

**THE CONFIDENT
SPORTS KID SERIES**
KIDS' WORKBOOK



THE CONFIDENT SPORTS KID

**A 7-Day Plan for Building
Ultimate Self-Confidence**

Patrick J. Cohn, Ph.D. and Lisa Cohn

AUDIO AND WORKBOOK PROGRAM

The Confident Athlete Series Presents...

**The Confident Sports Kid:
A 7-Day Plan for Building
Self-Confidence in Young Athletes**
by
Patrick J. Cohn, Ph.D. and Lisa Cohn

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The Confident Sports Kid: A 7-Day Plan for Building Self-Confidence in Young Athletes

Introduction



Welcome to **The Confident Sports Kid: A 7-Day Plan for Building Self-Confidence in Young Athletes**. In this program, we explain why confidence is so important in sports and teach you practical mental strategies for boosting your confidence.

Why do you need to build and maintain your confidence? Confidence is the *Number One* mental game skill that helps athletes succeed in their sport. You will not and cannot reach your full potential unless you possess a stable or high level of confidence.

What is a Confident Sports Kid?

First, we want you to understand what it feels and looks like to be a confident sports kid. Simply put, confidence is how much you believe in your physical abilities to perform any sports skill well. Here's a quote from a 12-year-old athlete named Jon:

"You know exactly what you're doing and nothing can stop you. The adrenaline takes over and you feel like nothing can go wrong."

Clearly, this athlete believes in his abilities. Confident sports kids, like Jon, are fearless. They embrace competition and thrive on it. They aren't afraid of taking risks. They maintain a high level of confidence even after making mistakes. Their thoughts or self-talk—what they say to themselves while practicing or performing—are positive and supportive. They act like they

know what they're doing. They generally perform better than kids who lack confidence, even if they're less talented than the other kids.

Some sports kids have more confidence in certain sports skills than others. For example, you may feel good about your shot in basketball, but lack confidence in your rebounding skills. This is common for many athletes. They feel more confident about their strengths and less confident about their weaknesses.

Most young athletes lack confidence for three common reasons: (1) They do not know how to improve--other than with more practice. (2) They have a fragile state of confidence; their confidence changes rapidly from play to play. (3) They had a difficult experience or past failures that hurt their confidence.

Youth athletes tell us that a number of things can cause them to lose confidence. Here are just a few examples:

"If someone steals home base, I assume it's my fault. I'm really hard on myself. I get real down on myself," says Kevin, a baseball player.

"After I've been away from instruction and drills, I lose confidence in my ability to replicate the drills and get value out of them," says Sam, a Division III basketball player. "I don't know how to practice without the help of the coach."

When kids lack confidence due to these and other issues, they start doubting themselves, stop taking risks, play tentatively, are hard on themselves and don't perform as well. Compare this type of mindset to this pro pitcher's:

"I'm pretty cocky on the mound, you could say. Every pitcher has to have it. I don't have all the physical abilities, but the mental abilities have carried me a little bit."

~Daniel Ray Herrera, Cincinnati Reds relief pitcher

We want you to know that you **can** boost your confidence. Confidence is not all about how well you perform or how much time you spend practicing—although those are important. You can actually learn, with our help, how to boost your confidence—how to think with more confidence and feel more confident—and how to retain your confidence under adversity.

But here's the catch: We can't do all the work for you. You need to take responsibility for improving your confidence—in much the same way you take responsibility for developing your backhand, pitching, or passing skills.

One of the important ways we will do this is by helping you understand what negative beliefs, thoughts, and high expectations hurt your confidence. You'll learn all about these in this workbook. You'll also learn how to focus on your strengths and maintain confidence-boosting thoughts even in the face of adversity or after making mistakes.

How Does This Program Work?

We designed this program to be simple and easy to follow. We know you're busy. You only need to spend a few minutes a day to learn how to boost your confidence. If you follow this program as we designed it, after seven days, you will notice improvements in your confidence. These improvements will likely enhance your performance, and help you maintain a high level of confidence.

During the program, you'll complete seven lessons, one lesson for each day of the week. Each day you will spend about 15 minutes listening to this audio program and doing workbook exercises. If you choose, you can complete the entire program by yourself. But the best option is to have your parents or a coach help you. We've given them a training manual so they can assist you with some of the exercises. Here's what you'll do each day:

1. Listen to the daily lesson using *The Confident Sports Kids CD* program for athletes.
2. Complete *The Confident Sports Kid Daily Workbook exercises or worksheets*. If you are 10 or younger, you'll need help from your parents or coach with some of the exercises.
3. Discuss each lesson with your parents or coach so they can help you improve, too.
4. Use what you learn in the program during practice so you can apply these strategies to practices and games.
5. At the end of each lesson, under "What did you notice?" in the workbook, describe how well you did in practice or competition during each of the seven days.

