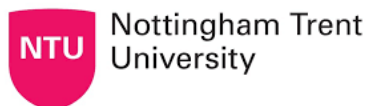


LTA COMPETITION PARENTING COURSE

Summary and Key Messages

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As the parent or carer of a young, aspiring tennis player, congratulations for completing this important course. We hope you enjoyed the content and most critically gained confidence and insights into your roles as a parent and how you can create and support a positive experience for your child and yourself when engaging in junior competition.

In the course, we focused on a number of key objectives which we hope that you could reflect on and have conversations about with other parents who you could encourage to take course.

We wanted to help you to:

- Appreciate why tennis is psychologically demanding yet offers natural opportunities for fundamental life skills
- Communicate effectively with your child before, during and after a match
- Manage the emotional demands of competition
- Role model appropriate behaviours and responses to events which happen on court
- Create a safe, positive and caring environment to support your child's health and development through tennis

At the start of the course, remember our points about your key roles as *provider, interpreter and role model*. It is quite a tough job being a tennis parent but we hope these insights were useful. Understanding more about the demands of tennis helps to develop an appreciation for the mental skills required, and you can read more about this area in our ['Mental and Emotional Skills'](#) guide.

We spent some time exploring pre-match communication which is a key element of your *Interpreter role*, and the value of process goals for your child.

We noted some of the main components of effective and helpful pre-match communication that could best support the emotions, attitude and mindset of your child going into a match where they could get quite nervous:

- Stay relaxed (talk slowly and calmly!) – be alongside them emotionally, empathising with any nerves they may have.
- Set moral expectations (e.g. sportspersonship, respect) and/or communicate values (e.g. effort, patience, composure) that are within their control, useful for performance and keep the match in perspective
- Emphasise enjoyment and fun related to the challenge and the intrinsic experience of the match as an opportunity for them to practice their skills
- Ask genuinely open questions and help your child to focus on 1 or 2 simple process goals that reflect the skills they are learning with the coach (To develop an improve not prove mind-set!)

During the match, we noted the importance of talking with your child about the best ways of supporting them and discussing your body language and reactions to typical situations. Remember the exercise focussed on thinking about stressful events in a different way, and using some chosen techniques to manage the challenge of watching matches. Collaborate with your child by helping them to help you understand how best to support them.

After the match, we noted the importance of timing and allowing your child to own the time when they wanted to talk about the match on their terms. Remember the open questions that we suggested that attempt to draw out their experiences and learning points as opposed to judging them as part of an outcome post-mortem. This information is useful to feed back into the coach and help the competition communication cycle revolve back into training and out again.

Finally, we noted all of the great life skills that can be nurtured through tennis via the environment you help to create:

✓ Problem Solving	✓ Conflict Resolution
✓ Coping with Pressure	✓ Teamwork
✓ Independence	✓ Emotional Regulation
✓ Dealing with adversity	✓ Organisation
✓ Work Ethic	✓ Sportspersonship
✓ Ability to focus	✓ Commitment
✓ Communication	✓ Positive Attitude

Keep up the great work supporting your child to develop these super qualities through tennis!

For further support please visit the [LTA's Parent Support Webpage](#)