PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION AND THE PSYCHOSOCIAL QUALITIES OF COMPETITIVE JUNIOR TENNIS PLAYERS

by

MICHELLE BROWNRIIGG

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Science
Graduate Department of Community Health
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Michelle Brownrigg 1997
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-51584-2
Abstract

Study has revealed that parental attitudes and behaviors as well as parent-child communication play a significant role in a young athlete's psychosocial development. Using a group of seven competitive junior tennis players between the ages of nine and fourteen, and their parents, this study focused on four areas. Firstly it sought to examine which parental behaviours had an effect on the psychosocial development, training, and performance of competitive junior tennis players. The second purpose was to assess the impact of a parent-child communication enhancement program designed for families involved in competitive junior tennis on the psychosocial elements of competitive anxiety, sport confidence and sport enjoyment. Thirdly, it explored the efficacy of the communication-enhancement program. Finally, it set out to explore issues considered significant by youth competitive tennis players and their parents.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The long and arduous process of completing this work could not have been achieved without the support of many individuals. The relationships I have encountered during the development of this research paper have contributed to various facets of my education, my work, my life and my character.

I would like to thank Casey Curtis for the many lessons I have learned from him and the significant contribution he has made to my life. I must also thank Rocky Curtis for providing me with daily joy and helping me to keep my temper in check as I pounded (quite literally) at the computer. It is imperative that I recognize the support of Laurie, Bill, Bob and Jeff Brownrigg for the individual and combined contributions they have made in the development of who I am, and why I choose to pursue difficult and challenging tasks such as this research. Thanks as well to the Brett-Crawford family: Naomi, Tyler, Chelsey and Katie, for consistent care and support throughout this and many other experiences.

The content of these pages could not have been made possible without the dedication and commitment of the families and coaches who participated in this study. My interactions with these individuals has contributed greatly to my educational, professional, and personal development, and has garnered in me a great respect for the nature of relationships and communication in the athletic context. Thanks also to Dr. James Loehr who graciously allowed me to use his work in the pursuit of this research. I must also thank my fellow graduate students who understand only too well the peaks and valleys associated with graduate work. Our group gatherings brought humor and camaraderie to some of the most difficult times.

Throughout the educational experience of graduate studies, I have been privileged to develop several rich and meaningful mentoring relationships. Each of these relationships has provided me with access to individuals with considerable expertise, devotion, and tremendous quality of character.

To Bruce Kidd, perhaps the busiest man alive, I am grateful for the time and personal consideration he gave to my educational development and for continually providing me with
new and challenging opportunities. I am also grateful to Diane Gerin-Lajoie for her incredible patience and reassurance, as well as her immeasurable guidance in the aspects of qualitative research. I will always be appreciative to Ken Olynyk for his perpetual faith in me, for the hours of conversation in which I learned many valuable lessons, and for the many, many lunches for which I was never allowed to pay. I feel certain that I would not be quite the same person had I not encountered and developed a relationship with Kristine Drakich. Her determination, commitment, strength and energy level fascinate me, and she inspires me strive to develop some essence of these characteristics within myself. However, none of these aspects of her person has affected me as much as her capacity nurture others in a fashion which is almost always unnoticed by all but the person who is being nurtured.

It is quite possible I may have pitched this whole "thesis thing" if it hadn't been for my super supervisor Gretchen Kerr. Her grace and tact have kept me out of trouble, her wisdom and skill have made me a better writer, and her support and encouragement have provided me with many diverse educational and professional opportunities. I will always be in her debt.

I must acknowledge the very important people who, though not directly involved with this research, have made tremendous contributions in fueling my motivation and perseverance. I will never forget the coaches, medical staff, and most particularly the athletes with whom I have had the absolute pleasure of working with in the past three years. Observing the talent, drive, spirit, and strength of character these individuals demonstrate on a daily basis has consistently amazed me.

The final steps of the race are always when the legs are most weary, and I will always grateful for the spirit, energy and inspiration that Winston Ho-Sang brought to my life in the end stages of this work. In closing, I wholeheartedly thank my greatest lifetime friend, Quineata, for always believing that I could fly to the moon and back - providing, of course, that I brought her a tasteful souvenir gift! For her unconditional and unwavering support I dedicate this work to her. (Kyle, I am so ready to go shopping!)
## CONTENTS

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... ii
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................... iii

### LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................ x

### Chapter I - INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW ...................................................... 1
  Problematic Issues in North American Youth Sport Culture ................................... 1
  The Sport of Tennis ....................................................................................................... 3

### Chapter II - REVIEW OF LITERATURE ................................................................. 6
  Stress and Anxiety in Youth Sport ................................................................................ 6
  Literature Examining Stress and Anxiety in Competitive Junior Tennis Players ...... 10
  Self-Confidence in Youth Sport .................................................................................... 17
  Gender Differences in the Self-Confidence of Young Athletes .................................. 21
    Note: The Concept of Learned Helplessness ............................................................... 24
  Sport Enjoyment and the Young Athlete ....................................................................... 25
    A Special Note: Children's Rights and Youth Sport .................................................. 28
  The Role of the Parent in the Psychosocial Development of the Young Athlete ...... 29
    Parental Influences on Stress, Anxiety, and Burnout ............................................... 29
    The Effect of Parents and Peers on Self-Confidence ............................................... 34
    The Influence of Parents and Other Significant Adults on the Child's Sport Enjoyment .................................................................................................................. 39
  Training Programs designed to Educate the Significant Adults in Youth Sport ........ 42
  Research Overview .................................................................................................... 45

### Chapter III - METHOD ........................................................................................... 47
  Research Purposes and Objectives ............................................................................... 47
  Research Assumptions and Hypotheses ...................................................................... 47
  Combining a Positivist and Naturalist Approach to Research .................................... 48
    Role of the Investigator ............................................................................................. 49
  Participants .................................................................................................................... 50
    Players and Their Parents .......................................................................................... 50
    Coaches ..................................................................................................................... 51
  Research Measures and Techniques ............................................................................ 53
    Quantitative Research Instruments .......................................................................... 53
    Sport Competition Anxiety Test for Children ......................................................... 53
    Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 ....................................................................... 54
Category I: Parental Involvement in the Child's Tennis Development
Role of the Parent in the Child's Tennis Development ........................................ 108
Goals of the Parent for the Child's Tennis Development ..................................... 112
Sport Experience of the Parent .............................................................................. 115
Parental Behaviours Affecting the Child's Tennis
Development ........................................................................................................... 116
Positive Parent Behaviours ..................................................................................... 116
Negative Parent Behaviours ..................................................................................... 119
Parent-Child Communication .................................................................................... 125
Changes in Parent Behaviour ................................................................................... 127
Category II: Psychosocial Aspects of the Child's Tennis Development
Stress and Anxiety ................................................................................................... 128
Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence ............................................................................. 128
Sport Enjoyment ....................................................................................................... 130
Performance Orientation and Perfectionism .......................................................... 131
Goal-Setting ............................................................................................................ 132
Responsibility and Autonomy of the Child ............................................................. 133
Sociocultural and Economic Background ............................................................... 135
"Mental Toughness": Developing Psychological Skills ......................................... 137
Gender Issues .......................................................................................................... 138
Category III: Pressures in the Competitive Tennis Environment
Pressures Experienced by the Child ....................................................................... 140
Parental Awareness of Child's Reaction to Pressure, Stress, and Anxiety .......... 143
Pressure, Stress, and Anxiety Experienced by Parents ........................................ 145
Effect of Parental Reactions to Distress on Child Participants ............................. 146
Category IV: Coach Involvement in the Child's Tennis Development
Role of the Coach in Developing a Junior Tennis Player ...................................... 147
Influence of the Coach on Child ............................................................................. 149
Communication in the Child-Coach Relationship .............................................. 149
Coach Involvement with the Athlete's Families ..................................................... 151
Dealing with Parent-Child Conflict ....................................................................... 152
Reflection on Coaching Techniques ....................................................................... 153
Category V: The Provincial Tennis Organization and the Child's Tennis Development
Officiating ................................................................................................................. 154
Tournament Structure ............................................................................................. 155
Category VI: Evaluation of the Communication Training Program ................. 156
APPENDICES
A. Sport Competition Anxiety Test for Children
   Competitive State Anxiety Inventory - Form 2
B. Trait Sport Confidence Inventory
   State Sport Confidence Inventory
   Competitive Orientation Inventory
C. Likert Scale of Enjoyment
D. Parental Report Card
E. "My Role as a Parent" Form
   Personal Goals of Parent Form
   Personal Goals of Player Form
   Parent Profile Questionnaires
   "How Does Your Child Deal with Stress" Form
   Player Report Form
   "How I as a Tennis Parent Breakdown Under Pressure" Form
   "Which Should We Discuss" Inventory
   "My Rights and Responsibilities"
   Player Agreement Form
   "Training Your Parent" Form
   Parent Role Change Form
F. Initial Letter of Information
   Follow-Up Letter of Information
   Family Consent Form
   Coach Consent Form
   Letter of Permission for use of the Parent-Player Tennis Training Program
G. Program Session Descriptions
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Anxiety in Sport and Nonsport Activities</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>The PRECEDE Model</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>A Conceptual Model of Sport Confidence</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>A Model of Sport Enjoyment</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Parent Profile Questionnaire Scores</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Mean Pre- and Post-Program SCAT-C Scores</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>CSAI-2 Means for all Three Subcategories</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Trait Sport Confidence Inventory Means Pre- and Post-Program</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>State Sport Confidence Inventory Means Pre- and Post-Program</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Competitive Orientation Inventory Means Pre- and Post-Program</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Likert Enjoyment Scale Means Pre- and Post-Program</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Raw Data Themes for Parental Role Subcategory</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Raw Data Themes for Parent Goal Subcategory</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>Raw Data Themes for the Positive Parental Behaviour</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>Raw Data Themes for the Negative Parental Behaviour</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>The Wheel of Child Development</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>A Proposed Model for the Psychosocial Elements of Youth Sport</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page
--- | ---
2.1 The PRECEDE Model for Elite Junior Tennis Players | 12
2.2 The Maintenance Questionnaire Card | 13
2.3 Recommendations for Preventing and Overcoming Junior Tennis Burnout | 16
2.4 Selections from The United Nations Charter of Children's Rights | 28
2.5 Parent "Pressure Traps" | 33
2.6 Characteristics Attributed to "Problem Parents" | 40
2.7 Characteristics of the "Trained Parent" | 43
3.1 Training Program Sessions | 67
5.1 Children's Pre- and Post-Program Evaluations of Parent Behaviour | 93
5.2 Categories for Qualitative Data Analysis | 107
CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Overview

Problematic Issues in North American Youth Sport Culture

Most of us believe that there's nothing more basic to the [North] American way of rearing young people than sports, but many have come to realize that the world of sports for youth is not an entirely innocent or happy one. In recent years, adults have imposed unchildlike standards on children's sports. In our zeal we have overorganized, overregimented, overstructured, and overtrained our kids. We've claimed their games for the serious business of adult competition (Martin, 1986, p. 146).

[A] government task force said that professional sport shows signs of...trying to instill values and ethics in Canadian youth. [Their] report identified two kinds of ethics: rules-based, drawn from principles of sportsmanship and end-point ethics, in which the suitability of on-field behaviour is judged by its appropriateness to the ultimate goal of winning. End-point ethics is most often demonstrated in professional sport, and professional sport gets the attention of the mass media. What gets reinforced in the public's mind is a style of play in which winning is the most important thing. Therein lies a serious problem for children's sport. When they play an organized game, children are asked to imitate the skills of adults, while adults are behind the bench and in the stands acting like a parody of undisciplined children demanding victory (Christie, 1993, p. D12).

When thousands of dollars in prizes and endorsements can be obtained by a person who is not yet of voting age or old enough for military service, and not even of an age to be legally married in some states, the pressures to obtain these financial rewards from the parents who have made substantial investments in these youngsters and from the athletes themselves are enormous. They may overcome all other considerations (Ryan, 1988, p. 312).

...the climate at the elite level appears to be worsening. As children encounter opportunities for increasingly lucrative careers as professional athletes, parents are tempted to encourage their children to become heavily involved in preprofessional sports at early ages (Donnelly, Caspersen, Sergeant & Steenhof, 1993, p. 96).
In recent years, concern over the escalating intensity of children's sports has prompted critical examination of youth sport culture and elite sport programs for children in North America. The previous quotations from books, magazines and newspaper articles illustrate the need to reconsider the principles and practices of coaches, administrators, and parents of youth sport participants. The approach of many sport programs for youngsters needs to be reappraised and adjusted to preserve and promote the health of the children involved.

Commentary on the problematic issues of youth sport is not limited to observers alone. Young athletes and their parents have also remarked on experiences in youth sport which can be damaging. Ryan's recent account of elite gymnasts and figure skaters in America revealed the pain and regret of past participants and their parents as one mother stated, "...as a parent, you become so involved in it you just really can't see the whole picture. You're only seeing what you want to see," (1995, p. 22). Similarly, a former gymnast described her reaction to a painful fall,

I wasn't just screaming because of the pain. I was screaming because I was losing everything. What used to be so easy, what used to be something that I loved more than anything, was turning into something horrible, and I couldn't stop it (Ryan, 1995, p. 86).

Ryan also illustrated the insights which come too late for some parents, as the mother of Christy Henrich, a former gymnast who died in July of 1994 after a prolonged struggle with anorexia and bulimia stated,

Now that I look back, I see that it's okay to train world-class athletes, but not at the cost of our children. Somehow change has got to come. Gold medals are good, but we're talking about people's lives. The change has got to come from the whole system: judges, officials, coaches, everybody (1995, p. 83).

Media and research are not only reporting instances of successful training and competitive outcomes in the youth sport environment, but are also beginning to examine
the damaging consequences which result from a child being driven to achieve that success at the expense of healthy development. One of the greatest areas of controversy concerning the intensity of youth athletics has involved the sport of tennis.

The Sport of Tennis

Several youth sports are plagued by misguided parents, overzealous coaches, and pressures on the participants to win. The sport of tennis is no exception. The very nature of the game of tennis proves to be highly problematic and can be excessively demanding on a child athlete. Loehr and Kahn (1987, pp. 13-15) explain:

Tennis is a tough, solitary competition that forces the player to perform at his [or her] peak without coaching, without substitution, and under tremendous physical and psychological pressure from an opponent. And this is true whether the player is an adult or child. In junior tennis, the player is alone. The problems to be solved are his [or hers], not a team's. The pressure...success...or failure is his [or hers]....The demands tennis places on a young player include effort, concentration, endurance, and the opponent. Once the match is underway, it must be completed. If a player has to take a break, that player's defaulted. If things aren't going well, if a stroke isn't working, the player still must continue. There's no opportunity to pull oneself together, to regroup, to take a break on the bench while the coach sends a substitute into the game. The player makes or breaks a match on his [or her] own, and everyone - opponents, officials, spectators - is aware of that. The need to concentrate is underscored by the sport's prohibition on coaching....if the coach - who could be a father, mother, brother, sister, or tennis pro - suggests anything, no matter how insignificant, the player could be penalized and ultimately defaulted.

Loehr and Kahn (1987, p.15) elaborate by comparing tennis to other pressure-filled individual sports.

Many of these pressures - the need to concentrate, to be fit, to sustain an effort - are true of other individual sports. But unlike gymnastics or diving, tennis features a real physical opponent as well. Those sports that, like tennis, involve fine motor skill - eye-hand coordination, footwork, trained muscle response - don't throw in the fundamental additional problem of an opponent.
Thus it is clear that the nature of the game of tennis involves unique pressures for the young athlete. These pressures are heightened by the fact that, unlike many individual sports, tennis has a professional tour that thrives year-round and receives extensive media coverage. Tennis is also a sport for which many colleges in the United States can provide full athletic scholarships, covering the entire tuition expense for a child's post-secondary education. Therefore, it may be argued that children who pursue the sport of tennis are at risk of experiencing greater pressure than many other young athletes.

Tennis, more than any other professional sport has hosted a parade of young champions: Boris Becker, Michael Chang, and Monica Seles - possessing the Wimbledon Championship, French Open Championship, and the number one ranking in the world respectively - achieving these feats at the age of seventeen (Hahn, 1992a, p. 32). As a result, the number of adolescent professionals on the tour has increased, leading to media scrutiny of the pressure experienced by these players. Hahn (1992a, p.33) discusses the rise and fall of Jennifer Capriati, who made her professional debut at thirteen years of age:

For Capriati and many other teen superstars, early fame and fortune are quickly followed by a personal and professional slump. But Capriati's turmoil has captured the most attention, undoubtedly due to the dramatic - and heart-wrenching - fashion in which it occurred. Two-and-a-half years after her debut as a carefree giant-killer...she tearfully told the press after a respectable quarterfinal loss in the Australian Open: "It's becoming too serious."

Capriati was arrested for drug possession in May of 1993, and no longer participates in professional competitive tennis, entering and exiting the sport before she turned eighteen years old (Jollimore, 1994, p. D5).

Among the disturbing stories surrounding professional tennis are the reports of overzealous and sometimes abusive parents of these young athletes. Mary Pierce, after years of verbal and alleged physical abuse by her father, finally obtained a restraining order to have him banned from attending her competitions (Deford, 1995; Hahn, 1992b).
Despite the tales of burnout and damaged development, young junior players still strive for early entry into the professional circuit. Jollimore reports of the professional debuts of Martina Hingis and Venus Williams, both fourteen years of age, entering the pro tour just ahead of the inception of the Women's Tennis Council rule restricting full-time participation on the tour to females sixteen years and older (1994, p.D5). Anna Kournikova was brought from Moscow to train at Nick Bollettieri's Tennis Academy Florida at nine years of age, and has been widely publicized as the next teen superstar (Deford, 1995; Hahn, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1993).

In the United States, agents from sport marketing firms roam junior tournaments in search of fresh, marketable talent (Deford, 1995, p.45). While this is not the case in Canada, the conversation at junior tennis tournaments often revolves around scholarship opportunities, selection processes for provincial and national tournaments, and comparison of junior training programs. The conversation is often tense and plaintive, sometimes interrupted by negative parental reactions to a child's performance on the court.

I have personally witnessed children being berated and verbally abused by their parents. I have seen parents illegally coach their children during a match and act in an unethical manner during match play in a deliberate attempt to disrupt the play of their child's opponent. The sport of tennis, with its potential for scholarships, sponsorship, perhaps a professional career, and simply the nature of the sport itself, places young athletes and their families in situations where stress may become excessive, enjoyment can be destroyed, child development can be hindered, and family relationships may be damaged. It is essential that parent-child relationships in the sport of tennis be examined and facilitated so that families will maintain a healthy perspective with regard to the child's sport involvement.
CHAPTER II
Review of Literature

Participation in children's sport has continually grown in North America. Children are introduced to sport at earlier and earlier ages. Furthermore, youth sport has become more specialized, involving practice hours and levels of physical training that were formerly reserved for adult sport endeavours (Cahill & Pearl, 1993, p.xi).

The evolution of youth sport has been accompanied by an increasing volume of research concerning the psychosocial aspects of children's sport experiences. In a comprehensive review of such research, Kerr (1996) wrote that youth sport can be a positive and enriching experience, or a negative and damaging experience for a child, depending on the psychosocial context.

Of specific interest to the present research are the psychosocial variables of competitive stress and anxiety, self-esteem, self-confidence, and sport enjoyment. The existing literature has indicated that these variables are important determinants of the nature of sport experience for children. Hence, each of these areas were explored in preparation for the present study, and will be reviewed in turn.

Stress and Anxiety in Youth Sport

Defining the term "stress" is difficult as it has been described as both an environmental variable and a psychological reaction (Gould, 1993, p.20). Selye, the pioneer of stress research, described stress as, "the state manifested by the specific syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically-induced changes within a biologic system," (1956, p.472). Lazarus has discussed the many variations of this original definition in the biological and social sciences over the years. The stimulus-response
definition of stress focuses on the human reaction to demands or stressors (1984, pp.12-20). The relational definition of stress refers to a "person-environment relationship," (Lazarus, 1984, p. 14). He also noted that the use of the term "anxiety" has been used as a synonym for the term "stress", leading to considerable confusion over the definitive nature of the two concepts (1984, pp. 1-21).

The work of Selye (1956) assists in the clarification of the two terms. He indicated anxiety to be a response to stress, and is therefore not the equivalent of stress (1956, p.175). It is important to note that the two terms have been used interchangeably in youth sport research as well, creating an image of stress and anxiety that is unclear and overlapping in the athletic context.

However, most researchers in youth sport accept and support McGrath's depiction of stress as a process, in which "a substantial imbalance [occurs] between demand and response capability." (1970, p.20). McGrath suggested that the stress process involves four stages: the environmental situation or demand placed on the child, the child's perception of that situation or demand, the child's physical and psychological response to the demand, and, finally, the child's behaviour as a result of that response (Gould, 1993, p.20). Stress results when there is a perceived imbalance between the situational demand and the capability to deal with that demand on the part of the child. Stress also occurs when the failure to meet the demand is perceived to hold important consequences (McGrath, 1970, p.20).

Scanlan and Lewthwaite's (1988, p.43) definition of competitive stress and anxiety essentially reiterates McGrath's definition, describing the stress process within the competitive context:

Stress is triggered when an imbalance is perceived between competitive demands and resources to meet those demands, in situations where negative consequences are believed to follow such an imbalance.
An essential component of these and other definitions of stress and anxiety (Martens, 1977; Smith & Smoll, 1982) is the focus on the individual's appraisal of the environment, not simply the environment itself. Gould noted that "young athletes will vary greatly in their interpretations of how stressful they perceive certain environments," (1993, p.20). Martens (1988a p. 241, original italics) indicated that the variance in young athletes' perceptions could be attributed to two factors:

These two factors are the uncertainty individuals have about the outcomes of competing and the importance they attach to these outcomes. The more uncertain individuals are about being able to meet the demands of the competitive situation in order to obtain a favourable outcome and the more important these outcomes are, the greater the anxiety will be.

Scanlan stated that central to the experience of competitive stress and anxiety in sport is the element of social evaluation (1984, p.113). She noted that the sporting arena places the child in a position where he or she must display his or her ability (or lack of) in full view of significant peers and adults, as well as perfect strangers (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986, p.113). Recognizing that individual differences will exist between children, research has examined the degree of stress experienced by youngsters in various situations involving social evaluation (Martens, 1978, p.246). The results of this research, depicted in Figure 2.1, indicated that sport competition, for the majority of children, did not create as much anxiety as a solo music evaluation (Martens, 1978, p.246). Martens' results also showed that certain sports may cause greater levels of stress in children. As evidenced in Figure 2.1, children found individual sports to be more stressful than team sports (1978, p.246).
Numerous other studies (Hale, 1961; Hanson, 1967, Lowe & McGrath, 1971; Skubic, 1955; Tierney, 1988) have been conducted in youth sport incorporating psychophysiological and self-report measures of anxiety. In his comprehensive review of this research, Gould stated, "although some young athletes report high levels of competitive anxiety...this is typically less than half of the children involved," (1993, p.23).

Although studies of youth sport have indicated that excessive stress levels in children were not the norm, it is still essential to identify the personal and social characteristics of children who perceived sport endeavours as highly stressful. Martens' Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) (1977), a sport-focused adaptation of Spielberger's (1977) work, introduced the concepts of competitive state and trait anxiety. Competitive trait anxiety, considered to be an enduring aspect of personality was defined by Martens as, "a predisposition to perceive certain environmental stimuli as threatening or non-threatening and to respond to these stimuli with varying levels of state anxiety," (1977, p.9). Competitive state anxiety was described as, "an existing or current emotional state characterized by feelings of apprehension and tension," (Martens, 1977, p.9). Trait
anxiety has consistently been shown to influence one's level of state anxiety, such that an individual with high trait anxiety will also have high state anxiety (Gould, 1993, p.21).

Scanlan and Lewthwaite (1984) examined several factors thought to predispose children to find sport highly stressful. Results of this study indicated that children high in competitive trait anxiety and children with low personal performance expectancies reported greater levels of stress (1984, pp. 222-224). It is important to note that high competitive trait anxious children may lose perspective of the role that sport plays in their lives; Smilkstein reported that some children rate making an athletic team as more stressful than losing a grandparent, suspension from school, or a parent's loss of occupation (1980, p.737).

In accordance with Martens, Scanlan (1984) found that individual sport, due to its evaluative nature, was associated with higher pre-competition stress and anxiety levels for children. Low self-esteem and low personal performance expectancies also correlated with higher pre-competition stress and anxiety levels (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1984; Scanlan & Passer, 1979). Finally, fear of failure and the perceived importance of the contest were positively related with pre-competitive anxiety (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1984). Regarding post-competitive stress and anxiety, research indicated that children who won the contest experienced less stress and anxiety than those who lost or ended the contest in a tie (Passer, 1982; Scanlan & Passer, 1979). Most importantly, regardless of victory or loss, those children who reported the experience as more fun indicated lower stress and anxiety levels (Scanlan 1984; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1984; Scanlan & Passer, 1979).

**Literature Examining Stress and Anxiety in Competitive Junior Tennis Players**

Recent investigations of competitive junior tennis players have explored the psychosocial aspects of stress and anxiety. O'Connell (1993) conducted research concerning the factors affecting the participation of female competitive junior tennis
players. Her study revealed that "too much pressure" was among the top three reasons former players listed for ending their participation in competitive tennis (1993, p.37).

A study conducted by Dunlap and Berne (1991) examined negative health occurrences in elite junior tennis players resulting from excessive competitive stress. This research incorporated the use of the PRECEDE health model which investigates the predisposing, reinforcing and enabling factors in educational diagnosis and evaluation in the health fields (Dunlap & Berne, 1991, p.59). The PRECEDE model, displayed in Figure 2.2 was developed on the premise that factors significant to outcomes (in this case, competitive stress) should be diagnosed before the structure and design of an intervention can occur (Dunlap & Berne, 1991, p.59). The investigators described the model as,

...a retrospective epidemiological review, starting with outcomes (quality of life markers), and working backwards through evident health problems, behavioural causes creating the health problems, and finally the predisposing, enabling and reinforcing factors influencing the behaviours (Dunlap & Berne, 1991, p.60).

Figure 2.2
Dunlap et al. allowed the players to explore the various factors which caused them stress, using the InnerView Personal Health Assessment (Iron, 1985) and a private interview. The breakdown of the PRECEDE model for elite junior tennis players is displayed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

The PRECEDE Model for Elite Junior Tennis Players

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Quality of Life Factors</th>
<th>Phase 2: Health Problems</th>
<th>Phase 3: Behavioural Causes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conditional self-esteem</td>
<td>Nervousness</td>
<td>Excessive practice/play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard-driven</td>
<td>Unsettled stomach</td>
<td>Excessive competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-disciplined</td>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Deficit stress management skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>Sleep difficulty</td>
<td>Adult/Peer Pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regimented lifestyle</td>
<td>Shin splints</td>
<td>Limited generic socialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High pressure</td>
<td>Tennis elbow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress fractures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low body weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socialization deficit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 4: Predisposing Factors</th>
<th>Enabling Factors</th>
<th>Reinforcing Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value athletic, academic,</td>
<td>Exceptional tennis</td>
<td>Role models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and financial success</td>
<td>talent</td>
<td>Tournament wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe hard work pays off</td>
<td>Availability of tennis</td>
<td>Tournament prizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe high pressure</td>
<td>academy</td>
<td>Sponsorships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition is essential to</td>
<td>Parental support</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>success</td>
<td>Higher socioeconomic</td>
<td>Approval/disapproval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceive that life revolves</td>
<td>status</td>
<td>Punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>around tennis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have external locus of control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 5-6: Education and Administrative Diagnosis, Intervention Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Players:</th>
<th>For Parents/Coaches:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal counselling</td>
<td>Sport psychology consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group counselling</td>
<td>Support training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress management skill development</td>
<td>Parent/Coach conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 7: Program Evaluation

| Player maintenance card tracking against baseline data | |
| Injury/drop-out monitoring against baseline data | |
| Individual/team performance against baseline data | |
| Program participant biannual evaluations | |

The athletes' increased awareness of their sources of competitive stress was
directed toward the development of relaxation, concentration, and stress management
techniques. Other intervention strategies included individual and group consultation with
a sport psychology consultant, support training for parents and coaches, and dedicating
free time to the enjoyment of activities that were unrelated to tennis (Dunlap & Berne,

Dunlap and Berne suggested that intervention strategies could be monitored and
maintained using a Maintenance Questionnaire Card, illustrated in Table 2.2. This
evaluation tool is administered weekly by the coach, and targets athlete behaviours in

Table 2.2
Maintenance Questionnaire Card

Answer the questions as follows:
SA: strongly agree; A: agree; N: neutral; D: disagree;
SD: strongly disagree
Your responses will be kept confidential

This week 1:
1. enjoyed playing tennis
2. slept comfortably at least 7 hours/night
3. cried
4. set aside some time for relaxation
5. handled problems with ease
6. was impatient
7. had trouble sleeping
8. related well with coaches
9. related well with parents
10. used relaxation and coping techniques
11. was nervous
12. related well with peers and players
13. met demands of school and tennis
14. had an injury
15. was depressed

KOERD, p. 62.
While the PRECEDE model proves to be a useful tool for increasing awareness of the stress experienced by these athletes, it has some limitations. Phase four of the model, which focuses on the predisposing, enabling, and reinforcing factors of the child's stress highlights many elements which are considered positive aspects of the sporting experience (e.g. believing hard work pays off, valuing success). To approach a parent or coach with these factors as reasons for health problems and stress would not likely encourage support for intervention. Perhaps this is a comment on the implications of North American societal values in sport, but it may have been more effective to indicate that if too much emphasis is placed on these values they become negative. For example, the pursuit of athletic success should not be the determinant of personal worth, nor should athletic success be pursued at the exclusion of everything else in life.

The other limitation of Dunlap and Berne's approach is that the negative outcomes are present in the athlete's behavior (e.g. conditional self-esteem, stomach problems, socialization deficits) before the model can be used. It is useful therefore only as a treatment, whereas prevention of these symptoms is the ultimate goal.

Gould, Tuffey, Udry and Loehr (1994) conducted a thorough report concerning burnout due to excessive stress and anxiety in competitive junior tennis players for the United States Tennis Association. The purpose of the project was to "identify and psychologically describe junior tennis burnouts and compare these individuals to players who did not burn out of junior tennis," (Gould et al., 1994, p.8). A sample of sixty-two participants, thirty burnouts and thirty-two comparison players, completed a battery of psychological inventories including assessments of trait anxiety, burnout, perfectionism, intrinsic-extrinsic motivational orientation and athletic identity (Gould et al., 1994, p.8). A subsample of those individuals who were categorized as burnouts were also interviewed in an effort to obtain detailed information about junior tennis burnout and possible recommendations for prevention (Gould et al., 1994, p.8).
Gould et al. reported that players who were experiencing or had experienced burnout had less input into their training, felt they had played in too many tournaments, were more likely to have played in higher age divisions in tournaments, and on average, practiced fewer days per week. It was noted that the lack of input into training and the number of years played up in age divisions were the most significant indicators of burnout (1994, p.18). The finding that burned out players practiced fewer days per week seems surprising, but Gould et al. state that these individuals reported lighter practice schedules because they were already in the process of burning out and had therefore reduced their practice load (1994, p.20).

Other survey data revealed that athletes who experienced burnout were less motivated, more withdrawn, had lower personal standards, and had greater concern for mistakes than comparison subjects (Gould et al., 1994, p.19). With regard to coping strategies, survey findings indicated that these athletes were less likely to use planning strategies and were lower on positive reinterpretation and growth coping skills (Gould et al., 1994, p.21). Finally, it was found that burnouts reported higher perceptions of parental criticism and expectations than their counterparts who were not burned out (Gould et al., 1994, p.21).

Themes uncovered in the interview data included lack of motivation, fatigue, frequent illness, inability to seek or obtain support when struggling with burnout, a lack of coping strategies, parental influences, dearth of social activity, lack of enjoyment in tennis pursuits, internalization of emotions, attachment of self-concept to tennis performance, and coach influences (Gould et al., 1994, pp. 25-40). Gould et al. stated that the results of interview data, "add further support to the suggestion that the experience of burnout is specific to the individual," noting that the manifestations of stress and reactions to burnout were different for each athlete (1994, p.44). However, the themes which emerged from the interview data provide insight into the psychosocial experiences of athlete burnout.
Coakley (1992) also emphasized that a young athlete's environment and social relationships could be more strongly related to burnout than that individual athlete's inability to deal with chronic stress. Coakley indicates that adult control over the child athlete's life, particularly parental control, can result in burnout as the child is developmentally limited by such control, feeling powerless and disconnected from his or her life. The disparity of power in these relationships can be a significant source of distress for the child (1992, p.279). Hence, the research of both Coakley (1992) and Gould et al. (1994) reveal that burnout is a developmental, as well as a psychological issue. Gould et al. listed recommendations for overcoming and preventing burnout in the junior tennis competitor, as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Recommendations for Preventing and Overcoming Junior Tennis Burnout

- Monitor Burnout Levels in Players
- Parental Education
- Provide a Socially Supportive Junior Tennis Environment
- Player Education
- Allow Players to Have Input into Their Training
- Limit Possibilities of Players Playing Up in Age Division
- Minimize Parental Criticism and Coaching
- Recognize and Limit Travel Demands
- Beware of Overtraining
- Emphasize the Fun of Junior Tennis
- Teach Preventative Stress Management Strategies


These recommendations are of particular significance as they are generated from the athletes who have experienced the difficulties of burnout first-hand.
Understanding the Role of Stress and Anxiety in Youth Sport "Drop-Outs". Gould noted that it is important to understand that children who drop out of sport are not necessarily burned out from excessive stress and anxiety (1993, p. 29). Instead, most children leave sport because they develop other interests (Gould, 1993, p.29). Therefore the examination of stress, anxiety and burnout must carry with it the caveat that the majority of children in sport do not experience high levels of stress and burnout. The need for such research, as stated earlier, is to prevent the high-risk child from becoming a burnout statistic.

However, regardless of whether it is the majority or minority of children who experience excessive competitive stress or burnout, the ramifications of such an experience are extremely negative and may be evidenced in other areas of psychosocial development. One of the areas of development highly affected by a child's experiences with stress, anxiety and burnout is self-confidence (Gould, 1993, Vealey, 1986).

Self-Confidence in Youth Sport

Research in the psychosocial realm of human behavior has yielded many "self" words, including: self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-concept, and self-confidence. Because of the confusing nature of the many "self" words, it is necessary to clearly delineate the accepted definitions for each of these terms.

Coopersmith, (1967, p.5), described self-esteem as,

... the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself[herself]: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself[herself] to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and or other expressive behavior.
Coopersmith's description of the term self-esteem as a personal judgment of "worthiness" often results in the substitution of the term "self-worth" in the literature (Feltz, 1988, p.424).

Bandura (1977) described self-efficacy as the conviction an individual has to successfully execute a behaviour to produce a certain outcome. He noted that self-efficacy does not refer to the skills one possesses, but instead focuses on the judgments an individual holds regarding what he or she can do with those skills (1986, p.28). Bandura suggested that one's self-efficacy specifies the level of perceived competence that individual maintains (1986, p.28). The notion of perceived competence (a term used interchangeably with perceived ability) involves "the sense that one has the ability to master a task." (Feltz, 1988, p. 424).

Self-concept is defined as "a composite view of oneself that is developed throughout evaluative experiences and social interactions (Feltz, 1988, p.424). Finally, in a thorough review of literature concerning the various "self" terms, Feltz noted that self-confidence has been defined as both, "a global trait that accounts for overall performance optimism", as well as "the belief that one can successfully execute a specific activity" (1988, p.423).

While the various terms involving the self are interrelated, each is unique. Bandura noted that the concept of self-confidence differs from self-efficacy in that self-confidence refers to the degree of belief an individual holds about a certain task, but it does not consider the level of perceived competence, whereas the term self-efficacy encompasses both strength of belief and perceived competence (1986, p. 32). Feltz (1988, p. 423) referred to Bandura's idea of self-efficacy as "situationally specific self-confidence", however, her review of the literature indicated that researchers have used the term self-confidence to refer to what Bandura described as self-efficacy.

Bandura also noted that the composite view of oneself, that is global self-concept, does not concur with the variations in self-confidence and self-efficacy that occur across
different situations for an individual (1986, p. 32). In addition, Feltz (1988, p.424) noted the distinctions between self-esteem and self-confidence:

Although self-confidence and self-esteem may be related, certain individuals do not have high self-confidence for a given activity, but nevertheless still "like themselves"; by contrast, there are those who may regard themselves as highly competent at a given activity, but do not have corresponding feelings of self-worth.

However, research by Harter (1988) indicated that self-esteem is multi-dimensional in nature, that is, an individual's level of self-esteem may vary depending on the domain or situation. To use an example from youth culture, a child may have a high self-esteem with regard to academics, but a lower self-esteem in the area of athletics. The contemporary multidimensional view of self-esteem described in Harter's work differs from the traditional view of the term, which referred to a general perception of how much an individual liked or disliked him or herself. Hence, the traditional, more global view of self-esteem is comparable to self-concept, whereas more contemporary views liken themselves to the notion of self-confidence.

Therefore, the confusion and overlap among the "self" terms is comparable to the confusion that affects the terms stress and anxiety. Feltz concluded that, with regard to sport, self-confidence is best defined as, "...the perceived ability to accomplish a certain level of performance," (1988, p.425).

In the specific area of sport and movement, the terms "movement confidence" and "sport confidence" have been developed (Griffin & Keogh, 1982; Vealey, 1986). Movement confidence describes an individual's feeling of adequacy in a movement situation (Griffin & Keogh), whereas sport confidence is defined as "the belief or degree of certainty individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sport," (Vealey, 1986, p. 222).

