



Below are some of the emotional and physical aspects of a young person going through puberty. These aspects need to be taken into consideration when coaching 13-14 y.o. competitors.

Introduction:

The average age for boys to start puberty is 11 and 12 years of age. Girls usually start a little earlier. So the age we are dealing with is within the puberty time in a young person's life. It is necessary to take this into consideration as the coach to this young person growing into an adult. Puberty is the time when the brain triggers the production of sex hormones. The body grows quicker at this stage than any other time in a person's life except for the baby stage. A growth spurt lasts 2 to 3 years. At its peak kids can grow up to 10 centimetres per year. In particular, the feet can grow very quickly and kids can feel clumsy and awkward.

Body:

At this time in a young person's life the body fills out and changes:

- Boys' shoulders become wider and the body more muscular.
- Girls' hips become wider and breasts bigger.
- At this stage in their life it is unhealthy to diet to stop weight gain.

Emotions:

Emotions can become confused, become strong, over sensitive, the young person can become upset easily. They can have: mood swings, low self esteem, aggression, depression.

Development doesn't happen at the same time. People are different: there can be early developers and late developers.

Puberty in Sport:

In sport puberty can effect:

- Less coordination. A temporary decline in balance and body control. The brain needs time to adjust to the changes in height and weight.
- Quitting the sport. With the release of hormones interests change; friends, girl friends / boy friends.

Girls gain weight (body fat). Body image issues can arise.

Decreased mobility and speed can contribute to athletes not wanting to continue their sport. Early developers can now suffer. Their initial physical advantages can now even out and if they didn't develop a good work ethic and skills then they can lose motivation due to their reduction of status as «leader» and so leave the sport.

- For girls' premenstrual issues: fatigue, abdominal pain, head aches. These symptoms can cause lack of concentration during play/training.



JUDO YOUTH LEAGUE

Recommendations for coaches of 13-14 y.o. judo competitors



- More Concussion

Especially in boys. They become stronger and heavier and more aggressive but are not always in control of the «new body». The level of «anger» and intensity can rise compared to prepubescent.

What to do:

- Positive reinforcement - keep an eye on self-esteem
- Be patient
- Have a long-term plan based on process goals and not only performance goals.

Confidence can decrease, so:

- Teach an athlete to set small, measurable goals that are achievable.
- Their bodies and minds are changing so it is important that they learn to focus on the process of reaching a goal, rather than just the outcome.
- The small goals are what lead to building confidence in adolescents.

Self-Talk is the way that an athlete talks to himself or herself at this age changes. It becomes more socially focused rather than ego-centric which can sometimes lead to a critical self-talk.

Working with an athlete at this stage to develop healthy self-talk (dialogue with yourself) is critical in preventing drop out from the sport and reduced confidence. Create positive self-talk, positive attitude. Replace negative a self-talk with more encouraging messages.