextual factors that affect youths’ motivation in sports and PA settings (Weeldenburg et al., 2021). Each of these theories and related concepts will be explored.

Achievement Goal Theory

Nicholls’s AGT (1984) distinguishes between two types of learning environments that a coach creates: a mastery climate and a performance climate. A mastery climate (also called task-oriented) is present when individuals in the environment are focused on self-improvement or on the mastery of a task or skill. A performance climate (ego-oriented) is present when individuals in the environment are focused on outperforming

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others in a task or skill. Balish et al. (2014) found that a mastery climate strongly predicted continued participation in sports. This outcome is likely due to fostering a *growth mindset*, the belief that one’s abilities can be improved through practice (Petitpas et al., 2005). It can be concluded that those who endorse mastery-focused goals experience more enjoyment and intrinsic motivation to participate in sports (Gardner et al., 2017; Jakobsen, 2021; Weeldenburg et al., 2021). The coach impacts the likelihood of youth adopting mastery goals rather than performance goals by creating a mastery climate (Gómez-López et al., 2019; Jakobsen, 2021; Petitpas et al., 2005; Vallerand & Losier, 1999).

Mastery Climate

A mastery climate is one in which athletes perceive the value of self-improvement, effort, and learning (Petitpas et al., 2005; Weeldenburg et al., 2021). In a mastery climate, success and recognition are based on effort toward individual task mastery. When athletes adopt mastery goals, they experience less anxiety, more enjoyment, and greater intrinsic motivation (Jakobsen, 2021). Weeldenburg et al. (2021) conducted interviews with secondary physical education students ($N=61$) aiming to identify preferred instructional strategies for students’ motivation to participate in class activities. Many of the students highlighted the importance of recognition of their effort, positive feedback, and a focus on their successes rather than their failures. This desire for acknowledgment of effort rather than outcome aligns with AGT and the stated benefits of a mastery climate supporting the development of a growth mindset.



The authors acknowledge that sport is inherently competitive, and competition in itself is not bad; youth must learn to be gracious in victory and humble in defeat. Rather, an overemphasis on competition at a young age can have a negative effect on youth-sport participants. Competition can be counterbalanced with task-oriented practice where youth athletes focus on exploration, skill development, and positive social interactions, emphasizing teamwork. Norway's *Children's Rights in Sport* (Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports, 2019) emphasized mastery and included provisions for competitive environments of youth-sport participants up to 12 years of age. This article's stance aligns with this contemporary view of sport, juxtaposed by the hyperindustrialized U.S. climate of competitive youth sports. The United States has recently aligned its efforts to improve youth sporting climates in its recent *National Youth Sport Strategy* (Department of Health & Human Services, 2024). This article most directly addresses opportunities to increase youth-sport participants' motivation within Level 1: Individual or Intrapersonal and Level 2: Interpersonal, by including quality coaching skills that align with motivational theories emphasizing competence and autonomy-supportive environments.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) conceives that athletes experience greater enjoyment in sports when

intrinsically motivated, and more intrinsic forms of motivation are likely to occur when athletes' needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy are met. The results from a Balish et al. (2014) review examining correlates of youth-sport attrition provided further support for these needs, as lack of perceived competence, relatedness, and autonomy all had a strong correlation to attrition. In K–12 physical education, self-determined motivation toward exercise and PA has been supported through more student autonomy and the development of perceived competence (Sun et al., 2017; Vasconcellos et al., 2020).

Need-Supportive Environment

An environment that meets athletes' needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy is referred to as *need supportive*. Athletes will experience a higher level of perceived competence if the coach provides feedback that is positive and focused on the learner's successes and efforts rather than failures (Avci et al., 2018b). Competence is viewed as the psychological need that is most strongly associated with intrinsic forms of motivation (Vasconcellos et al., 2020). Physical education students from all focus groups of the Weeldenburg et al. (2021) study stated the importance of the practice task being achievable. They described that when given a practice task that was too complex for their skill level, they felt frustrated and unmotivated. Athletes experience relatedness when they feel connected to and cared for by others in the environment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Lower

