



SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY

TALKING POINTS



COACH & PARENT TALKING POINTS FOR SPRING ATHLETES

Brought to you by the Saint Thomas Academy Athletic Department and School Counselors

VIDEO LINK: *Dealing with Disappointment*

The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted us all, and with the **cancellation** of the spring athletic season by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) it has become a very real and disappointing time for seniors especially. In the midst of social distancing, our student-athletes are certainly in the midst of difficult times. They are grieving the loss of camaraderie and community that comes with their sport.

So, what can we do? Allow athletes to be upset. An essential part of developing emotional mastery involves feeling bad, identifying and understanding the emotions, and learning to express those unpleasant emotions in healthy ways. Be empathetic and really listen to and reflect back their feelings. Don't try to solve the problem, there isn't really a solution right now. Allow your athlete to go through the five stages of grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance). Over time, as the negative emotions begin to fade, refocus on the positives of athletics, the lessons learned, and how you can give back. .

TALKING POINTS:

Maintain virtual communication with friends, family, and teammates
Balance your news intake - stay informed, but know when to take a break
Exercise is medicine - it helps fight stress and illness
Monitor your mental and emotional health
Talk it out - identify who you can trust and process the feelings you're experiencing
Consider how you can still engage your sport - training, mental performance, coaching
Remember your "why" - reflect on your reason for competing and where that can transfer
Establish a daily routine
Be a positive role model for everyone around you

ACTION ITEMS:

- *Hand write letters to seniors*
- *Get creative with a video message*
- *The power of positivity*
- *Encourage self reflection*
- *The gift of gratitude*
- *Grit bag tags*
- *Dear Sports*

RESOURCES:

- *Applied Sport Psychology*
- *Positive Coaching Alliance*
- *Inside Out Coaching*
- *An open letter to student athletes*
- *Dr. Jim Taylor*