An overall measure of sport confidence involves examining an athlete's trait sport confidence (SC-Trait), defined as "the degree of certainty individuals usually possess
about their ability to be successful in sport", state sport-confidence (SC-State), which is, "the degree of certainty individuals possess at one particular moment about their ability to be successful in sport," and competitive orientation, which explores the degree to which an athlete engages in sport for outcomes (winning, medals, etc.) versus performance (mastery of skill, process of playing well) (Vealey, 1986, p.223).

Vealey's definition of competitive orientation is closely related to the concept of goal orientation. Nicholls (1984) proposed that individuals subjectively define competence or ability differently and then set goals based on these subjective definitions. He indicated that those who view competence as performing better than others are ego-oriented, while those who believe that personal improvement is the essence of competence are task-oriented (1984, p. 22). Ego-oriented athletes tend to have primarily outcome-based perceptions of success (Nicholls, 1984, p.22).

Research examining the achievement goals and beliefs of elite adolescent tennis players revealed that male athletes tend to possess an ego-oriented goal-belief dimension, whereas the female athletes tend to possess both ego- and task-oriented goal-beliefs (Newton & Duda, 1993, p.445). The investigators noted the outcome-based criteria for success which is prevalent in junior tennis, and stated that ego-oriented athletes, "...would tend to experience less enjoyment, feel more anxiety, exert less effort and display less persistence at playing tennis than would task-oriented athletes who hold a different belief system," (Newton & Duda, 1993. p.445). Therefore, it is important to note that the goal orientation of the young athlete holds implications for that athlete's confidence.

Vealey devised a conceptual model for sport confidence, which is displayed in Figure 2.3. She used the model to indicate an interactional paradigm of sport confidence in which an athlete's trait sport-confidence and competitive orientation combine to produce a certain level of state sport-confidence with a given objective sport situation. Vealey noted that SC-State is the "most important facilitator of behaviour as it is based on the mutual influence of situational factors and individual differences," (1986, p.224).
Vealey's conceptualization and development of sport-specific self-confidence has provided researchers with a valid and reliable tool for measuring a construct which has proven to be somewhat difficult to define.

**Gender Differences in the Self-Confidence of Young Athletes**

The literature concerning self-confidence in young athletes contains many articles exploring possible gender differences in the manifestation of this psychosocial construct. Hence, a review of research in the area would be incomplete without exploration of this literature. Studies of males and females concerning physical activity and sport suggest that "lack of self-confidence may be a major reason why females, as a group, do not reach their optimal potential in physical activities," (Stewart & Corbin, 1989, p.64). While this
assertion is alarming, examination of research involving female self-confidence in the realm of sport has yielded mixed results.

The initial effect of self-confidence on involvement in sport and physical activity concerns performance expectancies on the part of the participant. Croxton, Chicchia, and Wagner (1987, p.167), in a study of university undergraduates found that males were more confident of success prior to an athletic contest than females. In addition, Crandall, Preston, and Rabson (1962) claimed that boys are likely to state success expectations equal to or above their ability, whereas girls tend to state success expectations below their ability level. Finally, Corbin and Nix (1979, p.43) stated that success predictions for a group of elementary school girls was lower than that of boys prior to competition, however, this prediction was reported only for what was considered by subjects to be a "male" activity. Corbin and Nix suggested that "girls are discouraged from stating high or realistic success predictions though this behavior is rewarded for boys," (1979, p.51).

Lenney (1977) contended that lack of self-confidence in females is the result of three situational variables: the nature of the task, presence of social comparison/evaluation, and the need for performance feedback. In response to Lenney's situational factors, research was conducted concerning performance feedback. Controlling for the first two factors by designing a "neutral" task in a noncomparitive, non-competitive environment, Corbin, Stewart, and Blair (1981, p.30) found that,

... the self-confidence of young girls did not differ from young boys. In the absence of Lenney's first two factors, girls did not seem to lack self-confidence, nor did they seem to be more dependent on performance feedback than boys.

Corbin et al. noted that the age of the subjects (6-10) years may have affected the results as it is possible that older female participants may have different expectancies due to greater exposure to sex role socialization.
In another study of non-competitive activity, Stewart & Corbin (1988) compared low confidence preadolescent boys and girls concerning feedback dependence. Their results indicated that the presence of feedback elevated low pre-performance self-confidence groups to the level of high pre-performance groups, for both boys and girls, however, it is noted that "many more girls were low in self-confidence prior to the task than were boys," (1988, p.160).

Finally in a study of college-age females performing a gender-neutral task, it was found that these subjects lacked self-confidence when compared to males. When feedback was provided, confidence levels for the given motor task improved, but did not generalize to a different task. It was suggested by the researchers that a fourth factor, lack of experience, be added to Lenney's situational hypothesis (Petruzzello & Corbin, 1988, p.174).

The results of the research presented indicate that Lenney's situational variability model should include a statement that the various situational factors interact with one another. In addition, it is noted by Petruzzello and Corbin that Lenney's list may be incomplete as it excludes the effects of lack of experience on self-confidence.

Another aspect of sport and physical activity affected by self-confidence concerns attributions. Riordan, Thomas, and James (1985) studied gender differences in attributions involving a one-on-one sports competition. They found that females attributed losses externally, whereas males maintained a preference for internal attributions. However, male attributions were generally more unstable than females (1985, p.42). To clarify, although males possessed internal attributions after a loss, these attributions reflected unstable conditions such as "I was tired" or "I wasn't thinking". In contrast, female external attributions were relatively stable, usually giving credit to an opponent, which was not the case for males (Riordan et al., 1985, p.49).

An important note concerning the research of Riordan et al. is that the external attributions of females following losses "suggests that these females had high expectancies
This statement contradicts the research findings regarding performance expectancies discussed earlier. Whether these discrepancies are due to changes in female approaches to sport over time and greater acceptance of females in sport, or the result of specific aspects of this particular study is unclear.

A final note on expectancies and attributions is reported by Vealey (1988). Her study of sport confidence in elite female athletes revealed that confidence measures in these athletes were no different from their male counterparts (1988, p.476). In response to these results Vealey stated,

These data suggest that females at an elite level of sport involvement strongly believe they have the ability to be successful at their sport. An interesting question to be addressed is whether they are selected into elite levels of sport because of their confidence (and ability) or whether they develop high levels of confidence from competing at an elite level. (1988, p.476).

Vealey's comments reflect back on the suggestion of Petruzello et al. to include experience (or lack of) in Lenney's situational variability model. It is difficult to explain or understand the sequence of events in the development of confidence as the interaction of situational factors is also effected by socialization influences.

Note: The Concept of "Learned Helplessness". Weiller and Higgs' (1989) investigation of children's literature focuses on the notion of female learned helplessness in sport. This state of low self-confidence on the part of females with regard to physical activity is defined by the authors as producing, "passivity, negative expectations, anxiety, depression, reduced aggression and reduced competitiveness," (1989, p.65).

Learned helplessness is an unfortunate result of many socialization experiences for young females. Consequently, these girls may choose not to engage in activity leading to the statistics which indicate that female adolescents do not achieve their fitness or skill potential (Stewart & Corbin, 1989, p.64).
Both male and female children need and deserve a sporting experience which enhances, rather than detracts from, their development of confidence and self-worth. A child who feels competent and worthy of the physical activity he or she is pursuing will be sure to enjoy that activity more fully than the child who is made to feel threatened or inferior in his or her athletic pursuits. Enjoyment of physical activity is an essential component of a child's psychosocial development and will now be addressed.

**Sport Enjoyment and the Young Athlete**

Sport enjoyment is considered, "a positive emotional response to one's sport experience that reflects feelings and/or perceptions such as pleasure, liking and perceived fun," (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988, p.45). The essential emotional aspect of enjoyment is discussed by Brustad (1988, p.30, italics added):

Emotion represents a highly visible and prominent component of the sport experience. Typically, emotion in sport has been veined as the thrill of victory or the agony of defeat resulting from a given competitive situation. However, a much more enduring emotional experience for the athlete may also be conceptualized that results from a succession of competitive experiences over the course of a sport season or over a number of years. This more persistent affective orientation may be characterized by pride, enjoyment, satisfaction and the desire to continue participation, or by apprehension and anxiety concerning continued sport involvement.

Scanlan and Lewthwaite (1986, p.32) commented in similar fashion to Brustad with regard to their study of sport enjoyment,

...Sport enjoyment is conceptualized as an individual's affective response to his or her competitive sport experience which reflects feelings and/or perceptions such as pleasure, liking and experienced fun.

Scanlan and Lewthwaite's research sought to examine predictors of sport enjoyment and found that younger children and those with higher perceived competence
had greater levels of enjoyment (1986, p.31). Brustad found that intrinsic motivation correlated with increased enjoyment levels, and that low competitive trait anxiety levels did not indicate higher levels of enjoyment. Brustad also found that objective success experiences such as high ability or winning teams were not predictive of enjoyment (1988, pp.318-332).

O'Connell's study of the factors affecting the participation of female junior tennis competitors revealed that close to sixty percent of these tennis players indicated "fun" as the number one reason for their involvement in competitive tennis (1993, p.30). Almost the same percentage of these individuals indicated that they would stop playing competitive tennis if it stopped being fun (O'Connell, 1993, p.35). O'Connell also found that one of the top three reasons given by the former players for quitting tennis included the reason that it was "not fun" (1993, p. 37). Gould et al. (1994, p. 34) noted that lack of enjoyment was a dimension prevalent among many of the junior tennis players who had burned out, as shown in the quotation from one participant in the research:

I started to lose some of the fun that I was having on the court. I didn't consider it a game, it was more like a job where you know if I didn't play well or something, you know, I almost wouldn't get paid or wouldn't, like, an analogy in that sense. It was as far away from a game as it could get for me.

These findings support assertions by Scanlan and Lewthwaite (1988, p. 45) who stated:

Enjoyment or fun has been identified by children as a major reason for their sport participation, whereas the lack of enjoyment has been associated with children's decisions to drop out of organized sport.

Further, Scanlan, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt, and Keeler (1993) contended that sport enjoyment is an essential influence on the young athlete's sport commitment.

Motivation and Enjoyment. Scanlan and Lewthwaite's research of sport enjoyment also discussed the links between enjoyment and motivation,
...sport enjoyment shares a common base with the construct of intrinsic motivation. That shared base involves the underlying perceptions of personal competence and control (self-determination) which are necessary conditions for enjoyment and intrinsic motivation.

(1986, p.32).

However, Scanlan noted that sport enjoyment is broader than intrinsic motivation as it involves aspects beyond personal perceptions of competence and control such as social evaluation, affiliation, and joy of movement (1986, p.32). Based on this philosophy, she developed a preliminary model for sport enjoyment, illustrated in Figure 2.4.

![Figure 2.4: A Model of Sport Enjoyment](image)

Wankel and Kreisel (1985, p.62) examined several perceptions of youth sport and their relevance to enjoyment, obtaining reports from children aged seven through fourteen.

Findings led to the following recommendations for youth sport programs:

Emphases should be on movement, skill development, and enjoyment of doing the skills. Winning and receiving rewards for playing, aspects that are frequently given considerable emphasis by parents, trainers and the media, are of secondary importance to the participants' enjoyment and should not be heavily emphasized.
These recommendations for youth sport also hold implications for the previously discussed areas of anxiety and self-confidence. It is essential to note that the elements of psychosocial development overlap and interact in the child's sport experience. Hence, while this research focuses on the areas of stress and anxiety, confidence, and enjoyment, related issues of psychosocial development should also be briefly addressed.

A Special Note: Children's Rights and Youth Sport  
Decisions made by the United Nations concerning children's rights in November of 1989 led to the development of an official resolution by the United Nations General Assembly (1989). The Rights of the Child were officially published by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights (1990). Many of these rights listed in that document can be highlighted in connection with youth athletics. The articles of significance are depicted in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

Selections from The United Nations Charter of Children's Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 1</td>
<td>&quot;State parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 12</td>
<td>&quot;State parties shall assure the child...the right to express [his or her own views] freely in all matters affecting the child...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 18</td>
<td>&quot;...parents [guardians] have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 19</td>
<td>&quot;...[child has the right of protection] from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, ...maltreatment or exploitation...while in the care of parent(s), guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 28</td>
<td>&quot;State parties recognize the right of the child to education...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 32</td>
<td>&quot;State parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous...[to the] child's education...health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. United Nations Centre for Human Rights - The Rights of the Child

Many of these rights are neglected in the world of youth sport, particularly when the sport provides opportunities for lucrative earnings in the form of prize money or...
endorsements for the child athlete. Therefore, providing an environment which allows the child to communicate his or her thoughts and emotions, before the seduction of financial gain becomes too strong, may prevent the violation of that child’s rights in the future.

Young (1965, pp. 117 & 129) discussed the concept of *dignity*, and how it relates to the life of a child,

Dignity is respect for what one is, feels and thinks.... At heart, dignity is self-honesty and self-respect...children have a great sense of their own dignity. They couldn’t define what it is, but they know when it has been violated.

Participation in sport should not violate a child’s rights or his or her dignity. Perhaps better communication and greater autonomy for the young athlete will ensure that such violations are prevented in the future. Rutenfranz suggested that too often adults involved with youth sport are, "...more interested in the effects of training than in protecting the children," and recommended that, "Ethics Committees should be established for national sports organizations and on a local basis," (1986, p. 16).

**The Role of the Parent in the Psychosocial Development of the Young Athlete**

As indicated in the previous discussions of psychosocial development in youth sport, a child’s growth is highly affected by his or her socialization influences and experiences. Children encounter many significant social influences in the youth sport domain, the most constant and powerful of which is usually the parent or guardian. Research that has examined the effect of the parent on the young athlete’s levels of anxiety, self-confidence, and enjoyment of sport will now be addressed.
Parental Influences on Stress, Anxiety, and Burnout

Scanlan (1984, p. 210) discussed the role of adults in youth sport anxiety,

...adults are integrally involved in the structure, dynamics and social milieu of children's sports. Moreover, they play a central role in conveying to the participant, as well as interpreting, the extensive ability information involved in the competition process. Therefore, parents and coaches were assumed to be very influential in shaping athletes' sport-related perceptions, including the perception of threat.

Research conducted by Scanlan and Lewthwaite revealed that a young athlete's concerns over significant adult evaluation was an important predictor of competitive stress (1984, p.224). More specifically, "adult factors...were significantly correlated with competitive stress," including parental pressure to compete and worries about parental evaluation (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988, p.43).

In a study comparing high and low competitive trait-anxiety (CTA) children, Passer (1983, p.185) declared,

...high-CTA youngsters have somewhat greater expectancies than low-CTA children of incurring criticism from adults. In particular, it is the anticipation of more frequent parental disapproval that best discriminates the two anxiety groups.

Passer stated that "parent-child interactions play an especially important role in the development of high competitive trait anxiety," (1983, p. 185). He also suggested that parents often fail to understand the competitive anxiety experienced by the child as they are unable to view the sport experience from the child's perspective. Passer indicated that young children (ages 6-10) do not conceive of the notions of strategy or looking to the past to figure out how to improve in the future as adults do, they only want to know who is best. He stated that it is not until the age of twelve and even fourteen in some children, that the young athlete begins to perceive sport in the way an adult athlete does with regard to tactics, strategy and success (1983, p.185).
Johns echoed Passer's sentiments stating, "...it is frequently the case that [adults] don't understand and therefore do not take into account the perceptions of the children and how they view competition," (1987, p.21). He indicated that adult intervention without concern for the aspects of sport which the child finds attractive and the child's perception of sport itself will increase the child's anxiety, as he or she is facing adult demands with child resources (1987, p.21). More specifically, the parent may then become an additional source of competitive anxiety for the child as he or she may express frustration and disappointment with the child for not having the "proper attitude" toward the sport experience.

Coakley (1992) also indicated that a young athlete's environment and social relationships can be significant sources of distress for him or her. Specifically, Coakley stated that tight control over the child athlete's life by adults often leads to burnout as the child feels powerless and lacks autonomy,

...even if they were well intentioned as they helped young people achieve performance goals, those adults unwittingly participated in creating and perpetuating social isolation and dependency among those young people. Once goals were set, environments were created in which the young people could focus nearly all of their attention on becoming elite athletes. As this happened, parents also restricted the range of experiences available to their children and "guided' them into a pattern of sport involvement that allowed for little or no autonomy despite progress toward the achievement of performance goals. In fact, the closer these young athletes came to achieving their goals, the less control they had over what happened in their lives (1992, p.279).

In a discussion of equal rights for children, Purdy confirmed Coakley's description of power and dependency stating, "When individuals are dependent, they tend to be powerless; they cannot exert what we would regard as the normal and fair amount of control over their lives," (1992, p.130).

Hellstedt indicated specific parental behaviors which lead to excessive anxiety in the young athlete, including: frequently appraising performance negatively, giving
inconsistent feedback (e.g. telling the child winning isn't important, yet becoming angry when he/she loses in competition), and overprotecting the child (1988, p.69).

The highly anxious child will often develop physical ailments as a result of parental pressure, as shown in a case study of a young tennis player (Anthony & Bolletieri, 1985, p.202),

...she became quite frustrated and frightened of her parents' disapproval. She just didn't know how to cope with losses. As a result, each time a match got close, this girl would develop some physical symptoms, something would hurt her, or she just wouldn't feel well.

Further examination of the physical symptoms of stress experienced by young athletes was undertaken by Purdy, Haufler and Eitzen (1981). Children were asked to report stress levels in terms of insomnia, loss of appetite and physical sickness. Parents were asked to report their child's stress using the same measures. Results of the study showed that parents consistently underestimated the stress experienced by the young athlete. If these obvious physical signs of distress are not clear to the parent, one can imagine that the subtle psychological feelings of pressure are not clearly understood either, hence the need for greater parental awareness and communication with the child.

Dunlap and Berne's research on competitive stress in junior tennis players also highlighted the importance of the parent-child relationship in the athletic context, noting that "too much adult pressure" was a significant source of stress in these young competitors (1991, p.62). The authors also recommended sport psychology consultation and support training for parents as intervention strategies for dealing with excessive competitive stress in the junior tennis player (1991, p.62).

Loehr and Kahn discuss the "pressure traps" parents may set for their children, increasing the stress and anxiety the child experiences in his or her competitive tennis pursuits. The different types of pressure traps are described in Table 2.5.
### Table 2.5

**Parent "Pressure Traps"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GUILT PRESSURE</td>
<td>Attempting to motivate the child by making him or her feel guilty when he or she does not play well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVESTMENT PRESSURE</td>
<td>Informing the child that a &quot;return&quot; is expected for the money invested in training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARTYR PRESSURE</td>
<td>Indicating to the child that individual or family happiness is being sacrificed to further his or her athletic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERIDENTIFICATION PRESSURE</td>
<td>Living vicariously through the child's sport endeavours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESSURE PRESSURE</td>
<td>Believing that the experience of excessive pressure is a necessary and beneficial aspect of the child's athletic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY PRIDE PRESSURE</td>
<td>Indicating to the child that he or she must uphold the tradition of family achievement and competitive success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF-ESTEEM PRESSURE</td>
<td>Withdrawal of love, affection, support, or attention when the child has not played well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Adapted from "Pressure Traps" by J. Loehr & E.J. Kahn, 1989, *The Parent-Player Tennis Training Program*, p. 77

Donnelly et al. indicated that various types of parental pressure, whether this pressure was subtle or overt, often made it exceedingly difficult for a child to leave a sport that he or she no longer enjoyed. He noted an example of overidentification pressure on the part of one parent who did not speak to her daughter for three weeks when it was announced that she no longer wished to be involved in figure skating (1993, p. 102). Hence, a parent may not only be a source of stress in the sport environment, he or she may also create a
sense of obligation in the child to that stressful environment, as the child will avoid the parental disapproval that will be experienced with quitting.

Gould et al.'s examination of youth tennis burnout revealed that burned out athletes perceived greater expectations and criticisms from parents (1994, p. 21). The words of the athletes reveal how pervasive this influence can be:

I always felt like I was supposed to win, and I never felt like anything I did was ever good enough for him [dad], you know. Even after I'd win a tournament or I'd do something well, even on that same day he'd, you know, already want something else and I never felt like he was really satisfied with how well I did, like he was really, you know, proud of me or that I always felt like I wasn't meeting his expectations.

I think they talked too much about how good other people were and how I could be better. I think she [mom] wanted me to be better than I could be. And I think she wanted me to be as good as my sister was and I just couldn't do that. (1994, p.38)

These quotations are just two of several examples of negative parental influence or control indicated by Gould et. al. as contributors to the junior player's stress and anxiety levels. It is evident that parent-child relations play an important factor in the development of the young tennis player, or any young athlete.

**The Effect of Parents and Peers on Self-Confidence**

The importance of social interaction in the development of a young athlete's sense of self is noted by Weiss and Duncan (1992, p.184) in their examination of perceived competence and peer acceptance. Their findings revealed that,

...a child's being good and believing that he or she is good in sport is strongly related to being successful in peer relations and perceiving acceptance from his or her peer group.
Gould et al. (1994, p. 39) indicated that burned out junior tennis competitors sometimes received depersonalized or damaging self-esteem messages from their parents, as illustrated in the words of a participant in the study:

Yeah, he [father] always kind of considered me to be kind of a weakling....I think he always considered me a failure. I had a father who was, you know, a typical tennis parent. I know millions of other people have the same thing.

The role of the parents and other significant adults (coaches, etc.) in the formation of the child's self-esteem needs to be explored. Stewart and Corbin (1989, p.65), in a review of self-confidence in young female sport participants, stated,

... adults should be cognizant to the fact that they can have a very strong influence upon the developing self-concept of younger children and even though to a lesser degree can influence the expectancy of the success for older children.

McElroy's study (1983) of parent-child relations revealed the effect of parental influence on the child's orientations toward sport. "Winning" and "achievement" were defined as traditional male sport orientations, while "fair play" and "everyone participates" were viewed as traditional female orientations (1983, p.997). Results revealed that mother-son and mother-daughter relationships were associated with traditional female orientations in both genders, whereas father-son relationships perpetuated traditional male orientations, yet father-daughter relationships maintained traditional female orientations (McElroy, 1983, p. 1002).

While these results are interesting to note, it could be argued that the design of the study is flawed in its ascription of traditional male and female orientations. By labelling "fair play" and "everybody participates" as female orientations, and "achievement" and "winning" as male orientations at the outset of the study, the research is inherently sexist or at least simplistic in its representation of the genders in the sport environment.
Weiss indicated that increased parental pressure and negative parental responses lead to decreased self-esteem levels in children (1993, pp. 43-44). She noted however that "surprisingly few studies have systematically examined parental influences on the formation of children's self-perceptions about physical ability," (1993, p.44).

Studies specifically examining the role of the parent regarding the self-confidence of the young athlete are essentially non-existent. This dearth of research may well be due to the confusion surrounding the definition of the term "self-confidence". Because the many "self" words tend to overlap, often the use of these words in research are designed to suit the needs of the investigator. Hence, it is difficult to assess the influence of parental behaviors on the young athlete's confidence when the term itself is unclear.

However, the primary concept of perceived competence/ability underlies each of the varying definitions of confidence and is often used to help define self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-concept (Feltz, 1988; Weiss, 1993). Some research has implicated the role of parents in the child's perception of ability and self-worth, hence shedding some light on the role of the parent in the child's self-confidence in sport.

For example, Dunlap and Berne's study of youth elite tennis players indicated that many players "expressed feelings of conditional self-worth associated with winning which was reinforced by...parents," (1991, p.62). Harter (1988) reported that children's perceptions of social support by parents were strongly predictive of self-worth. Scanlan and Lewthwaite stated that, "adult evaluation and support which reflect high perceptions of the young athlete's ability are related to high performance expectations on the part of the child," (1985, p.397). Woolger and Power's review of parent influences in athletic and academic literature supported Scanlan et al.'s findings that high expectations on the part of the parent produce high expectancies in the child, but note that the effect of expectancies on perceived ability may actually be seen as a curvilinear relationship - when expectancies turn to pressure, self-worth and enjoyment measures are lower for the child (1993, pp. 178-179).
Woolger and Power (1993, p.175) also noted other significant parental behaviors, including *acceptance* (defined as unconditional support) which resulted in higher competence levels in the child. Also examined were *punishment*, reported to have a negative effect on the child's self-confidence, and *directiveness* (degree to which parents actively instruct child), which appears to have a curvilinear relationship with perceptions of ability as well - highly criticized and instructed children had low perceptions of ability, yet no instruction yielded the same result. It was suggested that high directiveness results in a loss of autonomy for the child, producing low perceptions of competence, yet no direction yields the same result as the child he/she is not worthy or able enough to interest the parent (Woolger & Power, 1993, pp.181-182). Related study in the area of female self-confidence revealed that feedback increased confidence levels in young female athletes (Petruzzello & Corbin, 1988, p.181). However the cautionary note regarding *content of feedback* is highlighted by Weiss (1993, p. 44),

> ...players who received more frequent positive reinforcement or no reinforcement in response to desirable performances scored lower in perceived physical competence, and players who received more criticism in response to performance errors had higher perceptions of competence...[therefore] quantity of reinforcement and mere use of positive statements are not sufficient....Rather the quality of [adults'] behaviours, specifically the contingency to the athletes' behavior and the appropriateness of the information given is crucial to children's cognitions about the meaning of these messages.

Weiss' statements indicate that a child must feel he or she is being given relevant technical information, and not simply vague, generalized positive feedback, in order to perceive him or herself as gaining competence in a particular skill area.

Brustad's (1992) study of socializing influences in children's sport also examined the role of the parent in the development of a child's perceived competence. He discussed the importance of *role modeling* and *expectancy socialization effects*. To clarify, a child adopts a perception of competence based on imitation of a role model, or on what he or
she is informed is expected of him or her based on family history. For example, a child who understands that his or her family has shown proficiency in music, but not in sport expects to perform well in the former and less well in the latter (1992, p.64).

Finally, it is essential to be aware of the variance across age with regard to socializing influences. Research by Horn (Horn & Hasbrook, 1986, 1987; Horn & Weiss, 1991) indicated that younger children (eight to nine years of age), tend to rely on parental feedback, whereas older children (ages ten through fourteen) depend more heavily on peer evaluation. This information is beneficial for the design of intervention programs which target self-esteem and self-confidence.

Regarding strategies to enhance the development of perceived competence (leading to increased self-confidence), Leonetti recommended that adults create success experiences for each child, give proper feedback, and allow the child to assume responsibility for learning (1980, pp. 40-49). Lirgg and Feltz noted that effective modelling by adults can also serve to develop stronger competence and confidence levels in the child (1989, p 53). Studies examining coaching strategies designed to build self-efficacy in athletes (Gould, Hodge, Peterson & Giannini, 1989; Weinberg, Grove & Jackson, 1992), indicated effective coach behaviours to include: encouraging positive self-talk, modelling confidence oneself, using instruction and conditioning drills, modelling other successful athletes, emphasizing effort over ability, using reward statements liberally, reframing anxiety as a sign of "readiness", and emphasizing technique improvements while downplaying outcome. Burton (1988, pp. 259-264) compiled a list of suggested coaching strategies to help the young athlete feel worthy, including: teaching the child to set performance goals, rewarding goal achievement, using a performance approach in skill correction, and giving athletes more personal control.

Parents often justify their behaviors stating that these behaviors are for the child's "own good". Feinberg stated that one's own good is achieved through self-fulfillment, that is, the development of aptitudes that allow the individual to plan, design and choose
which actions to take in his or her life (1980, p.143). Therefore, constrictive or highly directive behaviors on the part of the parent, in fact, prohibit the good of the child, and should hence be avoided.

Although the confusing terminology connected with self-confidence makes investigation of the area more challenging, it is clearly an area where parental influences on the young athlete are strong, and should therefore be investigated.

The Influence of Parents and Other Significant Adults on the Child's Sport Enjoyment

The work of Scanlan & Lewthwaite (1986), Wankel & Kreisel (1985), and Brustad (1988) indicated how positive and negative parental (and other significant adult) influences can affect a young athlete's enjoyment of the athletic experience.

Scanlan et al. found that positive social evaluation, recognition of the child's achievements, positive parental involvement regardless of the child's performance achievements, and adult satisfaction with performance, all contribute to the child's enjoyment of sport (1988, p.46). In addition, Brustad found that low parental pressure was associated with higher season-long measures of enjoyment on the part of the child (1988, p.318). However, it was also revealed that negative adult affective reactions, negative adult evaluations and interactions, and particularly negative maternal interactions resulted in low enjoyment for the child (Scanlan et al., 1988, p.46).

Loehr and Kahn (1987), in their study of numerous junior tennis players, compiled a list of negative characteristics commonly attributed to what they called "problem parents". These characteristics are indicated in Table 2.6.
Table 2.6

Characteristics Attributed to "Problem Parents"

- creation of additional pressure for the child
- resorting to the use of fear
- constant criticism
- inability to understand expressions of insecurity
- thinking negatively and showing negative emotion
- nagging (re: practice, competition, diet, training, etc.)
- fostering guilt in the child (re: cost of lessons, travel)
- making sport bigger than life
- overlooking critical stages of development
  (i.e. letting the child shirk responsibilities unrelated to sport)

Note. Adapted from "Are You a Problem Parent?" by J. Loehr & E.J. Kahn, 1987, Net Results, pp. 41-46.

Donnelly et al.'s research concurs with the work of Loehr and Kahn, revealing several "problem parent" behaviours, including excessive parental pressure, guilt about money and family time, and constant parental presence at training and competition at an age when the child was striving for independence (1993, p.101). The children involved in the study noted how these behaviours detracted from sport enjoyment, and were often contributing factors in the decision to leave sport (1993, p.102).

Tutko and Richards examined the reasons why an average set of parents may become "problem parents". He stated that parents often consider a child's athletic performance a reflection of their child-rearing practices (making sport bigger than life), or as Smoll wrote, "A child must succeed or the parent's self-image is threatened," (1992, p.4). A parent may also feel that a child does poorly in sport to punish him or her for something unrelated to sport and hence that parent will react inappropriately to the performance situation. Tutko et al. also noted that a parent may be jealous of the child-coach relationship, and as a result become over-involved in the child's athletic progress.
Finally, he believes that many parents live vicariously through their child's athletic experiences as a form of nostalgia for their own past endeavours (1973, p. 165).

Loehr and Kahn described the process by which a parent becomes lost in the craziness of youth sport through influences of the media, sponsors and dreams of college scholarships and professional careers. Too often, the reality of the steps involved in the process of youth including cost, time commitment and dedication are not examined. Because they have not been told to consider these facts before the child becomes proficient at the game and involved at an elite level, the parent begins to view the child's sport participation as an investment. The expectation of future returns on that investment may lead to negative, problem parent behaviours (1987, pp. 20-23).

Loehr and Kahn noted a common trait of problem parents that contradicts that reported by Tutko et al. who stated that a problem parent is often an ex-athlete living vicariously through the child's sport accomplishments. Loehr and Kahn indicated that a number of problem parents have no athletic background, and therefore increase the pressure on the young athlete due to their inability to understand the inherent pressures which already exist in the competitive situation (1987, p. 38).

It must be noted that some of these behaviours are also characteristics of the untrained coach. However, the parent is responsible for investigating whether a coach is a positive or negative influence on his or her child, and hence can choose an appropriate coach for the child. Therefore, he or she is essentially the most important significant adult influence on the child's sporting experience. It is in the area of sport enjoyment where the effects of parental behavior are most clear. Increased awareness of the impact of their behavior could only be beneficial to the parent-child relationship.
Training Programs Designed to Educate the Significant Adults of Youth Sport

Highly anxious children with low self-esteem and self-confidence, leading to reduced enjoyment, should not be products of the youth sport experience. Research in youth sport has been conducted to increase insight into the organization of sport programs and sport as viewed through the eyes of the child. Coach and parent training programs have been developed which may be beneficial in reducing child anxiety, and increasing motivation, confidence and enjoyment.

Several manuals have been written for parents that are not specific to the sport domain, but may, in fact, prove very useful for families involved in organized athletics. Gordon (1975) introduced the concept of Parent Effectiveness Training, focusing on parent-child communication, the notion of "parental power", and the resolution of parent-child conflicts. Faber and Mazlish (1980) also focused on the communication between parent and child, urging parents to encourage child autonomy and constructive expression of emotion by the child.

Youngs (1985) and Orlick (1993) have developed programs designed to help the parent and child understand and deal with stress, examining the many sources of stress, and suggesting effective coping strategies for both parent and child.

Loehr and Kahn (1989) developed a training program for parents of children involved in competitive tennis. The Parent-Player Tennis Training Program incorporates the development of both communication and stress management for families, but also looks at parent and child goals, and examines parent behaviours which positively and negatively affect the development of the child as a tennis player and person. Loehr and Kahn listed the characteristics of parents that facilitate healthy development of the child athlete. These characteristics, described in Table 2.7, are the desired result of the training program.
Table 2.7

**Characteristics of the "Trained Parent"**

- Focus on sport mastery for the child, rather than sport outcome
- Decreased pressure on the child to win
- Recognition that the integral value of sport is a preparation for life
- Understand the risks and commitments involved in high level youth sport
- Ensure that the coach maintains the right perspective on the child's development
- Avoid coaching the child themselves
- Don't display negative emotion on the sidelines during play.
- Don't obsessively track the child's progress

**Note.** Adapted from "Do's for the Trained Parent," by J. Loehr and E.J. Kahn, 1987, *Net Results*, pp.59-64.

Loehr and Kahn's program is interesting in that it is a comprehensive, sport-specific program targeting the relevant issues of young tennis players and their parents. To-date however, empirical examination of the effectiveness of this program has not been conducted.

While it did not incorporate an actual training program, Bloom's (1985) retrospective ethnographic study of high achievers in sport, academics, music and art (which involved a specific study of tennis players) indicated certain characteristics of parental influence that were consistent across the various domains. He found that parents of these high achievers displayed a strong value of achievement and the "work ethic", they valued the talent area, they introduced the child to the talent area, and they made sure the child had *quality instruction* (1985, pp. 444-450). Bloom noted the changes in the parental role as the child developed both in and out of sport, beginning with high involvement, then evolving into what was essentially an *unconditional support system* (1985, pp.471-474). The most notable characteristic was the "child-centered" nature of the family, from which developed all other parental supports and influences (1985, p.474).

Some empirical study has been conducted with regard to training programs for coaches. Barnett, Smoll, and Smith (1992, p. 121) conducted a coach effectiveness
training program with eight Little League baseball coaches. At the end of the season, children playing with these eight coaches,

... perceived their coaches as more frequently giving reinforcement, encouragement and technical instruction, and less often being unresponsive or punitive.

The positive coach behaviours were in accordance with the guidelines in the training program (Barnett et al, 1992, p. 21). These results did not occur with the control group.

Barnett et al. also noted differences in the players' evaluations of the Little League experience:

... the [subject group] coaches were better liked and rated as better teachers. Additionally, players on their teams liked one another more and indicated that they had more fun playing baseball. Perhaps most encouraging was the fact that children with low self-esteem who played for the trained coaches exhibited a significant increase in their feelings of self-worth over the course of the season. Because a similar change did not occur for the other athletes, it appears that children with a low self-esteem are more responsive to supportive coaching behaviours... (1992, p. 21)

These findings are even more dramatic as the win-loss percentages between the subject and control groups were not significantly different (1992, p.21).

Finally, in a one year follow-up with subject and control groups, Barnett et al. examined the attrition rate of the baseball players. The rate of attrition for the control group was twenty-six percent, whereas the experimental group reported only a five percent attrition rate (1992, p.21). In a similar study, it was found that Little League baseball players who played for coaches trained by the same program in Barnett et al.'s research reported lower levels of competitive anxiety than control group children (Smoll & Smith, 1993).

Hence, it has been shown that training for coaches can have a positive effect on the young athlete's self-esteem, enjoyment and anxiety levels. Kerr (1995, p. 17) stated,
All sport practitioners, both within and outside of schools, should be trained and employed for the purpose of facilitating the development of healthy youth - physically, psychologically and socially - rather than simply focusing on producing athletic competence. This means that youth should be given the opportunities to exercise self-reliance, decision-making, and independence in their sport participation.

The work with coaches needs to be applied to research examining the effect of parent training on child-athletes, as it is clear that parents, in addition to coaches, have a considerable impact on the development of healthy young athletes.

**Research Overview**

I have spent a considerable amount of time with junior tennis players in both a training and competitive environment over the past three years. In that time, I have witnessed many negative communication patterns between young players and their parents, and I have seen many distressed, unhappy children. Similar accounts of strained parent-child relationships, and unhappy youngsters in tennis have also been widely reported in the media.

The previous discussion of children's sport, and junior tennis in particular, clearly indicates the need for research and intervention in the youth sport domain. However, very little research has examined the specific aspects of parent-child relations, and the effect of those relations on the child's psychosocial development in the sporting context. The rationale behind this study was to address both of these research needs in the junior tennis environment.

The focus of the study was parent-child relations in youth tennis, involving an intervention program targeting parent-child communication. This intervention program was largely based on Loehr and Kahn's *Parent-Player Tennis Training Program* (1989), which examines many aspects of parent-child interaction in the junior tennis environment,
and hence was very applicable to the participant group. I believed that a developed communication training program such as this one could provide valuable information on the specific aspects of parent-child relations which contribute to the child's psychosocial development in sport, while simultaneously facilitating and developing communication between the parent and child participants in this research. In addition, the program would be empirically evaluated for its effectiveness throughout the course of the research. Further discussion and detail regarding program structure and content, as well as research objectives and methodology will be undertaken in Chapter III.