levels of relatedness were associated with youth dropping out of sports (Calvo et al., 2010). Youth are likely to feel a sense of autonomy if they do not feel pressured to perform tasks and feel they can choose to do so under their own volition (Sun et al., 2017). Opportunities to be self-directed (i.e., make decisions) promote intrinsic motivation by increasing a person's perception of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is supported by the Weeldenburg et al. (2021) study in which students from every focus group reported greater enjoyment and motivation to participate when the teacher distributed authority among the students in physical education. Coaching strategies that provide students with decision-making responsibility, social interaction, and are appropriately challenging have the potential to develop more intrinsic motivation and may lead to sustained sports participation throughout adolescence. Strategies that are needs supportive and mastery focused are presented through the spectrum coaching styles (Pill et al., 2021).

Spectrum of Coaching Styles

Recently, Pill et al. (2021) applied Mosston and Ashworth's (2008) spectrum of teaching styles to the coaching context. The spectrum teaching styles have been applied within physical education and physical education teacher education programs as a unified theory for teaching guided by the assumption that teaching (coaching) and learning are all about decision making (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). The spectrum presents landmark coaching styles along a continuum, determined by the extent to which decisions are made by the coach or by the athletes (see Table 1). There are styles focused on the reproduction of known knowledge, referred to as the "reproduction styles," and styles that focus on discovery and creativity or the production of knowledge new to the athlete, known as "production styles."

The anatomy of any teaching episode begins with the pre-impact set of decisions (also called the "pre-impact set"), which are made about the objective, content, tasks, and performance criteria of the coaching episode. The next set of decisions is the impact set, which consists of decisions that occur during the task or activity. These include the following nine decisions: (1) location, (2) order, (3) when to start, (4) pace and rhythm, (5) when to stop, (6) questions for clarification, (7) rest intervals, (8) posture, and (9) attire and appearance (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). Not all nine of these decisions need to be left up to the player, such as attire and appearance, and some criteria can be given for these decisions (e.g., maintaining a safe distance away from other players, parameters about duration, and repetitions). The post-impact set of decisions (or "post-impact set") includes decisions about feedback and evaluation.

The spectrum takes a *nonversus approach*, meaning one style is not better than another; rather, they are more appropriate depending on the objectives and content, and multiple styles are likely used to achieve the goals of the practice session (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). If the goal is to create players who can make decisions independently from the coach during gameplay, production styles should be incorporated to practice creativity and problem solving. Most youth coaches focus on basic skills and tactical development, so cognitive processes such as identification and refinement, inherent in reproductive styles, are developed. If players find themselves with only the decision to do the activity/task or not, this is most representative of the command style (style A), where the coach makes all decisions. Command style is appropriate for teaching new skills or skills that require synchronization and timing, such as dance, synchronized swimming, or learning new resistance training skills, for example.

Moving down the spectrum, athletes gain decision-making responsibility. Applying the spectrum styles in the youth-sport

Table 1. Spectrum of Teaching/Coaching Styles

Cognition	Landmark Styles	Responsibility and Decision Making
<i>Reproduction</i> (memory)	Command (A)	<i>Coach maximum/player minimum</i>
	Practice (B)	
	Reciprocal (peer) coaching (C)	
	Self-check (D)	
	Inclusion (E)	
<i>Production</i> (discovery/creativity)	Guided discovery (F)	<i>Discovery threshold</i>
	Problem solving (convergent discovery) (G)	
	Divergent discovery (H)	
	Player designed (I)	
	Player initiated (J)	<i>Coach minimum/player maximum</i>
	Self-coaching (K)	

Adapted from Mosston and Ashworth's (2008) spectrum teaching styles and Pill et al.'s (2021) coaching styles.

context is logical, as coaching styles are practical approaches to create a need-supportive and mastery focus environment while teaching motor skills and basic sport concepts. The authors encourage the use of reproduction styles to develop competence in isolated skills, and production styles to foster problem solving and creativity, thereby developing “thinking players” (Mitchell et al., 2020). Youth should be encouraged to explore movement solutions within fun and engaging environments without constraining their motor performances to preordained solutions. Furthermore, genuine opportunities to practice decision making and responsibility should be afforded if these skills are to be developed (Hellison, 2011). See Table 2 for the decision-making responsibilities of each of the four styles presented in this article. To understand how decision-making responsibility shifts within the pre-impact, impact, and post-impact sets, it is important to understand command and practice styles. In command style, all decisions are made, including the nine impact set of decisions. The shift from command to practice style occurs when the nine impact decisions shift to the athlete. As mentioned before, criteria should be given to support youth making these impact decisions as shown with the styles presented next.

