

USA SWIMMING, USSA PARTNER FOR 'SUCCESSFUL SPORTS PARENTING'

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - Looking for tips on nurturing your future Olympian? Then look to the new CD produced by USA Swimming and the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Association, "Successful Sports Parenting," now available. Packed with tools and information for parents, coaches and club administrators, "Sports Parenting" is the most comprehensive resource ever created to support the successful development of young athletes - from novice to elite level - of all sports.

The CD is hosted by Deborah Phelps, a Baltimore county middle school principal and mother of swimmer and six-time Olympic gold medalist Michael Phelps.

"USA Swimming and USSA have created an exceptional resource for all parents," Phelps said. "Having a voice with the many parents that view this CD will allow me to let them know that I think parenting is a very collaborative endeavor. When I reflect on my years of parenting, I always think of it as a triangular approach to my children's lives that has been inclusive of the coach, the athlete and myself, the parent."

While this guide will be especially beneficial to clubs, the fact that it is non-sports specific makes it a valuable tool for any organization at the start of an athlete's career including clubs, youth teams, PTAs, high schools and more. This comprehensive guide will help any coach alleviate common issues with new parents coming into a sport.

"One of the best ways we can support our clubs at a grassroots level is to provide them with the resources to educate parents and volunteers on how to effectively support their children in their sport," said Pat Hogan, USA Swimming's Club Development Director.

"This CD offers a wealth of updated, relevant information from a multitude of sources that will be applicable for parents at all the different stages in their child's experience in (their) sport, from the parent whose child is just learning to the parent whose child is competing on a national-level team. In the end, better-educated parents make for a better experience for youngsters in sports."

Topics include information for parents on a child's growth and development, physical well-being (including nutrition, hydration and disordered eating), competition and training, as well as tips on how to best balance and support your child. Also addressed is how coaches and parents can work together better (dealing with conflict, being part of a team) and how organizations can better work with parents (volunteers, meetings, communication tools, retention, code of conduct).

"'Successful Sports Parenting' provides coaches, parents and administrators with practical, hands-on tools that they can use to help young athletes achieve their potential," said David McCann, USSA Director of Educational Services. "The interactive, multi-media format of the CD sets it apart from your typical textbook or web site."

The CD features more than 50 interviews with top coaches, athletes, parents and sports psychologists. Swimming interviewees include 1984 triple gold medalist Rowdy Gaines, Berkeley Aquatic Club coach Jim Wood and George Bruce, father of four swimmers including 2004 Olympian Caroline Bruce and more. Also available on the CD are flash presentations and more than 250 pages of background materials and handouts for coaches and clubs to use in organizational meetings and for planning.

"Parents are the greatest influence on their children, even when it is in the athletic arena," said Cathy Sellers, USOC Coaching Manager. "Good parents, like good coaches, can make the sports experience one that is memorable and worth repeating. This CD guides parents and coaches through potential problem issues so that young athletes can enjoy their sport experience. Everyone becomes a winner."

"Successful Sports Parenting" is endorsed, used and distributed by the U.S. Olympic Committee and 11 National Governing Bodies: USA Swimming, USSA, U.S. Tennis Association, USA Hockey, U.S. Speed Skating, U.S. Rowing, USA Water Polo, U.S. Curling, U.S. Figure Skating, USA Diving and U.S. Synchronized Swimming. The CD can be purchased online for \$39.99 at <http://www.successfulsportsparenting.com/> <<http://www.successfulsportsparenting.com/>>