

## 2 Simple Ways to Make a Positive Impact on Your Players' Lives

Coaching is more than X's and O's. It is more than winning and losing and getting into the newspaper. If you are a coach, in a youth or school situation, you are responsible for young people's lives. Charles Barkley once said "I am not a role model." Well, if you are a coach, like it or not, you are a role model. It is your responsibility to have a positive impact on your players' lives.

That responsibility should not be taken lightly or without thought. As a coach, you must think about the effect your actions have on your players' lives.

To make a positive impact on a player's life you have to be positive yourself. Be instructive, not destructive; build people up, don't tear them down. Remember at all times, you are a teacher. You have to be unyielding but flexible.

The second thing is to take an interest in your players as people. Your consistency of interest in the players should not be dependent on how well they are playing. Spend time with them off the court, discussing things other than basketball. Relate experience of how basketball is a vehicle to take you to places they never thought they would be. Off the court, teach them that if they can dream, they can accomplish. Relate basketball experience to life experience.

You also have to remember that they are not your kids. Do not overstep your bounds or responsibilities. In the best of cases, you might be in "loco parentis." Be careful not to intrude into family life.

Baseball great Jackie Robinson once said that the value of a man's life is measured by the effect he has on others. We all have that responsibility. Make it positive.