Reciprocal (peer) coaching (C)

Peer coaching can be thought of as the same as practice style, but where the athletes are now given the post-impact decisions (feedback and evaluation). Athletes are placed in pairs (or sometimes groups of three) and they take turns performing the task demonstrated and explained by the coach. Their teammates observe and give feedback based on the performance criteria (prepared by the coach during the impact set). Mosston and Ashworth (2008) used the terms *observer* and *doer* to identify who is responsible for what in this episode. Athletes need to be taught how to give feedback to ensure positive social interactions. To emphasize a mastery climate and positive relatedness, it is recommended that the observer give two forms of feedback: (1) positive and (2) corrective. Positive feedback is given when the observer praises their partner for meeting one of the performance criteria (e.g., “You did a good job of keeping

your head down those last five reps”). Corrective feedback is specific feedback that addresses an error and focuses on the correction (e.g., “To get in a better ready position, you need to get lower by having a wider base of support, like this”). The pre-impact set should include behavioral objectives (e.g., “Communicate positively to help your partner improve”). To foster this interaction between the observer and the doer, the coach should only communicate with the observer, focusing on their observation and feedback. In turn, this style can help to develop “mini coaches,” where players can get in the habit of helping teammates improve, fostering a climate focusing on encouragement and the mastery of skills. Peer modeling can play an important role in learning motor skills for the observer and the doer through the cognitive process of observing, evaluating, and comparing motor performance against performance criteria. The next production style emphasizes more autonomy, where athletes survey tasks that are presented and choose their level of entry for practice.

Inclusion (E)

In the inclusion style, the cognitive processes for the player are now to survey the task levels, compare their performances, and select a task to continue practicing. This style can help accommodate various ability levels by presenting three challenge levels. The need for autonomy is further supported by allowing the player to self-select the most appropriate tasks, and competence is developed because players can practice the level of task that is most appropriate for them. It is important to note that the pre-impact decisions made by the coach should ensure that the practice tasks can be performed safely and include the ability levels of their players. The coach determines an appropriate factor to vary across the three levels based on the objective of the episode, sport, and athletes’ developmental levels. Factors can either be external (time and repetitions) or internal (distance, height, speed, size of target, size of implement, or posture; Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). Within the three tasks, the coach includes performance criteria that players use to evaluate their performance. The inclusion style can be combined with peer coaching, where players move through the

Table 2. Primary Decision-Making Responsibility

Anatomy of a Coaching Style	Peer Coaching (C)	Inclusion (E)	Guided Discovery (F)	Divergent Discovery (H)
Pre-impact set <i>Style, objectives, content, performance criteria, task parameters</i>	Coach	Coach	Coach	Coach
Impact set <i>Location, order, when to start, pace and rhythm, when to stop, questions for clarification, rest, intervals, posture, attire and appearance</i>	Doer (player)	Player	Player	Player
Post-impact set <i>Feedback, evaluation, surveying of options, next steps</i>	Observer (player; with support)	Player (with support)	Coach or player	Player (with support)

three tasks together, provide feedback, and support each other in selecting an appropriate challenge point. This style may seem simple, but there are some important considerations when implementing it. Often, players are conditioned to rely on coaches, and this style will be uncomfortable for some skilled players who excel at coach-centered tasks (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). However, this can “level the playing field” for the less skilled players, in that the focus of performance is against the task, not peers. It is important that players demonstrate responsibility in decision making within other styles where they perform a single task before expanding autonomy to three task variations.

