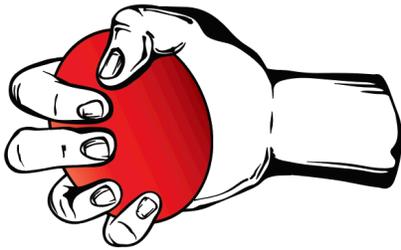




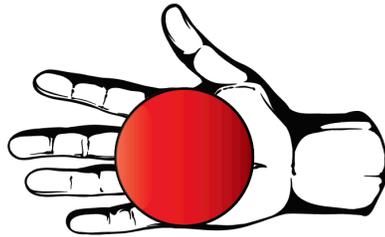
Strong Minds is an interactive learning activity focused on developing adaptive coping skills. Competition provides a natural opportunity to develop active strategies for maintaining emotional wellness under stress, such as: thinking positive thoughts, releasing stress and connecting with others. During Strong Minds, your athletes will learn the following strategies and will benefit greatly if you can incorporate these strategies into practice and games.

Station 1

1 Squeeze the ball for 3 seconds.



2 Release the ball and any tension.

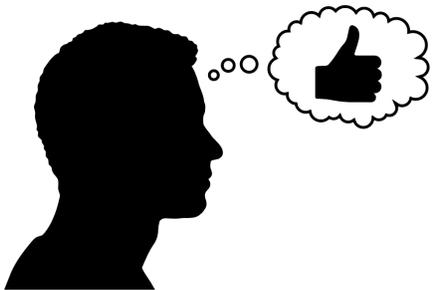


Coach Recommendations

- On the way to a game or competition
- During a pre-game team talk
- After the game during a team talk
- For an athlete sitting on the bench or in between turns/games

Station 2

1 Think a good thought.



2



- During practice and games, state positive statements to athletes
- Start practices with a song with a positive message
- Ask an athlete to start each practice with a positive statement to the team
- After the game, ask the athletes what went well

Station 3

1 Smell the flower [pinwheel].



2 Blow the flower [pinwheel].



- Encourage deep breathing during stretching
- Teach the athletes to use deep breathing during a stressful situation in a game (ie. Before shooting a foul shot).
- Before a game, do a few rounds of deep breathing as a team



Station 4

1 Try a few stretches



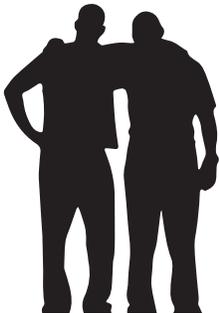
2 How do you feel?



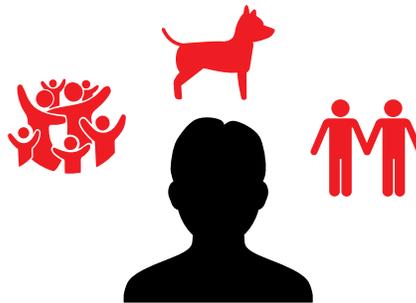
- Make sure athletes hold static stretches for at least 30 seconds
- Incorporate deep breathing into stretching routines
- Lead stretches that also focus on relaxation
- Encourage athletes to do a few stretches before they go to bed each night

Station 5

1 Support others



2 Seek support from others



- Set up drills for partner work to allow athletes to build connections
- Encourage athletes to use positive messages to teammates during practices and games
- Remind athletes that their coach and teammates are there to support them
- Encourage family members to also incorporate these strategies with their athletes

Station 6

1 Pick the strategies you like



2 Use the strategies in everyday life



- Encourage athletes to visit Strong Minds at Healthy Athletes or Game Ready Minds at Performance Stations
- Remind athletes who visited Strong Minds to utilize the skills they learned in practice and games
- Ask the athletes to practice these strategies at home