It is my the hope that junior tennis in the future will be characterized by more healthy, balanced athletes and parents. I feel that this research and other similar study is essential in the educational and professional development necessary to create a more healthy, balanced youth sport environment.
CHAPTER III

Method

Research Purposes and Objectives

The present research had two purposes. The initial purpose was to examine the relationship between parent-child communication and the psychosocial characteristics of the developing athlete, namely, competitive anxiety, sport confidence, and sport enjoyment. The second purpose was to investigate the efficacy of the communication-training program, Loehr and Kahn’s Parent-Player Tennis Training Program (1989), as a means for enhancing the parent-child relationship.

It was also hoped that the training program would meet two additional goals. The first objective was to enhance parent-child communication in the athletic context. The second objective was to promote the autonomy of the young athlete, and to develop mutual respect and understanding between the child and the parent, focusing specifically on the child’s competitive tennis experience.

Research Assumptions and Hypotheses

Building on the purposes and objectives of the study, research assumptions and hypotheses were identified. The central research assumption was that parent behaviour and parent-child communication are related to the psychosocial qualities of the child athlete, in particular, competitive anxiety, sport confidence and sport enjoyment.

From this assumption, it was hypothesized that the communication-training program would positively influence parent behaviour and parent-child communication. It was also hypothesized that the families’ involvement in the program would result in
decreased competitive anxiety, increased sport confidence and increased sport enjoyment in the child athlete. Considering that these two hypotheses predicted positive results from the communication-training program, it was also predicted that Loehr and Kahn's Parent-Player Tennis Training Program (1989) would be effective and evaluated positively by research participants.

**Combining a Positivist and Naturalist Approach to Research**

This study involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative measures were determined at the outset of the research, whereas qualitative analysis emerged and expanded as the study progressed. Each of the methods and techniques incorporated in this research will be discussed in turn.

Quantitative instruments were administered to the child participants to obtain numerical scores for the psychosocial constructs of competitive anxiety, sport confidence, and sport enjoyment. In addition, these participants completed a quantitative measure to categorize parent behaviour.

Qualitative techniques explored the psychosocial qualities measured by quantitative measures, as well as examining the role of the parent, goals of the parent and child, tennis related stressors for both the parent and child, evaluation of the training program itself, and various other issues and concerns raised by family participants throughout the course of the research. These techniques were also used to explore the contributions made by the coach to the child's tennis development, as well as his (in this case all of the coaches were male) involvement with the athletes in the program and their families.

Qualitative and quantitative researchers often debate. The purposes of the quantitative, or positivist approach involve generalization and causal explanation for the behaviours of those under examination, usually with the hope of confirming a predicted outcome. The qualitative, or naturalist approach proposes to contextualize and interpret
the perspectives of research participants, with the hope of developing a greater understanding of those perspectives (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 7).

My aim in using both quantitative and qualitative research methods was to learn as much as possible from participants, through quantitative measures, and through participants' comments, opinions, experiences, and social interactions as human beings. I felt that the use of both forms of methodology would maximize the realization of the purposes and objectives of this study. This combined research approach allowed me to develop a comprehensive view of research participants, not only as a subject group, but as individuals.

**Role of the Investigator**

My involvement in this research extended beyond the traditional investigator's role of collecting quantitative data in a detached manner. I was personally immersed in the families' communication training program, facilitating and mediating each session.

My first objective was to quantitatively measure anxiety, confidence and enjoyment levels of the child participants before and after experiencing this program with their parents. I hoped to numerically examine the effects of the parent-child relationship on these psychosocial characteristics.

My second objective was to provide an opportunity for families to openly discuss the issues that arise in an intensive tennis training environment. I wanted, in particular, to provide a discussion setting in which the child could freely express his or her views on the joys and frustrations of being a competitive tennis player. In addition, I wished for the environment to be considered a neutral arena in which family issues and tensions concerning tennis could be discussed in such a manner that all family members were given equal opportunity to voice their opinions. I involved myself in this environment as a facilitator who could be objective insofar as I had no vested interest in the child's tennis involvement. I established clear ground rules at the beginning of the program, indicating...
that each member of the family should be allowed to communicate without interruption or criticism, and that the issues covered in the sessions would only pertain to the child's tennis involvement.

Therefore, my role as an investigator, while objective, also incorporated extensive personal involvement. Developing an understanding of qualitative methodology has allowed me to examine this area of study more closely. In addition to quantitatively measuring the psychosocial aspects of anxiety, confidence, and enjoyment, I have been able to observe parent-child interactions and to affect these interactions. I have been given the opportunity to listen to the thoughts and opinions of parents, coaches, and most importantly, the child athlete. I feel the degree of involvement I have experienced has allowed me to more fully understand the psychosocial aspects of the developing athlete.

Participants

Players and Their Parents

While ten families originally consented to participate in the study, the final group of participants included seven competitive juniors, four female and three male, and their parents. The three remaining male players and their families withdrew from the study before it began. Two families forfeited their participation due to time constraints. The child of the third family had decided to discontinue playing competitive tennis altogether to pursue other athletic interests.

With the exception of one child, all of the participants lived with both parents. Five of the families could be socioeconomically defined as upper middle class and two as lower middle class. Of the seven children, two came from families in which both parents held a full-time occupation outside the home. Of the remaining participant families, each of the fathers were employed full-time outside the home. In addition to homecare, two of the remaining mothers worked part-time outside the home, one maintained a full-time
occupation from her home, and one was a full-time graduate student. Six individual parents were first generation immigrants to Canada of varying ethnic backgrounds.

The mean age of the children in the participant group was 12.5 years ($SD=1.08$). At the time this research was conducted, these participants were training an average of 4.86 days per week ($SD=.69$), with a mean of 11.29 training hours per week ($SD=3.15$). This measure of training included both group and private lessons, practice sessions, practice matches, and physical fitness training. Days and hours spent training did fluctuate during the course of the study, as it began just prior to the end of the school year. Training time tended to increase over the summer season, but was variable due to summer vacations taken by the families which usually did not include tennis.

The mean age at which the participant children began playing tennis was 9.43 years ($SD=2.37$), while the mean age when these children began training competitively was 10.85 years ($SD=1.89$). While all of the participating children are members of the same competitive training program, levels of ability and experience did vary. Although all of these athletes had experienced competing in provincially organized tournaments, only four had played enough tournaments to be provincially ranked. One of the participants had played several tournaments, but he was not ranked as he was still competing in the Under 12 category, a category for which rankings are not generated. One of the participants was highly ranked in the province, and had in fact been selected to compete at the National Under 14 Finals the last two years. Three of the participants had experienced intensive training camp experiences in the United States, involving exposure to international caliber players in the past two years.

**Coaches**

The four coaches involved with the competitive tennis training program, all of whom were male, had very different background experiences in the sport of tennis. Only one of them had extensive competitive experience, playing the sport since childhood,
competing at the high school, junior college, university, and satellite professional level (analogous to the minor leagues in baseball). The three remaining coaches learned the sport in their late teenage years, only one of whom played at the junior college level. Of these three coaches, two were Level I certified, and one was Level III certified by the Canadian National Coaching Certification Program and had experience as a provincial development coach. One of these coaches was also certified by the United States Professional Tennis Association. The first coach had no form of official certification.

Two of the coaches were primarily focused on the development of competitive junior tennis players. One of these coaches worked mainly with players early in their development, most of them competing in the Under Fourteen age division. The other worked with players ranging from the Under Fourteen to the Under Eighteen age divisions. The players varied in their level of play from those still early in their development to more accomplished and experienced players. The remaining two coaches were less intensively involved in junior development at the competitive level, working with both competitive and recreational juniors. All four coaches also taught adult players of varying ability levels.

The mean age of the four coaches was 33.25 years (SD=5.74) and they had been teaching tennis for an average of twelve years, ranging from three years for the least experienced coach and twenty years for the most experienced. While all of the coaches had experience coaching both junior and adult players, one of the coaches also had experience coaching other sports in addition to tennis. Three of the coaches also had administrative experience in club programming, two had managed equipment sales (one of them owning his own shop), one had been a club manager, and two had been club owners. Hence it was clear, that the coaching staff for the competitive junior tennis program had varied and extensive experience in the sport of tennis.
Research Measures and Techniques

Quantitative Research Instruments

The child research participants completed measures of competitive anxiety, sport confidence, and sport enjoyment. These questionnaires were administered prior to the commencement and after the conclusion of the training sessions, allowing for a pre- and post-program comparison. In addition, a questionnaire to evaluate parent behaviour was completed before and after the training sessions. All measures completed by the children were confidential throughout the study and their contents were not divulged or discussed with parents or coaches. Each questionnaire will be described in turn.

Sport Competition Anxiety Test for Children (SCAT-C). Participants' levels of anxiety were assessed using the Sport Competition Anxiety Test for Children (SCAT-C) (Martens, 1977). This simple pencil and paper questionnaire was utilized to determine self-reported anxiety levels experienced by the children in competition. It is a trait measure of anxiety specifically designed for sport situations and takes approximately five minutes to complete. The form asks fifteen questions concerning competition, allowing the respondent to reply "Hardly Ever", "Sometimes", or "Often", with corresponding scores for these responses being 1, 2 and 3 respectively (e.g. "Before I compete I am nervous"; Hardly Ever=1, Often=3). Two items on the form are scored in reverse order (e.g. "Before I compete I feel relaxed"; Hardly Ever=3, Often=1). There are also five spurious items on the inventory. The majority of the questions focus on feelings of calm or uneasiness prior to competition. The range of possible scores extends from 10 to 30.

Internal consistency of the SCAT was analyzed using the Kuder-Richardson formula producing coefficients of .89 for females and .88 for males (Martens, Vealey & Burton, 1990, p.69). Mean test-retest reliability has resulted in a correlation coefficient of .77. ANOVA reliability was computed on responses to the initial administration of the SCAT-C for the samples used to assess test-retest reliability indicating an ANOVA
reliability coefficient of .81 (Martens et al., 1990, p.23). Construct validity of the SCAT was confirmed in eleven experimental and field studies, supporting the SCAT as a valid measure of competitive trait anxiety (Martens et al., 1990, p.49). Concurrent validity studies have revealed that the SCAT is significantly correlated with other measures of anxiety (Levy, 1958, Sarason, Davidson, Lighthall, Waite, & Ruebush, 1960, Spielberger, 1977) (Martens et al., 1990, p.26). (Appendix A).

**Competitive State Anxiety Inventory - 2 (CSAI-2).** The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2) (Martens, 1977) was used to assess the anxiety experienced by the young athlete immediately before competition. It provides a situational state measure of the child's competitive anxiety in sport. It contains twenty-seven questions and takes approximately five minutes to complete. The CSAI-2 includes three subscales of cognitive state anxiety, somatic state anxiety and self-confidence. Content validity for all items on the CSAI-2 was obtained as three judges analyzed each item rating each item for syntax, clarity and face validity. The item analysis coefficient for both the upper and lower test scores was required to be .40. Each item has at least a .50 correlation coefficient with all other items in a subscale as determined through factor and discriminant analyses (Martens et al., 1990, pp. 127-129). Internal consistency of the inventory ranged from .79-.90 (Martens et al., 1990 p.132). Concurrent validity on all subscales revealed high congruency with both anxiety trait measures (SCAT, TAI, AAAT-C & I-E) and anxiety state measures (WEI, CSAQ, SAI & AACL), (Martens et al., 1990, pp. 132-136). Construct validity was achieved in several different studies supporting relationships between CSAI-2 components and various individual and situational factors including sport type, individual athlete differences, sport performance, time before competition, trait anxiety, attentional style, self-confidence, perceived ability, past experience, and perceived match outcome (Martens et al., 1990, pp. 142-172, & pp. 194-202) (Appendix A).
Sport Confidence Inventory. The Sport-Confidence Inventory (Vealey, 1986) was used to assess confidence levels before and after the program. This inventory measures self-confidence in reference to sport endeavours. Both the trait (TSCI) and state (SSCI) versions of the inventory were used. Both have thirteen questions and take approximately five minutes to complete. The mean test-retest reliability value for the TSCI was .86 (Vealey, 1986, p.228). Vealey stated that test-retest reliability analysis is only appropriate for trait measures, therefore the SSCI scale was not analyzed in this way (1986, p. 227). Concurrent validity was tested by correlating measures of competitive A-trait, perceived ability, physical self-presentation confidence, self-esteem, external locus of control, cognitive competitive anxiety, and somatic competitive anxiety with the TSCI and SSCI. All correlations for the TSCI were significant and in the predicted direction, that is, the TSCI was positively related to state self-confidence as measured by the SSCI and the CSAI-2 (Martens, Burton, Vealey, Bump & Smith, 1982), as well as being positively related to perceived physical ability and physical self-presentation confidence. Negative relationships emerged between the TSCI and external locus of control, competitive trait anxiety, and both cognitive and somatic competitive state anxiety (Vealey, 1986, p.229). Most of the correlations for the SSCI were also significant and in the predicted direction; the SSCI was positively correlated with the TSCI, state self-confidence as measured by the CSAI-2, and to physical self-presentation confidence. The SSCI was negatively related to competitive trait anxiety, as well as cognitive and somatic competitive state anxiety (Vealey, 1986, p.230). Vealey's construct validation model indicated the correlation between the TSCI and SSCI to be .60. The trait and state self-confidence were positively related to performance orientation and negatively related to outcome orientation (1986, p.234). Vealey emphasizes that SSCI should be completed as close to the competition start time as possible to maximize validity (1986, p.239).

Designed to be used in conjunction with the Sport Confidence Inventories, the Competitive Orientation Inventory (COI) (Vealey, 1986) is a matrix form scale given
to determine whether the athlete is performance or outcome oriented. Vealey proposed that competitive orientation influences SC-state measures, which in turn leads to selected behavioural responses (1986, p.234). This inventory was also used as a pre/post measure along with the TSCI and SSCI to determine if competitive orientations changed as a result of the program. Reported test-retest reliability of the COI equaled .69 (Vealey, 1986, p.228). Concurrent validity studies for the COI indicated a significant relationship between COI-performance/outcome and SSCI measures; high performance-orientation was positively correlated with state sport confidence, while high outcome-orientation was negatively correlated to state sport confidence (Vealey, 1986, p.228). Construct validity revealed the influence of competitive orientation on state sport confidence, supporting the relevance of this measure in accordance with the SSCI (Vealey 1986, p.234). Vealey revised the scoring procedure for the COI to derive a single COI score, rather than separate scores for performance and outcome orientation as in the original instrument development. The higher the combined score, the greater the performance orientation of the participant (1988, pp. 471-473) (All Vealey inventories can be found in Appendix B).

**Sport Enjoyment Measure.** A Likert Scale of Enjoyment was designed specifically for this study to target the child's enjoyment of tennis. As discussed in the literature review, enjoyment is essentially defined as "fun" (Brustad, 1988; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986; Wankel & Kreisel, 1985). The concept of fun is best expressed by young athletes themselves, as a junior tennis player interviewed by Gould, Tuffey, Udry and Loehr (1994, p.34) states:

...I really enjoyed the competition....Even when I'd lose...later on I'd look at it and know that I'd enjoyed it. I would have rather been there that anywhere else...

The enjoyment measure contained the questions: 1) "How much fun do you have training for tennis?", and 2) "How much fun do you have competing in tennis tournaments?". The
response scale ranged from "none at all" (= 1 point), to "a lot of fun" (= 9 points) (Appendix C).

**Parent Behaviour.** All child participants completed a confidential evaluation of parent behaviour using the Parental Report Card (Loehr & Kahn, 1989), which allowed the child to analyze his/her parents' behavior regarding the child's tennis. The form is designed as a report card with letter grades in different behavior categories. The form contained twelve questions in total, asking the child to grade his or her parents on specific behaviours, for example, "Parent doesn't make me feel guilty for the time and money being spent on my tennis", as well as asking for an overall grade of parent behaviour. The items on the report card allowed the child participants to assess particular parent behaviours that would be discussed within the training sessions. Hence, if training sessions proved to be effective in changing parent behaviour, this change might be reflected in the parent evaluations. This particular tool was also valuable because each of the evaluation categories was specific to the tennis environment. Due to the letter categorization, data obtained from this particular measure could only be analyzed descriptively (Appendix D).

**Qualitative Research Techniques**

**Introduction.** Before embarking on a discussion of the qualitative research techniques employed in this study, it is necessary to discuss the role of qualitative methodology when examining human relationships in the athletic context. Traditionally, studies in the field of sport behaviour have focused on quantitative research methodologies, largely because this was the only form of research accepted for publication in journals dedicated to the study of sport behaviour (Newburg, 1994).

However, in recent years, acceptance of qualitative research has grown. The 1993 Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology Conference held two symposia discussing the nature and validity of qualitative research in the field of sport psychology (Hanson & Newburg, 1993; Strean, 1993). In the same year, *Contemporary*
Thought on Performance Enhancement - A Journal of Qualitative Inquiry was produced, allowing those in the field to pursue publication of naturalistic research. Furthermore, other journals in the field are beginning to publish qualitative research (Newburg, 1994).

The characteristics of qualitative research are well delineated by Bogden and Bilken (1992, pp. 29-32):

- Qualitative research has the naturalistic setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.
- Qualitative research is descriptive. The data are collected in the form of words or pictures, rather than numbers.
- Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.
- Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively. They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses they hold before entering the study; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together.
- "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach....In other words, qualitative researchers are concerned with what are called participant perspectives (original italics).

The field of sport behaviour research can benefit greatly from these qualitative research methods. Research in the naturalistic setting allows the study of sport behaviour to be more genuine or closely related to the actual events which occur in the athletic context. For example, an interview with an athlete regarding how she feels about her coach will reveal far more detail than a likert scale form asking her to rate her relationship with that coach. While the scale may be considered helpful and more concrete in its use of numbers, the details of how or why the athlete feels the way she does are not represented. This example also illustrates the descriptive nature of qualitative study.

The indication that qualitative research is concerned not only with outcomes, but with process, is in keeping with the primary ideal of sport psychology. Individuals who work in the field are continually striving to facilitate the enjoyment of the athletic process in the athletes they assist, that is, the actual doing of sport and not just the results achieved from sport.
As we continue to progress, let's be careful not to become preoccupied with distant goals, or we may miss the pleasure of the climb (Milliman, 1994, p. 142).

Entering into study without preconceived hypotheses and with an interest in participant perspectives allows the investigator to fully explore the experiences and beliefs of those participants, rather than "looking for" a particular characteristic of human behaviour to occur. Approaching research in the area with this open framework allows similarities and differences in participants to be drawn from their unique experiences in sport, rather than having specific constructs thrust upon them for their evaluation. Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 6) illustrate this point,

...since qualitative researchers deal with multiple, socially constructed realities or "qualities" that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them.

A final note on qualitative research concerns the question of bias on the part of the investigator. While it is commonly assumed that a quantitative researcher approaches his or her area of study "objectively", closer examination of the positivist research process may alter this assumption. The fact that quantitative investigators propose hypotheses and measurable purposes at the outset of their investigation reveals a possible bias straight away, as they already have in mind what they want to "happen" in the course of the research. As a result, the measures chosen, as well as the controls placed on the study, may in fact be designed to produce the desired "happening", to fulfill the measurable purposes, and prove or disprove the stipulated hypotheses. The open framework of the qualitative researcher is no more biased by the personal involvement of the investigator than quantitative research, and in some cases may, due to its focus on participant perspectives, in fact may be more objective.
In the world of sport and physical activity, as in all naturalistic settings, there is much diversity. Hence, a controlled study may not always examine the complex issues which exist in the field; strict adherence to the preservation the positivist conception of scientific merit may detract from the practical merit of that research in the actual sport environment. Eisner and Peshkin state,

Qualitative approaches to research may be better able to make the feel of the place more vivid than a precise measured description of what [participants] say they experience (1990, p.12).

While traditional quantitative research has made a significant contribution to the development of knowledge in the field of sport behaviour, the increasing acceptance of qualitative research in the field will only serve to benefit and develop this understanding even further.

Three techniques of qualitative research were incorporated in the development of this research. These included: participant observation, document analysis, and the semi-structured interview. Each of these will be addressed in turn.

**Participant Observation**

According to Patton (1980, p.132) a continuum exists with respect to the extent of participation on the part of the researcher, ranging from: Complete Participant, Participant as Observer, Observer as Participant, and Complete Observer. At one end of the continuum, the complete participant is a member of the participant group, and as such, is completely immersed in the social interactions of that group. On the opposite end is the complete observer, who is entirely separate from those being observed, and the individuals under observation are usually completely unaware of the researcher's presence.

My role as investigator during the training sessions was that of participant as observer, described by Patton (1980, p.127) as follows:
...the participant observer is fully engaged in experiencing the setting under study, while at the same time trying to understand that setting through personal experience, observations, and talking with other participants about what is happening. In participant observation, the evaluator shares as intimately as possible in the life and activities of the program under study.

This direct involvement facilitated the development of rapport with participants, yet also allowed me to observe and record the family interaction as it occurred in each program session. The families were aware that their discussions were being recorded in my notes, even though I was often leading that discussion. These notes included direct quotes from family conversation, my observations of the dialogue and nonverbal interactions which occurred, as well as the information given on training session forms. Following the sessions I would reflect and expand on these notes, developing and then transcribing them in a fashion suitable for data analysis.

As the objective of the research was to enhance and, in some cases, change communication patterns between parent and child, this study is also a form of action research, defined as a "small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world, and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention," (Cohen & Manion, 1989). My participant role involved that of being a facilitative change agent in parent-child patterns of communication regarding the child's tennis. The desired effect was to develop more beneficial, long term communication patterns between the parent and child when discussing tennis.

Analysis of Participant Observation Data. According to Denzin, (1978, p.183) a participant observer searches for data by simultaneously combining document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation, observation, and introspection. As recommended by Patton (1980), and employed in research similar to this study (Gould, Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1994), hierarchical content analysis was utilized for all forms of participant observation data. Such analysis involves the systematic
selection and refinement of theme topics presented in the raw data obtained from subject participants. The specific steps for hierarchical content analysis of data were as follows:

- Profiles of each family were developed, focusing particularly on the child's experience in competitive tennis.
- Raw data themes were identified from transcribed data in the form of quotes or paraphrased quotes and behaviour observed that represented the opinions, ideas, and concerns of the child and/or parents.
- Raw data themes were also derived using document analysis of the various forms and questionnaires that were completed as part of the training program.
- All raw data themes were recorded separately in notecard fashion on computer, in order to facilitate further analysis.
- Using the raw data themes derived from document data and transcribed data, an inductive analysis was conducted to determine general patterns and commonalities. These patterns and commonalities were in turn coded into more generalized, broad-scope themes, and then compiled into various descriptive categories.
- Once themes and categories had been identified, they were re-examined and compared to the raw data to ensure that they clearly represented the perspectives of the research participants.

**Document Analysis**

Carney (1972, p.26) described document analysis as, "...a general-purpose analytical infrastructure....intended for anyone who wishes to put questions to communications, to get data that will enable him [or her] to reach certain conclusions." To clarify, document analysis involves the examination of written information to derive significant data for study by the researcher. In this sense, the quantitative instruments discussed in the previous section are in fact documents undergoing analysis in the course of this research.

However, documents which are qualitative in nature, such as open-ended forms, can also be subject to documentary analysis. The process involves, "the simultaneous coding of raw data...constructing categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document's content," (Merriam, 1990, p.117). This latter description of the process in fact
describes the steps taken in analysis as listed in the section describing participant observation data analysis.

The documents examined in this research were what are classified by Merriam as the type of document, "prepared by the researcher for the specific purpose of learning more about the situation, person, or event being investigated," (1990, p.114). More specifically, the documents analyzed as part of this study were only those forms designed for use in the program sessions. This distinction is important as document analysis often includes such items as public records, association policies, and historical accounts, none of which were examined in this study.

The documents used in the training sessions available for analysis included:

- "My Role as a Parent" Form (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  This form allowed the parent to describe his/her type and level of involvement in his/her child's tennis.

- Personal Goals of Parent/Player Forms (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  These two forms were designed to help athletes and their parents clarify the goals they have regarding tennis.

- Parent Profile Questionnaires (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  These three questionnaires served to highlight any potentially troublesome parent behaviors. Two were completed by the parents, and one by the child.

- "How Does Your Child Deal with Stress" & Player Report Forms (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  These inventories sought to identify the stress levels of the child, how stress manifested itself in the child, and how astute parents were at recognizing distress in their child. The forms focused on both on and off court behaviors.

- "How I as a Tennis Parent Breakdown Under Pressure" Form (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  This form focused on how the parent dealt with stress and examined how poor reactions to stress at competition (anger, abusive language, excessive expressions of worry, etc.) will affect the child who is trying to compete.

- "Which Should We Discuss?" Inventory (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
  This form listed twenty-nine common problems in youth competitive tennis, including cheating, sport specialization, coaching, etc. Families chose the issues they wanted to discuss.
• "My Rights and Responsibilities" (Binder, 1990)
This brief exercise allowed the young athlete to understand what rights he/she has in sport, and as a result what responsibilities he/she must uphold to ensure these rights remain intact for him or her and for all other participants.

* Player Agreement Form/"Training Your Parent" Form (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
These two final measures allowed the child and parent to work together, using the information they had learned from one another, to establish the responsibilities each party must fulfill with regard to the child's tennis, as well as appropriate behaviors each party must strive to maintain in the competitive tennis environment. The final written agreements had to be acceptable to both parties.

• Parent's Role Change Form (Loehr & Kahn, 1989)
This measure is the partner to the "My Role as a Parent" form and was given at the end of the program to investigate any attitude or behavior changes on the part of the parent.

(Copies of all program forms can be found in Appendix E).

The Semi-Structured Interview

Patton (1980, p.206) described four categories for conducting interviews. These include the informal conversational interview, the interview guide approach, the standardized open-ended interview, and the closed quantitative interview. The progression of each of these categories involves greater structure in the instrumentation of the interview. The first category involves completely unplanned questions emerging from the immediate context, whereas the fourth not only plans the questions, but also provides response categories for the participant as well. The families participating in this research were involved in all four of Patton's interview categories in some capacity throughout the course the program training sessions. These interviews were incorporated as part of the participant observation approach of the investigator, and the method for data analysis of this observation has previously been explained.

Coach Interview Data. The coaches of the tennis training program were interviewed using Patton's semi-structured "interview guide" approach (1980, p.206). I

64
devised an outline of topic areas as a guideline for the interview. This semi-structured format was selected to facilitate comparative examination of interview data, and to allow for variation of individual expression. Topic areas presented in the interview included the role of a coach in the development of a young tennis player, the role of the parent in that development, the responsibilities of the child for his or her own development, as well as the degree of time spent in communication with parents and dealing with parent-child conflict regarding tennis.

All coach interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim prior to analysis. The hierarchical data analysis described for participant observation data was also used for coach interview data. Coach interviews were not a part of the original research design, but were conducted following the family sessions upon the advice of a committee advisor. These interview proved to be a rich and valuable source of information, as they provided a third point of view on the parent-child relationship in tennis, from an involved and influential group of individuals.

The research procedure, which will be addressed in turn, incorporates each of the measures and techniques that have been discussed. To reiterate, while the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods creates a more complex research procedure, it also enhances the possibility of obtaining rich and informative data.

Procedure

I approached the competitive junior tennis training program director of a local club to obtain support and approval to pursue the research with families involved in the program. This particular tennis program was well established in the provincial tennis community, and hence was considered to be a collection of junior tennis competitors who were representative of junior players competing both provincially and nationally.
After securing support from the program director, consent to proceed with the research was obtained from the University of Toronto Human Experimentation Committee. An initial letter of information was drafted and sent to the eighteen families involved in the competitive tennis program who had children between the ages of nine and fourteen years to determine those who wished to be involved in the study (Appendix F). This letter clearly indicated that the research in no way impacted on the child's involvement in the competitive tennis program at the club.

Ten families expressed an interest in being involved in the research after receiving this initial letter. Subsequent to this initial response, each family received a detailed letter of information explaining the study, again reassuring them that their involvement in the study would not affect their child's membership in the competitive tennis program (Appendix F). The letter also ensured confidentiality, as well as the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Enclosed with the letter were two copies of a consent form to be signed by both child and parent(s) (Appendix F). One copy of the form was returned to me, while the participants were encouraged to retain the second, along with the information letter, for their records. Finally, participants were informed that they could receive a written copy of the research, if they so desired, when the study reached conclusion. They were informed that this final copy would discuss group findings, without identification of individual participants.

In addition to the training program undertaken with participating families, I conducted a brief interview with the four coaches associated with the competitive tennis program. All coaches completed a written consent form (Appendix F), and were informed that they were not required to share any information with regard to any particular child or parent, and that all information was confidential. They were also informed that the opinions and ideas they expressed would be depicted in the analysis as themes, issues and perspectives presented by the coaching staff in general.
Procedures for Training Sessions

Once the participants were informed of the nature of the study, had given consent, and completed the pre-program measures, training sessions were arranged with each family individually, at the convenience of the family members involved. The time between sessions was usually one to two weeks, although the schedule was flexible according to the needs of the participants. Sessions were conducted by the investigator at the local club or, more commonly, at the home of participants, depending on the wishes of the participants themselves. Each session was approximately one hour in length, however some sessions were of shorter or longer duration depending on the family discussion generated during the session. Table 3.1 depicts the format of each session.

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Program Sessions</th>
<th>SESSION 1</th>
<th>SESSION 2</th>
<th>SESSION 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Examination of personal goals of both parent and child regarding child's tennis</td>
<td>*Examination of parent behaviour from both child's and parent(s)' perspective</td>
<td>*Discussion of competition and training stress on the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SESSION 4</td>
<td>SESSION 5</td>
<td>SESSION 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Discussion of parent reaction to stress and the effect of these reactions on the child</td>
<td>*Discussion of specific issues of concern to the family concerning the child's tennis</td>
<td>*Discussion of the need for communication between parent and child regarding child's athletic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Discussion of fair play in the context of rights and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Discussion of future directions for child and of child's tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Constructive feedback on the program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Complete session descriptions can be found in Appendix G.
Risks and Benefits of Research

Risks of the study included: i) possible guilt on the part of the parents if they felt they had been trying to help but in fact had been displaying behaviours with negative consequences for the child, ii) perhaps a defensive reaction on the part of the parents if negative behaviours were being uncovered, iii) parental compliance with the program while the experimenter was present, but perpetuation and perhaps increased negative behaviour patterns (due to defensive reaction) in absence of the experimenter, iv) fear on the part of the child to reveal his/her true feelings about any negative parental behaviour patterns which may have existed, v) the child may use his/her newfound communications skills to "blame" the parent for any negative behaviours he/she was displaying in competition or training, and, finally, vi) the risk of uncovering deeper problems within the family outside of the tennis realm.

Potential benefits of the study included: i) increased awareness on the part of the parent of behaviours that facilitate or hinder his or her child's athletic experience, ii) increased communication between the child and the parent concerning athletic endeavours, iii) increased awareness on the part of both the child and the parent concerning goals, dealing with stress (competitive and otherwise), ideal performance state, fair play, responsibilities, and other issues personally relevant to the tennis life of each subject, and finally, iv) an increased level of enjoyment of tennis for both the youngster and the parent.

Precautions Taken to Prevent Occurrence of Risk Factors. Several precautions were taken to minimize potential risk factors and to maximize the benefits of the study. These included:

- Reassurance on the part of myself as the investigator that parents always have the best interests of their child in mind, and that behaviours which may, unknowingly, produce negative consequences for the child are not to be considered "bad parent" traits.
- Encouragement by myself as the investigator for the child to feel free to communicate his or her feelings without considering this communication to be "parent-blaming";
also, indication by the experimenter that increased communication includes increased responsibility for the child in his/her actions.

- Clearly reinforcing those parental behaviours that facilitate the child's athletic experience and encourage continuation of these behaviours beyond completion of the study.

- Stating at the commencement of the program that all communications are to be directly concerned with the child's tennis involvement only, and that communication must address the behaviours of those persons involved, and not the person him or herself.

Summary

The growing concern for the intensity of youth sport and the pressures inherent to competitive junior tennis, indicates the relevance and necessity of this research. A child's sport experience should be a positive source of growth and development for that child and his or her family. Media reports and research examining youth sport have suggested that the athletic environment is too often an arena in which families are damaged rather than developed. This study seeks not only to increase the available knowledge regarding the potential problems in youth sport, but also strives to intervene in a manner that will prevent or change some aspects of these problem areas. It is hoped that a healthier sport experience will be created for these young athletes and their parents.

The quantitative analysis provides information concerning the effects of a communication training program on competitive anxiety, sport confidence, and sport enjoyment. Furthermore, the qualitative research allows for a much deeper, personal examination of the issues of significance in competitive tennis for all families involved in the study, as well as a thorough evaluation of the communication training program employed in the study. Triangulation of qualitative data is achieved in that all topics and
issues discussed are being presented by child, parent and coach. Hence, it is clear that the combination of the positivist and naturalist approach to research in this study has served to develop a comprehensive examination of parent-child interaction in the realm of competitive tennis.
CHAPTER IV

Participant Family Profiles

Hierarchical qualitative analysis allows trends and themes across all research participants to be developed and examined. However, this form of analysis also removes some of the depth and detail provided by the experiences of each research participant. Hence, individual family profiles will be described to prevent the loss of information which is unique to individual participants. All names given to the children are pseudonyms.

Profile for Participant 1 ("David")

David was fourteen years old, and attended the sessions with his mother. His father was unable to commit to the training sessions due to time constraints in his schedule. David is the elder of two children in his family. His younger brother is seven. He began playing tennis when he was eleven, but had only been seriously training and competing for a year and a half. He was considered by his coach to be very talented, and in the past winter season had achieved a level of skill to play with the most developed players in the group at that time.

At the time the sessions took place David was considering leaving competitive tennis. He seemed quite frustrated and angry with his competitive tennis experience in the past year. He greatly disliked tournament competition, and felt uncomfortable with the "external pressure to perform" (FT1 - P1). He described himself as not feeling confident in the competitive setting of provincial tournaments, and disliked being watched by others. He was also dissatisfied with the lack of officiating at tournaments, stating that he felt most tournament directors were "more concerned with getting the tournament over, than with enforcing the rules (FT1 - P1)". Both he and his mother were particularly upset with the cheating and unsportsmanlike behaviour David had encountered from some of his opponents. It not only angered David, but he felt embarrassed when disputes occurred.
during his matches. He felt sure everyone present at the tournament would be consider him to be a "brat", and perhaps a cheater himself.

David did not feel the same degree of pressure or concern when playing doubles, and in fact preferred competing with a partner. He indicated team sports to be more to his liking than individual sports in general. He also felt comfortable competing at a less intensive level than that which he encountered at provincial tournaments.

David also found it difficult and often distressing to manage his schoolwork and his tennis training. He was an accomplished student, but the private school he attended was academically demanding, and David felt a great deal of strain in balancing his academic and athletic pursuits. He indicated that his academic development was of far greater importance to him than his tennis. He also pointed out his desire for variety in his life, stating, "I want to be diversified, not just focus on tennis" (FT1 - P6). He felt the combined intensity of his schoolwork and the competitive training program prevented him from developing other areas of interest.

His mother wanted him to continue his competitive tennis training as she felt it was important for her son to experience the "dedication and satisfaction of sticking to something" (FT1 - P3). She had not been involved in athletics herself as a child, and felt that there was much to be gained from involvement in sport, such as managing priorities, fulfilling objectives and enhancing self-esteem. David's mother found it difficult to watch her son at tournaments, indicating that her lack of experience in competitive sport caused her to be too anxious, and to empathize too greatly with her son's disappointments and struggles on court. It bothered her that she had no control over the outcome of the match, causing her distress and frustration. She felt, however, that she did not display these emotions overtly, and her son agreed, indicating that she always looked calm and "tries to make me smile" (FT1 - P5).

Mother and son had conflicting opinions concerning the importance of competitive experience. He felt she considered the pursuit of competition too important. She wanted
him to overcome his aversion to competition, but David felt that it was better to simply leave the competitive tennis experience for those who enjoyed it. He felt that winning was not really important to him, yet he did indicate that being at the top of his academic class was a goal he sought to achieve. In discussion, David revealed that he felt more confident in pursuing academic objectives as he was more competent in that area. He also described competition as "being the best you can be" (FT1 - P3), and thought schoolwork embodied this vision, as he was essentially competing against himself. He felt confident in striving to better himself, but not in competing with others stating "when it comes to competitive stuff I have never been very confident in myself" (FT1 - P1).

His mother indicated that he may have undermined his confidence in his tennis ability as he set unrealistic goals for his improvement. It was suggested that he felt disappointed in his tennis as he was unable to pursue the sport to level of "perfection" he desired. David considered this view to hold some merit in his situation, stating that it was helpful for him to look at the situation in this manner.

David also felt it was important to get a "return" for the time he was putting into tennis training, that is, something that would help him in later life when pursuing educational or occupational opportunities. He wanted to become a tennis instructor to "pay his way through university" (FT1 - P2), and had considered the possibility of pursuing a tennis scholarship. It was important to him that there be some measurable achievement as a result of his training, stating that "enjoyment is secondary" (FT1 - P2). He felt he was clearly getting a "return" from his academic development, but questioned whether his involvement in tennis was as beneficial. His dislike of competition had eradicated the notion of pursuing a scholarship, therefore, in his eyes, one possible measurable benefit of training no longer existed. This investment type of thinking also affected his training as he felt "needed to pay back something [to his parents] by working hard" (FT1 - P3). Although David indicated that he pursued tennis for "intangible"
reasons as well as measurable results, his need for tangible outcomes was apparent in all program sessions.

This overall cost-benefit approach to tennis seemed to be leading David to surmise that he should no longer pursue intensive training. He wanted to reduce his involvement with the competitive program as he no longer could see himself competing at the college level. In addition, he didn't feel he could work hard enough in the program to make up for the costs incurred by his parents because the demands of school and training would be too great a strain. Conversely, his mother felt he did not owe her anything, but that he owed it to himself to derive the benefits of sport involvement. She also felt it would be useful for her son to learn how to balance school and tennis, as managing priorities was an important life skill.

