



Mental wellness includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

"The challenges today's generation of young people face are unprecedented and uniquely hard to navigate. And the effect these challenges have had on their mental wellness is devastating." - **U.S. Surgeon General**

## HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS PCA PROGRAMMING PROACTIVELY ADDRESSES MENTAL WELLNESS FOR YOUTH.

### BASICS FOR A CHILD'S GOOD MENTAL WELLNESS:

- Unconditional love from family
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- The opportunity to play with other children
- Encouraging teachers, coaches, and supportive caretakers
- Safe and secure surroundings
- Appropriate guidance and discipline

- Assisting coaches in creating a **caring climate**, where all youth athletes feel they belong, which can improve the mental wellness of youth.
- Positioning **mistakes as "OK"** and an important part of the learning process, which helps reduce anxiety and fear for athletes.
- Psychological distress is experienced when people feel unable to control their thoughts, actions, emotions, or some other aspect of their day to day living. PCA programs help athletes **control things that are in their control** (like effort) rather than what they cannot, reinforcing a sense of psychological wellbeing.
- An emphasis on Carol Dweck's **Growth Mindset**, which helps youth improve mental wellness by giving them the knowledge that they can succeed through sound effort, sound strategies, and guidance (ex: the power of YET!).
- PCA promotes a praise to **criticism ratio of 5:1**, a ratio that reinforces positive behaviors and catches athletes "in the act" of success, improving self-esteem.
- PCA's **Triple-Impact Competitor Model** is one that embraces the idea that an athlete can make themselves better, their teammates better, and "the game" better. Tools "to make a difference" are introduced in athlete workshops.