MENTAL PERFORMANCE CENTER

ALBERT DUARTE

Certified Mental Performance Coach

PARENT GUIDE TO RAISING A CHAMPION

A practical guide for supporting young athletes with confidence, healthy communication, resilience, and perspective.

Support the person.
Encourage the process.
Let the athlete own the performance.

What young athletes need most

Young athletes develop best when they feel supported without feeling controlled. A parent's role is not to remove every struggle or analyze every performance. It is to create a stable environment where the athlete can learn, recover, take responsibility, and continue growing.

Connection Make sure your relationship is bigger than the result.	**Ownership** Allow the athlete to solve problems and communicate.	**Perspective** Keep sport connected to growth, character, and enjoyment.

A champion mindset grows through consistent support, honest reflection, and opportunities to respond to adversity.

PART 1 - BEFORE COMPETITION

Help your athlete prepare without taking ownership away from them.

- Ask what support would be helpful instead of assuming.
- Encourage preparation, sleep, nutrition, hydration, and organization.
- Avoid making the upcoming event feel bigger than it is.
- Do not add last-minute technical instructions unless you are the coach.
- Remind your athlete that nerves are normal and manageable.
- Focus conversation on effort, attitude, communication, and preparation.
- Allow quiet space if your athlete prefers less conversation before competing.

What kind of support does my athlete prefer before competition?

One encouraging message I can give without adding pressure

WORDS THAT HELP

Instead of saying...	Try saying...
You have to win today.	Trust your preparation and compete one moment at a time.
Do not mess this up.	Be brave, stay present, and respond to whatever happens.
You need to prove yourself.	You do not have to prove your worth. Focus on your role.
Why are you nervous?	Nerves mean this matters. Let's use that energy well.

PART 2 - DURING COMPETITION

Your body language becomes part of the performance environment.

- Keep your facial expression and posture steady after mistakes.
- Do not coach from the stands unless invited and appropriate.
- Avoid criticizing officials, opponents, coaches, or teammates.
- Let your athlete experience the competition without constant evaluation.
- Support effort, courage, teamwork, and response to adversity.
- Model the emotional control you want your athlete to develop.

What does calm, supportive body language look like for me?

PART 3 - THE RIDE HOME

The period immediately after competition can either strengthen trust or create unnecessary pressure. Give your athlete time to regulate before analyzing performance.

First Offer connection: “I love watching you compete.”	**Then** Ask whether they want to talk now or later.	**Finally** Listen more than you speak.

Helpful post-game questions

- What felt good today?
- What did you learn?
- When did you respond well?
- What would you like to work on next?
- What support would be helpful from me?

The first question I will ask after the next competition

One thing I need to stop saying or doing after games

PART 4 - BUILDING RESILIENCE AT HOME

Resilience grows when athletes are allowed to experience manageable difficulty, reflect honestly, and take the next constructive step.

- Allow natural consequences instead of solving every problem.
- Praise preparation, courage, communication, and follow-through.
- Separate the athlete's identity from statistics and results.
- Encourage respectful communication with coaches.
- Teach recovery routines after mistakes and disappointments.
- Keep sport in balance with school, family, friendships, rest, and health.
- Notice signs that the athlete is losing joy or feeling excessive pressure.

One responsibility my athlete can own more fully

One way I can support resilience without rescuing

PARENT SELF-CHECK

- My athlete knows my love is not connected to performance.
- I can stay composed when the competition becomes stressful.
- I listen before giving advice.
- I respect the coach-athlete relationship.
- I allow my athlete to develop their own voice.
- I celebrate growth as much as achievement.

The parent I want to be during the next competition

HELP YOUR ATHLETE BUILD CONFIDENCE THAT LASTS

Complete the Mental Performance Gap Analyzer™ or schedule a free consultation with Albert Duarte.

ADMPC.co

Educational use only. This guide supports healthy sport-parent communication and is not a substitute for medical or mental-health care.