David has very positive feelings toward his parents, stating "I have really terrific parents, the best...they are excellent when it comes to my tennis game" (FT1 - P1). He felt they communicated very well in his family. The only issue of difficulty they were having was David's decision to decrease his involvement in the sport. While much of the discussion in sessions revolved around this issue, at the conclusion of the program, it was still somewhat unresolved. However, it appeared that both mother and son better understood each other's opinions on the issue.

Follow-Up. David no longer participates in the competitive tennis program. He returned to the program for a short period, at a reduced training load, but then made the decision to withdraw completely. He still attended two physical fitness sessions per week with the competitive group, and assisted in coaching a "tiny tots" program one morning per week. He still played tennis at a recreational level, and was going to play a less intensive level of competitive doubles in the summer season, as well as coaching young children.
Profile for Participant Two ("Meghan")

Meghan was twelve years old at the outset of the study. She celebrated her thirteenth birthday before the family sessions were complete. She consistently attended the sessions with her father, but on two occasions her mother was present as well. She has a younger sister who is also involved in competitive sport (swimming). She had only started playing tennis when she was eleven, and had just completed her first year with the competitive tennis training program. She had just begun to compete in tournaments in the past year.

Meghan and her father indicated that she was not competing in tennis with the hope of becoming professional or in pursuit of a tennis scholarship. She stated she liked to compete because "I like trying my hardest" (FT2 - P1). Both she and her father indicated that she pursued the sport because it would be something she could play throughout her lifetime.

Her father declared that he and her mother "had no real expectations as to her progress as a tennis player....She does not have to be the best" (FT2 - P1). He compared his daughter with one of the more intensively focused children in the program, who was currently one of the top players in the province, and competitive at the national level, stating "if she were doing as well as him right now, perhaps our thoughts would be different, but she's still learning" (FT2 - P1). He also noted that when he was his daughter's age, he wouldn't have had the confidence to compete at all, so he was pleased with her tournament participation.

At the time the sessions were taking place, a newspaper had featured the story of an eleven year old boy whose parents had sold their house, quit their professions, and moved to Florida with the hope of facilitating their son's tennis development. Meghan's father indicated that he felt this was a very unhealthy situation, putting a great deal of pressure on the child. He indicated that stories such as these were the reason for the objectives he held concerning his daughter's involvement in the sport.
Meghan felt her parents were very supportive and encouraging, and that there was "no pressure to win" (FT2 - P2). When discussing the difficulties which may arise in competition, such as cheating opponents, or other parents who were overly zealous about their child's performance on the court, Meghan's mother felt her role in helping her daughter to deal with these issues was to "empower her to take control of the situation for herself" (FT2 - P3).

The family seemed particularly interested in the session concerning management of training and competition stress. Meghan's father felt the discussion held benefits for himself and could be discussed with his younger daughter as well. Both mother and father described Meghan as angry and stubborn when she was distressed, and her mother indicated that "this usually occurs when things don't go her way at practice" (FT2 - P2). They indicated that she becomes withdrawn and non-communicative as well. Meghan agreed with this description, stating that she needs some time alone when she is very frustrated. She stated that this level of frustration rarely occurred in regard to her tennis, and usually happened when she was having a busy time at school as well.

All members of the family felt they communicated quite well. Meghan's father stated "we have a pretty open household, we usually deal with things as they come up" (FT2 - P3). Meghan stated, "I'm lucky to have the parents I have" (FT2 - P3). They felt that the sessions were helpful in that it was good to think about certain issues before Meghan got more involved in the sport, but thought they weren't as "into tennis" as some of the other families in the competitive program.

Follow-Up. Since the completion of this research, the competitive program has been broken into three levels: elite, "A", and "B". Members of the elite program train and compete at the most intense level; this level of intensity decreases in each of the A and B programs. Meghan still trained the same number of hours as the previous year, but she was now a member of the B-level program. She also attended two fitness sessions per week in addition to her on-court training.
Her mother indicated that Meghan no longer became withdrawn and stubborn when she experienced excessive distress. She stated that Meghan seemed better able to express herself, that she examined situations more rationally, and that she dealt with stress more effectively. Her mother attributed this change to the maturity her daughter had gained over the previous year.

Profile for Participant Three ("Jennifer")

Jennifer was thirteen years old when the family training program began. She attended all sessions with both of her parents. She has been training competitively for two years. She competes in tournaments regularly and has aspirations of playing professionally in the future. She has an older brother (19 years) who is not involved with tennis at all. At the time of the training sessions, she was considering leaving this particular program as she wasn't enjoying the structure of the practices. Both she and her parents felt she was not developing and learning as much as they would like. She had begun training at two other locations, experimenting with different programs and coaching.

Both parents were quite involved in Jennifer's tennis development. Her father played the game as well, and often practiced with his daughter. Her mother did not play, but attended almost all of her tournaments along with Jennifer's father. Both ensured that she was transported to her various practice locations. Although she had not been playing very long, she was quite talented and her exposure to the sport had encouraged her to pursue it at a serious level. She had attended an intensive training program in Florida, and wished to have that opportunity again. Her cousin also trained quite intensively, and the family is acquainted with a successful player on the professional tour. The family had considered a tennis scholarship as an option for Jennifer, as well as supporting her desires to eventually play professionally.

Both parents, and, in fact, Jennifer herself felt that she had a tendency to "give up" in tough matches, or when she saw she was going to play one of the top players. Her
father felt very frustrated with this behaviour. He commented that in Eastern Europe (he and his wife's home country), children in athletics often worked harder, and were tougher in competition because they were not used to having things come easily. He had also developed his own successful business, through resourcefulness and hard work. Because of his previous experience, he found it very difficult to see his daughter give in so easily when she played. He indicated that it bothered him when she lost a match in this fashion, stating, "it's not the losing, it's the giving up that bothers me" (FT3 - P3). Jennifer felt that she let her frustration overcome her sometimes, and that she felt "a bit afraid" (FT3 - P2) of the better players, but that she was trying not to let these things bother her as much as they had in previous matches. Everyone in the family agreed that she was not as likely to let a match slip away as she had in the past.

Jennifer's father said that at times he was overinvolved and overly critical of his daughter regarding her tennis, but she felt he was exaggerating. She said she enjoyed having the support and feedback he provided her, and stated that one of his strengths was that "he thinks I can do it" (FT3 - P4). She did state, however, that she felt he talked about tennis too much of the time. She quickly added that it wasn't critical conversation, it was just always the topic of conversation, which she found frustrating. She felt, in particular, that she needed some time to herself after completing a match, particularly if she lost, and she got anxious if she was confronted with questions or discussion about her tennis immediately after she left the court. She made it very clear that she valued the advice and support her father gave her stating he wasn't at all like the parents she had seen who were "really mean to their kids" (FT3 - P4).

Her parents sometimes found it difficult to watch her matches together, as they had different styles of spectating. Her mother was generally quiet, while her father was quite vocal, and her mother stated he "drives me crazy with constant talking" (FT3 - P3). Jennifer said she was quite unaware of any distress on the sidelines when she was playing,
thinking they always looked fairly relaxed to her, and they often made a "smiley face" at her when she was frustrated or upset to help her relax.

Jennifer's father believed her mother should continue to be encouraging, but to refrain from giving any technical advice to her daughter, as her lack of knowledge in the sport would only confuse Jennifer. Jennifer felt that her mother's feedback was sometimes quite helpful, and it was usually too general to cause her any difficulty. However, she and her mother both agreed that her father was more sympathetic to the pressures of competition as he was more experienced in the realm of competitive sport.

In all discussions, regardless of the issue at hand, Jennifer made it very clear that it was important to her to have her parents attend tournaments and provide support for her tennis development. She indicated that she needed to have time to herself after matches, and to not be constantly bombarded with "tennis talk", however she also pointed out that in spite of this occasional need for solitude, she enjoyed the contribution that each of her parents brought to her tennis training.

**Follow-Up.** Jennifer had continued her tennis training in the competitive program. She began training with a new coach five mornings a week. She played practice matches two or three nights per week, and also attended mental training sessions as part of her development. She had become quite competitive at provincial tournaments in her age category, and was frequently one of the top seeded players. She had been consistently ranked among the top fifteen players in the province, and at times was among the top ten. Her progress and involvement in the sport had both increased.

**Profile for Participant Four ("Lauren")**

Lauren was thirteen years old at the time of the training sessions. She attended all sessions with both of her parents. Lauren had been training competitively for two years with the same coach. She had an eight year old brother who had started to play tennis, her father played, and her mother was now learning to play as well. She has been developing
her game over the past year and is beginning to compete in tournaments. She has aspirations to play professionally in the future.

Lauren's family had become quite involved in her tennis, attending all of her tournament matches. Her father ensured that she arrived on time to her morning practice sessions every week day.

In family discussion, her parents supported Lauren's desire to play professional tennis in the future. However, both indicated that they would like her to obtain a college scholarship, and pursue her education before she embarked on the professional circuit. Lauren had not really considered a scholarship, and the family agreed that this issue needed to be discussed, but felt that it could be postponed until Lauren was older and her game was more developed.

Lauren described herself as not entirely confident in her ability as a tennis player at this point in time. She stated that she was "near" to being a good player, but ultimately felt she was only a "potentially good player" (FT4 - P2). She had experienced a considerable growth spurt in the past year, and on occasion described herself as "clumsy" (FT4 - P2). The rapid change in her height left her tired and weak at times, which she found frustrating as it impeded her tennis development.

Lauren felt she should be achieving proficiency more quickly in her tennis, and found her gradual progress affected her motivation at times. Her parents indicated that she was very hard on herself, sometimes setting unreasonable standards for herself. Lauren was very accomplished academically, progressing well in the gifted program at her school. Hence, she was accustomed to having high standards in other areas of her life. When she felt similar standards were not being fulfilled in her tennis game, she would withdraw from her family and become non-communicative. Lauren indicated that she also felt that her parents withdrew from her, particularly after a bad match. More specifically, she felt that she had disappointed her father.
In discussion, the family revealed that they had experienced difficulty communicating about Lauren's tennis, and her father indicated, "I sometimes take it too seriously" (FT4 - P3). He also felt that he sometimes pushed her too hard because he had always considered himself a "terrible athlete" as a child. Lauren's mother said that father and daughter often took two different opinions and "stood their ground" (FT4 - P2). She also stated that sometimes she was too hard on her daughter, and that this behaviour stemmed from the criticism she received from her own parents as a child, which was an acceptable child-rearing practice in her native culture.

However, Lauren declared that things were much better than they used to be, and her father noted that he had been working very hard to communicate more effectively with his daughter. He felt very strongly that the program sessions would assist him and his wife in this endeavour, also revealing that previous discussion with Lauren's coach had been helpful. He also felt his involvement in the sport at a personal level was beneficial as he now realized he was quite athletic and capable of being good at the sport himself.

Lauren's mother revealed that at times she felt pressured by the costs of her daughter's tennis training. Lauren's parents worked long hours at the same job location. Her mother works during the day, while her father was scheduled for the night shift. They had maintained this job schedule for many years as it allowed one of them to be with their children at all times of the day. Lauren's coach had extended a partial scholarship to Lauren for her tennis training, but her mother said it often bothered her that they could not finance the full cost of her daughter's training. As the situation had been thoroughly discussed with Lauren's coach, the issue was not of overwhelming concern to the family, however, it bothered both parents when Lauren's dedication to training fluctuated.

The involvement of the whole family in tennis appeared to contribute to Lauren's lapses in dedication. It was enjoyable recreation for Lauren's parents to play at the summer clubs where they had memberships, but Lauren often found that spending the entire weekend at these clubs was too much tennis. At summer clubs, a good deal of time
is spent waiting for courts to become available, and Lauren found herself bored, frustrated, and becoming tired of "hanging around" the clubs. Now that school was no longer in session, Lauren was spending several hours training at her regular club, and found that spending all week-end at the summer clubs left her with no time for anything but tennis. In discussion, she came to understand how much her parents enjoyed the opportunity to play, and that they did not expect her to be with them at the clubs all week-end. It was agreed that Sundays could be Lauren's time to do "regular stuff" with her friends. Until this point the issue had never really been addressed as Lauren had always assumed her parents had wanted her to be at the clubs with them, and that any time she was not at the courts it was "bad for my (her) tennis" (FT4 - P5). She seemed to understand that taking time for herself would, in fact, benefit her tennis as it would replenish her motivation and foster her enjoyment of playing.

Although Lauren has started the game at a later age than many of her peers, she had had considerable exposure to tennis training and competition. She had been involved with the Canadian Open each year as a ball girl, and had seen many top tour players practice and compete. She had also trained with her coach in Florida during a time when several international junior competitions were taking place, giving her exposure to the top players in the world in her own age group. At this training camp she had the opportunity to play some local Florida tournaments to gain competitive experience.

Follow-Up. Lauren had continued her training with her coach, and had been joined by two other players, which seemed to increase her motivation and enjoyment in her practices. She attended mental training sessions as part of her training regimen. She had developed more strength and stamina, and as a result was progressing more quickly in her development. She played more tournaments, and had become fairly competitive in her age group, ranking among the top fifteen players in the province.
Profile for Participant Five ("Pete")

Pete was twelve years old at the time of the family training sessions. He attended all sessions with both of his parents. He had two older siblings, a sister (fourteen years) and a brother (twenty-four years), neither of whom was involved in tennis. His parents played the game at a recreational level, primarily in the summertime. He had been training and competing for approximately four years. He had aspirations for a college scholarship, and intended to pursue the sport professionally. He was quite active in tournament competition, and had consistently been among the top five players in his age group since he began playing. He also competed in the under sixteen category and has won a tournament at the under eighteen level. He has competed at the national level, and had been invited to compete as a member of the provincial team at other events. He had had the opportunity to try out for a national team, and had gained international competitive experience at events held in Florida. He had been training with the same coach in the competitive program for two years now, and practiced with the most developed players in the program.

Each of Pete's family members was very successful in their respective areas. His mother, brother and sister were all proficient musicians, his father excelled as an executive, and his mother was pursuing graduate studies. All of the children were very accomplished academically. In discussion, Pete's parents indicated that it was important to them that each member of the family strive for excellence in whatever area they chose to pursue, and that no one in the family should settle for less than what they were capable of achieving.

All members of the family supported each other in their endeavours. Both of Pete's siblings attended his matches when they could, and he would attend their performances whenever possible. Both parents were quite involved in his tennis, however it was usually his father who attended the majority of his tournaments. In this regard, Pete felt his father understood the pressures of competition better than his mother. However, he appreciated the unconditional support he received from both parents, and noted in
particular that they were very calm at his matches, unlike some of the other parents he had observed. He was also very appreciative of the endless source of transportation his mother provided him between school, practice and matches.

In discussion of the achievement orientation in the family, Pete's father wondered if this orientation created additional pressure for his son. His mother was also intrigued by this thought and considered that Pete's position as the youngest member of the family may put him in the position of having standards to uphold. Pete stated that he did not feel additional pressure, and felt that the philosophy of the family was "more like an inspiration" (FT5 - P2). However, he indicated that he sometimes felt he could not talk about the pressure of competition for fear of being a "negative thinker" (FT5 - P2). The family revealed that it was also their philosophy to approach situations in a positive frame of mind. In competition Pete sometimes struggled with this philosophy, as he judged himself quite harshly when he made errors, and would enter into patterns of negative thinking.

These negative thoughts would, on occasion, result in verbal outbursts of temper, frustrated and angry body language, and sometimes even racquet or ball abuse. In these instances, Pete's parents would make their son very aware of their disappointment with his behaviour. This issue had been a topic of discussion among the family, and with the coach, on different occasions over the past year.

Pete found it very difficult to discuss his outbursts as it made him feel "less than perfect" (FT5 - P5). He felt embarrassed after the incidents occurred, but because he did not want to be less than perfect in a match, he put himself in a position to repeat the incidents, as his tolerance for mistakes was unreasonably low. Throughout the sessions, this topic re-emerged for discussion, and while it made Pete feel uncomfortable, he also began to examine his on-court thinking patterns in a more objective fashion, and even devised strategies to control his temper on court.
When discussing the stress of competition and training, it became apparent that on occasion Pete pushed himself too hard, trying to accomplish too many things in one day. Developing an understanding that recovery is essential to progress was significantly beneficial to Pete, as he could now understand that rest was required and did not mean that he was "slacking off" (FT5 - P4).

Pete's mother indicated that at times she felt the three of them spent too much time discussing only tennis. Both parents indicated that this discussion was largely due to the continual schedule of tournaments Pete was involved in playing, but noted that sometimes they had to make a concerted effort to avoid tennis discussion in favour of other family activities. They felt these diversions were important for the entire family to prevent Pete from becoming uni-dimensional in his outlook on the world.

At this point in his development, Pete felt it was time he took more responsibility for arranging his own practice matches and tournament doubles partners, as well as taking more control over the tournaments he entered through discussion with his coach. He has open, two-way communication with his coach, as do his parents, and he felt he was at the stage that he could relieve his parents of some of these duties. He also wanted to be responsible for arranging his own transportation to practice, using public transport, or riding his bicycle when possible, to prevent his mother from always having to drive him to training.

He still enjoyed and wanted the support of his parents at his matches. He also welcomed the relationship between his parents and his coach, in that it provided him with several sources of feedback.

Follow-Up. Pete had continued to progress and develop as a player. His training regimen was essentially the same, with more focus on developing strength, speed and endurance. He trained daily with players who competed in the under eighteen category. He again attended the national competition, finishing seventh in the nation. He continued to compete as a member of the provincial team in his age category, and also continued to
play provincial tournaments at the under sixteen and, occasionally, the under eighteen level. He again attended training camp in Florida, where he competed in the international events occurring while he was there. He had continued to train with the same coach and had incorporated a mental training regimen into his development.

Profile for Participant Six ("Kevin")

Kevin had just turned eleven years old at the time of the training sessions. He attended the sessions with his mother, whom he lived with as his parents were separated. He had been playing tennis from age of was five years, but had only begun training competitively in the last year. He attended the competitive training program three times per week and played practice matches and tournaments in the under twelve category. He enjoyed tournament competition, preferring it to practice for its excitement and challenge. He had aspirations for a college scholarship, and hoped to play professionally as well.

Kevin felt that sometimes his mother was too involved in his tennis, and that it was all they ever talked about. She felt she was discussing tennis because it was what her son wanted to talk about. The two made a resolution to discuss matters of importance, but not to continually rehash the events of everyday training each day. Both parties seemed relieved by the prospect that they could venture into other topics of discussion, each had assumed that tennis was all the other wished to discuss.

Kevin also indicated that on a few isolated occasions he felt his mother was overly critical and angry when he lost a match. He hastened to add that it did not occur often, but that the two occasions when it did occur it had bothered him, and he had told her he was upset at the time. His mother agreed that in these instances she had been frustrated, and had felt tired of travelling to tournaments. She indicated that she found it difficult at times to be involved in all of Kevin's tournaments and matches as she was often tired from her occupational and household work during the week. Both she and her son stated that
these incidences were discussed at the time, and Kevin pointed out that they had taken place a long time ago, noting that his mother did not criticize his play anymore.

During the sessions it was revealed that Kevin had experienced some difficulty communicating with one of his coaches. He felt that the coach thought he was lazy and did not think he could become a very good player. He had been chastised in front of the other players on different occasions, which left him feeling embarrassed and unmotivated. He had also had some difficulty balancing his schoolwork with his training, and found himself feeling quite pressured during the winter season, often feeling fatigued and anxious during practice. It was at these times, he stated that he found himself running into difficulty with the coach, but he did not feel he could explain his fatigue for fear of being considered lazy. Yet as a result, he would be lazy at times, feeling little motivation to work hard for a coach who considered him to be not very good at tennis. Hence, he encountered more conflict with the coaching staff as they could no longer discern if he was really fatigued or not. Eventually he missed several training sessions when he fell ill for an extended period of time.

His mother attempted to deal with the situation, but Kevin felt he should have handled it better himself, and stated that he no longer felt afraid to express himself to the coach, and that the relationship had improved somewhat.

His mother felt that the tennis was "too much" at times, with the training, matches and tournaments, and felt that the schedule her son had tried to maintain had brought about his illness. She indicated that in the upcoming winter season she was going to reduce the number of days he trained to two, replace this group session with a private lesson from the coach Kevin had been taking instruction from since he began playing the game. This coach was also employed with the training program, and hence this new schedule was still convenient for her and her son.

Kevin’s mother stated that she was always aware of the cost of the training, even though it was his father who financed his tennis. She added that she felt pressured by the
schedule herself, finding it difficult to balance with her own work schedule, and indicated that the coaches had been very helpful to her in that regard.

Both Kevin and his mother stated that they felt distressed when he competed against a cheating opponent. They felt an umpire should be assigned to the match, and Kevin revealed that he did not really feel comfortable asking for an official, no matter how unsportsmanlike his opponent was during play.

Kevin made it very clear that he considered his mother's presence at his matches to be very important. He appreciated having her support, and enjoyed having the opportunity to display his newfound or improved skills for her benefit. His mother found it difficult to attend all of his matches, and the two compromised, agreeing that the tournaments were the most important, although he preferred that she come to his practice matches as well, when possible.

Kevin's mother felt that it was more difficult for children to develop in sport in Canada, than in her native Eastern Europe as athletes had more support from the state/nation in her home country. She expressed her appreciation for the communication training program, indicating that it was helpful for the children to have a neutral party who could objectively view the situation and assist them with the psychological aspects of training. Kevin agreed with her, stating it was good to "have a break from everything and just talk" (FT6 - P5).

Follow-Up. Kevin continued to train with the competitive program twice per week and also maintained his private lesson schedule. He still competed in the under twelve category and continued to enjoy the tournament environment. He was growing and developing greater strength, which contributed to his progress as a player. His mother indicated that she had changed her attitude as a tennis parent since the completion of the program. She discussed an incident in which she had a "blow-up" with the coach, and as a result realized she was overprotective, too involved in her son's training, and was unable to be objective. She felt her inexperience as a tennis parent caused her overprotectiveness
and to approach the coach in an "attacking" (FT6 - P6) manor. Although she still believed the intensity of the tennis training was "a little too much, too soon" (FT6 - P6) for her son, she stated that she now tried to let her son handle training issues, and felt he had developed a better relationship with the coaches. She felt her son's confidence would grow as a result of her reduced involvement and encouragement for him to handle communications and conflicts in training.

Profile for Participant Seven ("Lisa")

Lisa was twelve years old at the time the family sessions took place. She attended the sessions with both her mother and father. She had an elder sister (twenty-four years), who was not involved in tennis. Both of her parents played the game, and her father had coached tennis at a summer sports camp. She had only been training competitively for one year, however, she was a talented athlete and progressing quickly. She had previously been involved in many school sports, but was focused primarily on downhill ski racing. She had been invited to train with the provincial ski team, but at this point had decided she wanted to pursue tennis intensively instead. She had aspirations to obtain a college scholarship and then play professionally. She was spending several hours at the club each day, playing as often as she could, with anyone who would play with her, and continually expressed her enjoyment of the game. At this point in time, she was just beginning to compete in provincial tournaments in the under fourteen category.

Lisa's parents were very supportive of her tennis goals, however, they indicated that it was important that she learn to balance her athletic interests with her academic development. She had experienced some academic difficulty in the previous year, and therefore it was a priority for the family at this time. They were also slightly concerned with the amount of time she wanted to spend at the club, hoping that it was not putting too much strain on her physically. However, she showed no signs of duress and continually expressed her desire to play.
Lisa believed that her father occasionally became overinvolved in her tennis. She felt confused when he tried to assist her with strokes and strategy as she was already receiving instruction from two coaches in the competitive training program. Her father indicated that his profession as a teacher sometimes predisposed him to be instructional, and felt his comments were only designed to help her understand what she was being taught in practice. Discussion revealed that the family wished to find one coach that they all felt comfortable with to maintain consistency in Lisa's training.

Both of Lisa's parents were concerned that she tended to be unrealistic in her goal setting as she did not always appreciate the time and effort that progress required. They were worried that she may set herself up for disappointment. Simultaneously, they wanted to be supportive of her goals and aspirations, and not appear to undermine these aspirations if they were truly attainable for Lisa. This dilemma created some distress for her parents, and in discussion it was revealed that these issues needed to be examined with a coach to determine Lisa's future development.

Both parents stated that Lisa had the ability to be very focused during competition. However, they noted that at times she judged her performance too harshly. Her frustration with mistakes made Lisa angry and in these situations her parents observed that Lisa did not seem to be enjoying herself at all. Lisa and her parents both experienced distress with the lack of officiating and the degree of cheating at provincial tournaments, finding this also detracted from Lisa's enjoyment of the sport.

An issue of court attire also arose in discussion, as Lisa's mother felt it would be good for her daughter to wear a tennis skirt more often to training, so she would be comfortable when wearing one during a match. Lisa disliked the idea, and was upset that one of her coaches agreed with this idea. In discussion, her mother discovered that it was not a requirement to wear a skirt at matches, and as a result withdrew the suggestion. However, she still thought it was important for Lisa to dress professionally in her practice sessions to help her prepare for her matches. Lisa did agree with this, and indicated that
she had balked at the notion of the skirt because it "just wasn't me" (FT7 - P2). On a separate occasion, Lisa's mother and I discussed how many female tennis professionals often feel pressure to not only be proficient in their sport but also to be "pretty" while they are playing as it helped them to secure endorsements and fan support. Lisa's mother realized that she had inadvertently incurred this pressure on her daughter, although her intentions were entirely different. This realization resolved the issue for both mother and daughter.

Finally, Lisa's parents indicated that at times they were nervous for their daughter during matches, although they tried to appear calm so as not to distract her while she played. Lisa stated that she never looked at them when she was playing anyway, and she believed that they just wanted her to play well because that was what she herself wanted. She emphasized that she enjoyed having the support of her parents when she played, and while it was not imperative that they be there, she appreciated it when they were in attendance.

Lisa acknowledged that she wanted to take more responsibility for her training and practice matches, but still desired her parents' feedback and support. At this point the family had begun to consider Lisa's tennis more seriously and were seeking to provide her with one consistent coach and a more comprehensive training program.

Follow-Up. Lisa ended the summer and began the winter season with a new coach. She attended training every morning before school and was developing well as a player. She began to play more tournaments and was becoming competitive at the under fourteen level. However, her dedication began to wane, and she seemed to question her original objectives in tennis, as she realized she would have to focus all of her energies into one sport. As the winter season approached, she withdrew from the competitive program entirely, and began pursuing competitive skiing intensively, racing at the provincial level. She did return to playing recreational tennis, pursuing it in the summer season.
CHAPTER V

Results

Quantitative Research Findings

To reiterate, the purpose of the quantitative instruments was to examine the relationships between parent-child communication and the psychosocial characteristics of the developing athlete. In particular, it was hypothesized that involvement in the communication training program would have a positive effect on parent-child relations. It was also hypothesized that a program designed to improve parent-child communication would reduce the young athlete's competitive anxiety, increase his or her confidence and enjoyment in the sport setting, and positively influence parental behaviour.

All quantitative measures were completed by the child participants before and after the communication training program. To ensure privacy and confidentiality for the child, the measures were administered when the parents were not present. With the exception of the parent behaviour evaluation, which is descriptive in nature and cannot be subjected to inferential statistical analysis, all measures were analyzed using a paired dependent sample t test, as well as a Wilcoxon T test for dependent samples. The latter non-parametric test was incorporated as it is designed for smaller sample groups, and therefore is suited to the participant group in this study.

In addition, relationships among anxiety, confidence and enjoyment were examined using the Pearson product-moment correlations. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

Parent Behaviour

Table 5.1 depicts child participants' evaluations of parent behaviour, illustrating both pre and post program assessments.
### Table 5.1

**Child Participants' Pre- and Post-Program Evaluations of Parent Behaviour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE</strong></td>
<td><strong>POST</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRE</strong></td>
<td><strong>POST</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRE</strong></td>
<td><strong>POST</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRE</strong></td>
<td><strong>POST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** The letter grades indicate the child tennis player's evaluation of his or her parents with regard to situation-specific behaviour patterns (see Appendix E for details). The final grade is an overall evaluation of parent behaviour indicated by the child; it is not an average of the situation-specific grades.

It is clear from Table 5.1 that little or no change occurred in the Parental Report Card measures from pre- to post-program. However, the pre-program grades indicate that there was little room for improvement in most of the young athletes' evaluations of their parents. Although the letter grade structure of the evaluation prevents statistical analysis beyond that of a descriptive nature, the report card provides a straightforward and concise depiction of the child's assessment of his or her parent's behaviour.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the range of Parent Profile Questionnaire scores representing positive parenting to potential problem or problem parent behaviour. Also illustrated are the mean parent profile scores for the program participants.
Figure 5.1 As indicated by the clear area, mean Parent Profile Scores for participant parents on all three Parent Profile Questionnaires (PP1, PP2, PP3) all fell in the "PERFORMING WELL" range as categorized by Loehr & Kahn (1989).

The graphical depiction of participant parent scores indicates that the mean scores on all three parent profile questionnaires fell well within the "Performing Well" range as categorized by Loehr and Kahn (1989).

**Competitive Anxiety**

Competitive anxiety was examined using both trait and state measures.

**Competitive Trait Anxiety**

Martens' Sport Competition Anxiety Test Form C for children (SCAT-C) (1977) was completed by all program participants. Figure 5.2 depicts pre- and post-program SCAT-C means.
A paired dependent sample *t* test indicated a non-significant change in SCAT-C scores from pre- to post-program (*t*(6) = 1.27, N.S.). The Wilcoxon *T*-test for dependent samples confirmed the parametric non-significant result (*T*(7) = 10, N.S.).

Using a two-sample *z*-test, mean participant SCAT-C scores were compared to SCAT-C norms for youth sport (boys = 17.84, girls = 18.74) (Martens et al., 1990, p. 57). The mean pre-program SCAT-C score of 18.33 for the male participants was not significantly different from the published norm (*z* = 0.38, N.S.). However, the mean pre-program score of 16 for female participants was significantly lower than the norm (*z* = 2.80, *p* < .05).

The mean post-program SCAT-C scores of 18.83 for male participants, and 18.25 for female participants were not significantly different from the normative data (males, *z* = 1.08, N.S.; females *z* = 0.30, N.S.). While the female SCAT-C scores increased more than the male scores, it should be noted that the data was skewed by one female participant with a score of 23 (*z* = 1.18), placing her in the 77th percentile (Martens et al., 1990, p. 58).

The participant SCAT-C scores were also compared to norms for the sport of tennis (*M* = 20.89), which are not reported according to gender (Martens et al., 1990, p. 58). Male participant scores were significantly lower than the published norm both pre-
and post-program (pre-program $z = 1.81, p < .05$; post-program $z = 1.98, p < .05$). The females' pre-program scores were significantly lower than the norm ($z = 4.76, p < .05$), but post-program were not significantly different ($z = -1.28, \text{N.S.}$). As the published norm for tennis is not classified by gender, the SCAT-C means for the entire group of participants were also compared with normative data, revealing that both pre- and post-program means were significantly lower than the published norm (pre-program $z = 4.02$; post-program $z = 1.94$).

Finally, mean SCAT-C scores for male and female research participants were compared using a two-sample $z$-test to assess possible gender differences with respect to competitive trait anxiety. No significant difference was found between male and female mean scores (pre-program $z = 1.57, \text{N.S.}$; post-program $z = 0.26, \text{N.S.}$).

**Competitive State Anxiety.** Martens' Competitive State Anxiety Inventory - Form 2 (CSAI-2) (1980) was completed by participants during the final thirty minutes prior to match play. This measure was completed by six of the seven research participants as one of the participants had ceased competing in tennis tournaments. Mean scores were plotted for the CSAI-2 and are represented in Figure 5.3.
The data illustrated in Figure 5.3 seem to indicate a decrease in competitive cognitive and somatic anxiety and increased state self-confidence from pre- to post-program. However, the paired dependent sample t-tests indicated non-significant findings for state cognitive anxiety (t(5) = 1.53, N.S.), state somatic anxiety (t(5) = 0.306, N.S.), and state self-confidence (t(5) = 1.76, N.S.) The Wilcoxon T-test for dependent samples confirmed the non-significant parametric test results for all three CSAI-2 subcategories (cognitive anxiety T(6) = 4.5, N.S.; somatic anxiety T(6) = 9.5, N.S.; self-confidence T(6) = 3, N.S.).

CSAI-2 norms are presented for high school athletes, but unfortunately are unavailable for this particular age group and the sport of tennis. Although none of the program participants are in secondary school, their training levels (i.e. time commitment, dedication) are comparable to those of high school athletes, so the high school norms will be used.
A two-sample z-test indicated that the mean pre-program CSAI-2 cognitive anxiety score of 24.5 for male participants was not significantly different from the published norm of 18.48 (z = 1.09, N.S.). However, the post-program mean score of 15.5 was significantly lower than the norm (z = 3.85, p < .05). The female participants' mean CSAI-2 cognitive anxiety scores were 15 before the program and 13.5 after the program. Both means were significantly lower than the norm of 21.61 (pre-program z = 2.63, p < .05; post-program z = 7.17, p < .05).

The mean pre-program somatic anxiety score for males was 20.75 while the mean score post-program was 16. Neither mean score differed significantly from the norm of 17.7 (pre-program z = 0.72, N.S.; post-program z = 0.56, N.S.). In contrast, female CSAI-2 somatic scores of 10.75 and 12, pre- and post-program respectively, were both significantly lower than the norm of 18.92 (pre-program z = 13.92, p < .05; post-program z = 5.44, p < .05).

Finally, the mean CSAI-2 self-confidence score for males of 15 before the program and 24.25 after the program did not differ significantly from the published norms (pre-program z = 1.62, N.S.; post-program z = .62, N.S.). Conversely, female scores did differ significantly from the norm of 22.5 for self-confidence. The pre-program mean of 26.75 and the post-program mean of 29.75 for self-confidence were both significantly higher than the published norm (pre-program z = 1.78, p < .05; post-program z = 8.92, p < .05).

Gender comparisons on CSAI-2 sub-categories revealed that the mean male post-program cognitive anxiety score was significantly higher than the mean score for females (z = 2.00, p < .05). This significant difference was not found for pre-program means (z = 1.57, N.S.). Males also had a significantly higher mean than females for pre-program somatic anxiety (z = 2.34, p < .05), however, significant differences were not found between post-program means (z = 1.24, N.S.). Finally, the mean male self-confidence scores were significantly lower than the female scores both before and after the program (pre-program z = 1.91, p < .05; post-program z = 5.19, p < .05). These results are
contrary to the pattern of the published norms, in which males have lower cognitive and somatic anxiety means than females, as well as having higher mean self-confidence.

**Sport Confidence**

The child participants completed trait and state measures of sport-confidence, as well as the Competitive Orientation Inventory (Vealey, 1986), which serves as a supplement to these measures.

**Trait Sport Confidence.** Vealey's Trait Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI) (1986) was completed by all of the child participants. Plotted pre- and post-program mean scores for the TSCI are displayed in Figure 5.4.

![Figure 5.4: Trait Sport Confidence Inventory means pre- and post-program (bars represent standard deviation).](image)

The paired dependent sample t-test did not indicate significant differences between pre- and post-program means ($t(6)=1.30$, N.S.). The Wilcoxon T-test confirmed the non-significant parametric findings ($T(7)=8$, N.S.).

As with the CSAI-2, norms for the TSCI have been determined for the level of participation and not for the age of the participants. Therefore, the most comparable norms for the participants of this study are those of high school level athletes ($M=77.66$)
(Vealey, 1986, p. 234). The mean trait self-confidence scores for the participant group of 73 before the program and 80.21 after the program do not differ significantly from the published norm (pre-program \( z = 0.64, \text{N.S.} \); post-program \( z = 0.44, \text{N.S.} \)).

In a more recent study, Vealey classified TSCI norms for high school athletes by gender (1988, p. 475). The mean self-confidence scores for the male participants were 67 pre-program and 75.83 post-program, neither score differing significantly from the norm of 76.75 for high school males (pre-program \( z = 0.67, \text{N.S.} \); post-program \( z = 0.09, \text{N.S.} \)). The female pre-program mean was 77.5, which did not differ significantly from the norm of 68.20 (\( z = 1.13, \text{N.S.} \)), however, the post-program mean of 83.5 was significantly higher than the norm (\( z = 2.17, p < .05 \)). No significant differences occurred between pre- or post-program TSCI means for male and female participants (pre-program \( z = -0.64, \text{N.S.} \); post-program \( z = -0.61, \text{N.S.} \)).

**State Sport Confidence.** The State Sport Confidence Inventory (SSCI) (Vealey, 1986) was completed by only six of the seven child participants. Graphical representation of mean SSCI scores is depicted in Figure 5.5.

![Graph](image)

**Figure 5.5** State Sport Confidence Inventory means pre- and post-program (bars represent standard deviation).

Both the paired dependent sample t-test and the Wilcoxon T-test revealed non-significant findings (\( t(5) = 1.24, \text{N.S.} \); \( T(6) = 4, \text{N.S.} \)).
The competitive orientation refers to outcome orientation (1986, pp. 234-235).

Weekly claims that self-confidence is positively related to performance orientation whereas claims that performance orientation is focused on the horse rather than skills and strategies. In contrast, in situations in which the performance of competition outcome is considered to be important in addition to skills, namely, personal competitive processes, claims are considered to be important in addition to skills, namely, personal competitive processes. Competitive orientation refers to those aspects of the following the training program.

Scores (1986) did not include a similar categorization for the SCCI. Hence, mean scores (1986) did not include a similar categorization for the SCCI.

