

## **Competition breeds success**

**Question:** Is it true that competition for a child is healthy physically and mentally?

**Answer:** I am a firm believer that competition is an excellent dynamic for children to experience. There is a fine line between obsession to always win versus productive competition that encourages us to improve and stretch our abilities. Competition teaches children that commitment and hard work breed success. It is not until we have competed with peers on our level that we recognize how much we have achieved or must improve to reach satisfactory growth.

The competition of sport is a parallel to real life competition for jobs, finances, relationships and personal improvement. Learning we can achieve success at a young age carries forward to our adult life and develops self-esteem and confidence. Team sports and competition teach children social skills, respect for others and adaptation to different personalities and disciplines.

Physically, there has never been a more important time in the history of our country and the health of our youth, than now, in inspiring children to participate in competitive sports. The health of the average American child is abominable. Children are more sedentary than ever and their diets have created the largest recorded amounts of obesity and diabetes ever. At the rate we are going now more than half our population of youth will be diabetic within 5 years. This is more than scary, it is a fact. I encourage every parent to get their child involved in sports. An obese nation distresses our entire nation with hospital and

medical costs as well as poor performance in our work place and more importantly an unhappy and unhealthy society.

The United States spends more money on health-care costs than any world power yet our overall health and quality of life is the worse among all world powers and many third-world nations. Health-care consciousness starts at home and the parent is the primary role model. It is time for America to get off their fat butts, turn off “Wheel of Fortune”, and go for a walk outside. It is spring, so get some fresh air, interact with your children, play some sports and get healthy together.

We have, unfortunately, become a nation of victims, blaming everything that goes wrong, including our health, on external forces. Health comes from above, down, inside, out. Health doesn't come in a pill or potion. Exercise your mind and your body. Stretch and challenge yourself to be just a little healthier every day and it will add up to a better quality of life for you and your children. Instill competition within yourself and in your children and their sports. Always strive to better yourself and be responsible for everything that happens to you on a daily basis.

**Quote of the week:** *“Ingenuity, plus courage, plus work, equals miracles.”* -Bob Richards