For youth players, the objective of the episode, as well as the behavioral expectations, should be communicated to players. A demonstration should always be given, and clarifying questions should be answered before beginning the episode. Some may argue that turning over decisions to the players may cause supervision and safety issues due to the lack of coach control. The authors argue just the opposite: by turning responsibility over to players, the coach can focus more on player management, supervision, and providing redirection when they are not the source of instruction and information. To develop a mastery-focused environment that is needs supportive, decision-making responsibility will need to be given to players, and the spectrum coaching styles provides the opportunity to create a motivating environment.

The production styles, specifically guided discovery (F) and divergent discovery (H) are emphasized next, because they focus on critical thinking, exploration, and creativity.

Guided discovery (F)

Guided discovery can often be challenging for novice coaches, and coaches aim to simplify the process of preparing a sequenced line of questioning, where athletes discover new knowledge. This style aligns well with the *play–practice–play* format that the Tactical Games Approach (TGA) follows (Mitchell et al., 2020). The distinguishing characteristic of this style is that the athletes discover new knowledge through a series of well-crafted questions by the coach. Simply asking questions of an athlete may encourage critical thinking; however, not all lines of questioning are guided discovery episodes. When preparing the skills and tactics to be practiced and taught, the guided discovery episode can help coaches plan small-sided modified games. For example, if a coach wants to focus on moving to space, they can create a 3v3 game that prohibits dribbling, where players must pass to teammates to earn points. The initial task can set the scene for the line of questioning, but so can the initial questions themselves within guided discovery (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008; Pill et al., 2021). The pre-impact set of decisions is planned by the coach and focuses on the content or skill/tactic to be learned. After identifying the content, the sequence of questions is created that leads the athletes to a discovery in a stepwise manner. A singular correct answer

to each question is ideal when using this style, leading or narrowing the athlete to the ultimate discovery (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). Preparing questions will likely be the most difficult part of this episode; it is recommended for the initial questions to set the stage, and for the latter questions to converge on the discovery to be made (tactic or strategy to be understood). Coaches will likely need to pose remedial questions on the spot if the cognitive jump is too great or misaligned from the desired discovery. Mosston and Ashworth (2008) recommended following these “rules” after preparing a sequence of questioning and clues when implementing this style (pp. 215–216):

1. Never tell the answer.
2. Always wait for the learner’s response.
3. Offer frequent feedback.
4. Maintain a climate of acceptance and patience.

This style typically goes well with sports where young athletes discover ideas associated with (1) concepts, (2) principles, (3) relationships among entities, (4) orders or systems, (5) cause and effect relationships, and (6) limits (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008). For this style to be used with efficacy, the discovery must be unknown to the learner (although the authors acknowledge that, with varying experience levels, this may not always be possible) and should include topics related to scientific principles (i.e., biomechanics, physics, anatomy, etc.) versus social topics where cultural norms or beliefs are imposed on youth or held as correct or incorrect. Lastly, knowledge must be discoverable based on the learner’s abilities and the task with which they are presented. It is important to note that guided discovery can be paired with an activity or can be a series of questions in itself. It is generally used within TGA after the first small-sided modified game, and the discovery presents the context and rationale of skill practice to follow. Table 3 provides examples of guided discovery questions.

Divergent discovery (H)

The difference between convergent discovery and divergent discovery is the number of possible solutions to the problem defined by the coach. In convergent discovery, the desired outcome is for the players to converge on the ideal solution to a clearly defined problem. In divergent discovery, multiple solutions exist to the problem. This forces the players to think creatively and discover new answers to a problem currently unknown to them. In this style, the coach is still responsible for the pre-impact set of decisions and presents a problem to the athlete that has multiple solutions. The autonomy the players experience in this coaching style is one of its strengths, as players are encouraged to discover their own creative means of solving the problem (impact set). Unlike all other coaching styles described so far, the answer to the problem presented is not known by the coach.