Program Unintentionally, Veale's recent study examining gender differences in TSCI program. Unfortunately, Veale's recent study examining gender differences in TSCI program. Female participants had a mean SCCI score of 4.5 pre-program and 4.8 post-

There were no significant differences in pre- or post-program self-confidence.
The paired dependent sample t-test resulted in non-significant findings ($t(6)=2.267$). The Wilcoxon $T$-test results, however did yield significant results ($T(7)=3$, $p < .05$), indicating that the competitive orientation of the athletes was significantly lower after the program than before it. More specifically, participants became more outcome-oriented and less performance-oriented.

The competitive orientation norms are presented in the form of percentile ranks. The pre-program competitive orientation mean for the participant group ranks between the eightieth and ninetieth percentile, while the post-program mean falls between the seventieth and eightieth percentile for 12-14 year old norms (Vealey, 1988, p. 473). The participant group data suggest that this sample is more performance-oriented than their peers.

It is interesting to note that the participant data seem more comparable to norms for high school athletes, with the pre-program competitive orientation mean ranking between the 60th and 70th percentile, and the post-program competitive orientation mean falling between the 40th and 50th percentile (Vealey, 1988, p. 473). As previously discussed, the level of participation of the participant group is comparable to that of high school athletes, hence, perhaps this is a better norm comparison. Vealey reported a mean
competitive orientation norm for high school athletes ($M=0.59$), but as the standard deviation for her population was not provided, a two-sample $z$-test comparing participant means with this norm could not be completed (1988, p. 476).

Examination of participant competitive orientation means according to gender revealed no significant differences between males and females (pre-program $z=1.01$, N.S.; post-program $z=0.64$, N.S.). The lack of discrepancy between genders is consistent with Vealey's research comparing male and female COI scores (1988, p. 476).

**Sport Enjoyment**

The nine-point Likert enjoyment scale asking the athletes to rate their enjoyment of training and competing in tennis was completed by all of the child participants. The means and standard deviations for enjoyment are illustrated in Figure 5.7.

![Figure 5.7 Likert Enjoyment Scale means pre- and post-program for both training and competition (bars represent standard deviation).](image)

The paired dependent sample $t$-test results were non-significant for both training ($t(6)=1.05$, N.S.) and competition ($t(6)=0.42$, N.S.). The Wilcoxon $T$-test results were also non-significant (training: $T(7)=14$, N.S.; competition $T(7)=13.5$, N.S.).
As the Likert enjoyment scale was designed for use in this research, normative data are not available. There were no significant gender differences in the enjoyment reportedly experienced in training (pre-program \( z = 1.38 \), N.S.; post-program \( z = 1.032 \), N.S.) or competition (pre-program \( z = 0.98 \), N.S.; post-program \( z = 0.83 \), N.S.).

**Correlations Between Quantitative Instrument Scores**

In addition to the analysis conducted on each psychological variable, relationships among the variables were examined. The correlational analyses considered both pre- and post-program participant scores.

**Competitive Trait Anxiety and Trait Sport Confidence.** Pre-program competitive trait anxiety and trait sport confidence were significantly correlated in a negative direction (\( r(5) = -0.909, p < .005 \)). No significant correlation existed between competitive trait anxiety and trait sport confidence after the program (\( r(5) = 0.421, \) N.S.).

**Competitive State Anxiety and State Sport Confidence.** Participant scores for the subcategories of cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and self-confidence were compared to state sport confidence scores. Pre-program cognitive anxiety and self-confidence scores were significantly correlated with state sport confidence scores, indicating a negative correlation between cognitive anxiety and state sport confidence, and a positive correlation between self-confidence and state sport confidence (cognitive anxiety \( r(4) = -0.889, p < .01 \); self-confidence \( r(4) = 0.874, p < .025 \) ). Scores for somatic anxiety were not significantly correlated to state sport confidence scores (\( r(4) = -0.587, \) N.S.).

Post-program scores for subcategories of the competitive state anxiety and state sport confidence were not significantly correlated (cognitive anxiety \( r(4) = -0.256, \) N.S.; somatic anxiety \( r(4) = 0.695, \) N.S., self-confidence \( r(4) = -0.622, \) N.S.).

**Trait Competitive Anxiety and Tennis Enjoyment.** Pre- and post-program trait competitive anxiety scores were correlated with enjoyment scores for competition. Participant scores for pre-program competitive trait anxiety and enjoyment of competition
were significantly correlated in a negative direction ($r(5) = -0.81, p < .025$). Pre-program scores for enjoyment of training and competitive trait anxiety were not significantly correlated ($r(5) = 0.33, \text{ N.S.}$). Post-program participant scores for competitive trait anxiety were not significantly correlated to enjoyment of training or competition (training $r(5) = -0.453, \text{ N.S.}$; competition $r(5) = -0.044, \text{ N.S.}$).

**Trait Sport Confidence and Tennis Enjoyment.** Pre- and post-program enjoyment ratings in training were not significantly correlated with trait sport confidence scores (pre-program $r(5) = -0.18, \text{ N.S.}$; post-program $r(5) = 0.59, \text{ N.S.}$). However, both pre- and post-program ratings of enjoyment in competition were significantly correlated with trait sport confidence scores (pre-program $r(5) = 0.84, p < .01$; post-program $r(6) = 0.87, p < .01$).
Qualitative Research Findings

The qualitative research component of this was incorporated to provide a more complete representation of the psychosocial aspects of the child's tennis development than is portrayed in quantitative measures alone. Analysis of the content of the sessions revealed richly informative data concerning the nature of parent-child communication, parent behaviour, and the participants' experience in the competitive junior tennis environment.

Interviews with the coaches served to provide information about the involvement of these coaches in the development of young tennis players. Analysis of this data also provided information about the coaches' impressions of parent-child communication, parent behaviour and parent involvement in the child's tennis.

Qualitative analysis was also incorporated to evaluate Loehr and Kahn's Parent-Player Tennis Training Program (1989). Finally, post-program evaluation of parent-child communication and parent behaviour was also obtained through qualitative data analysis.

Presentation of Results

Hierarchical content analysis of the data will be categorized and presented for all of the research participants in all topic areas. However, the results will be organized to clearly indicate if the data is representative of children, parents or coaches.

Content Analysis Findings Across Participants. Inductive data analysis procedures summed over all research participant responses were examined for raw data themes. Identification and structuring of these raw data themes led to the emergence of several topic categories which were used to organize and present data. Each topic category represents a broad-scope theme, as explained in the method section of Chapter III, and has several more specific themes as subcategories. Table 5.2 depicts the organization of qualitative data analysis.
### Table 5.2
Categories for Qualitative Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Parental Involvement in Child's Tennis Development</td>
<td>Role of the Parent*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals of the Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport Experience of Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive and Negative Behaviour Patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent-Child Communication*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Program Changes in Parent Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Psychosocial Aspects of Child's Development in Tennis</td>
<td>Stress/Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Orientation &amp; Perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Autonomy/Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socioeconomic Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Mental Toughness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Pressures in the Competitive Tennis Environment</td>
<td>Pressures Experienced by the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parental Awareness of Child's Reaction to Pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pressures Experienced by Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Reactions to Pressure - Effect on Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Coach Involvement in Child's Tennis Development</td>
<td>Role of Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of Coach on Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child-Coach Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involvement with Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dealing with Parent-Child Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection on Coaching Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Involvement of the Provincial Tennis Organization</td>
<td>Officiating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tournament Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Evaluation of the Training Program</td>
<td>Positive and Negative Parent Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive and Negative Child Evaluations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*pre- and post-program responses are addressed in these subcategories*
Category I: Parental Involvement In the Child's Tennis Development

Qualitative results concerning parental involvement in the development of the child's tennis were derived from an analysis of the written and observational data obtained in the communication training sessions, and from interviews with the program coaches.

Role of the Parent in the Child's Tennis Development. Prior to the commencement of communication-training sessions, all of the parents were given the opportunity to write down and discuss what they felt their role as a parent in the development of their child's tennis should entail. Several commonalities emerged across the participants.

- All of the parents indicated the most obvious aspect of their role to be the provision of financial support for their child's tennis. Parents felt they were responsible for the cost of lessons, equipment, tournament entry fees and other incidental costs. While this aspect of the parent role was consistent across participants, it should be noted that the financial load of each family did vary.

- All of the parents indicated the second most obvious role in their child's development to be the provision of transportation to practice and tournaments. For a few of the parents, this task was difficult as their children trained very early in the morning before school or they were a one-car household with several individual schedules. In one case, the family used public transit, and hence greater time for transportation was required, and often the parent had to arrange for a coach or another parent to assist her.

- All of the parents indicated that it was their role to provide emotional support for their child in his or her tennis pursuits. Emotional support included listening to the child discuss practices and matches, attending matches, consoling the child after a difficult loss, and allowing the child to pursue tennis knowing that the parent felt it was a worthwhile activity.
- Another common theme among discussions of the parent role was the promotion of the child's physical, mental and social development. The parents believed that it was their role to make sure their children were involved in physical activity to keep the child physically fit. Parents also believed their role of encouraging physical activity would provide their children with an environment which would develop their mental skills, including concentration, perseverance, setting and realizing goals, and analyzing situations. Finally, parents reported that the encouragement of sport involvement would provide their child with social opportunities, such as meeting friends, learning to communicate with coaches, and travelling to different parts of the province for tournament play.

- Some of the parents perceived that it was their role to provide their child with a good coach, and to maintain ongoing communication with that coach throughout their child's development. A few parents indicated that it was also their role to facilitate communication between their child and his or her coach, encouraging the child to call the coach after matches and to express his or her feelings constructively in practice. Parents who indicated that securing good coaching was an essential part of their role as parents tended to have children with aspirations to pursue tennis at an intensive level.

- Finally, several of the parents indicated that they believed it was their role to promote sport involvement for their children to "Keep them busy and out of trouble" (FT3 - P2, mother). The majority of the children are entering the teen years, and parents believed it was their role to encourage tennis involvement to prevent their child from experiencing boredom and the temptation to experiment with less healthy pursuits such as alcohol or drugs.
A summary of participant themes concerning the role of the parent in the child's tennis development are illustrated in Figure 5.8.

Following the conclusion of the communication-training sessions, parents were again given the opportunity to evaluate their role as a parent in their child's tennis development. The parents were asked to reflect on the discussions that had occurred in the sessions and to make additions or changes to any aspects of their role. A few common themes emerged after the program regarding the role of the parent.

- Several parents indicated that an important part of their role should be to reduce the pressure the child experiences in training and competition. More specifically, parents stated that they would try to be more relaxed when watching matches, more patient with their child's skill development, and try to be more empathic of the pressures of competition. A few parents indicated that they should try to be more understanding of the child's effort to balance schoolwork and training.
A few parents indicated that they should be instrumental in helping their child cope with unsportsmanlike opponents. One mother discussed her role in this area:

As a parent, I have to empower her to take control of the situation herself. I wouldn't try to shelter her from it, because it's going to happen, but I would talk to her about how to deal with possible distractions that could happen.

A few of the parents believed it was important for them to be less involved in their child's tennis regarding strokes, strategy and training habits. These parents believed it was essential that they be able to rely on the coaching staff to provide their child with direction in these areas.

Several other issues arose in the discussion concerning changes in the role of the parent, however, these areas are more accurately defined as intended changes in behaviour. The most pervasive of these intended changes was the promise to reduce the amount of time spent talking about tennis, particularly after the child had finished a match. One parent indicated that he needed to be less critical with his child, and to resist the temptation to coach or evaluate his child's performance on court. Another indicated that she would attend more of her child's matches at his request.

A few parents indicated that they did not wish to change any aspects of their original role definition. Some parents seemed to be slightly offended at the idea of changing their behaviours. However, on reflection they seemed to understand the purpose of the second evaluation, as the following quotation illustrates:

I don't want to change anything (pushing "Parent Role Change" form away from him). (Pause). But...well, I understand that it is not good to be too hard in pushing. I don't feel my role is different, but I see that it is better to back off sometimes. (FT3 - P8)
As part of the interview process, the coaches were asked for their perceptions of the parents' role in the child's tennis development. All four coaches used the term "unconditional support" in their responses, referring to financial, physical and emotional support. The idea of unconditional support is illustrated by one coach in the following quotation:

A parent's role is to give support - financial, mental and emotional to the child. To help them with their confidence (pause), mainly to provide a support structure for the child when they leave the tennis court. To go and watch the child, show they're interested in what the child's doing, which is part of support....win or lose in matches, to love the child, and to show that it's not the end of the world whether they win or lose a tennis match. That it doesn't affect the family relationship, it doesn't affect how they feel about the child.  (CT3 - P2)

Specifically, it was stated that parents should ensure their children are getting proper nutrition and sleep, that the parent take time to watch matches and discuss tennis with the child in a non-threatening manner, and that the parent try to understand the pressure that tournament play places on the child. In addition, it was advised that a parent's role was to seriously consider the nature of competitive tennis before allowing the child to pursue it at an intensive level, and to not coach the child, as the child needs unbiased parental support, particularly on difficult training days. One coach indicated that it was the role of the parent to communicate to the coach any difficulties the child may be having that the child is reluctant to admit to the coach for fear of being viewed as "not tough" (CT3 - P3).

Goals of the Parent for the Child's Tennis Development. One of the communication-training sessions was spent discussing the goals that the parent and child had for the child's tennis development. Several common issues emerged across the parents' responses.
• One of the goals parents indicated for their children was to excel at the sport. One set of parents' list of goals for their child referred to "excellence" and "elite" in four different instances, and each time the words were underlined. It should be noted that not all of the parents who wished for their child to excel at tennis had aspirations for the child to play professionally. While not all of the parents listed this goal for their children, only one indicated that he specifically did not have a desire for his child to excel in the sport.

• Several parents stated that they wished their child's tennis development would encourage the child to pursue the sport for a lifetime. A few parents indicated that this was one of their initial motivations for enrolling the child in tennis lessons.

• Many parents hoped that the child's tennis development would enhance his or her self-esteem. It is important to emphasize that several parents indicated that they felt the child needed to experience competitive success in order to have this goal fulfilled.

• It was a goal of several parents that the child obtain enjoyment from his or her tennis development, both in the present and the future.

• A few parents indicated a goal for their child's tennis was the development of a future coaching career which could provide employment in something the child enjoyed.

• Several parents listed the development of work ethic, perseverance and emotional control as a goal for their child's development. One father's quotation portrays this desire:

  I'll explain what I mean by "winning character", you know, to always try to win, don't give up, and if you cannot win it, you still try your best. (FT3 - P1).
Other parental goals connected with the child’s character development included the development of self-discipline, learning life skills from the sport experience, and learning to prioritize and manage time between school and athletics.

- All parents indicated that it was their goal for their child to have a healthy mind and body, and that the child’s involvement in tennis would help him or her achieve that health and well-being.

- Five of the seven sets of parents indicated that a goal they had for their child was to obtain an athletic scholarship to an American university. One of the remaining two parents did not list this as a goal for her child, but brought it up in later discussion as something she had considered.

Other parental goals which were not as common across participants included the desire for the child to learn realistic expectations and to learn to work for a long term objective. In addition, some parents wished for the child to travel and to meet people through his or her participation in tennis. One parent indicated that he felt it was important for his child to learn how to deal with victory and loss. Finally, three parents stated that it was a personal goal to experience the satisfaction in having assisted the child’s tennis development. Parental goals are summarized and depicted in Figure 5.9.

![Figure 5.9](image_url) Raw data themes for the Parent Goal subcategory.
Sport Experience of the Parent. Four of the fathers and one of the mothers had been proficient child athletes with a good deal of competitive experience. Two of the other fathers expressed that they had found athletics difficult as children, and that they had lacked confidence in their athletic abilities.

Data concerning parent sport experience is interesting when compared with the comments that the children made regarding parent understanding of the child's experiences in the competitive setting. One child indicated that one of his father's greatest communication strengths was that he was experienced in sport and therefore could discuss his matches with him. His mother agreed that her lack of competitive experience made it difficult for her to understand his tournament experiences, and that her nervousness prevented her from enjoying the matches (FT1 - P4). Another child felt his father better understood the pressure of a tennis match, due to his father's previous competitive experience and even stated "Mom, you have no idea how hard it is, " (FT5-P2).

A third child indicated that her father's athletic experience provided him with a better understanding of the nature of competition, but that sometimes he overidentified with her tennis and, as a result, she would avoid discussing matches with him. This situation was replicated between another father and daughter.

One of the coaches described his impressions of the sport experience of parents with children involved in competitive tennis as follows:

I tend to see the parents who don't play sports be far harsher on their kid than the ones that do....it alienates the kid and the parent...to the point where the kid can say, "Look, you don't know what I'm going through, you don't know what you're talking about, so just stay out of it” (CT1 - P1/2).

One of the children whose mother had not competed in sport indicated that while his father was more experienced, he found his mother to be more analytical of his matches. The child whose father lacked confidence as a child athlete, and whose mother did not
pursue sport as a child stated that she felt her parents were sometimes overcritical of her match play. Her father agreed that they were sometimes too harsh on their daughter.

While the sport experience of the parent was not addressed directly as part of the communication-training sessions, the issue did arise with several participants, and therefore was relevant.

Parental Behaviours Affecting the Child's Tennis Development. The second program session allowed both parents and children to examine parental behaviour with respect to the child's tennis involvement. Dialogue from each family's session as well as the issues revealed in Parent Profile Questionnaires were analyzed. Common themes for both strengths and weaknesses occurred across participant families.

Positive Parent Behaviours

- All of the children indicated that their parents provided encouragement for them in their tennis pursuits. Encouragement varied from providing motivation to exercise and play tennis, giving comfort on difficult competition or training days, focusing on the child's enjoyment of tennis, helping with goal-setting, and, as indicated in the quote below, attempting to raise the child's confidence.

  [My mom] encourages me a lot, she always says, "You know you can do it!" She thinks of me as good [as a tennis player]. [My dad] encourages me a lot, gives me pep talks. He thinks I can do it. (FT3 - P4)

- In general, the children felt that their parents were very supportive of their tennis development. More specifically, the children referred to financial support, provision of transportation and equipment, and incidentals such as "[keeping] my tennis stuff organized and always making sure I'm fed," (FT4-P3). One child described the support he received from his parents as, "one of the driving forces behind me and my tennis game," (FT1-P1).
Several children referred to the *communication and feedback* they received from their parents as a positive and helpful behaviour.

"...our communication and trust is very strong" - (FT1 - P8)

"Sometimes it's good to have them for feedback, sometimes it helps" - (FT4 - P4)

"I like getting feedback from them during my match when things aren't going well and I'm starting to get frustrated" - (FT3 - P3)

"...she's good about listening to me when I want to talk about practice and matches" - (FT6 - P3)

All of the children indicated that they enjoyed having their parents present at competitions. However, more important than simply attending the match was the behaviour parents exhibited while spectating:

"...she always looks calm, and sometimes tries to make me smile." - (FT1 - P5)

When I'm getting frustrated on the court, I'll look at my mom and she sometimes gives me, like a 'smiley face', to remind me to relax. She's there at tournaments, I like that...you know, smiling and gesturing. - (FT3 - P3/P4)

He ignores other obnoxious parents, you know, doesn't get into clapping wars at matches. He's always really nice to guys I play against, if I win or lose. He always looks relaxed, even in close matches. - (FT5 - P3)

Not all of the children indicated that parental behaviour at matches was positive, however, regardless of the type of behaviour exhibited, all of the children stated that they still wished to have their parents present at tournaments.

Other positive behaviours mentioned by some of the children included "keeping the pressure off, there's no pressure to win," (FT2 - P2) and always maintaining a positive attitude about the child's tennis. One child described the example of achievements his parents displayed in their own professions as an inspiration for his own goals in his tennis development.
The coaches were asked to comment on what they considered to be positive parental behaviours in the development of a young athlete. These comments were very similar to the children's descriptions of positive parent behaviour, including support, encouragement, and attending matches.

I think the "all world" parent is the one who gets up in the morning and drops the kid off [at practice] because the kid wants to be there. And drives the kid to tournaments because the kid wants to participate. And says to the kid after the kid loses badly, "Was it fun?"...just non-committal, total support, win lose or draw.  (CT2 - P3)

Other remarks included developing intrinsic motivation in the child, providing the child with confidence through positive, constructive communication, exhibiting genuine interest in the child's tennis development, and ensuring that the child's physical development needs (proper nutrition and rest) are monitored.

An illustrated summary of positive parent behaviours indicated by both child and coach participants is depicted in Figure 5.10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of Positive Parent Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children's Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.10*  Raw data themes for the Positive Parental Behaviour subcategory.
Almost all the child participants felt their parents spent too much time talking about tennis. Several of the children indicated that they rarely got to discuss their other interests. Two participants indicated that even when the topic of conversation involved something completely different, their fathers often compared the situation to tennis, or brought the conversation back to the subject of tennis training or competition. One set of parents indicated that they also felt family conversation too often revolved around tennis, and that they strove to introduce other areas of life to their child. They claimed that such tennis conversation was often inadvertent as it seemed the family was always preparing for or recovering from tournament competition. It became apparent in these sessions that some of the parents were unaware that their children were bothered by conversations concerning tennis, as they were only trying to ensure that the child knew they were interested in his or her sport involvement. Often the child would indicate that it was not the fact that the conversation focused on tennis, which was troublesome, but that the nature of the conversation was such that he or she felt the parent was nagging. As an example, one child stated, "...it doesn't bother me, unless he's too pushy," (FT3 - P4). It became apparent that often a fine line existed between exhibiting interest in the child's tennis pursuits and excessively harping on these pursuits.

Tennis related discussion seemed particularly distressing for child participants when it occurred immediately after the child completed a match, particularly if the child had lost. Each and every child indicated that their parents did not give them enough time to recover after a match.
before discussing that match. Several children expressed their frustration with this bombardment:

When I'm frustrated I need a little time by myself, sometimes they don't understand that. - (FT2 - P3)

I know what I do wrong, I don't want to talk about it. I'll come off and they'll be there, "Honey, what happened?", or, "You should have tried this," and it just annoys me sometimes. Sometimes I'll go to the locker room right after [the match] and stay in the bathroom for awhile, but they're still right there when I come out. - (FT3 - P6)

They don't always seem to understand what it's been like for me on the court, and sometimes what they say bugs me 'cause it's always black and white to them. - (FT4 - P4)

Several of the children believed that their parents placed more importance on tennis than they themselves thought necessary. However, the reasons behind parent consideration for the sport did vary between participants. One mother indicated to her son that she felt the competitive experience gained from tennis provided many valuable life lessons including "how to have a common goal, the psychology of competition, [and] time management" (FT1 - P6). However her child still felt she placed too much importance on tennis stating, "there are a lot of things I could do to learn life skills besides play tennis" (FT1 - P6). Another point related to excessive tennis discussion was brought forth by three other children who felt their respective parents placed too much importance on tennis as a great deal of time was spent conversing about tennis, but very little time was spent in conversation about other aspects of the child's life. As a result these children felt their parents had placed too much significance on the role of tennis in their lives.
Several children felt that their parents were often overly critical of certain aspects of tennis. One child felt his mother was too critical of his aversion to competition. Another child indicated that she felt both of her parents were excessively critical of her play after she completed a match, stating, "I don't always agree with what they say" (FT4-P3). She also indicated that if she lost a match, her father would either be critical, or he would withdraw from her and not speak to her at all. In relation to this issue, it is interesting to note the comments of one of the program coaches who stated, "I think both...being negative with the child, or not saying anything...both undermine the confidence of the child," (CT2-P3).

A third child indicated that his mother's criticism of his training development was sometimes too harsh. This same child also indicated that while his mother was primarily positive and supportive, on one occasion she had been very negative and angry when he had lost. He stressed that it was a rare occurrence, but he remembered it very vividly and was quite upset by the incident.

Interestingly enough, many of the parents judged themselves more harshly in this area than their children did, indicating that they were sometimes too critical, "pushy" or put extra pressure on their children to perform well. One set of parents indicated that they needed to work on reinforcing their daughter's self-esteem when she lost a match, pointing out that the family tended not to communicate very well when this situation occurred.

A few parents also stated that they may be expressing negative emotion while watching their child play. In one instance, a particularly difficult one for myself as the investigator and facilitator, one child's mother indicated that she felt her husband maintained a constant negative
commentary throughout the child's matches. However, none of the children seemed aware of parental behaviour on the sidelines as not one child indicated that their parents seemed tense or upset when they played.

- A few children felt their parents were overinvolved in their tennis. This overinvolvement usually involved unwanted commentary on strokes and strategy, too great an awareness of rankings and tournament schedules, or, again, the inclination to discuss the child's tennis involvement at great length. Examples of parent overinvolvement were discussed in the coach interviews. One coach provides a vivid example of the behaviour of an overinvolved parent:

  ...you can see the parent over-reacting, or just reacting period, to a child's mistakes, or making derogatory comments toward the child....it is a form of projection, where the adult is actually seeing themselves playing the tennis match, and making comments towards themselves, as they had made the mistake. You hear parents talking about "we're", that's an obvious sign. "we're going to play in a tournament this weekend, we lost to so-and-so, we couldn't hit a forehand". When you start hearing that, you know you're in trouble. - (CT3 - P3)

Less common parental behaviours that certain child participants found negative included feeling pressure to perform, as stated by one participant,

I feel my parents sometimes compare me a bit too much against the better under fourteen players, and I feel a bit pressured to be like them. - (FT3 - P1).

One parent indicated that he may make his daughter feel guilty about the money being spent on her tennis if he felt she wasn't trying as hard as she could. Coaches also commented on the issue of linking child performance with the money invested in his or her training. This situation is described in one coach's interview:

...the parents are putting a lot of pressure on her to get good quickly for financial reasons. Like they're saying, "We're spending a lot of money on
you for you to be here, you better be making some progress." And so when they come in to watch it's like a test. And so she tenses up. - (CT2 - P5)

Another issue involved the parent living his or her sport dreams through the child's tennis involvement. A couple of parents admitted that these dreams were sometimes in their thoughts. One parent in particular claimed he felt this inclination was a result of having always thought of himself as a "terrible athlete" as a child. A comment from one of the coaches provides an interesting footnote to this situation,

[Parents with low self-esteem] probably have a higher tendency to interfere in their child's development because maybe they had a shot at doing something in sports, or didn't have a shot at doing something in sports, but always wanted to and now they have a second chance with their child, and it's almost like themselves, because it's a part of them. - (CT3 - P3).

Analysis of the coaches' interviews revealed other negative parental behaviours worthy of mention, although not commonly reported by the family participants. One such behaviour involved the impingement of parent goals on child sport involvement, as one coach stated, "I think there are a lot of kids that are playing because they think their parents want them to play," (CT3 - P3). Another issue derived from the coaches' interviews addressed the parent reaction to match outcome as discussed in the following quotation:

I see real inconsistencies in the way parents treat their kids, whether they've won or lost. Often there's an emphasis on winning and losing, even if the parent says, "Go out and have fun", they don't treat their kid the same way if they win or lose. So the message, "go out and have fun", is like a flowery comment... if little Johnny [or Mary] had fallen down and was hurt, they wouldn't think anything of hugging and supporting him [or her]... but if they have an equally traumatic time on the tennis court, they're more likely to say, "Why'd you play so dumb, that was stupid," or, "Why didn't you do what you were told?". They start treating them like little employees... - (CT2 - P2/P3)
Coaches also identified the detrimental effects of the underinvolved parent, noting how many talented and eager children simply don't develop in the sport because the parents do not wish to invest the time required of a tennis parent. These children often exhibit decreased confidence, rarely enjoy the sport experience, and therefore may decline participation in sport and physical activity altogether (Donnelly et al., 1993; Loehr & Kahn, 1987; Woolger & Power, 1993). Hence the behaviour of the underinvolved parent may have long term ramifications for the developing child's health and well-being. Finally, one coach noted the effect of parent behaviours and attitudes unrelated to tennis which still have an impact on the child's tennis involvement:

[If the parent] talks very negatively about how hard everything is, how tired [he or she] is, how much of a hassle everything is...then I see those things from [the child] on the tennis court. - (CT4 - P3)

While all of the coaches were able to identify parental behaviours which were potentially damaging to a young tennis players development, one coach cautioned against prematurely judging a parent:

...sometimes it's just a misunderstanding of the parent's role. I mean the parent wants the child to...do the best, and sometimes it's just that they really want the best for the child. Maybe they're starting to question the coach's ability....maybe they see some other kid improving at a faster rate, and maybe they don't understand that that's sometimes a normal part of tennis development....it's really easy to say that a parent wants it more than the child does...but you have to be sure before you throw that title on somebody. - (CT3 - P3)

The themes identified by children and coaches concerning negative parental behaviour are outlined in Figure 5.11.
Perceptions of Negative Parental Behaviour

**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children's Comments</th>
<th>Coaches' Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excessive &quot;tennis talk&quot;</td>
<td>Impingement of parent goals on child's tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombarding child after difficult match</td>
<td>Linking costs invested in training to performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making tennis too important</td>
<td>Over or under involved in child's tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overly Critical</td>
<td>Reacting negatively to losses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing negative emotion on sidelines</td>
<td>Display of negative life attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.11 Raw data themes for the Negative Parental Behaviour subcategory.

**Parent-Child Communication.** Both children and parents commented on the nature and quality of their communication before and after the program. In general, this group had quite solid communication patterns prior to the program, as illustrated by such comments as, "There isn't much room for improvement, our relationship is already very strong," (FT2 - P7), and, "...we have a pretty open household, we usually deal with things as they come up," (FT2 - P3). These claims were supported in my observation of the sessions as in most instances children and parents seemed free to express their opinions without worry of recrimination. In one particular instance, a child caught her father trying to express a thought for her and corrected him stating, "No, Dad - you don't know what I'm thinking," (FT7 - P1).

There were, however, exceptions to the generally good parent-child communication. One child felt his mother was not really listening to his concerns regarding competition. Their discussion of this issue became more intense and the mother began to withdraw. The child then chided her stating, "Don't be sullen, speak it out" (FT1
them new insights into the child's thought and emotions. In addition, some of them have followed the program, several of them remained to me that they felt the sessions gave themselves to the child-communication. While parents were not asked directly to comment on parent-child communication

these changes in parent-child communication have at least persisted in the short term. The sessions seem to have opened a communication between between me

We did improve a little your communicating with Renata. When I decided

the way they do. (P.4 - P7)

and my parents. Plus I know how they feel sometimes and why they react

The children were given the opportunity to express their feelings in the effect of

Feared they would say he was a negative thinker.

cold indications that he was afraid to communicate his worries to his parents because he

however, if this week of fear was due to my presence as a facilitator. In another case, a

expression themselves they did not appear to be afraid of parental reprisal. It is unclear

inconsistency, the children needed to be drawn into conversation, but when they began to

that in difficult situations they tended to withdraw and not discuss the issue at all. In a few

different opinions and stand their ground” (P.4 - P2). Both the father and child agreed

communication breakdown between her husband and child thinking, “(hey), take two

emotionally frustrated with the situation. In another instance a mother described

- P6) It took some time before they could communicate clearly again as both were

It's pretty good. She's easier to talk to and she doesn’t go on forever.

efficiently, better than when we used to. (El. - Pd)
also asked me to continue to aid in the communication process in an informal manner, which would suggest that some of the children are more expressive with a facilitator present.

Changes in Parent Behaviour. In addition to improved communication, the children reported that their parents were more understanding of competitive stress and the rigors of training. The most common report was a feeling of reduced pressure. Parents who had been overinvolved in their child's tennis, and those parents who hovered around their children following matches became conscious of the impact of this behaviour on the child, and hence began to allow the child the time and space he or she needed.

Children found it difficult to specify exactly what was different regarding the nature of their parents' behaviour, but simply reported that they felt more relaxed and were better able to enjoy their sport. One child described her relationship with her parents as "closer", while another simply stated,

I can't describe it, but what my dad used to do before - he doesn't do it anymore. It's just better. Somehow it's a lot better. - (FT3 - P8)

The parent of this particular child commented that he felt he could be less interfering because he had a better idea of how his child was thinking.

A few of the children indicated that their parents' behaviour had not changed significantly, but that they did not really want to see any change. One child in this category suggested that the program was not needed to help change his parents' behaviour, but rather helped the family to deal with tennis situations more effectively when they occurred.
Category II: Psychosocial Aspects of the Child's Tennis Development

Data derived from the communication-training sessions and the coaches' interviews examined several psychosocial aspects of the child's development in the sport of tennis.

Stress and Anxiety. A detailed discussion of results concerning stress and anxiety is found in the examination of Category III, and therefore will only be mentioned briefly in this section. The stress of training and competitive anxiety were referred to often by parents, children and coaches as significant elements of a young tennis player's development. As one coach states, "...there's a lot of stress on the kids. There's time pressures, competitive pressures, which could be internal or external..." (CT1 - P1).

Of all of the psychosocial aspects of the child's tennis development, stress and anxiety were the most frequently mentioned. This prevalence, which is noteworthy, was likely influenced by the fact that one of the communication training sessions is devoted to stress education.

Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence. As mentioned in the analysis of Category I results, the enhancement of self-esteem was a goal that many of the parents had for their children's involvement in tennis. It is again important to note that many parents felt that competitive success was necessary in order for that goal to be achieved. One of the coaches also commented on the importance of goal-setting and successful achievement of goals in the development of confidence:

[Developing confidence] has to do with their past goal-setting, and their achievements of these goals, and how much encouragement they've had, well especially from families, and maybe previous coaches...a lot of it has to do with their successes in the past - short term and long term. - (CT3 - P1).

This same coach commented that a parent's lack of self-esteem may affect that parent's ability to provide the proper social support structure for the child, stating,

...my best guess is that there would be a direct correlation between low self-esteem in a parent and the odds that they would interfere with their
child's development, not only as an athlete, but probably in other areas of life. - (CT3 - P4)

Three of the children indicated a lack of confidence in their view of themselves as tennis players, particularly in a competitive setting. It was indicated by two children that their confidence levels dropped even further when they were distressed. One child's quotation illustrates this connection between stress, competition and confidence:

When it comes to competitive stuff I have never been very confident in myself, especially when the odds are against me. This is one of the reasons I disliked competition and feel that a less competitive situation and less pressure are better for me. - (FT1 - P1)

However, one other child indicated that he experienced one of his best competitive outings when he was both highly confident and highly anxious, stating, "[I] felt really confident, I was happy 'cause I could hit every shot I wanted to consistently - although I was nervous," (FT6 - P3). While this child was an exception from the others, his experience is a pointed reminder that discussion of psychosocial qualities must allow for uniqueness between individuals.

Comments from coaches denoted a link between the levels of self-esteem and self-confidence a child possesses and his or her motivation to train. The examples below illustrate this connection more clearly:

How confidence levels affect the work production on the court is unbelievable. Like the kid who has low self-confidence and low self-esteem and doesn't think they're going to be very good is not gonna try very hard, because they don't think they're going to succeed. Or they're scared to try very hard because they don't want to fail. - (CT2 - P2)

...the biggest difference [between the player who is confident and the player who is not] is the amount of work the individual puts into what they're trying to accomplish. The amount of sacrifices they're willing to make. - (CT3 - P1)
A final comment from one coach discusses his impression of the "true" nature of confidence which he feels many athletes, particularly young, developing athletes, find elusive and unclear:

...a lot of young people think they understand what it means to believe, to really believe in themselves, and that what they are saying they want to do, or what they can do is possible. But a lot of juniors don't really believe it...then I feel there's almost a built in mechanism where they leave themselves an "out" because inside they truly believe that they're not going to achieve that goal. And they don't want to self-destruct because of it. Real belief is like a guarantee. Nothing's going to keep you from achieving that goal. There is no "out", there is no question. It's not ninety percent, it's a hundred percent. You believe you're going to make it. There is no room for doubt. - (CT3 - P2)

**Sport Enjoyment.** While all of the parents indicated the desire for their child to experience enjoyment from his or her tennis pursuits, only half of the children emphasized "fun" as one of their tennis participation objectives. In fact, one child plainly stated that his primary aim for his training was for it to somehow benefit him in later life with either a coaching job, or a scholarship, claiming enjoyment to be a "secondary" concern.

With regard to specific sources of enjoyment, several children indicated that learning new skills was an enjoyable aspect of tennis training, as one child stated, "This is the reason I started. I love tennis as a game or when trying to improve my skill." (FT1 - P1).

Several parents identified a correlation between child distress and enjoyment, noting that when the child was frustrated in training or competition, any signs of enjoyment seemed to disappear. Common descriptions of this unhappiness included "droopy" posture, angry outbursts, listlessness, negative facial expressions (or as one father described, "the black mask"), and derogatory self-talk. The frequency of these expressions of unhappiness varied between child participants.

One coach felt his place in the development of his athletes included fostering their enjoyment:
...we work hard, but it has to be fun too...I like to be close to the kids, to be their friend and mentor. That way they'll remember their tennis and be happy about it, you know? - (CT4 - P2)

**Performance Orientation and Perfectionism.** With the exception of one child, all child participants presented fairly balanced objectives for their tennis involvement in the areas of performance and outcome. The one exception was highly outcome-oriented in his approach to the sport. However, every child indicated that winning was not very enjoyable if he or she had not performed to the best of his or her ability, and that losses as a result of poor performance and execution were particularly difficult to endure. One child's comments illustrate his opinion concerning performance, as he stated, "I don't mind losing if I performed well, [but] anytime I perform poorly I will be dissatisfied and ask myself why I did so bad." (FT1 - P1).

**Perfectionism** was evident in several of the children. All but one of the children expressed a notably high concern with and low tolerance for mistakes, especially during competition. One child in particular expressed several perfectionist tendencies, as indicated in the following quotations:

I know that nobody's perfect because everyone always tells me that, but I still feel like I could be. - (FT5 - P5)

I like to feel perfect. By perfect, I mean when I've had a great practice, my room is really organized, I've finished my homework, done my sit-ups and push-ups - when I've done everything well. - (FT5 - P6)

This child was also the participant with a significantly high outcome-orientation, and of all the children, had the greatest tendency for outbursts of anger during matches. These outbursts were the topic of conversation in several of the sessions, and the child expressed discomfort in many of these discussions, stating at the end of the program, "Talking about the things we were talking about made me feel less than perfect," (FT5 - P6).
In a session with another child, who described feelings of frustration and poor confidence in competition, it was suggested these feelings were due to the fact that he was always striving to achieve perfection in his competitive pursuits, therefore setting himself up for disappointment. The child indicated that this was indeed a valid explanation, and felt that it would be helpful in understanding his approach to schoolwork and other activities.

