



THE INSTITUTE OF  
**SPORTS**  
PSYCHOLOGY

## **Intrusive Parents in the Training Room**

*By Robert Andrews, MA, LMFT, CSC*

**“I spend a lot of my time taking phone call and emails, and tending to visits to the training room from parents of injured athletes I am treating. It takes up a lot of my time. How can I take care of this problem?”**

There is a saying that says “we teach others how to treat us”. This means that through our actions and inactions we teach others what we will tolerate and not tolerate in our relationships.

Somewhere in your relationship with these parents you have given them the message that it is alright for them to take up your time and energy tending to their concerns.

Parents of injured athletes are scared and this fear can show up as control in their interactions with you. They may try to control their son or daughters healing process to help both the parent and the athlete feel better. Phone calls, emails, repeated questions, and training room visits are all signs of stress and concern.

Think of your training room as a castle with a gate and a mote. You decide who comes into the castle. If your mote is dry and the gate is always open you are going to have problems. With a full mote, and a guard at the gate parents, coaches, and athletes will quickly get the message that your training room is not a place to stroll in and out of. They will get the sense that you mean business and that you take your role as team trainer seriously. They will learn that your time and energy are valuable resources in the recovery process of the athletes you treat.

I am not saying to cut off all contact with parents. It is reasonable for parents to want to know how treatment is going. It is up to you to decide when this concern moves beyond reasonable and becomes an annoyance.

Set aside specific times to visit with parents about their concerns and place time limits on these conversations. By setting strong boundaries about training room policies you will avoid many problems down the road.



The Institute's founder and director Robert B. Andrews MA, is a certified sports counselor, and licensed therapist. Robert has woven his passion for sports and experience as an athlete, together with 18 years of experience in personal empowerment. He has created a dynamic facility for athletes desiring to break through performance ceilings, and maximize their athletic potential.

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