Table 3. Example guided discovery questions

Modified tennis: 1v1 mini-tennis. Serve underhand. Play on a shortened court.
Tactical focus: varying shot direction and depth.
Q: What happened when you hit the ball straight to your opponent? (observational question) A: <i>They returned it easily.</i>
Q: When did your opponent struggle to return the ball? (comparison question) A: <i>When I hit it to the sides or dropped it short near the net.</i>
Q: What happened when you changed where you hit the ball each time? (tactical cue question) A: <i>They had to move more and made more mistakes.</i>
Q: Why is changing shot direction and depth useful? (reasoning/generalization questioning) A: <i>It makes your opponent move, tire out, and mess up returns.</i>
Q: What do we need to practice to make your opponent move, tire out, and mess up returns? (convergent discovery of tactical focus) A: <i>Changing shot direction and depth.</i>
Ah-ha!: Changing shot direction and depth is a key tactic in tennis.
<i>AI Disclosure: ChatGPT.com was used in the initial drafting of guided discovery questions, prompted with the description of the Guided Discovery Style and the Tactical Games Approach.</i>

Therefore, in the post-impact set of decisions, the coach's job is simply to assist the players in refining their own ideas about the solutions to the problem. The authors believe this truly leads toward a player-centered focus, as players can decide on solutions that they think work best and that they are most confident in.

It is acknowledged that more coach-centered styles are utilized in youth-sport practices, such as command or practice style. In line with the *nonversus* approach of the spectrum styles, they are not inherently bad; rather, it is their exclusive focus within practice environments that can limit the underpinning motivational constructs of a mastery focus within a needs-supportive environment. The authors recommend that coaches intermix the discussed styles, starting small, with incremental changes as youth become more accustomed to autonomy and independence, and that coaches practice relinquishing control, focusing on player management and questioning. Practical examples of each style discussed are described in [Table 4](#).

Additional Considerations

Task sheets

Task sheets, also called task cards, play an important role in implementing the spectrum styles. Task sheets reduce dependency on the coach and encourage independence. They also communicate performance criteria to athletes and reduce repeated instructions—they tell athletes “what to do.” Task sheets can be printed, laminated, and placed at stations or given to pairs of athletes when working in peer coaching. For peer coaching and inclusion, players can record their performance and these data can be used for goal setting and developing a

mastery climate. When making task cards, six design principles should be followed: (1) instructions are close to pictures, (2) instructions are connected to parts of the picture, (3) information is coherent and simple, (4) information connects to the user through first or second point of view, (5) instructions break down complex tasks/movements into parts, and (6) information is specific to the prior knowledge and experience of players (Iserbyt & Byra, 2013). See [Figure 1](#) for an example template for a peer coaching episode.

Tactical Games Approach

A game-centered or games approach to teaching sport is not a new concept, and it is recognized as a more holistic approach to coaching (Martens, 2012). To situate the spectrum styles within a larger framework, the authors recommend implementing a game-centered approach, specifically the TGA (Mitchell et al., 2020). Production coaching styles like guided discovery, problem solving, and divergent discovery go well with TGA. However, they are likely more challenging for novice coaches to implement with fidelity, so it is recommended to start with reproduction styles to gain confidence. Additionally, the authors advocate adopting two of TGA's core practices, which are (1) small-sided, modified games and (2) the play-practice-play format. Small-sided modified games are more developmentally appropriate than adult versions of sports for youth. Small-sided game integrate adaptations, such as rules, smaller boundaries, and fewer players. These versions highlight the skill and tactical requirements within more closed environments than adult versions. As a result, more youth can spend time in active gameplay. Also, many adult versions of games are dominated by early maturing players, limiting the participation and skill development of later maturing youth. In the play-practice-play