Several of the parents felt their children set exceptionally difficult and perhaps unrealistic expectations for their tennis development. One mother specifically suggested that her child's frustration and disillusionment with the sport of tennis was the result of his unrealistic expectations for his progress. One of the coaches indicated that he also frequently witnessed this tendency in junior tennis competitors. Paired with the child's unrealistic expectations for his or her development was often an inclination for the child to judge him or herself harshly when these expectations were not achieved. All parents indicated that overly ambitious goals placed excessive pressure on the child, and two sets of parents indicated that distress in their children was often the result of overly demanding self-expectations.

Hence, while the behaviours and attitudes associated with perfectionism varied between the children, all of them displayed some perfectionist tendencies.

**Goal-Setting.** Commonalities in the goals set by the child participants for their tennis development represented both performance and outcome concerns.

- Six of the seven children indicated their desire to obtain a scholarship at an American university.
- Six of the seven children referred to the goal of learning and improving skills.
- Four of the children expressed concern with obtaining a certain ranking either provincially, nationally or internationally.
Five children stated that they had aspirations to pursue the sport of tennis professionally in the future. The seriousness of this goal varied between children, three of them considering it to be an achievable aim, one thinking it was a possibility, and one child stating as a "dream goal" (FT6 - P1).

Goals that were not as common across the group included future plans to coach the sport, enjoyment, pursuing the sport for a lifetime, pursuing the sport for fitness, and meeting people. Some children had a greater number of performance-oriented goals, others listed more outcome-oriented goals, and some children listed a somewhat equal proportion of each.

All of the coaches emphasized the importance of goal-setting, however only one discussed the clear distinction between performance and outcome goals. One coach felt that children should learn to set goals, "as soon as a child can realize what a goal is and what it means to achieve it," (CT3 - P2). This particular coach felt that proper goal-setting was essential to the development of the child's confidence and skill, and that as a coach he was instrumental in guiding his athletes to set goals which were challenging, measurable and achievable in both performance and outcome areas of development.

Responsibility and Autonomy of the Child. Child participants were invited and encouraged to express their opinions, emotions, and experiences throughout the course of the communication training program. Every family agreed that program sessions were a time for open family dialogue in which each family member was given an equal opportunity to be heard. This design was intended to promote the autonomy of child participants, an essential objective of the research project.

All of the parents believed that the program was helpful in this area. Several parents indicated that their children revealed things to them in program sessions that they had not expressed in any previous discussions concerning the child's tennis involvement. Some of the children also indicated that they felt they could express themselves more
freely during the program sessions. Furthermore, some of the children stated that they could be more open in conversation with their parents outside of program sessions.

However, some of the children indicated that the program sessions had little effect on their personal expression. Two indicated that they already had very open communication with their parents and were always able to express themselves freely. Another child stated that while she had enjoyed the opportunity to speak her mind in program sessions, and that communication between herself and her parents did improve, she felt that the new communication patterns would not persist in an argumentative situation, and that she would most likely refrain from speaking her thoughts.

Two of the sessions involved components in which children examined their rights and responsibilities in the context of their tennis involvement. The discussion of child rights and responsibilities focused on the aspects of fair play and the child's contribution to his or her own development in the sport. The children completed an exercise asking them to examine how they wished to be treated in the sport environment, and to make a commitment to treat others in a similar fashion. Several of the children commented that the exercise gave them a different perspective on the concept of fairness.

Regarding individual accountability for their tennis training, the children were asked to complete a form clarifying the aspects of their tennis for which they were personally responsible. Responses varied, but some consistencies across participants included being more consistently committed to training, striving to control emotions on court, persevering in difficult matches, maintaining a positive attitude in training and competition, listening to and communicating with the coach, and arranging practice matches. Decisions concerning the child's personal responsibility for his or her tennis were the result of suggestions and compromises achieved between children and parents in the final program session. Therefore, commonalities in responses are representative of all child and parent participants.
The coaches were also asked to comment on what aspects of tennis training they considered to be the responsibility of the child. The coaches' responses concurred with some of those elicited from the participant families, including a dedication to training, emotional expression and communication with the coach, and maintenance of a positive attitude in training and competition.

Additional suggestions made by coaches involved responsibilities of the child that also required parental guidance. Two coaches stated that the child had to seriously consider his or her aspirations concerning tennis, and then discuss with his or her parents the effort required to achieve those aspirations. The coach mentioned the child's involvement in the procurement of proper nutrition and rest.

One of the coaches summed up the child's responsibility to training as a commitment to learning, as expressed in the following quotation:

I think, like any area of learning, the responsibilities of the child are to learn (emphasis). To pay attention, to listen, and to learn what's being taught, physically, mentally, and emotionally. I think the child’s responsibility should be the same as their desire to put in hard work and make the sacrifices necessary to achieve the goals that they themselves have stated. - (CT3 - P4)

Sociocultural and Economic Background. A few notable trends emerged from the program sessions and coach's interviews concerning sociocultural and economic aspects of competitive junior tennis. Some of these trends are directly related to the participant group, while others are more general observations of the competitive tennis environment.

Two of the families, situated economically as lower middle class, expressed that the expense of tennis training was sometimes a source of distress for the family. One mother indicated that her child's present training situation would not be possible without a scholarship extended to the family by the child's coach. Another mother pointed out that she too relied on her child's coach for assistance with transportation to practice and tournaments as she did not have a car.
Family relations in half of the participant families were sometimes compromised by the time, effort, and finances committed to the child's tennis development, particularly if the child had siblings. Several parents commented on occasionally feeling "spread thin" by the effort to give equal time to all of their children. Two of the parents expressed that they felt their personal needs were sometimes deprived by the constant effort to support their children's tennis development.

Three of the parents suggested that their cultural backgrounds sometimes made communication with their children difficult as they held values and attitudes that were common in their homeland, but were not as prevalent in the Canadian society to which their children related. One of these was from an Asian background, and she wondered whether she was too harsh with her child, but that her background was such that criticism was used to "make people better" (FT4). She was aware that this form of communication was not always helpful, and indicated that she had to make a constant effort to change this pattern of communicating.

The other two parents were both of Eastern European background. One father indicated that he felt his cultural experience had created a much different work ethic than he found in North American Society as "things did not come as easily there" (FT3). He stated that he wanted to provide his daughter with the things he was unable to have as a child, but that he wanted her to appreciate her good fortune in having those things and to understand what it meant to work for the things you wish to achieve. He felt frustrated as he thought she sometimes expected things to be simpler and that her attitude prevented her from giving a full effort in training and competition. It was noted that a number of first generation immigrants of Eastern Europe were competitors at the National championships. Two of the coaches also noted this observation. Both the parents and the coaches indicated that the "work ethic" these children possessed seemed of a higher degree than Canadian children.
The other Eastern European parent presented a very different issue in comparing European and Canadian, focusing on the support structure for sport in the two cultures. Her frustration stemmed from the cost of training and the inaccessibility of mental training for children, as she claimed, "...it's the money too, in Europe things are sponsored by the government so kids are more likely to get [support], it's harder here," (FT6 - P5). One of the coaches expressed his views on the different support systems, and the difficulty that the discrepancies can cause for Eastern European immigrants, their children, and coaches in Canada:

If you do the demographics of tennis you'll see that the number of players are skewed in favour of Eastern European families....Those parents in a club in Europe would not have nearly as much to say [to coaches]...[often] they couldn't possibly support the kid in [tennis] endeavours, so they have to hand it all over to the clubs and the coaches. Here, they battle with the frustration of the expense of it all...they see tennis as an opportunity for their children to be involved in sort of an upper echelon sport, and give them the chances that they [as parents] wouldn't have. But the end result is...still often unhealthy for the kids involved [as parents get too involved with the child's development]. - (CT1 - P5)

"Mental Toughness": Developing Psychological Skills. Six of the seven families referred to mental or psychological training and skill in the child's tennis development, usually using the term "mental toughness" (FT5 - P3). The desire for the child to be mentally strong during competition was expressed by both parent and child participants. Two parents indicated that they felt their respective children had a tendency to lose focus and/or motivation during matches because they were lacking mental strength. Two others used the term "mental toughness" in describing their desire for their children to have greater emotional control on the court, specifically to prevent reactions of anger or frustration to match situations.

Several children expressed the desire for mental toughness for many of the same reasons parents indicated, as well as dealing with unsportsmanlike opponents. One child
stated his need to develop greater confidence, as he felt he was greatly influenced by his peers in this area. This same child expressed his desire to develop his concentration skills:

This is a big problem. I find my concentration breaks down in most competitive situations, not only in tennis but in academic areas. - (FT1 - P8)

Another child had already tried to devise his own mental strategies for dealing with frustration on the court, compiling a list entitled "Things I Can Do When I Get Mad" (FT-P6). Finally, several parents expressed the desire for their children to have specific training in "mental toughness" as part of their tennis development. One mother felt it was important for children to have an objective listener available to them to discuss any concerns or aspects of their training:

If the clubs have training in intensive sport, they should have someone the parents and kids can talk to that can act as a buffer between them and the coaches...kids don't get psychological training until much later - they should get it sooner, and it's lacking. They get burned out because they are pushed mentally and physically, but they don't understand because they are not in touch with their thoughts and feelings. - (FT6 - P5)

Gender Issues. Only a few gender issues emerged explicitly from the interviews and sessions with research participants; however these issues are worthy of mention. One of the children generally wore shorts and t-shirts and objected to the recommendation of her mother and her coach that she wear a tennis skirt to practice. The reasoning of the parent and coach was that the child should dress "professionally" on occasion. In addition, her mother thought that wearing a skirt was required for female participants in tournaments, and felt that her daughter would benefit from "getting used to the idea" in practice. However, the child strongly felt that her right to choose her own attire was being impinged upon, and resisted the idea strongly.

After the mother realized that skirts were not required in tournaments, she withdrew the suggestion. Sometime later, in an unrelated discussion outside of the
sessions, I was explaining to this parent the prevalence of eating disorders in female tennis players, noting that athletic achievement was often not satisfactory. Regardless of their tennis abilities and success, many of these players also felt the need to be "pretty" in order to obtain sponsorship and endorsements. Hence, these women would often resort to pathogenic eating behaviours to try and obtain the media-defined image of thinness. After my explanation of these pressures, the mother responded, "that's kind of like the skirt thing isn't it?". This particular predicament is of note as it again underscores how positive parental intentions are often interpreted differently by the child, and a negative situation arises.

The other gender issue involve the experiences and views of one of the coaches. He expressed his previous difficulties with a young girl he was coaching who developed a "crush" on him, bringing him gifts, telephoning him often, which created an uncomfortable situation and eventually resulted in the termination of the coach-athlete relationship. As a result, this coach stated that he treated his female athletes very differently from the males, never patting the girls on the back or putting his arm around a girl's shoulders the way he might with a boy. He felt that encouraging any sort of friendship with young athletes, particularly female players, often led to an "unhealthy" situation. Again, this conversation was not part of the formal interview process, and as it occurred in a brief conversation immediately following the interview these were the only details the coach expressed concerning his views.

Many other gender-related issues likely affect the competitive junior tennis environment; however such issues have fallen beyond the scope of information derived from this study.

**Category III: Pressures in the Competitive Tennis Environment**

The third and fourth sessions dealt with the pressures, stress and anxiety experienced by junior tennis players and their parents in the competitive tennis
environment. Several common stressors emerged across both child and parent participants.

**Pressures Experienced by the Child.** Data concerning sources of stress and pressure for child participants were obtained from the perspective of both the child and parent, as well as from observations made in the training sessions. Child participants indicated various common stressors.

- Five of the seven child participants indicated that they found *frequent and lengthy discussions with their parents concerning their tennis development* frustrating and sometimes a source of distress. One child expressed this frustration to his mother, exclaiming, "That's all you talk about is tennis!", also turning to me stating, "...she just goes on too long." (FT6 - P1). Several other children pointed out that the length of the conversations were often more upsetting than the content, claiming that the same points or advice were being repeated to the point of redundancy.

- A related stressor for the children was *lack of solitary recovery time following a difficult match*. Several examples of this scenario were provided by children, all with the same theme - they felt even more tense and distressed following a difficult match if they were immediately bombarded with questions, criticism, or even excessive consolation.

- Six of the seven children had *worries concerning evaluation by others*. Children not only worried about what significant others, such as parents, coaches, and friends thought of their tennis performance and behaviour on court, but also expressed concern over what other peers and adults might be thinking of them as players or as persons. Three of the children indicated that they experienced more competitive anxiety when someone was watching, and five felt greater concern for mistakes when spectators were present.
One other child claimed he became more anxious about parent evaluations if he had lost his temper during in a match. In some matches his anxiety would "snowball" from first being concerned with evaluations of those watching, leading to an excessive concern with mistakes, resulting in outbursts of temper in reaction to mistakes he felt were unacceptable, and then anxiety over being chastised by his coach or parents for his loss of temper. All of this anxiety would culminate in frustration with himself for not maintaining perfect control of his shots and his behaviour; "I don't like seeing myself acting like that, I don't like being like that," (FT5 - P3).

- Three of the seven children admitted that *their own high performance expectations sometimes heightened their competitive anxiety*, and perhaps were even a source of distress in practice. However, several of the children seemed to find the distinction between challenging and excessively high goals difficult to determine.

- A consistent source of competitive distress across all child participants was the experience of *playing against an unsportsmanlike opponent*. All of the children indicated that their anxiety was heightened when an opponent cheated them, as they became angry, then frustrated and then tense from having lost their focus.

In a lengthy discussion with one child about acquiring a match umpire, it became apparent that anxieties involved with playing a cheating opponent may also be related to concerns over evaluations by others. This child stated that he was uncomfortable requesting an umpire as he assumed everyone would think that "those brats playing on that court can't play fairly," regardless of his own efforts at fair play. When asked to explain his feelings, the child stated that he, "always assumed the worst," in regard to what others were thinking about him, and that even if he was being badly
Lesson in time management:

Sometimes too much for the child to handle, while others felt it was a valuable

than parents differed in their opinion of the stressor. Some stated that it was

balance and prioritizing schoolwork and leisure routines. It is important to note

Several parents indicated that their children were pressured by the need to

development of the tennis game:

another indicated that her child seemed to place too much importance on the

sometimes pushed himself too hard physically in his desire to improve, while

concern with winning and match outcomes. One parent felt her child

scheduling practice, tournaments, and training matches, and excessive child

from concern over the number of hours the child practiced, pressure of

demands of competitive tennis on the child. Comments in this area varied

another common concern of parents involved the physical and psychological

themelves.

seemed unaware that they may be placing too much internal demands upon

children did recognize this tendency as a source of distress. However, others

source of pressure and anxiety for him or her. To relieve a few of the

Several parents felt that their child's excessive high expectations were a

children.

The parents expressed similar concerns regarding the stressors experienced by their

between parents and coach, and receiving inconsistent feedback from different coaches.

as common included balancing school and tennis, not enough "free" time, conflict

additional sources of pressure and anxiety included by child participants which were not

would cause when attention was attracted to this court.

cheered be would not ask for an umpire and risk the of embarrassment that
Other concerns over child stress mentioned by individual parents involved negative relations with a coach, confusion caused by conflicting advice from different coaches, and unidimensional identity development.

Coaches were not asked to comment specifically on what they considered to be sources of pressure for the child in the competitive environment. However, suggestions which arose during interviews included the child’s lack of confidence, time pressure, competitive stress, concerns over growth and/or skill development, peer pressure, and critical, unsupportive or overinvolved parents. An example of this latter source of anxiety is illustrated in one coach’s story relating an event which occurred at an under twelve provincial tournament:

We had a parent screaming at a kid…his kid had won the match by a score of 10-1, and the parent’s still yelling at his kid, like ten minutes later.
- (CT1 - P4)

Thankfully, incidents of this type did not emerge as sources of stress among the children in this study. However, these and other sources of pressure occur in the competitive tennis environment, even though they are not represented by the families involved in this research.

**Parental Awareness of Child’s Reactions to Pressure, Stress, and Anxiety.** The third program session involved an exercise in which the parents were asked to discuss the behaviours their children exhibited in reaction to excessive pressure and anxiety. This discussion examined both on and off-court reactions to stress. Several common behaviour patterns were identified across research participants.

* On-court behaviours displayed by children in response to pressure and anxiety included dejected expression, losing interest/giving up on the match, outbursts of anger, and loss of concentration. "Droopy" posture, negative self-talk, and facial tension were common descriptions of child participants'
dejection. Expressions of anger usually included impatience, careless play, and, in some cases, abuse of the ball or racquet.

- Common off-court manifestations of distress noticed in the children by their parents included irritability, fatigue/lack of energy, and quiet, withdrawn behaviour. Parents indicated that when distressed, children would spend more time alone, closing the door to their rooms to ward off other family members. Three sets of parents stated that their children were more easily upset when distressed and often cried with frustration. Three sets of parents pointed out their children's tendency to become very stubborn. One family indicated that their child became much less organized in tennis, school, and personal matters when he was feeling excessive pressure. One mother found that her son's appetite waned and he had difficulty sleeping when he was anxious. During the discussion one child pointed out reactions to distress that her parents had not identified, stating that she would experience an upset stomach and headaches when distressed.

Some parents noted other possible sources of distress for their children. Two sets of parents indicated that if their children felt they were being pushed to hard, or as one mother stated, "if things don't go her way in practice", these children would respond with typical manifestations of distress, such as irritability, withdrawal, dejection and decreased motivation. One father stated that his daughter became distressed if she felt she wasn't being listened to, while another father questioned whether the family's expectation that all of its members strive for excellence in their individual pursuits was a source of pressure for his child. The child however stated that this family value was "more like an inspiration" than a stressor.
Pressure, Stress, and Anxiety Experienced by Parents. Parent participants were given the opportunity to discuss the aspects of the competitive junior tennis environment which caused them distress.

- At least one parent indicated that the empathy that they felt for their children when they were struggling on court raised their stress level. Two parents even stated that they found it difficult to watch, one father finding that he needed something to keep him occupied so as not to fidget or look anxious and disturb his child on the court. One mother expressed the difficulties her emotional involvement in her son's desire to play well impinged on her ability to attend matches:

  Frankly, I find it difficult to watch. I guess I have difficulty with the fact that I can't control the outcome. I want so much for him to fulfill his expectations and desires....I know it's not rational, but I can't help what I feel. - (FT1 - P4/P5)

With one exception, all children felt that their parents almost always looked calm and relaxed at matches, even if the parents weren't actually feeling at ease. Several children even pointed out that their parents helped to keep them calm and relaxed on the court.

- Several parents commented that they were distressed by the unsportsmanlike behaviour on the part of other children or parents at tournament competitions. Parents who were more experienced with attending tennis competitions seemed better able to prevent this behaviour from causing them distress, however it still bothered them somewhat.

- In a related issue, another common stressor identified by parents was the lack of proper officiating at matches. Many parents commented that the lack of officiating was a source of stress for their children as well. One mother commented that she felt it put too much pressure on the children to be
responsible for officiating their own matches, and that children with an excessively strong desire to win learned to "bend the rules" early on in their competitive experience, usually worsening as they grew older.

Other sources of pressure referred to by different sets of parents included, watching the child give up during a match, arguing with the child about the match, time away from other children due to child's tennis involvement, financial strain, and concerns over the coach-child relationship. One parent also indicated that she found it distressing trying to be supportive to her child's tennis as she was a single parent. Another parent claimed she experienced anxiety watching her child play, or even discussing her child's tennis with her spouse as she found him "too negative" (FT3).

Again, coaches were not asked to comment specifically on sources of stress for parents of competitive junior tennis players, however some suggestions were revealed in the interview data. These included, financial strain, "wanting the best" for the child, communication breakdown with the child, and transporting the child to practice and tournaments.

Effect of Parental Reactions to Distress on Child Participants. Discussions of parental reactions to pressure in the competitive tennis environment were also reviewed in the context of how these reactions affected child participants both on and off the court.

As previously indicated, children stated that they were rarely affected by parental behaviour on the sidelines during match play. Some children, while they were playing, were preoccupied with thoughts concerning parental evaluation, and discussions which might occur after the match, thus distracting their focus from the match.

Other parental manifestations of distress did seem to become stressors for the child. Child participants indicated various examples of this negative effect:

If we argue after a match I'll usually just shut-up and not say anything. Even if what they say really bothers me I usually won't say anything. - (FT4 - P3)

146
Discussing the cost of his tennis training, "I feel I need to pay back something by working hard." - (FT1 - P3)

I don't like to talk about the pressure I feel because I don't want them to think I'm a negative thinker. - (FT5 - P2)

I get frustrated when he tries to tell me what I should be doing to improve my shots, I'm already confused enough with the different things I hear from all the coaches. I know he's trying to help but it doesn't help. - (FT7 - P1)

I don't like it when she argues with the coach...it's probably going to come down on me in practice later. - (FT6 - P3)

This latter quotation is supported by the comments of one of the coaches, who related his experience of dealing with a difficult parent:

...we keep her as far away from the program as possible. Even to the point where I told her, at one point not to talk to [one of the coaches]. I said, "he doesn't want to talk to you, and I don't think it's a good idea for you to talk to him because it's affecting the way he treats [the child] on the court".
- (CT2 - P4)

It is quite apparent that pressure, stress and anxiety are part of junior competitive tennis. The reactions of parents and children to their respective stressors is noteworthy, as is the effect these stressors have on the child's relationships with his or her parents and coaches.

Category IV: Coach Involvement in the Child's Tennis Development

The purpose of the coaches' interviews was to examine the aspects of the coaches' involvement in developing a young tennis player. Common themes across the coaches' interviews existed in several areas, however, different ideologies and approaches to junior development also emerged and will be examined.

Role of the Coach in Developing a Junior Tennis Player: All four coaches used the term "role model" in describing their part in the development of a young tennis player.
Two of the coaches stated specifically that it was important to "lead by example" (CT1, CT4), and one indicated that was important to "live up to the kids' expectations" (CT1). Quotations from the various coaches illustrate the opinions expressed concerning the coach's role in each interview:

I'm a role model...a salesman as far as selling the game of tennis to them...I think it's very important for us to teach the children some ethics as far as cheating...[and] how they should act, not just on a tennis court, but how they should be in life so to speak. - (CT2 - P1)

I think you have to be a mentor. Not a parent. More like a big brother or sister. More like a friend. You have to guide them, be a role model. Give them something to look up to. But definitely not a parent. Don't get me wrong, discipline is important. I can be tough, sometimes I'm really tough on them, but they know it's not personal, you know. It's important that it be fun. - (CT4 - P1)

The role of the coach is to first determine what it is the youngster wants to achieve...if they have trouble clearly seeing what their goals might be, you can try to help them, without stating goals that you think they want to achieve, and to try and help them see things that are possible...And the next thing is for you to explain to the junior what it is they will have to do to achieve those goals, and see if they feel that they are capable and that they fully understand the time and effort it takes...then the coach's job from that point forward is to show them the way...to figure out the best path for that individual. - (CT3 - P1)

I think when you do have influence on anyone, you have to be careful, without being too careful, that you do and say the right things and try as much as possible to set a good example yourself. It doesn't do a lot of good to say one thing and do something different yourself. I think you have to try and govern yourself along the same sorts of guidelines you're telling other people to govern themselves by....you are a role model. - (CT3 - P6)

Other implications of the coach's role discussed by the coaches included *instilling competitive spirit, dedication and intrinsic motivation in the child*. One coach discussed the importance of assisting the child with goal-setting, adding a cautionary note:
I think the most important thing is that the coach doesn't set goals for a junior, but their job is to help the junior achieve the goals that the juniors themselves set. - (CT3 - P1)

Influence of Coach on Child. Coaches were questioned on how influential they felt they were in the lives of developing athletes:

I think we can be one of the most influential people in these kids' lives. - (CT1 - P1)

A coach certainly is, I feel, a very influential person in the child's life. Almost a parent...very often we spend more time with the child than the child spends with his [or her] parents. - (CT2 - P1)

I feel I have a tremendous amount of influence over the kids that I'm coaching. - (CT3 - P2)

[I want] to be a mentor, to have an impact. We all have someone in our lives we remember like that, and it was something you didn't think about all the time, but they made an impact. I want to make an impact. - (CT4 - P2)

Hence, it is quite apparent that all of the coaches felt their influence over their athletes is quite substantial. In fact, one coach stated that the negative influence of a coach may be the reason a child chooses to leave a sport, and that a positive coach influence can help an athlete with a difficult parent-child relationship to develop as a person through the sport experience (CT3 - P4/P5).

Communication in the Child-Coach Relationship. The coaches were also asked to discuss the nature of the relationships they formed with their athletes. The philosophy concerning the coach-athlete relationship differed between the coaches, as illustrated by the following two quotations:

I'm really hard on the kids. I'm not their friend. As their coach I don't wanna be. I take more of a disciplinary act with the whole group....So if
they're on my court they're working hard, and they're trying hard, or they're off. - (CT2 - P2)

With all the kids, I think I have a different relationship than maybe the other pros do. I'm more their friend. Some of my peers think I get too close, that I'm too soft, but I don't think so. - (CT4 - P1)

Another coach indicated that he felt the nature of his relationship with a given athlete depended on the type of relationship that child had with his or her parents, indicating that children "receiving a lot of support from home" were not as likely to communicate openly or personally with him as a coach. He also stated that the personality of the athlete played a part in coach-athlete communication as some children were simply "too shy" to approach the coach (CT1 - P2). He indicated that the relationships he formed with his athletes depended on personality, stating, "Just as there are different personalities of kids, there are different kids you can coach, you know, most easily, " (CT1 - P5). This same coach also felt that younger children were less likely to confide in a coach in the way that older children did (CT1 - P1).

Coaches referred to attending to the individual needs and expectations of each child as one coach declared, "I think every kid is different, I think we have to treat every child as a different case," (CT2 - P1). However, another coach cautions against partiality:

Kids are different. They have different needs, different personalities, different strengths. But on the other hand, you have to be careful that you don't talk too differently to one child than you do to another one. - (CT3 - P6)

Finally, one coach indicated that children need assistance in the ability to communicate their view and opinions to the coach,

I think kids need to be trained to express what they're feeling, and hopefully have that reinforced by the adults in their lives, that it's okay to express your feelings. - (CT1 - P1)
A second coach confirmed this opinion, stating that three-way communication between the child, parents, and coach is essential to ensure that the child feels comfortable in stating his or her emotions, opinions and experiences. This coach indicated that an athlete's desire to appear "tough" with his or her coach may prevent open communication, and this is where the parents' assistance is needed.

**Coach Involvement with the Athletes' Families.** As indicated in previous coach commentary, the coaches spend a significant amount of time training their athletes. Coaches were asked to estimate the amount of time they spent off the court with athletes and their families, whether it be at tournaments, discussing the child's progress, or in social settings.

Responses varied from "very little", an hour-and-a-half per week, to one or two hours per day. The coach who spent very little time with athletes and their families off court indicated that he left family relations to the director of his junior program, stating:

...the director of the program takes full responsibility. I told him, "I don't get paid enough to do this," and he spends literally hours with the parents. On the phone at night, during the day - which is critical, I think, to a program where the kids have spent so much time....If I ever did take three or four kids and said, "I'm gonna coach these four kids, they're mine", then I would be very active as far as staying in touch with the parents. But I haven't had to do that yet, and I don't really want to do that. - (CT2 - P4)

All but one of the coaches stated that their social involvement with the families was very limited, as the following quotations indicate:

I have some social contact with them, but there is a line. You need to have a life that's separate too....I like the kids a lot, but you have to have a break. (CT4 - P3)

...I don't really spend a lot of time socially with them, and that's a personal thing. Like if I did, I wouldn't have any time at all for myself....the house wouldn't get cleaned, the dishes wouldn't get done, and I'd be eating McDonald's every night... - (CT1 - P4).
One coach indicated that he spent approximately twenty percent of his time in social contact with the athletes and their families.

With regard to the amount of time spent at tournament competition, one coach did not attend matches at all, another only rarely, as he usually had lessons scheduled on week-ends. Two of the coaches spent two or three week-ends per month watching the athletes compete.

Dealing with Parent-Child Conflict. The coaches were asked to speak of their experiences in dealing with parent-child conflicts in the competitive junior tennis environment. One of the coaches indicated that he had not, to date, been confronted with the issue of parent-child conflict as yet in his coaching experience. The three remaining coaches spoke of the importance of having a complete understanding of the difficulty the child and parent were encountering:

Well, you can't side. I mean, you really can't usually. You have to be really careful, and make sure you know both sides. I think you have to listen to the kids, but you can't side with anyone. - (CT4 - P3)

...it's very important to communicate extensively with the parents, and not let the kids get in between, or um, use you to get in between them and their parents. - (CT1 - P1)

Two of the coaches also indicated that it was their responsibility to intervene if they were to witness behaviour from a parent which is damaging to a child:

[If I'm coaching the child] I do approach the parent and I feel very comfortable doing it....If I'm not coaching the child, if it's somebody else, I would not usually interfere, unless it's really gross behaviour. If it's gross behaviour, I would probably say something, (pause), usually first to the child, and then possibly later to the parent. - (CT3 - P4)

...I sort of see myself, like my role of being a coach doesn't end just 'cause I don't coach somebody...I sort of feel like I have enough sort of clout that I can go up to a parent and say, "Look, what you're doing is unreasonable, and I'd like to see you stop it". - (CT1 - P4).
These same two coaches commented on the importance of educating the parent and child in terms of communication in the athletic setting:

I try and educate the parent and the child...the cause is normally the parent, so it's usually the parent that needs the most education....the child can usually grow out of [excessive concern over parental evaluation] fairly quickly, if it's replaced with something more healthy... - (CT3 - P4)

...it's important that we try our best to educate the parents and also educate them as to what our beliefs are. - (CT1 - P1)

These two coaches had the most exposure to situations of parent-child conflict. However, one of the coaches indicated that he had only rarely witnessed a difficult situation in his program or been approached by a child in distress, finding that most of his exposure to these situations occurred in the tournament setting. The other coach estimated that one-third of the children he had coached had experienced difficulties with their parents that had required some intervention on his part.

Reflection on Coaching Techniques. The final topic area covered in the coaches' interviews concerned the time they spent in consideration of their coaching techniques and communication styles. Two of the coaches indicated that they did not often reflect on their coaching practices, however one of the coaches revealed that he occasionally had experiences in which he felt he could have performed more effectively:

Certainly I've gone home and thought to myself, "You could have handled that differently", and try to see why I slipped....One of the advantages of working with two other coaches is that I've said on occasion, "Look, you deal with him [or her], I'm not gonna deal with him [or her] well in this frame of mind". - (CT1 - P5)

The remaining coach indicated that he spent a good deal of time reflecting on his coaching and his communication with his athletes, in order to improve his techniques or prepare for future situations:
Probably as much time as I spend on the court training the kids, I spend thinking about it, trying to think about things ahead of time. - (CT3 - P6)

Hence, while similarities across coaches existed in some areas, several individually unique ideas, experiences, opinions, practices and ideologies differentiated them from one another. It is important to note that the results derived from these differences is as essential as the data revealing trends and similarities. Unfortunately, data from families are not available for the subcategories concerning coach involvement in the child's tennis as the interview were conducted after all family sessions had been completed.

Category V: The Provincial Tennis Organization and the Child's Tennis Development

Although the structure of competitive tennis in the province as experienced by the participants was not introduced in either the program sessions or coaches' interviews, several comments and opinions were expressed by the children, parents, and coaches.

Officiating. All of the family participants commented on the dearth of officiating at provincial level tournaments. Parents felt that the responsibility of officiating a match while simultaneously playing that match put undue strain on the children, particularly if they were just beginning to experience competition. Both parents and children felt the amount of cheating currently in existence would be reduced significantly if proper umpires were present at all sanctioned tournaments. Several parents commented that the current practice of using other competitors to umpire matches quite often proved to be an inequitable situation for one of the competitors. One child stated that, "tournament directors...are usually more concerned with getting the tournament over [with] than with enforcing the rules, " (FT1 - P1). Several of the family participants implied that the lack of proper officiating at tournaments often detracted from their enjoyment of the sport and added to their stress level.
One mother suggested a possible solution to alleviate the current situation, stating, "Why can't they increase their yearly dues and train a number of officials who can sign up to umpire at events?" - (FT1 - P7). Other families felt there should be at least one certified official at each tournament site.

Tournament Structure. A few comments concerning the structure of tournaments at the provincial level emerged from the family sessions and coaches' interviews. One family stated that the selection procedures that their child must pursue in order to qualify for the Provincial and National championships were such that the child was involved in tournament competition nearly every weekend, and spent most other days concerning himself with rankings, his training regimen, and tournament schedules. His parents felt that this structure sometimes caused the child to be too singularly focused and anxious about tournament results. This structure also left little room in family conversation for anything but the planning and organizing of their child's tennis.

One of the coaches, outside of the formal interview process, indicated that competitive juniors' need to focus on rankings often prevented them from developing as players, as these children would be reluctant to change shots or strategy for fear of short term loss of form, which may lead to a drop in the rankings.

One mother felt that tournament competition for children under the age of twelve should not be structured in the same single elimination fashion as the older children, stating that the children experienced great distress if they had a succession of first round losses, often leaving these children disillusioned with the sport. As tennis is a sport which can be played into late adulthood, she felt that children who were "turned off" by the sport at such a young age had truly been cheated.

A comment from one of the coaches confirms this mother's impressions of early tournament competition:

...with the tennis system [in the province], there are not little steps you can take. It's like a big step to get to a competitive level, and then,
unfortunately, you get beaten about for awhile before you can start to have some successes (sic). - (CT1 - P3)

It is apparent then, that discussions concerning the provincial tennis organization contribute noteworthy data concerning the competitive tennis environment in which the research participants exist.

Category VI: Evaluation of the Communication-Training Program

After completion of the final program session, both child and parent participants were given the opportunity to evaluate the content and format of the program. Comments from the participants concerned the design of the program for general use, as well as the effectiveness of the program as personally experienced by each family.

Parent Evaluations of the Program. The nature of the parent evaluations varied from participant to participant. Therefore, specific quotations across participants best represents the views of all parents. Positive program evaluations are evidenced in the following quotations:

The model makes a lot of sense. I would like to be able to sit down with a coach and discuss a training plan like this to...but the parent should be more in the background. - (FT1 - P7)

It's good to think about these things before [daughter gets intensively involved in tennis]...it's good for any child focusing on competitive training, regardless of their sport, or even if they are heavily into something else, like music. - (FT2 - P4)

I like the concept of 'training the parent', after reading the book my ideas about motivation were totally different. I used to think about things in terms of reward and punishment, but I understand that that doesn't really work. - (FT4 - P6)

Frankly, I thought it was going to be a waste of time in the beginning, but it did help because I didn't always realize what [my daughter] was thinking. - (FT4 - P6)
All parents should go through this. - (FT5 - P6)

I think it's great, it should be implemented into the training, not just for tennis, but for other sports, maybe once a month. - (FT6 - P5)

I think she's more open now, there is a more open relationship - (FT3 - P6)

We're all so busy all the time, it was good to be kind of 'forced' to sit down and talk to one another because we rarely seem to do that on our own. - (FT7 - P4)

It's nice to have a facilitator, someone objective. - (FT4 - P6)

Parental responses to the program were generally positive; however some of the comments indicated the less positive aspects of the program. One mother felt that the wording of the parent profile questionnaires was too negative, questioning if parents would respond honestly to the issues indicated on the form. Observation of the family sessions incorporating the questionnaires did pose some difficulty with certain participants, as I could sense some discomfort with the nature of the questions, and I quite often had to preface the use of the questionnaires with a warning concerning question format. It should also be noted that the scoring process for one of the questionnaires is incorrect, as questions requiring reverse scoring are not marked. As a result of this calculating error, final scores would be higher, which is said to indicate possible problems. Several of the parents commented on how the scores were wrong, even when I expressed that they should not score the questionnaires.

Another mother indicated that the program had been helpful, but quite "rocky" and sometimes draining as she and her child had to work through some difficult issues. Finally, one father, whose child was less competitively involved than the other participants, stated, "Several of the topics don't quite fit our family, as she's not that into tennis." (FT2 - P3).
Child Evaluations of the Program. As with parental comments concerning the program, remarks made by the children varied between participants, and are therefore best expressed in their individual quotations:

Sometimes when I talk to my mom and dad about tennis, we think back to those sessions and say 'remember what [investigator] told us about this, and we try to think of how to handle situations. So I would say it had an effect - a good effect. - (FT5 - P7)

Sometimes it's good to have a break from everything and just talk. - (FT6 - P5)

It was good. Before if we talked, we wouldn't express our real feelings about it. - (FT3 - P6)

I feel like a communication barrier has been opened up between me and my parents. They seem to understand me better, and I know why they do the things they do sometimes. - [FT4 - P6]

Some child participants had mixed feelings concerning the program, and the less positive evaluations are illustrated in the following comments:

This program is only applicable to very competitive players - this was the wrong family. I'm sort of an oddball here, I think I'm a pink flower in a line of green ones...[but] it could be good for my tennis, it could help me stay involved in tennis. - (FT1 - P7)

Sometimes I got bored 'cause it was too long and I wanted to go and do other things. - (FT6 - P5)

I like to feel perfect...sometimes talking about the things we did (child's temper) made me feel less than perfect - kind of picked on. - (FT5 - P6)

It's hard to design a program for families which fits everyone's needs, we talked about a lot of gray [areas] (FT1 - P7)
One child felt that the program did not have any effect on the communication between her and her parents, but that some of the information covered was helpful, particularly the discussion on stress and overtraining. Another child felt that the family communication improved during the program, and that she felt more able to be open with her opinions, however, she also stated that if in future she faced a confrontational situation with her parents that she would likely withdraw and revert to old patterns of non-communication.

