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**Sample "Letter to the Editor" of a Local Newspaper about Positive Coaching**

Letter to the Editor of the *(name of paper)*

As *(name of sport*) season approaches, I look over my team roster, practice drills and rule books, and find myself thinking about the bigger picture. What are my goals for this team? Can we go undefeated? Can we do better than .500? Are these even the right questions to be asking? Maybe we should just have fun and not care about the win-loss record? What skills do I want my players to learn? Do I want these players to learn "life" skills above and beyond the specific athletic skills they'll learn -- skills such as discipline and teamwork?

I've been coaching *(name of sport)* for \_\_ years now*. (Perhaps add a little about your background here.)*. Over this period of time, I've noticed that my goals as a coach have changed. I've moved from a "gotta have a winning season" coach to a "gotta use the sports experience to help teach my players 'life lessons' that will help them succeed in every aspect of their lives" coach.

Most of the kids I coach won't pursue competitive sports after they graduate from high school. In fact, only 1 percent of all youth athletes play sports in college. So, I ask myself, is it ultimately the most beneficial to spend most of my time teaching kids a skill that they're rarely going to use after eight to ten years? Sure, they need to know how to *(list some sport-specific skills they need to learn)*. But why not concentrate more of my effort on helping them develop into successful individuals who know how to work hard, cooperate with those around them and who respect others?

There's an organization I've become familiar with that shares and promotes many of these objectives. It's called Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA), and it's part of Stanford University's Department of Athletics. This non-profit organization has been around since 1998, and its mission is to "transform youth sports so sports can transform youth."

PCA includes three main Positive Coaching themes. They are:

1. To redefine a "winner," so that a winner is an individual who's given maximum effort, continually learned and improved, and is not afraid of mistakes.
2. To honor the game, by respecting the rules, officials, teammates, opponents and self.
3. To fill players' emotional tanks, by giving themmore positive feedback than criticism.

I now consider myself to be a "Positive Coach." I have two goals for this season, and for every season: to try our hardest to win, and to help my players use their *(name of sport*) experience so that they can be successful in every aspect of their lives. If my team and I can accomplish these objectives, then we'll have had a winning season.

Let's play ball!