Table 4. Practical Examples of Spectrum-Style Episodes

Style	Purposes	Examples
Reciprocal (peer) coaching (C)	• Positive social interactions • Observing and evaluating motor skills • Skill refinement	• Players take turns observing and providing feedback between two sets of lunges, squats, push-ups, and sit-ups. A task card includes performance criteria for each. • Pairs practice fielding a ground ball; players take turns rolling five ground balls to each other and provide feedback before switching roles.
Inclusion (E)	• Differentiation • Responsible decision making • Improvement	• Athletes move between push-ups on a high box, low box, and the ground and see what an appropriate challenge for 10 repetitions is while maintaining good posture and control. • Soccer players practice kicking to a target using their nondominant foot from three distances. They survey their performances and select a level to continue practicing their nondominant passes.
Guided discovery (F)	• Critical thinking • Exploration	• Players play in a 3v3 half-court basketball game with no dribbling. Three passes = 1 point. Players restart from the top of the key, and defenders stay at arm's length. Questions are posed to lead the players to discover that cutting and moving helps the team keep possession. • 1v1 flag football, "off" defense only. Receiver gets 2 points for completion; defender gets 2 points for a pass break-up. Questions are posed to lead players to discover that short and inside breaking routes are easier to complete than deep outside breaking routes.
Divergent discovery (H)	• Creativity • Trial-and-error process • Evaluation of effectiveness	• For invasion sports that use passing, provide the instructions for a three-person task (two passers, one "light pressure" defender): "Your task is to find and use five different types of passes to get the ball to your teammate. Try each one at least once. If it doesn't work, try another. You can invent your own, too!" • Prompts: How many passes can you think of? What makes each pass work or not work in different situations? Which pass worked best when the defender was close? Far away?

format, the practice session starts with a modified game, then guided discovery questions followed by practice tasks (through the spectrum styles), and ends with another small-sided modified game (see [Figure 2](#)). There are multiple advantages to this approach compared to traditional "skill and drill" practices ending in a brief scrimmage. First, youth enjoy playing games, and starting with gameplay can be fun. Also, more time is spent in gameplay through play-practice-play. Youth experience *variable practice* in small-sided games. Variable practice is when skills are performed with varying motor-response options. Time spent in variable practice has been shown to increase motor learning compared to constant practice, where a single response is repeated (van Rossum, 1990). Second, the first modified game contextualizes the skills and tactics to be practiced. Often, youth begin sessions in decontextualized drills, which can be less enjoyable for young athletes. The first small-sided game presents the sensory-motor requirements and the preceding practice tasks allow youth to develop associated skills and strategies. When

the practice tasks share sensory-motor requirements, then *practice specificity* is greater—likely leading to more transfer of motor skills (Henry, 1968). Compared to traditional practice, decontextualized drills share limited sensory-motor characteristics with the game environments, limiting transferability. More research needs to be done to strengthen these



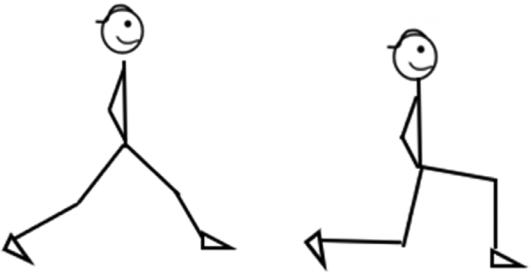
A mastery-focused, needs-supportive environment will promote enjoyment and sustained participation.

Split Squat (Reciprocal Style C)

Instructions: Choose the observer and doer.

Observer: Give instructions, demo, or picture; watch performance; and provide feedback. After the doer practices and gets feedback, switch rolls.

To the Doer: “Complete 8 repetitions on each leg of the split squat. You can choose to perform them with your hand on a chair or a box for assistance, or with a beanbag on your head for an extra challenge. After your first set, I will give you feedback before you do your second set. The performance criteria are....”

PICTURE	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (CUES)
Starting 	Big step forward to starting position, keeping feet shoulder-width apart.
	Torso is upright and stable.
	Rear knee almost touches floor (make the L's).
	Foot, knee, and hip forward.
	Lower down for 3 seconds and up for 1 second while keeping feet in place.

Observer: After watching the doer perform the skill, give them feedback using the prompts below:

“You did a good job of: _____”

“One thing you can do to improve is: _____”

Figure 1. Example task card template for peer coaching.
Adapted from Mosston and Ashworth (2008).