Hence, while the majority of the responses to the program were positive, it is important to note the facets of the program that families found to be less helpful. It should also be noted that the families' positive evaluations of the program came from the unique and different perspectives of each family. That is, each family received distinct benefits from the program, depending on what issues were personally relevant to them. Research data provided through qualitative techniques and analysis have significantly contributed to the amount and detail of information obtained from the study.
CHAPTER VI
Discussion

The purposes of the study included the examination of the relationship between parent-child communication and competitive anxiety, sport confidence and sport enjoyment in the child participants, as well as an investigation of the efficacy of Loehr and Kahn's Parent-Player Tennis Training Program (1989) as a method for enhancing parent-child relations. As the quantitative and qualitative results of this study examine these purposes differently, each will be discussed in turn.

Examination of Quantitative Research Findings

Parent Behaviour

The results from the Parent Profile Questionnaires indicated that the research participants were, in general, already exhibiting behaviours and using communication patterns which were beneficial to the psychosocial development of the child. The information in Figure 4.1 along with the data concerning the Parental Report Card in Table 4.1 illustrate that parent-child communication was very positive at the outset of the program. Hence, a ceiling effect may have prevented statistical significance from being achieved in the quantitative psychosocial measures, as any improvements may have been small or beneficial in areas which are difficult to measure quantitatively (Drew & Hardman, 1985, p.194). It is also possible that the measures used in this research limited the range in which parent behaviour could be measured effectively using quantitative methods (Drew & Hardman, 1985, p.194). These improvements are better represented in the qualitative analysis.
Competitive Anxiety

While the increase in competitive trait anxiety in the children following the communication-training program was not statistically significant, this change contradicted the hypothesis that such a program would serve to reduce competitive anxiety in the athlete. One possible explanation for the increase could simply be the increase in competitive experience which occurred between pre- and post- measures. The majority of child participants in the research were just beginning to increase their involvement in tournament play, which focuses on wins, losses, rankings, and peer respect. Increased exposure to this environment may have produced greater anxiety for these young athletes. As the Parent Profile and Report Card scores indicate that child participants did not feel their parents were placing competitive pressures on them, it is possible that the tournament environment accounts for the increased trait anxiety. Therefore, while the parent-child relationship is an integral part of the young athlete's development, it is still only one factor in that development.

It was encouraging to discover that the participant scores on competitive trait anxiety were significantly lower than the published norm for tennis players both pre- and post-program. While the reasons for this difference are unclear, it is possible that the positive Parent Profile and Parental Report Card evaluations may be an influencing factor in the SCAT scores. That is, perhaps the reported positive behaviour of the parents has contributed to the low levels of competitive anxiety in the children.

Although the result was not statistically significant, it was also encouraging that state competitive anxiety scores decreased following the program. Session three of the training program involves discussion of how the child deals with stress during competition, and time is spent developing coping mechanisms for the child. Session four of the program involves a similar examination and exercise for parents. The decrease in state competitive anxiety may be an indication that these sessions affected how the children appraised competition just prior to match play.
Gender Differences in Competitive State Anxiety. Examination of the subcategories of the CSAI-2 revealed interesting results between the genders in the participant group. The female members of the participant group had significantly lower measures of somatic anxiety and significantly higher measures of self-confidence than the published norm both pre- and post-program. While the participant group is small, this result still deserves discussion.

It appears that the males in this particular group experienced more somatic anxiety and had less self-confidence than the females. Corbin, Stewart and Blair (1981) indicated that age affects a child's reports of self-confidence, noting that younger females did not report lower self-confidence than males, perhaps because they have had less exposure to sex role socialization. It is possible that the age of the participant group affected the measures of self-confidence as the females were pre-pubescent at the time of the study and hence had not yet entered the stage in which young women often become more influenced by sex role socialization through peer interaction and the media.

It is still interesting that the male self-confidence score was lower, as this is unusual. I feel that this result indicates the importance of recognizing individual differences in the examination of research as each child brought unique circumstances and experiences to this study which cannot be accounted for in quantitative measures alone. The individual profile reports provide greater insight into how these circumstances and experiences can affect measures of somatic anxiety and self-confidence of the males in this study to the point where these measures differ from the norm. For example, David expressed that he was not confident in the competitive setting and felt very "jittery" when being watched by others. Pete judged himself very harshly and did not like to feel imperfect. Kevin felt his coach did not believe that he could become a good player and often felt fatigued and anxious in practice. These few notes taken from the individual profiles all have implications for the reported measures of somatic anxiety and self-
confidence by the male participants which could not have been detected through quantitative analysis.

Comparisons between participant and normative data indicate that the female participants in this study are significantly less anxious and more self-confident than their normative counterparts immediately prior to competition. However, the small participant sample size must be taken into consideration in all of the norm comparisons.

**Sport Confidence**

Although not statistically significant, trait and state sport confidence scores for the child participant group did increase in accordance with the stated hypothesis. The children's involvement in the program may have contributed to these increases, but as the results were not statistically significant the relationship between program involvement and sport confidence is unclear. It is also possible that the growing competitive experience of the children was related to the increase as they had more opportunities to learn and improve skills in the competitive setting (Feltz, 1988; Weiss, 1993).

However, it should be noted that in the sport of tennis, perhaps more than any other youth sport, state confidence will be directly affected by the particular opponent the child is playing. In team sports, if a child's team is playing one that is superior to his or her own, it is quite possible that the child will still have similar state confidence measures about his or her own personal performance (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1985). In many other individual sports (gymnastics, diving, track and field) the child's performance is still ultimately under his or her control, and therefore state confidence measures again may not vary to the same degree.

In a sport such as tennis, however, a child's performance is directly and constantly impinged upon by the performance of his or her opponent (Loehr & Kahn, 1987). If a child knows or perceives that opponent to be a significantly better or lesser player than him or herself, that child's state confidence measures are likely to be affected. As a result,
he or she may report very different state sport confidence measures from one match to the next. This factor must be taken into consideration when examining state sport confidence.

It is also interesting to note that post-program measures of trait sport confidence for females were significantly higher than the published norm. While it cannot be stated that the training program had a direct effect on female trait sport confidence, it is encouraging to see that the female members of the participant group are significantly more confident than the norm. A possible explanation for these elevated scores could be the age of the females in this study. Corbin, Stewart and Blair (1981) indicated that females who had not yet been excessively exposed to sex role socialization may have higher performance expectancies. As the females in this study were just approaching the teen years, it is possible that they had higher performance expectancies than the norm which contributed to the high trait confidence score (Croxton, Chicchia & Wagner, 1987).

**Competitive Orientation**

Perhaps the most disconcerting result of the quantitative analysis, is the statistically significant decrease in mean competitive orientation scores, indicating the athletes' trend toward a more outcome-focused approach to competition. This finding contradicts Vealey's (1986, p. 234) assertion that sport confidence is negatively related to outcome orientation, as trait and state sport confidence scores increased for the athletes.

As previously discussed with regard to competitive trait anxiety, the athletes became more involved in tournament competition between pre- and post- program. The outcome-focused environment of tournament play, may not only have affected trait anxiety, but may also have influenced the athletes' competitive orientation. This assumption is reinforced by the results of a study conducted by Knoppers, Schuiteman and Love (1988) who examined the professional orientation of junior tennis players. Professional orientation was defined as "an emphasis on winning" (1988, p.243), and is hence comparable to Vealey's definition of outcome-orientation. Knoppers et al. found
that, "overall, the degree to which winning was endorsed increased with the degree of competitive involvement and tournament success," (1988, p.243). The study indicated that professional orientation seemed to be the norm in competitive junior tennis as well as a function of the level of competitive involvement among both males and females (1988, p.250). Hence, there is evidence to suggest that despite sport confidence measures, the competitive environment in which a young player exists will have an effect on his or her competitive orientation.

Vealey defines sport confidence as "the degree of certainty individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sport," (1986, p.223). As Knoppers et al. point out however, success experiences also cause the child to become more professionally oriented, that is, more focused on winning. Therefore the findings of this study, which support Knoppers et al.'s work, contradict Vealey's findings that trait and state sport confidence are negatively related to outcome-orientation. More specifically, a child who is playing in an increasingly competitive environment seems likely to adopt a professional outcome-focused competitive orientation, regardless of that child's sport confidence. This finding indicates that the links between competitive orientation and confidence need to be further examined.

On a positive note, it is encouraging that the program participants measured well above the norm in competitive orientation in both pre- and post-program measures. Therefore, although the competitive orientation scores decreased, it is of some consolation that the group was more performance-oriented than the norm.

**Sport Enjoyment**

The athletes' enjoyment of tennis training and competition pre and post-program did not significantly differ. The children had a very high level of enjoyment before program sessions began, so it is apparent that a ceiling effect may have prevented any measurable improvement (Drew & Hardman, 1985, p.194) The measure used was a
Likert scale devised specifically for this study as existing measures seemed inappropriate. However, in retrospect, a less tennis-specific measure that had been validated in previous study (such as the one used by Wankel and Kreisel, 1985), while not as applied, may have provided more information about sport enjoyment. Such a measure may have also provided a wider range of measurement for enjoyment, hence circumventing the ceiling effect (Drew & Hardman, 1985, p.198). Effective measurement of sport enjoyment is an area of research in youth sport which needs to be developed further.

Correlations Between Instruments

The significant negative correlation between competitive trait anxiety and competitive trait sport confidence prior to the program is consistent with Vealey's findings (1986, p.230). However, this correlation was not evident in post-program comparisons. It is possible that the post-program increase in trait anxiety was responsible for the absence of a correlation.

The significant positive correlation between the self-confidence category of the CSAI-2 and state sport confidence prior to the program also supports Vealey's findings, as does the significant negative correlation between cognitive anxiety and state sport confidence (1986, p.230). Both state sport confidence and the CSAI-2 measure of self-confidence increased post-program, resulting in a post-program correlation between the measures as well. However, although CSAI-2 cognitive anxiety scores decreased post-program, a significant negative correlation was not repeated. It is possible that the broader standard deviation of the scores (pre-program SD = 8.04, post-program SD = 3.11) may account for the absence of a significant correlation post-program.

The significant negative correlation between competitive trait anxiety and enjoyment of tennis competition is not surprising as a child who is highly anxious about competition is unlikely to enjoy it. This correlation has been indicated in previous work as Scanlan and Lewthwaite found that children who reported the sport experience as "fun"
also indicated lower post-competitive (i.e. state) anxiety (1984). Brustad (1988) however, found that higher levels of intrinsic motivation, which was the strongest predictor of enjoyment, were not correlated with lower levels of competitive trait anxiety. Perhaps the discrepancy in these findings occurred because one study examined state competitive anxiety, whereas the other investigated trait competitive anxiety in relation to enjoyment. For example, it seems possible that a child who reports high competitive trait anxiety, but experiences a great deal of enjoyment from a particular competitive experience, will likely feel less anxious immediately following that experience. However, these contradictory findings indicate that the relationship between enjoyment and anxiety is complex and requires further investigation.

Following the program there was no significant correlation between enjoyment and trait anxiety. Again, this is likely due to the unexpected increase in trait anxiety, accompanied by very little change in enjoyment measures. It is interesting to note however, that the increase in trait anxiety was not followed by a decrease in enjoyment. Therefore, previous research and the results of this study indicate the complexity of the relationship between trait anxiety and enjoyment and the need for further exploration.

The correlation between pre- and post-program measures of enjoyment of competition and trait sport confidence is also supported by the literature examining sport enjoyment as children with higher perceived competence were found to experience greater enjoyment (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986, p.31). Brustad found that objective measures of success were not correlated with measures of enjoyment (1988, p.30). Therefore, it should be noted that perceived competence and competitive success are not equivalent. That is, a child who is more confident is likely to enjoy sport more, regardless of whether that child is achieving objective success in the form of winning.

The intercorrelations between the psychosocial elements in this research highlight the fact that the youth sport experience consists of many aspects, and that it is very difficult to examine these aspects in exclusion of one another. Further research needs to
examine the interactions between the many variables involved in youth sport to learn more about the development of a child through sport. Such research could involve interviews with young athletes, examination of the structure of youth sport organizations, and observation of parenting and coaching practices in youth sport. While this research would be challenging, it would enhance the understanding of the youth sport domain and allow researchers to examine the sport experience in a more holistic fashion.

**Examination of Qualitative Research Findings**

The qualitative methodology incorporated in this study yielded data in several broad categories including: *parental involvement in the child's tennis development, psychosocial aspects and pressures in the competitive tennis environment, coach involvement in the child's tennis development, the role of the provincial tennis organization, and the evaluation of the communication-training program*. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

**Parental Involvement in the Child's Tennis Development**

Parental involvement in the child's tennis involves several different elements, including: roles and goals, parental sport experience, parental behaviours and parent-child communication.

**Roles and Goals.** Loehr and Kahn's recommendations for a parent's role in his or her child's tennis involvement are depicted in Table 6.1.
Table 6.1
Recommended Role of the Parent in the Child's Tennis Development

1. To be supportive financially and emotionally.
2. To help the child constructively manage the competitive stress associated with junior tennis.
3. To assist the coach in gaining insight into the child's personality and emotions.
4. To ensure that the junior tennis experience is a good one principally from the perspective of the developing child.
5. To be enthusiastic and positive.
6. To make sure the child adheres to the good principles of sportsmanship and ethics.

Note. From The Parent-Player Tennis Training Program, by J. Loehr and E.J. Kahn, 1979, pp.4-5.

The "My Role as A Parent" forms completed prior to the commencement of the training program by all participant parents included many of these recommendations. Parents indicated that it was part of their role to be financially and emotionally supportive, and to promote the child's physical, mental and social development through that child's tennis experience. Coaches also indicated that the most important role of the parent was unconditional support in these three areas. Several parents also indicated that it was their role to provide the child with good coaching and to facilitate the child-coach relationship. Hence, before the program sessions began, the parents participating in this study already possessed some of the characteristics recommended for effective parent child relations within the context of the child's tennis involvement (Anthony and Bolletieri, 1985; Loehr & Kahn, 1987; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988; Smoll, 1992; Tutko & Richards, 1973).

One of the most frequently mentioned aspects of the parent role not identified by Loehr and Kahn is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation. This aspect of the parent's role is noteworthy as tennis tournaments are held throughout the province, and car pools are not nearly as common among tennis competitors as they are with children involved in team sports. This is a significant parental contribution to the child's involvement in the sport of tennis and needs to be acknowledged.
Following the completion of family sessions, parents were given the opportunity to re-examine and revise their view of their role. While very few changes were made among the parents, it should be noted that parents indicated that they should try to reduce the pressure on the child and help him or her deal with unsportsmanlike opponents, corresponding with recommendation number two in Table 5.1. Some parents also indicated that they needed to be less involved in their child's tennis. Loehr and Kahn state that, "it must be acknowledged that as the child progresses in competition, the parents have to learn to step back," (1989, p.5). The dangers of parental overinvolvement in youth sport have been addressed in research concerning competitive anxiety, self-confidence and enjoyment (Coakley, 1992; Passer, 1983; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988; Woolger & Power, 1993). It seems apparent that involvement in the training program helped parents realize that at times they must allow the child to take greater control of his or her tennis development as that child grows.

Finally, it should be noted that asking parents how they should "change" their role can be perceived as threatening or judgmental. A couple of parents seemed a little disgruntled with the question, but nonetheless did indicate that the program had led them to consider their role as parent in a way that they may not have considered prior to the program. However, as an investigator, I found it necessary to approach this exercise cautiously, ensuring parents that I was in no position, nor did I have any desire to judge their role in their child's tennis.

The purpose of examining parents' goals was to compare and contrast them with the child's goals to determine whether parent expectations of the child were congruent with what that child expected of him or herself. The children tended to have more outcome-focused goals than did their parents, as they were more concerned with rankings and pursuing the sport professionally in the future. This finding supports the research of Knoppers Schuiteman and Love (1988) which indicated that junior tennis players were professionally or outcome-oriented. Common outcome goals between parents and children
included the attainment of a college/university scholarship at an American school, and obtaining employment as a tennis coach in the future. Common performance goals listed by both parents and children included the development of skills and knowledge in the sport of tennis, as well as obtaining enjoyment and social interaction through the sport of tennis.

Goals and expectations on the part of parents play an important role in a child's self-confidence, anxiety and enjoyment. The literature indicates that parents must express acceptance and support of the child's goals, maintaining challenging yet not unrealistic expectations in order to foster that child's confidence (Harter, 1988; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1985; Woolger & Power, 1993). While none of the families involved in this study expressed difficulty with regard to goal setting, several were concerned about expectations becoming a pressure. It became clear that open, direct communication between the parent and child regarding expectations was essential in order to prevent any undue pressure on the child. Some parents inquired as to the best way to deal with the instance in which a child's goal seemed out of reach for that child. This is a difficult issue for all parents as it is a fine line between preventing disappointment and not supporting a dream. Discussion around this topic suggested that while there was no simple way to deal with this issue, it was best to keep the child informed of all the steps necessary in order to achieve a lofty goal, and support that child in his or her decision to ascend these steps or not.

Sport Experience of the Parent. In this particular study, parental sport experience was generally viewed positively by the children and the coaches. Children felt more comfortable discussing their tennis pursuits with the parent who had been involved in sport as a child, feeling that this parent could understand the pressures and frustrations better than the parent who did not have sport experience. Coaches also reported that a parent who had sport experience was generally more understanding than one who had not. Loehr and Kahn (1987, p.20) support this finding as they recall the story of a father who
was frustrated with his daughter's inability to deal effectively with the pressure of close matches:

'Do you play?' the coach asked him.

"Yeah,' the father replied, 'but not in tournaments.'

'Fine,' the coach said. 'Here's what I want you to do. Contact your local sectional association, and get a schedule of all B-level men's tournaments over the next couple of months. Map out a schedule for yourself over that period, trying to play five weeks in a row. And I want you to remember just one command: win. Go out and win! Nothing else matters.'

A month and a half later, the father returned. Subdued and shaken, he told the coach that, for the first time, he understood what it meant to have to win.

'The impact of what you said was unbelievable,' he said. 'For the first time, I felt constant pressure on a tennis court.'

Another supportive statement concerning parental sport experience was voiced by world class player Monica Seles at twelve years of age, "[My father] knew about sport, and about pressure. And he knew to keep the sport fun," (Loehr & Kahn, 1987, p.92). Unfortunately, this supportive literature is primarily anecdotal. However, Brustad indicates that a child's perception of competence is often based on the imitation of a role model, that is, a child who has an athletic parent has an expectancy to perform well in athletics (1992, p.64). Therefore, there is some relevance attached to the parental sport experience.

However, these generalizations must be clarified. As one coach pointed out, it is the nature of the parent's sport experience that is essential, stating that a parent with low self-esteem had a greater tendency to be interfering in their child's tennis (CT3-P3). If the parent was marginalized or not completely fulfilled by his or her sport experience, that parent may put pressure on the child to fulfill his or her sport dreams. Tutko points out that parents often live vicariously through their children's sport experiences (1973, p.165). Loehr and Kahn also note that problem parents are often "frustrated athletes, seeking a
reflected glory long overdue," (1987, p.33). One child in this study, whose father had lacked confidence as a child athlete was described by his daughter as sometimes being overcritical of her tennis. The father acknowledged that he was sometimes too harsh and found it hard to separate himself from his daughter's progress.

Therefore, the relationship between a parent's sport experience and his or her ability to be understanding and supportive of the child's tennis involvement is complex and dynamic. It appears that parents who have had a sport experience that is remembered as positive and who are not harbouring unfulfilled sport dreams are more effective at understanding and assisting their children with the pressures of competitive tennis.

**Parental Behaviour and Parent-Child Communication.** The parent behaviours most cited as positive by both children and coaches included support, encouragement, communication and match attendance. Scanlan and Lewthwaite indicated that positive parental involvement, like the behaviours listed above, contribute to a child's enjoyment of sport (1988, p.46). Research has also shown that positive, constructive feedback enhances the child's self-confidence (Petruzzello & Corbin, 1988; Weiss, 1993).

Positive parent behaviour while attending the child's match was noticed and appreciated by the children, as one child states "...she always looks calm, and sometimes tries to make me smile," (FT1 - P5). Loehr and Kahn also indicated that a significant characteristic of positive parents included the ability to display positive emotion on the sidelines during play (1987, p.63). Research has also shown that positive parental support leads to reduced anxiety and increased confidence and enjoyment (Dunlap & Berne, 1991; Gould, Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1994; Martens, 1993; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988).

Finally, some of the children reported that their parents didn't place pressure on them to win. Scanlan and Lewthwaite found that significant adult evaluation, particularly parental pressure and worries over parental expectations were significantly correlated with competitive stress (1988, p.43). Therefore, the children in this study who reported that
their parents did not place any pressure on them are at less risk of suffering excessive competitive stress.

While the children felt their parents were generally supportive and encouraging, they also felt that their parents spent too much time talking about tennis, and were sometimes overinvolved in their tennis. The children also reported that their parents sometimes treated their tennis involvement as being too important. Johns noted that adult intervention in children's sport without concern for the child's perception of sport will increase that child's anxiety (1987, p.21).

With regard to the parents spending too much time talking about tennis, it should be noted that it was the nature of the conversation that aggravated the children. That is, if the parent's tone was "pushy" or "nagging" it bothered the children as they felt their tennis endeavours were being dictated to them. This is an important finding as Woolger and Power note that excessive directiveness on the part of parents yielded low perceptions of ability in children (1993, p.81). Coakley also noted that tight control by parents over a child's athletic endeavours predisposes that child to burnout (1992, p.279).

The other aspect of parent behaviour that frustrated the children was when parents would not give them enough "alone time" after a difficult match. Loehr and Kahn caution parents to "give the child some space when he or she loses. Your youngster will want to be alone for awhile, and then he or she will be okay," (1989, p.54). One child, however, indicated feeling upset when her father would withdraw from her and did not speak to her at all for an extended period of time after she lost a match. This behaviour indicated that parental support was conditional on her tennis performance, which research has shown to decrease confidence and increase anxiety in a child (Dunlap & Berne, 1991; Hellstedt, 1988; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988; Woolger & Power, 1993).

One child stated that she sometimes felt her parents "pressured" her to be like better players in her age category (FT3-P1). Excessive adult pressure was considered a significant source of stress in studies examining child athletes and junior tennis players in

These data are significant and noteworthy as they indicate that parents who are generally viewed positively by their children, and who had very positive evaluations on the Parental Report Cards and Parent Profiles may still occasionally exhibit behaviours which increase anxiety and conditional self-worth in their children, which in turn decreases that child's sport enjoyment. Therefore, it becomes clear that good parents can make poor choices on occasion, and that open communication between the child and parent is essential for the family to maintain a healthy perspective in the sport environment.

While the children stated that communication with their parents was quite strong prior to the commencement of the training program, some indicated that some improvement occurred as a result of the program. As indicated by Weiss (1993), positive and constructive feedback is essential to a child's development of self-worth. This connection is noteworthy as it was hoped that through this study parent-child communication and child autonomy would be enhanced.

Psychosocial Aspects and Pressures of the Competitive Tennis Environment

Many elements of psychosocial development were revealed in the qualitative analysis of the child's tennis experience. These included the elements of anxiety, confidence, and enjoyment as measured through quantitative analysis, as well as performance orientation, perfectionism, "mental toughness", and sociocultural issues.

Sources of Anxiety. Sources of anxiety due to parental involvement have already been discussed in the previous section, and therefore this section will focus on other sources of distress for the children. Some of the children were distressed at the thought of being evaluated by others, an experience that Scanlan indicates as being central to the feeling of competitive stress and anxiety (1984, p.113)
Other reported sources of anxiety included high personal performance expectations and playing against an unsportsmanlike opponent. The latter source of anxiety can be understood in terms of the factors of uncertainty and importance which play a central role in a child's perception of threat (Martens, 1988a). To clarify, these children perceive each tennis contest as important, and as tennis competitors are responsible for their own officiating, when a child plays an unsportsmanlike opponent, there is greater uncertainty attached to the outcome of the contest. The children's reports that high personal performance expectancies caused them anxiety are contrary to reported literature which states that low personal performance expectancies led to higher pre-competitive stress (Scanlan & Lewthwaite; 1984, Scanlan & Passer, 1979). This discrepancy can perhaps be explained by the evidence of perfectionism in several of the children, suggesting that personal performance expectancies were a source of anxiety because these expectancies may be excessively high.

Perfectionism is a term that is often referred to in anecdotal accounts of athletic achievement. The attributions and images associated with this term make its definition unclear as many youth sports, (gymnastics, figure skating, diving) demand that an athlete perform as flawlessly as possible to obtain a "perfect" score, yet perfectionism is also recognized as detrimental to the development of the balanced athlete. Research indicates that perfectionist junior tennis players are those most likely to burn out from the sport (Gould, Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1994; Loehr & Kahn, 1989). Frost, Marten, Lahart and Rosenblate (1990) developed a multidimensional definition of perfectionism which identified six specific dimensions of perfectionism including: excessive concern over mistakes, high personal standards, perceptions of high parental expectations, perceptions of high parental criticism, doubting the quality of one's actions, and a preference for order and organization. Frost et al. indicated that excessive concern over mistakes was the most significant of all the dimensions, noting that the possession of high personal standards was only an unhealthy dimension when concern over mistakes was exceedingly
high (1990, p.467). The investigators also speculated that perfectionist athletes would "...show decreased motivation at times when their mistakes are more apparent," (1990, p.333).

Several of the parents reported concern that their children held excessively high expectations. These children also exhibited very low tolerance for error. The combined presence of these two characteristics are reported to yield greater anxiety in athletes (Frost et al., 1990, p.333). Therefore, it is possible that the children involved in this research have the characteristics of perfectionism which contribute to increased anxiety. Perfectionist tendencies, along with the increasingly competitive environment in which the majority of the children were playing, may be contributing factors to the increase in competitive trait anxiety reported following the training program.

**Self-Confidence.** Frost and Henderson (1991) indicated that perfectionist athletes also reported lower confidence than other athletes. Some of the children in this study indicated that at times they lacked of confidence in the competitive setting. Coaches indicated that many times young athletes simply do not truly believe they are capable:

...I feel there's almost a built-in mechanism where they leave themselves an "out" because inside they truly believe that they're not going to achieve [their]goal. And they don't want to self-destruct because of it (CT3 - P2).

Coaches also indicated that this wavering self-confidence holds implications for the child's motivation, stating that children with low self-confidence will not work as hard. These opinions are supported by Weiss' indication that a child will not pursue an activity that does not maintain or enhance his or her self-esteem (1993, p.47).

Hence, it is possible for a negative cycle to emerge in which a perfectionist child sets expectations which are too high, and performance fails to meet these expectations, that child experiences a blow to his or her self-confidence and self-esteem and subsequently loses motivation to pursue sport. It is essential to understand the development of perfectionist tendencies in order to maximize the participation and enjoyment of sport for children.
Enjoyment. It is interesting to note that parents seemed more concerned than the children that "fun" was a part of the children's tennis experiences. This finding contradicts the literature on sport enjoyment which states that children indicate fun as the most important reason for sport involvement (O'Connell, 1993; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988; Wankel & Kreisel, 1995). However, considering that quantitative findings revealed a significant increase in outcome-orientation, the fact that only half the children indicated "fun" as an objective is perhaps not surprising.

Before considering this finding further however, it is essential to remember that quantitative analysis also indicated high scores for enjoyment of tennis for the children both before and after the training program. Therefore, it appears that the children are, in fact, experiencing enjoyment from their tennis involvement.

Developing "Mental Toughness". Parents and children in all of the families indicated that they wished to learn more about developing psychological skills in sport. Concerns about concentration, dealing with anger, managing anxiety, and developing confidence were frequently mentioned. Discussion around developing each of these skills was part of the training program, but as the central focus of the program was parent child-communication, they were not examined in detail.

The benefits and importance of several different types of psychological skill development in children and adolescents has been examined in youth sport literature (Dunlap & Berne, 1991; Gould, Tuffey, Udry & Loehr, 1994; Loehr & Khan, 1987; Martens, 1993; Weiss, 1991), but using these methods in the development of healthy balanced athletes before they reach a high level is still not the norm in Canadian athletics. Both the parents and children in this study seemed to have an interest in the development of psychological skills. Research and practical application of such training with young people needs to be developed in Canadian sport.
Coach Involvement in the Child's Tennis

Interviewing of the coaches involved in the children's tennis was undertaken to examine the nature and degree to which these coaches had an effect on the development of the child. Findings which emerged from analysis of interview data which warrant discussion include the role and influence of the coach and communication with the child and parent.

The Role and Influence of the Coach on the Child's Development. All four coaches indicated that they saw themselves as "role models" in the development of the young tennis player. The characteristics associated with the term role model included: leading by example, teaching ethics, being a mentor, providing guidance with goal-setting and training plans, instilling motivation and dedication in the child, and making sure the child has fun. However, Coakley (1993, pp.91-92) indicates that being a role model in a child's life involves far more than the aspects described by these coaches:

Being a model requires that others get to know the model well and then experience situations similar to the ones in which they have seen in that person. This is why it is often unrealistic to expect coaches to be role models in a true sense. Athletes don't have enough information to pattern their lives after the lives of their coaches. Coaches do not make enough personal self-disclosures, nor do athletes observe the personal lives of coaches often enough for any true role modelling to occur. Furthermore, coach-athlete relationships are not often characterized by the emotional ties required for anything beyond a superficial form of role modelling.

As only one of the coaches indicated that he spent a significant amount of time in social contact with the children and their families outside of training time, it would appear, according to Coakley, that these coaches are not truly "role models" to the children they coach. However, all of the coaches also felt they had considerable influence over the children they coached and that their influence was instrumental to the development of the children they trained.
While Coakley takes issue with the practice of giving a coach the title of "role model", he does agree that coaches can have considerable influence on athletes, and writes about the most positive channel for this influence.

...coaches can be important in the lives of athletes, even when they are different from their athletes. Coaches are most likely to impact the lives of athletes when they act as advisors or advocates. An advisor gives information, offers opinions, and consults with another person. An advocate is someone in a position of power and influence who directly supports or defends others... All young people need advisors and advocates because all young people make mistakes as they learn how the world works, who they are, and how they fit into that world. (1993, p.92).

Weiss (1991, p.342) also agrees with the impact that a coach can have on a young athletes life, stating,

Coaches have contact with their athletes on a day-to-day basis and thus are the mechanism by which the most frequent opportunities for development can take place.

Previous researchers have also indicated how positive coach behaviours such as providing encouragement, reinforcement and technical instruction can increase a child's confidence and self-esteem as well as reducing that child's competitive anxiety (Barnett, Smith & Smoll, 1992; Weiss 1993). Therefore, it seems clear that whether or not a coach possesses the criteria associated with being a role model or not, she or he has significant influence over the psychosocial development of the young athlete.

It is interesting that the findings from the coach interviews indicated that while all of the coaches recognized the degree of influence they possessed in the development of young athletes, only one indicated that he spent a great deal of time reflecting on his coaching abilities and his communication with the athletes. Coaches need to be cognizant of their own development in order to maximize their capabilities in developing young athletes.
Communication with the Child and Parent. Coaches offered different philosophies on how to communicate with the children they coached. One took the role of disciplinarian, stating "I'm really hard on the kids" (CT2 - P2), while another wanted to be seen as a "friend" (CT4 - P1). The two remaining coaches indicated that different situations required different methods of communication.

Coakley (1993, pp.90-91) comments on the impact of a dictatorial disciplinary coach-athlete relationship:

...I suspect that many coaches become important in the lives of athletes because they use extreme command-style methods. Rigid systems of control often lead to dependency relationships....some coaches may use control to become significant in the lives of athletes....When coaches create extreme dependency relationships, they often do not contribute to the overall growth and development, or provide athletes with the appropriate models to use in their own relationships.

Considering the previous discussion which acknowledged the considerable influence a coach has on a child's development, and the recognition of that influence by the coaches involved in this research, it is somewhat disturbing to see even the slightest evidence that one of these coaches may be excessively disciplinarian in his coaching behaviours. This coach's remarks are highlighted with a cautionary note however, as there is not enough evidence in the interview data to conclude that this is the case.

It is also interesting to note that two of the coaches indicated that the nature of their communication with a child was usually influenced by the type of interaction that child had with his or her parents. One of these coaches stated that a child having difficulty with his or her parents was more likely to communicate on a personal level with him (CT1 - P1).

It appears quite possible that the child may use a coach as a parent substitute, which is unhealthy for the coach-athlete relationship, and may serve to exacerbate negative parent behaviour and poor parent-child interactions. It is essential then that three-way
communication exist between the parent, child and coach in order to facilitate healthy development in the child. The concept of three-way communication is the central premise of Loehr and Kahn's training program and has been discussed in several studies of youth sport (Coakley, 1993; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1988; Smoll, 1992; Weiss, 1991).

Finally, coaches commented on their role in facilitating communication between the parent and child. Of particular note in this area was the concept of dealing with parent-child conflict. All of the coaches felt this was a very difficult aspect of their profession, and felt that it was important not to get "caught in between" the parent and child (CT1-P1, CT4-P3). However, two of the coaches felt it was their responsibility to intervene if they witnessed parent behaviour which was damaging to a child.

Coaches often view children enduring various forms of abuse from parents. This issue is very intriguing as the literature does not address the role of a coach in such situations. However, Article 19 in the Charter of Children's Rights (1990) states that a child has the right to protection from "...all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse,...maltreatment or exploitation...while in the care of parent(s).". Therefore, it is the responsibility of the coach to protect any child he or she witnesses as suffering from such treatment.

Quite often though, the nature of parent-child conflict is such that the need or type of intervention required is not clear. Again, it becomes apparent that three-way communication between the parent, child and coach is essential to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of each are clear. It is also important to note that Loehr and Kahn's training program includes an exercise which asks the parent, child and coach to examine these roles.
The Role of Provincial Tennis Organization in the Child's Tennis Development

The provincial tennis organization was referred to frequently during family program sessions. The most common areas of discussion involved match officiating and tournament structure.

All of the families commented on the lack of provincial officials at the majority of provincial level tournaments. The families and coaches felt that a culture of cheating and other unsportsmanlike behaviour was growing in the junior tennis environment. This sentiment is supported by research that indicated that only two percent of the study's participants placed a priority on fair play (Knoppers, Schuiteman & Love, 1988, p.250). Loehr and Kahn state that "the simple pressure to win can turn players into cheaters, and that reality - whether or not it actually takes place - adds still more emotional pressure," (1987, p.16).

One of the coaches described to me an experiment he incorporated into one of his weekly training sessions. He asked the players to line up behind one baseline while he travelled to various points on the court, placing a tennis ball in close proximity to the lines identifying the playing area. He related to me that more than half of the time, the athletes were incorrect in their estimation of whether the ball was "in" or "out". We noted that this margin of error for a ball that was stationary held significant implications for the fact that children, in the act moving, watching a moving ball, and under pressure to win a point, are regularly required to make line calls in junior tennis competition. Several parents made the comment that other sport endeavours their children had been involved in had an official present at organized competition.

It has already been noted that playing an unethical opponent was a significant source of distress for these children, which also decreased their enjoyment of the sport. It is important to note that once cheated, the tendency to "cheat back" is increased as the behaviour is often justified as means of maintaining a "fair" match.
provincial tennis organization in order to create a

powerful self-esteem. Rankings and seedings add another layer of pressure.

different selection order and/or the protected rules and values in our culture.

whether the player has achieved or not their specific goals.

Junior tennis is hierarchical, a pyramid that Eliminates Losers at every level.

(1997)"P.18) common on the current structure of junior tennis.

round losses accumulate, causing the child to eventually quit the sport. 和

tournaments may lead the developing player to become disillusioned with the sport as far

It was also noted that the single elimination structure of the majority of

nor risk developing strokes in an effort to "protect" a ranking.

the four aspects of tournament structure may inhibit skill development as children will

comparison on their tennis partners and is done on a ranking system. It was noted

of the study indicates that the current structure promotes a singular focus in young

Several comments were also made by parents and coaches with regard to the role

this was an area in which the provincial tennis organization was not fulfilling its duties.

experience of the junior tennis players. At the time of this study, rankings and coaches held

philosophy of the junior tennis program needs to be implemented into the ranking and competition

The current system of the ranking program involved an exercise

means of discipline that is consistent, constant, and reminds competitors of their rights and

It seems essential then, that the provincial tennis organization needs to implement a

wood's, 1993). Parents and coaches involved in this study felt that the role of the


provincial tennis organization in order to create a
competitive tennis environment that was more conducive to the psychosocial development of the children involved in the sport.

**Evaluation of the Communication-Training Program**

The final topic of the qualitative analysis involved the evaluation of the training program by both child and parent participants. As indicated in the results, response to the program was generally positive on the part of parents and children. However, it was suggested that the wording of the parent profiles was too negative and the forms themselves could not be scored correctly according to the directions. Perhaps a revised form should be devised, but Loehr and Kahn's *Parent-Player Tennis Training Program* (1989) is no longer in print. This is unfortunate as many of the aspects of the manual are excellent and could be used by children, parents, and coaches to their benefit.

It was also noted that aspects of the program were too geared to the high level player, and were not issues of the more recreational player. A modified version of the program could be given to these players in order to ensure that topics of discussion were appropriate.

Families generally felt that the program enhanced their communication, or gave them ideas of how to deal with tennis-related issues more effectively. Again it should be noted that each participant family received unique and different benefits from participation in the program.