That's it. We hope this sounds easy. So now, let's get started with your lesson for Day 1.

Day 1: Are You a Confident Sports Kid?

Warm Up

As we mentioned earlier, you're responsible for your own confidence level. To feel confident, you don't want to rely solely on feeling good about immediate results, such as getting the first hit of the day or making the first basket of the game. Some kids, without thinking about it, wait until the first few minutes of a game before they decide how confident they feel. We call this "reactive confidence." Your feelings of confidence change rapidly based on how well you are performing in competition.



If this sounds like you, you want to have quick positive results during a game. Then you'll decide you feel confident.

Today's Mission

Today's mission is to take a short assessment about your confidence and learn all about the areas you need to build on! You'll spend about 5 to 10 minutes taking the **Confident Sports Kid Assessment**. This will help you understand more



about what supports and hurts your confidence. Be sure to be honest when taking this assessment. There are no right or wrong answers—only answers that will give you information you need to be a better athlete! The assessment begins on the following

page.

The Confident Sports Kid Assessment
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Directions: please respond to the following statements below on a scale of 1-7. Write the number (1-7) to the right of each statement that best describes you.

(1) Never (2) Very Rarely (3) Rarely (4) Sometimes (5) Often (6) Very Often (7) Always	
Statement	Score
<p>I Feel Confident When...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I do well or perform well in my daily practice. 2. I receive positive comments from others. 3. I work hard in practice. 4. My skills improve from practice. 5. I have won or played well in the past. 6. I know I have good physical abilities. 7. I have a game plan or strategy. 8. I feel good about my pregame warm-up. 9. I know I have a strong mental game. 10. My coaches or my parents have confidence in me. 	
<p>I Lose Confidence When...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I make a stupid mistake. 2. My coach yells at me. 3. I get benched by my coach. 4. I (or my team) am down in the game. 5. I am playing a good player or team. 6. I am not playing my best. 7. I have a bad warm-up. 8. My opponents try to psych me out. 9. I have a bad practice leading up to the game. 10. I am in a performance slump. 11. I beat myself up after mistakes. 12. Coach gives me too much to think about before the game. 	
<p>When I Lose Confidence During Competition...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am able to regain confidence quickly. 2. I can regain confidence, but not right away. 3. I can't regain confidence. 4. I don't know when I lose confidence. 	

(1) Never (2) Very Rarely (3) Rarely (4) Sometimes (5) Often (6) Very Often (7) Always	
Statement	Score
<p>What Happens When I Lose Confidence?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nothing, I keep playing hard and don't worry about it. 2. I can't focus or concentrate my best. 3. I try to avoid making mistakes in competition. 4. I stop trying, give up or want the game or match to end now. 5. I hope my coach pulls me from the game so I don't have to play. 6. I call myself bad names such as "loser." 7. I have a lot of self-doubt about my ability. 8. I begin to think I'll lose or the team will lose. 	 <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>The Reason(s) I Probably Lose Confidence in Sports...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want to perform perfectly or do everything just right in competition. 2. I have super high expectations. 3. I worry others think I'm not a good athlete. 4. I think my skills or techniques are really bad. 5. I question if I have practiced enough to perform well. 6. I don't perform well in warm-up or at the start of competition. 7. I think the competition is too good. 8. I don't deserve to play well. 	 <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>What I Say To Myself When not Feeling Confident</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I'm a loser and should give up this sport." 2. "I should never make such a silly mistake." 3. "I never play well when I'm behind in the game." 4. "Other people (circle one: parents, coach, or teammates) think I stink." 5. "Now I'm going to get benched." 6. "I don't deserve to feel confident." 	 <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

You will not be graded on this test, so don't worry. For now, we want you to place a star (*) next to the statements that you rated as 5, 6, or 7. Please discuss your answers on this assessment in "Things to Talk About Today" with a parent or coach.

Things to Talk About Today

After you complete today's audio CD program and test, please discuss these questions with a parent or coach:



1. Did you understand all the statements on The Confident Sports Kid Assessment? What statements did you not understand?
2. On what statements did you rate yourself a 6 (very often) or 7 (always)?
3. What did you learn about yourself from this test?
4. What helps you feel the most confident before competition?
5. What happens to your play after you lose confidence?
6. What are the top two reasons you lose confidence during competition?
7. What do you say to yourself at the moment you begin to lose confidence?

My Notes:



The Confident Sports Kid CD Series:

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