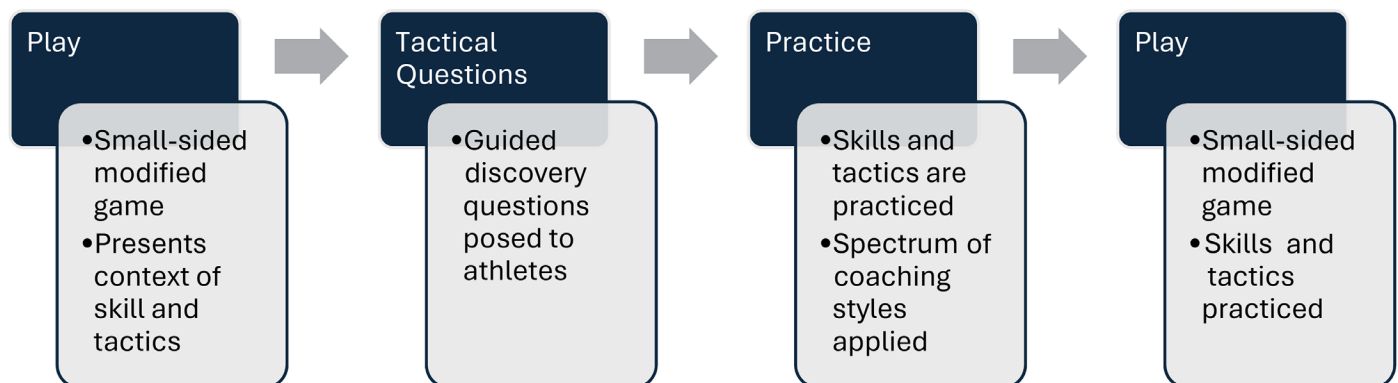


Figure 2. Tactical games approach format (Mitchell et al., 2020).

Table 5. Example Small-Sided Modified Games

Sport	Rules and Objectives	Skill and Tactical Focus
Soccer	In a 3v3 game with small boundaries, teams must pass successfully to their teammates. The defending team can intercept a pass but cannot steal the ball from a player that possesses it. They can play “warm” defense, meaning they cannot come within a body’s length of an opposing player. Each three consecutive passes earn a point. No dribbling is allowed.	Passing Moving to space
Cricket	There is one batter and four fielders (including a bowler). The batter can only hit the ball to the opposite field; if they pull the ball or the ball is caught, the batter rotates to a fielding position, and there is a new batter. Every successful “hit” counts as a run and the batter must rotate every five successful hits if not out.	Hitting ground balls Hitting the opposite field Bowling Catching
Badminton	Teams of two are split into two singles teams competing against singles on opposite sides. Each singles game uses half the width and the full length of the court. Points are scored if there is a failure to return the birdie within bounds.	Clear and drop shots Hitting short and long based on opponent’s position
Golf	Set up three target zones at varying distances (e.g., 25, 50, 100 yards). Assign point values for each target zone (e.g., 25 yards = 1, 50 yards = 2, 100 yards = 3) and have players take turns hitting one shot at a time toward their chosen target. Players are not allowed to shoot for the same target twice in a row; this ensures that players work through a variety of different shots. After a set number of shots, the player with the most points wins.	Shot approach Accuracy Consistency across different shot types

hypotheses supported by motor learning theories, but the authors advocate for the TGA to develop motor learning within a motivating environment. See Table 5 for example small-sided modified games.

Conclusion

Youth-sport programs where athletes experience enjoyment, intrinsic motivation, and the fulfillment of their psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy will have less attrition. Coaches can cultivate such programs by utilizing strategies from the spectrum of coaching styles, particularly peer coaching, inclusion, guided discovery, and divergent discovery. Additionally, implementing small-sided games through the TGA will enhance enjoyment and skill development and allow for more time to be spent in active gameplay. Overall, a mastery-focused, needs-supportive environment will promote enjoyment and sustained participation. It is suggested that novice coaches make incremental changes. Integrating more decision-making responsibility through the coaching styles presented here is intended to have positive motivational and motor-learning outcomes for youth athletes.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Sean A. Fullerton  <http://orcid.org/0009-0006-1265-9322>

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Sean A. Fullerton (fullerton@towson.edu) is an assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology at Towson University in Towson, MD.

Rowan Ramsay is an undergraduate student at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, NM.



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