Educational programs such as the one incorporated in this research assist and facilitate parents, coaches and children in the youth sport domain. Weiss (1991, p.342) indicates the impact of educational programs for parents on child development:

I strongly believe that educating coaches and parents about children's perceptions of instructional feedback and reinforcement, and providing strategies for bringing about change in self-perceptions, motivation, sportsmanship, and anxiety, is the most powerful way of developing children's psychological skills.
The complex and broad nature of these research findings illustrate that the sport experience of children involves many psychosocial aspects. It also becomes apparent that these aspects interact and affect one another as the child develops. Therefore, it is essential that both research and practical endeavors in the field of youth sport examine these psychosocial elements in a comprehensive and holistic fashion.

**Developing a Model for the Psychosocial Elements of Youth Sport**

Throughout the developmental stages of this research - the review of literature, the development of methodology, family training sessions, coach interviews, and data analysis - it was increasingly apparent that the psychosocial elements of youth sport were interrelational in their effect on a child's development. That is, these elements overlapped, interacted, and influenced one another within the child's sport experience. Therefore, the psychosocial development of the child needs to be examined in a manner that acknowledges the complex relationships which exist between such concepts as anxiety, self-confidence, self-esteem, and enjoyment.

Weiss attempted to organize the fields of sport science and their examination of youth sport into a model she entitled the "Wheel of Child Development" which is depicted in Figure 6.1.
The psychological and social "spokes" on this wheel of development include some of the areas which have been explored in this research. Figure 6.2 illustrates a proposed model which further develops the psychological and social categories indicated by Weiss. This model depicts the various inter-related psychosocial elements of youth sport.
The central assumption of the model is that a child's perception of competence, which is developed by his or her socialization experiences, is the primary influence on that child's development in the psychosocial elements of self-esteem, self-confidence/self-efficacy, competitive anxiety, motivation and enjoyment in sport. The broken lines around each of these elements indicate that the elements themselves are also inter-related. Examination of the literature concerning the child's development through sport indicated that a child's perceptions of his or her competence influenced other elements of that child's psychosocial development. The many inter-relational aspects of the elements of anxiety, self-esteem/self-confidence, motivation and sport enjoyment have previously been examined in the literature review and discussion of results in this research. Therefore, they will not be reiterated at this juncture.

Further study examining the role of perceived competence in the other psychosocial elements of a child's development needs to be undertaken. Greater research is also needed to explore the multi-faceted nature of the young athlete's psychosocial development through sport. Such research could also determine if this model effectively represents the psychosocial environment of youth sport.
Summary of Results

The complex nature of the combined methodological approach in this study has proved to be a challenging endeavour in the design and development of the research, as well as in the presentation and discussion of results. Using both psychometric measures and qualitative techniques to derive information about the psychosocial development of the child indicated varied results for each methodological approach and at time the results derived by the different methods appeared to conflict.

For example, while the SCAT scores did not discover the children to be significantly more anxious than the norm, analysis of discussion in family sessions revealed that the children were coping with several different potential sources of anxiety as a result of their tennis involvement. It is possible that the psychometric measure does not indicate significant levels of anxiety in the child because that measure was developed using clinical definitions of anxiety. Hence, a child may not be experiencing a level of anxiety which warrants clinical recognition, yet he or she may be facing several circumstances which can potentially produce feelings of anxiety. The latter of these situations is expressed in qualitative data, but is not be measured by an instrument such as the SCAT. Therefore, it is possible that quantitative measures and qualitative techniques assess the same psychosocial constructs in different ways. While some may see this to be a disadvantage or detracting factor of the study, it may also be viewed as a valuable learning experience. The combined approach allows for the discovery and exploration of differences, not just similarities, in the results derived from each approach.

Qualitative analysis proved to be advantageous in that the detail provided by qualitative data revealed information that could not be obtained by a quantitative measure alone. This point can be illustrated by again using the SCAT as an example. While the SCAT has been established as a valid tool for the measurement of anxiety, it cannot reveal
why a child may be feeling anxious. Aspects of the parent-child relationship, the nature of tennis as a sport, individual attributes of each child, and many other potential sources of why a child may feel or express anxiety were revealed and delineated through qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis provided similar expansion of data in the areas of confidence and enjoyment as well.

Another advantage of the qualitative approach is the opportunity to obtain multidimensional exploration of the child's tennis experience. Through qualitative methods, more information could be obtained regarding the personal relationships, individual characteristics, and social structures which impacted upon each child's tennis environment. Such exploration could not have been achieved through the use of quantitative instruments.

The complexity of the combined methodological approach may be considered by some to be convoluted or distracting as this approach does not linearly define what exactly is being "measured". However, it is my belief that such an approach provides the researcher with the opportunity to be more widely observant of the many factors which may affect the research question, and to different ways of assessing that question, rather than limiting him or her to narrow constraints of examination. It also seems that using both approaches makes the researcher cognizant of the advantages, limitations, and inherent biases of each. Therefore, the study becomes an exploration of the research methodology as well as the research question, providing a well-rounded learning experience for the researcher.

Research Limitations

While this research holds implications for children and parents involved in various youth sport domains, it is limited in its investigation of tennis players, whose issues may be different from children who play other sports. It is also limited in that the program
implemented in the study appears to be too strongly geared toward highly competitive athletes.

The small number of participants allowed for rich and informative data to be gleaned from the research. However, this small sample size may prevent an overall understanding of the psychosocial elements and issues relevant to all competitive junior tennis participants. In particular, the quantitative research results may be skewed by the small number of participants.

With regard to quantitative measures and techniques, many of the instruments used in the study were not the most effective means of obtaining data. The measures of parent behaviour and sport enjoyment were hampered by a ceiling effect. The parent profile questionnaires contained a flawed scoring procedure as well as some double-barreled items which made proper interpretation of the scoring difficult (e.g. *Are you overinvolved (or underinvolved) in your child's tennis?*). More effective use of quantitative measures may have resulted in more meaningful data.

The combined approach to the methodology of the research allowed for information to be obtained from both quantitative measures and qualitative techniques. However, the psychometric measures used to gather quantitative data concerning anxiety and confidence are based upon clinical definitions of these elements, whereas the emergence of qualitative themes regarding such elements are often influenced by socially constructed relationships and environments. To clarify, a child may not indicate a clinical level of anxiety on a psychometric measure, however, discussion with that same child may reveal that he or she is encountering several sources of anxiety in the sport and/or family environment. Therefore, the connection between quantitative and qualitative data is limited, as the two approaches may in fact measure different dimensions of the same psychosocial construct.

My direct involvement as an observational participant in the study allowed me to gain an in-depth and connected view of the junior tennis experience for the families in the
study. However, in some cases my dual role as facilitator and researcher may have prevented truly open communication, or may have affected my ability to absorb all of the information at family sessions. It is also necessary to recognize that I, like all researchers, brought a subjective bias to my study. It is possible that my bias was further complicated by the dual nature of my role.

Another methodological limitation of the study involves the process of participant selection. The children and coaches were all acquainted with me before the study, as were some of the parents. This enhanced my accessibility to the participants, and the familiarity between us removed the rapport barrier that often exists between participant and researcher. However, the self-selection process by which participants were obtained had limitations as the type and nature of participant were not drawn from a random population. Hence, the data gleaned from the study may not be truly representative of the greater population of junior tennis or youth sport.

A final limitation of the research methodology addresses the procedure by which qualitative data were collected and recorded. Coach interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data from the family training sessions were recorded in the form of notes taken by myself as a participant in the sessions, and through the analysis of documents used in the training program. Tape-recording the family sessions would have been a more complete and accurate method of obtaining qualitative data.

However, the original design of the study involved primarily quantitative structure, with the qualitative aspects of the research emerging and expanding over the course of the research. As I had not indicated in the letter of information that sessions would be recorded, I did not feel it was ethical to introduce tape-recording once the families had provided consent and the sessions were in progress. It was my belief as well that the introduction of tape-recording would have altered the rapport established between myself and the participants in the early sessions. Therefore, the degree to which the study is
limited by the absence of tape-recordings of the family training sessions is not easily illustrated.

While this was not a sociocultural study, it would be remiss not to address the sociocultural issues that are part of the psychosocial development of the children involved in this research. Cultural differences between parent and child, the expense of tennis training, family/sibling relations affected by the child's tennis training, and gender issues in the sport of tennis all hold important implications for the child's psychosocial development and tennis experience. These issues were addressed and discussed in the presentation of results.

A broader limitation concerning socialization resulted from design and scope of the study. While the influence of coaches and parents on child development was examined in all aspects of the research, a similar examination of the ways in which a child's behaviour can influence a parent or coach was not considered. Therefore, the study often depicts a uni-directional view of socialization, rendering the investigation of the parent-child-coach relationship incomplete. Limitations of the study in social and cultural aspects must be recognized. However, further discussion of these issues, while warranted and needed, unfortunately falls beyond the scope of this research.

The requests for psychological skill training on the part of both parents and children were difficult to address effectively within the program session environment. As the focus of the sessions was on communication development I was unable to contribute the time necessary for adequate skill training. Perhaps a more comprehensive study would have allowed for development and assessment in this area.

Finally, the duration of any positive results from the communication-training sessions is unclear. Perhaps a longer time frame for sessions or the incorporation of a longitudinal follow-up procedure in the study would have been beneficial. Parent behaviour and parent-child communication may be positively influenced while the family is involved in the program; however, it is open to question as to whether such positive
changes will be maintained as long-term habits. As tennis is a sport which takes a considerable amount of time and effort to obtain a high level of proficiency, this particular limitation is quite significant.
CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine the effect of parent-child communication on the psychosocial development of young competitive tennis players. While the research design focused on the areas of competitive anxiety, sport confidence and sport enjoyment, as the study progressed many other relevant psychosocial issues were revealed, indicating the complex, dynamic nature of parent-child relationships and youth sport.

Each of the seven families and four coaches involved in this research provided valuable information regarding common issues and concerns for developing tennis players. However, the contribution of each child, parent and coach was also distinct and unique. Hence, while the results and discussion of the study tend to focus on collective issues, it is important to remember that the sport experience is different for each family and coach.

The many and varied issues revealed in the research reminds us as academics and practitioners, that we cannot oversimplify or be limited in our approach to youth sport. Each of the elements of a young athlete's psychosocial development overlap and interrelate and hence must be examined with comprehensive awareness, particularly when examining or facilitating the parent-child relationship.

Aside from the comments that the training program employed in this study was more suited to those families with children involved intensively in junior tennis, all of the children indicated that they enjoyed the opportunity to discuss their tennis-related issues with their parents. Hence, it seems apparent that such a program should be implemented in youth tennis training programs across the nation. The nature and depth of the program could be altered to suit the needs of the families and coaches involved.
As the investigator, I would like to address two other issues concerning the program. I feel it would be interesting and beneficial to conduct a similar study in which the coach was also involved in the sessions. The program is designed to involve the coach, but in such a fashion that the coach conducts the sessions and acts as a facilitator. I feel that it would be more appropriate to involve the coach, but to also have the investigator as the neutral facilitator, as this study's findings from coach interviews suggest that the coaches' influential impact on the child's development indicates an inherent power structure within that relationship. The presence of the investigator as neutral facilitator is essential to facilitate child communication as that investigator holds no vested interest in the child's tennis development.

Secondly I feel that a program such as this could be conducted as a practical development tool for athletes, parents and coaches, and not simply as a research tool. The program could also incorporate ongoing follow-up sessions at intervals in the child's development to ensure that positive communication patterns are being maintained. Often when a child becomes more successful within the sport, the communication lessons learned are forgotten as the focus on outcome rewards may cause families to lose perspective on the importance of tennis in the child's development. Follow up sessions are also beneficial in that as the child develops, his or her needs with regard to parents and coaches will change, and it may be helpful to discuss these sessions in the context of the training program.

The results of the study also indicate that the current structure and officiating standards in junior tennis may be somewhat unsatisfactory and in some cases may prevent the children from obtaining maximum enjoyment from the sport. It seems apparent that consistency and quality of officiating and tournament organization is an issue the governing bodies of tennis need to address.

Continual exploration, through both research and practice, must be undergone to ensure that junior tennis, and youth sport in general, recognizes and supports the needs of
the child athlete, recognizing that these needs are different from adult competitors. Parent and coach education is an essential aspect of this exploration, as these adults are significant and enduring influences in the young athlete's life. Education of the significant adults in youth sport must also incorporate support and the development of coping skills.

The implementation of such programs in the sport of tennis and all youth sport is the responsibility of the provincial and national sport organization in this country. Candidates for the administration of such programs should be individuals who are not immediately immersed in physical and skill development so they can provide the children, parents and coaches with objective facilitation and guidance in junior tennis and other youth sports. A policy and procedure which more fully incorporates communication and relationship development for the child, parent and coach into junior tennis needs to be developed and consistently administered in Canada. The successful administration of such a policy may serve to assist in the psychosocial development of all those involved in junior tennis, and may also serve as a model for other youth sports.

Underwood (1984, p. 123) states,

A game should never be more important than the child who plays it. The outcome of an athletic contest should never be as significant as the pleasure and education the participant might derive.

A child's sport experience can help him or her develop independence and a sense of responsibility by developing communication, decision making and learning skills (Martens, 1988b, p.303). The effective administration of policies and programs for all participants, families and coaches involved in youth sports will help to facilitate healthy and balanced development of the young athlete.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Sport Competition Anxiety Test for Children (SCAT-C)
Competitive State Anxiety Inventory - Form 2
Illinois Competition Questionnaire

Form C

Directions: We want to know how you feel about competition. You know what competition is. We all compete. We try to do better than our brother or sister or friend at something. We try to score more points in a game. We try to get the best grade in class or win a prize that we want. We all compete in sports and games. Below are some sentences about how boys and girls feel when they compete in sports and games. Read each statement below and decide if you HARDLY EVER, or SOMETIMES, or OFTEN feel this way when you compete in sports and games. Mark A if your choice is HARDLY EVER, mark B if you choose SOMETIMES, and mark C if you choose OFTEN. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement. Remember to choose the word which describes how you usually feel when competing in sports and games.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hardly Ever</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Competing against others is fun.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Before I compete I feel uneasy.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Before I compete I worry about not performing well.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I am a good sport when I compete.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>When I compete I worry about making mistakes.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Before I compete I am calm.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Setting a goal is important when competing.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Before I compete I get a funny feeling in my stomach.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Just before competing I notice my heart beats faster than usual.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I like rough games.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Before I compete I feel relaxed.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Before I compete I am nervous.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Team sports are more exciting than individual sports.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I get nervous wanting to start the game.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Before I compete I usually get uptight.</td>
<td>A □</td>
<td>B □</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Illinois Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

Directions: A number of statements that athletes have used to describe their feelings before competition are given below. Read each statement and then circle the appropriate number to the right of the statement to indicate how you feel right now—at this moment. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement, but choose the answer which describes your feelings right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Moderately So</th>
<th>Very Much So</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am concerned about this competition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel nervous</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel at ease</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have self-doubts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel jitters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel comfortable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am concerned that I may not do as well in this competition as I could</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My body feels tense</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I feel self-confident</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I am concerned about losing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel tense in my stomach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I feel secure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I am concerned about choking under pressure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My body feels relaxed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I'm confident I can meet the challenge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I'm concerned about performing poorly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My heart is racing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I'm confident about performing well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I'm concerned about reaching my goal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I feel my stomach sinking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I feel mentally relaxed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I'm concerned that others will be disappointed with my performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My hands are clammy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I'm confident because I mentally picture myself reaching my goal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I'm concerned I won't be able to concentrate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. My body feels tight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I'm confident of coming through under pressure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Trait Sport Confidence Inventory
State Sport Confidence Inventory
Competitive Orientation Inventory
Think about how self-confident you are when you compete in sport.

Answer the questions below based on how confident you generally feel when you compete in your sport. Compare your self-confidence to the most self-confident athlete you know.

Please answer as you really feel, not how you would like to feel. Your answers will be kept completely confidential.

When you compete, how confident do you generally feel? (circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you compete in sport, you focus on two major goals. These goals are:

1. To perform well
2. To win

Think about how satisfied you are when you perform well and lose.
Think about how satisfied you are when you perform poorly and win.

Below is a matrix containing 16 boxes. Each box represents a situation in which you either win or lose and either perform well or poorly.

Write a number from 0 to 10 in each box below (see the example box on the right).

Select your numbers for each box based on the scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very dissatisfied in this situation</td>
<td>very satisfied in this situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There are no right or wrong answers—we are interested in how you feel.*
APPENDIX C

Likert Scale of Enjoyment
FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, CIRCLE THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES HOW YOU FEEL. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS AND NO ONE ELSE WILL SEE YOUR CHOICES.

1) HOW MUCH FUN DO YOU HAVE TRAINING FOR TENNIS?

| NONE AT ALL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | ALOT OF FUN | 9 |

2) HOW MUCH FUN DO YOU HAVE COMPETING IN TOURNAMENTS?

| NONE AT ALL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | ALOT OF FUN | 9 |
APPENDIX D

Parental Report Card
Parent's Name ____________________________________
Player's Name ____________________________________
Reporting Period __________________________________

Grading categories:
A  Excellent performance
B  Good performance
C  Average performance
D  Poor performance
F  Failure

Parent shares a healthy interest in my tennis

Parent doesn't put pressure on me to win

Parent is supportive and encouraging about my tennis

Parent doesn't make me feel guilty about the money and time being spent on my tennis

Parent has a positive attitude about my tennis

Parent helps me emotionally when I have hard or difficult times in my tennis

Parent is not getting overinvolved in my tennis

Parent looks very positive and relaxed during my matches

Parent doesn't try to be my coach but lets my pro do that

Parent doesn't nag me for failure to play more tennis, do my exercises, running and so forth

Parent helps me to feel good about myself and my tennis

Overall evaluation as a tennis parent

Suggestions: ________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

Signature ______________________________________ Date ____________________
APPENDIX E

"My Role as a Parent" Form
Personal Goals of Parent Form
Personal Goals of Player Form
Parent Profile Questionnaires
"How Does Your Child Deal with Stress" Form
Player Report Form
"How I as Tennis Parent Breakdown Under Pressure" Form
"Which Should we Discuss" Inventory
"My Rights and Responsibilities"
Player Agreement Form
"Training Your Parent" Form
Parent Role Change Form
Write out each component and sign and date this form at bottom.

My role is to:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Signature ___________________________ Date ________________
What do you expect to get out of your child's tennis?
What are your goals and expectations?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
What do you expect to get out of this tennis experience?
What are your goals and expectations?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
Parents: Read the following statements and rank yourself using the following scale:

5 Always
4 Almost Always
3 Sometimes
2 Almost Never
1 Never

Then pass the completed form to the child and coach for them to score. Move on to Parent Questionnaire 2. Both parents should complete the questionnaire if possible, filling out the answers together.

1. Are you a source of additional pressure on your son or daughter? Is there pressure to win, pressure to be great, pressure to live up to your expectations? To what extent is your influence one of pressure?

Score: __________

2. To what extent do you make your child feel guilty? Do you control your child out of guilt? You’re spending time and money on him or her. What is the child doing for you? Is this the kind of attitude you have?

Score: __________

3. Are you overinvolved (or underinvolved) in your child’s tennis?

Score: __________

4. Are you perceived by your child as supportive? encouraging? reinforcing?

Score: __________

5. Are you understanding—sympathetic toward the problems and pressures of competition?

Score: __________

6. Do you look relaxed, happy, determined, positively energized, and calm when your child plays badly or is losing? Does your son or daughter see this when he or she looks over at you?

Score: __________
7. Following the match, do you show disappointment when your child doesn't live up to your performance expectations?

Score: __________

8. Do you make the child feel valuable when he or she loses? Do you reinforce his or her self-esteem?

Score: __________

9. Have you usurped the coach's role? Are you too involved in strategy or strokes?

Score: __________

10. Are you overly critical?

Score: __________

How to score: Add the scores for all ten items together.

Total score: __________

Rating key: 10-20: Performing well
21-30: Slight problem
39+: Problem parent
Parents: Read the following statements and rank yourself using the following scale:

5  Always
4  Almost Always
3  Sometimes
2  Almost Never
1  Never

Then pass the completed form to the child and coach for them to score.
Both parents should complete the questionnaire if possible.

As a parent, do you:

1. Say, "We're playing today," as if you were going to be on court too!
   Score: __________

2. Look disgusted on the sidelines when your child makes a stupid mistake?
   Score: __________

3. Treat your child differently when he or she loses, as opposed to wins?
   Score: __________

4. Withdraw love, affection, and warmth to get your child to try harder or do better?
   Score: __________

5. Feel your child owes you for all the time, money, and sacrifice you've made for his or her tennis?
   Score: __________

6. Look nervous on the sidelines?
   Score: __________
7. Get upset with your child when he or she loses?
   Score: ____________

8. Walk away from a match because your child is doing badly?
   Score: ____________

9. See your child cheat and do nothing or say nothing about it?
   Score: ____________

10. Take notes or videotape tennis lessons?
    Score: ____________

11. Let your child get away with foul or abusive language or racket throwing?
    Score: ____________

12. Let your child treat the opponent with disrespect (not shaking hands at the end of the match or intimidating and accusing during play)?
    Score: ____________

13. Allow your spouse to be a problem parent at times?
    Score: ____________

14. Allow your child to treat you—or others—badly when he or she loses?
    Score: ____________

15. Tie special privileges—perhaps a trip for ice cream, a movie, a private telephone, the use of the car, late hours—to winning in tennis!
    Score: ____________
16. Place more importance on tennis than school work?
   Score: __________

17. Find yourself frequently arguing with your child about tennis?
   Score: __________

18. Spend too much time talking tennis with your child?
   Score: __________

19. Consider the money you're spending a financial investment with an expected return?
   Score: __________

20. Believe that were today the last day your child were ever to play tennis, the competitive experience he or
    she has had will have a negative effect on his or her future development?
   Score: __________

21. Feel you're living out some of your unfulfilled needs or dreams through your child's tennis?
   Score: __________

22. Get more upset than your child when he or she loses or doesn't play well?
   Score: __________

23. Sense your child's tennis is more important to you than to your child?
   Score: __________

24. Expect your child will become a successful professional player?
   Score: __________
25. Suspect that other parents or tournament officials have viewed you as a problem parent?

Score: __________

26. Insist on accompanying your child to lessons and practice matches?

Score: __________

How to score: Add the scores for all 26 items.

Total score: __________

Rating key: 26-52: Performing well
            53-78: Slight problem
            79+: Problem parent
Player: Read the following statements and rank each of your parents using the following scale:
5 Always
4 Almost Always
3 Sometimes
2 Almost Never
1 Never

My mother/father [circle one] is:
1. A source of pressure to win.
    Score: __________

2. Overinvolved in my tennis.
    Score: __________

3. Underinvolved in my tennis.
    Score: __________

4. Overly pushy about my tennis.
    Score: __________

5. Overly critical about my tennis.
    Score: __________

6. Shows negative emotion on the sidelines.
    Score: __________
7. Plays the coach's role too much.  
   Score: __________

8. Uses the cold shoulder, or withdrawal of love or attention, to show disappointment with me and my tennis.  
   Score: __________

9. Gets along very badly with other parents.  
   Score: __________

10. Is nonsupportive with my losses or when things get tough.  
    Score: __________

11. Is moody and irritable if I play badly.  
    Score: __________

12. Communicates poorly with my coach.  
    Score: __________

13. Always talks tennis.  
    Score: __________

14. Thinks tennis is more important than I do.  
    Score: __________
15. Is not tough enough on unsportsmanlike, abusive, or disruptive behavior or language.

Score: ____________

How to score: Add the scores for all 15 items.

Mother self-evaluation score: ____________

Father self-evaluation score: ____________

Player evaluation score: ____________

Rating key: 15-30: Performing well
            31-45: Slight problem
            45+: Problem parent

Another useful scoring method is to add all three evaluations together and divide by 3.

Composite for mother (average score) ____________

Composite for father (average score) ____________
Questionnaire 1

Score ________ Rating ________

Questionnaire 2

Score ________ Rating ________

Questionnaire 3

Score ________ Rating ________

Taking the responses given on the Parent Profile Questionnaires, list what team members believe are each parent's strengths and weaknesses. Do they keep pressure off? Are they overly critical? Are they supportive in losses? Do they put winning in perspective?

There may be fewer than six strengths and weaknesses. Don't feel pressured to make the list longer than team members feel comfortable with.

Mother's Strengths                       Father's Strengths
1.                                         1.
2.                                         2.
3.                                         3.
4.                                         4.
5.                                         5.
6.                                         6.
### Off-court:
What are the signals that your child is experiencing greater than normal stress? Describe in detail.

### On-court:
What are the signals of stress on court for your child? Describe in detail.
1. 

How this affects my child's Ideal Performance State (IPS):

2. 

How this affects my child's IPS:

3. 

How this affects my child's IPS:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WHICH SHOULD WE DISCUSS?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>My child doesn't want me to watch his matches. Must I comply? See p. 99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>My daughter shows great promise, but we don't have the money to pay for the kinds of lessons and the travel necessary, as far as we're concerned, for her to reach her full potential. Our only alternative would be to take a second mortgage on our home. Would you advise us to do that? See p. 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>My son swears and throws his racket during matches and even—on occasion—during practice. What would you suggest we do? See p. 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Our daughter's been playing tennis for nearly five years and has not been doing as well as she'd hoped she'd be able to do. She's just told us she'd like to quit. Should we let her? See p. 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Our son likes his coach very much, but both my husband and I feel he's a poor coach. What should we do? See p. 101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Our daughter has decided she wants to go to a tennis academy away from home. She's only 14. Should we allow her to go? See p. 101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>How do we know if the stress levels are too high for our daughter? She's very sensitive and keeps everything inside. What are the signals? See p. 102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My son treats me badly when he's not playing well, particularly after he loses. In fact, he treats everyone badly after a loss! Should we accept this as a difficult time and allow it to occur? What can we do? See p. 102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Our daughter is not mentally tough, and there are no pros in our area who teach mental toughness training. What would you recommend? See p. 103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Our son is very talented and does well in a number of sports. He's 13 years old and doesn't want to specialize. He likes to play soccer, basketball, and tennis and runs track too. Should we let him play all the sports, or should we get him to focus on one so he will achieve enough skill to be successful? See p. 103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Our daughter is terribly afraid to play tournaments. She loves to take lessons and loves to hit, but as soon as we suggest a tournament, she freezes. Should we force her to play a few so that she can overcome this, or should we let it go? See p. 103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Our daughter wants to play every tournament that comes up. Should we let her? See p. 103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Our daughter can't stand to talk about her tennis with us. Every time we bring it up, she gets defensive. What can we do? See p. 104</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Our son is constantly injured. Every time he gets going, he's injured again. It's hard on him emotionally. What can we do? See p. 105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Our daughter has unrealistic goals. Should we let her pursue them or force her to lower her expectations? See p. 105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Our son has no discipline in his training. He wants to be good but is inconsistent and irresponsible about arranging for court time, scheduling lessons, and finding practice partners. What should we do? See p. 106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Our daughter is doing poorly in school. Should we take away tennis as a punishment? See p. 106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Is it right for our family to give up vacations and other personal time for our son's tennis? We find ourselves constantly changing our plans to coincide with his tournament schedule. Is that appropriate? See p. 106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I see so many young children who've become tennis brats. How does that happen? How can I prevent it from happening to my own kids? See p. 106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. My son always wants to play sets. When I win—and I'm the better player—he goes crazy. Should I purposely lose to give him confidence? See p. 107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am a teaching pro who teaches her own children. Can that work? The expense of hiring someone else is too great, and there's no one else nearby anyway. See p. 108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. My daughter's 11 years old, and all she wants to do is play tennis. She'd play 10 hours a day if I let her. Is it bad to let her play as much as she likes? See p. 108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Are there any personality patterns that seem to be a higher risk for burnout than others? See p. 108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Is there anything I can do constructively while I watch lessons and matches? Can I take notes or tape videos, for example? See p. 109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. When should my son travel with a coach? Is it okay that I fill that role if a coach cannot travel? What are the pros and cons? See p. 110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
26. How much school should I allow my son or daughter to miss? There always seems to be a tournament that conflicts with academic time. Should tennis be elevated to the same level of importance as school? See p. 110

27. Should I do all the dirty work? Fetch drinks, towels, regrip rackets, prepare meals, do the laundry, arrange for transportation—who should do all the little things like this? Is that part of the parental role? See p. 111

28. Should I set up matches—call people for my daughter—until she learns to do it herself? See p. 111

29. It's a real sacrifice for us to pay for all the lessons and clinics. Our son isn't trying; he's not giving his best effort. He shows up late, doesn't try in practice, and pays little attention to his coach. I'm afraid, however, that if we tell him that he can't take lessons or clinics, he'll quit. What should we do? See p. 111
EXAMPLE:

I have the **RIGHT** to an equal chance to use equipment and space on the playground or in the gym.

Therefore I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to give everyone else an equal chance to play and to share equipment and facilities.

1. I have the **RIGHT** to be treated politely. Therefore, I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to ____________________________________________

2. I have the **RIGHT** to my own space and to my own belongings. Therefore, I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to ____________________________________________

3. I have the **RIGHT** to be safe and not to be hurt by others. Therefore, I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to ____________________________________________

4. I have the **RIGHT** to be treated kindly and fairly by all. Therefore, I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to ____________________________________________

5. I have the **RIGHT** to equal access and opportunity to physical activity. Therefore, I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to ____________________________________________

**TIME OUT!**

- How do these **RIGHTS** relate to **SELF-ESTEEM**?
- Make up your own list of **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**. Then make up a class list and put it on the wall at the front of your room or gym (e.g., for every right there is a responsibility).

PLAYER AGREEMENT FORM

Things I agree to do:
1. 
   
   
   
   
   
2. 
   
   
   
   
   
3. 
   
   
   
   
   
4. 
   
   
   
   
   
5. 
   
   
   
   
   

Things I agree not to do:
1. 
   
   
   
   
   
2. 
   
   
   
   
   
3. 
   
   
   
   
   
4. 
   
   
   
   
   
5. 
   
   
   
   
   
   

Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things I now wish to take responsibility for:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things I still want you (my parents) to do:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How I want you, my parents, to handle things (other parents, bad behavior, transportation, on the sidelines, etc.):
Things I will work to change

In general, I will

[Blank lines]

Specifically, I will do the following:

[Blank lines]
APPENDIX F

Initial Letter of Information
Follow-Up Letter of Information
Family Consent Form
Coach Consent Form
Dear

I am a graduate student at the University of Toronto in the field of sport psychology. My research involves the study of young people in competitive sport and their families. The professional staff at Greenwin have expressed an interest in incorporating a mental training program into the current competitive training regimen, which would be run by myself in accordance with the coaching philosophy of the Greenwin professional staff.

We would like to begin this training program with a series of meetings that include both the parent or parents and the young athlete, starting in the summer season. The parent-child sessions include six one-hour meetings conducted by myself, arranged at your convenience. For my part, I will not only be involved in the meetings but will be using the feedback gained from them as a base for my research.

This letter is a preliminary introduction only, to determine families that are interested in pursuing the program. A more detailed letter of information will follow. Approximately twenty families have been approached and I hope to have as many as possible involved in the program. I would like to make a special request to female athletes and their parents to participate, simply because there are fewer girls in the competitive program and I feel a balanced representation of both genders will make the program and the research findings which result from it, more complete in their representation of youth competitive sport.

The sessions will begin at the end of June or early July based on school schedules. One important detail that I will express in this letter is that the same parent (or parents, if possible) must consistently attend all six sessions to obtain maximum benefit from the program as the sessions build on one another.

Once again, a detailed letter of information will follow, however, if you have any pressing questions you may contact me by telephone at the number listed at the top of the page. Please indicate your interest below and return this letter with the questionnaire included in this package. I hope to meet all of you in the summer!

Sincerely,

[Questionnaire options]

WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED    THANK-YOU, NOT INTERESTED
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

As a graduate student at the University of Toronto, my work has focused on the study of children in competitive sport and their families. With the support of the Greenwin Tennis Club coaching professionals, and the Ontario Tennis Association Director of Junior Development, I have been given the opportunity to run a mental training program for the Greenwin Club competitive juniors and their parents. This program will provide the basis for my own research concerning child athletes.

The program will begin in late June and continue through until the end of the summer season, roughly late August or early September. Prior to commencement of the program, your child will be asked to complete four basic pencil and paper questionnaires concerning his/her thoughts and emotions in competition. The agenda for the program involves six one-hour sessions to be attended by both you and your child, conducted by myself. Topics of discussion for these sessions include roles and goals of the parent and the player, questionnaires concerning your involvement as a tennis parent, defining responsibilities for both child and parent, understanding how you and your child deal with stress, and dealing with tough issues such as fair play, coaching, and balancing tennis with school. The format of these sessions will be such that open written and verbal communication between yourself, myself, and your child will be maximized. At the close of the program, in addition to the written material completed in the sessions, your child will be asked to again complete four short questionnaires.

The times and dates of the sessions will be determined based on your family’s convenience. Session may be held at Greenwin or in your home, if you prefer. Both parents are welcome to attend, but I will stress that the same parent must attend each session as the material covered builds from each previous session.

I feel that, apart from my own research, this program will be a valuable experience for you and your child and will also benefit your son or daughter’s development in tennis. If you and your child wish to participate, please complete the attached consent forms and return one to myself or Peter Cameron. Please retain this letter of information for your records along with the second copy of the consent form.

The research generated from this program has been approved by the University of Toronto Human Ethics committee. All participants are free to withdraw from the program at any time, and all results are strictly confidential. Please understand that choosing to participate or not to participate in the program has absolutely no effect on the standing your son or daughter’s involvement in the competitive junior tennis training sessions at the Greenwin Tennis Club.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you are interested, final research results will be made available for you, however, individual participants will not be identified. I hope to see you and your child this summer. Should you have any questions, please call one of us at the numbers shown below.

| Michelle Curtis, B.P.H.E. (Principal Researcher) | Gretchen Kerr, Ph.D (Supervising Professor) |
| 166 Ballyl Road #300 | School of Physical & Health Education |
| Toronto, Ontario M4S-1C2 | 320 Huront Street |
| 416-480-6350 | Toronto, Ontario M5S-1A1 |
| 416-676-766 |

Sincerely,
CONSENT FORM

I (we) ________________________________ choose to participate in

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) (Please Print)

this program. I grant permission for my child, _____________________________

NAME OF CHILD (Please Print)

to participate as well. I understand that this program is part of a research

study involving families in competitive tennis.

_________________________  __________________________
SIGNATURE OF PARENT(S)      SIGNATURE OF CHILD

DATE_________________________
CONSENT FORM

I ______________________________ choose to participate in
PROGRAM COACH (Please Print)

this program. I understand that this program is part of a research

study involving families in competitive tennis.

________________________________
SIGNATURE

DATE______________________________
November 4, 1996

Michelle Curtis  
The University of Toronto  
Department of Athletics & Recreation  
55 Harbord Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5S 2W6 Canada

Dear Michelle:

Thank you for the kind words in your letter of November 1, 1996. I have no problem with your use of material from my books *Net Results* and *Parent-Player Tennis Training Program*. My only request is that you reference the use as you’ve said you would do. I would be interested in receiving a copy of your final work and promise to NOT use it as a doorstop or booster seat! From the tone of your letter (and understandably so), you are very eagerly awaiting the day that you have completed your thesis and defense.

Best of luck to you as you near the completion of graduate school.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

James E. Loehr, Ed.D.  
President & CEO
APPENDIX G

Program Session Descriptions
**THE PARENT-PLAYER TENNIS TRAINING PROGRAM**

Jim Loehr & E.J. Kahn

**SESSION ONE**

- Discuss goals and expectations of both child and parent regarding the child's tennis involvement.

- Have parent and child refine and finalize these goals so that all are acceptable to both parties. Stress the importance of *flexibility* in discussion of goal setting.

- List the goals in writing using personal goal forms.

- Provide each family with a copy of *Net Results* (Loehr & Kahn, 1987). This book, written in partnership with the program, highlights and discusses aspects of competitive junior tennis. It serves as a reference for the family throughout the program.

- Schedule the following meeting. Ask parents to read first three chapters of *Net Results* for next session.

**SESSION TWO**

- Have parent(s) fill out Parent Profile Questionnaires 1 and 2, while the child completes Questionnaire 3.

- Compute the scores for each questionnaire and the combined composite score.

- Discuss the composite result to determine if both parent and child agree that it is a fair reflection of parent behavior. Focus on problem issues pointed out by specific items on questionnaires.

- Emphasize that the profiles are not designed to harshly criticize the parent, but to determine how the parent(s)' actions affect the child.

- Schedule the next meeting.
SESSION THREE

- Provide parent and child with an overview of basic concepts concerning stress.

- Discuss how stress manifests itself and the many pressure traps which exist for the athlete and parent in the realm of youth sport.

- Have parent fill out "How Does Your Child Deal With Stress" form while child completes the Player Report form.

- Review and discuss forms. Examine parent awareness of how the child copes with stress. Discuss the ways to manage stress.

- Indicate to the child that he/she should periodically complete the Player Report form to monitor how he/she is dealing with competitive stress on an ongoing basis.

- Schedule the next meeting. Ask parent(s) and child to review and complete the "Which Should We Discuss" form to be reviewed in the fifth session.

SESSION FOUR

- Discuss the concept of the "Ideal Performance State" (Loehr & Kahn, 1987), emphasizing the feeling of relaxed energy the athlete achieves in this state.

- Discuss mental toughness as it relates to the player and the parent.

- Have parents complete the "How I as a Tennis Parent Break Down Under Pressure" form.

- Discuss the effect of parent behaviors in reaction to stress and pressure on the performance and general psyche of the child.

- Schedule the next meeting.

SESSION FIVE

- Review the "tough issues" indicate by the child and parent on the "Which Should We Discuss" form. Allow equal input from both parent and child, mediating discussion and encouraging child involvement.