

THE YOUTH SPORTS COMPANION GUIDE

# THE HUDDLE

FEBRUARY EDITION

WHAT  
WE GET  
**WRONG**  
WHEN  
KIDS  
SAY "I'M  
TIRED"

THE RIDE  
HOME  
AFTER  
HAVING A  
**BAD**  
GAME  
DIALOGUE

## THE WALL

IS ADULT PRESSURE BREAKING OUR KIDS?

THE YOUTH SPORTS COMPANION GUIDE

# THE HUDDLE

— The people and partners behind *The Huddle* —

WWW.THEHUDDLEGUIDE.COM

757-504-0478

INFO@THEHUDDLEGUIDE.COM

---

## MASTHEAD

### Editor & Publisher

Michael Churn

### Lead Writer

HBL Editorial Team

### Design & Layout

HBL Creative Studio

### Photography & Visual Production

HBL Media

### Contributing Voices

HBL Coaches, Parents, and Athletes

*Produced in Hampton Roads*



READ THE HUDDLE ONLINE

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

---

### COMMUNITY PARTNER

### DealerGlow

Automotive Photography

### DEALERGLOW

### Why We Support HBL

**DealerGlow** believes confidence is built long before performance is judged. We support HBL because development, preparation, and clear communication matter — on the court and in life.

*Proudly supporting youth development in Hampton Roads.*

**Supporting families on  
the road between  
school, practice and life**



**DEALERGLOW**

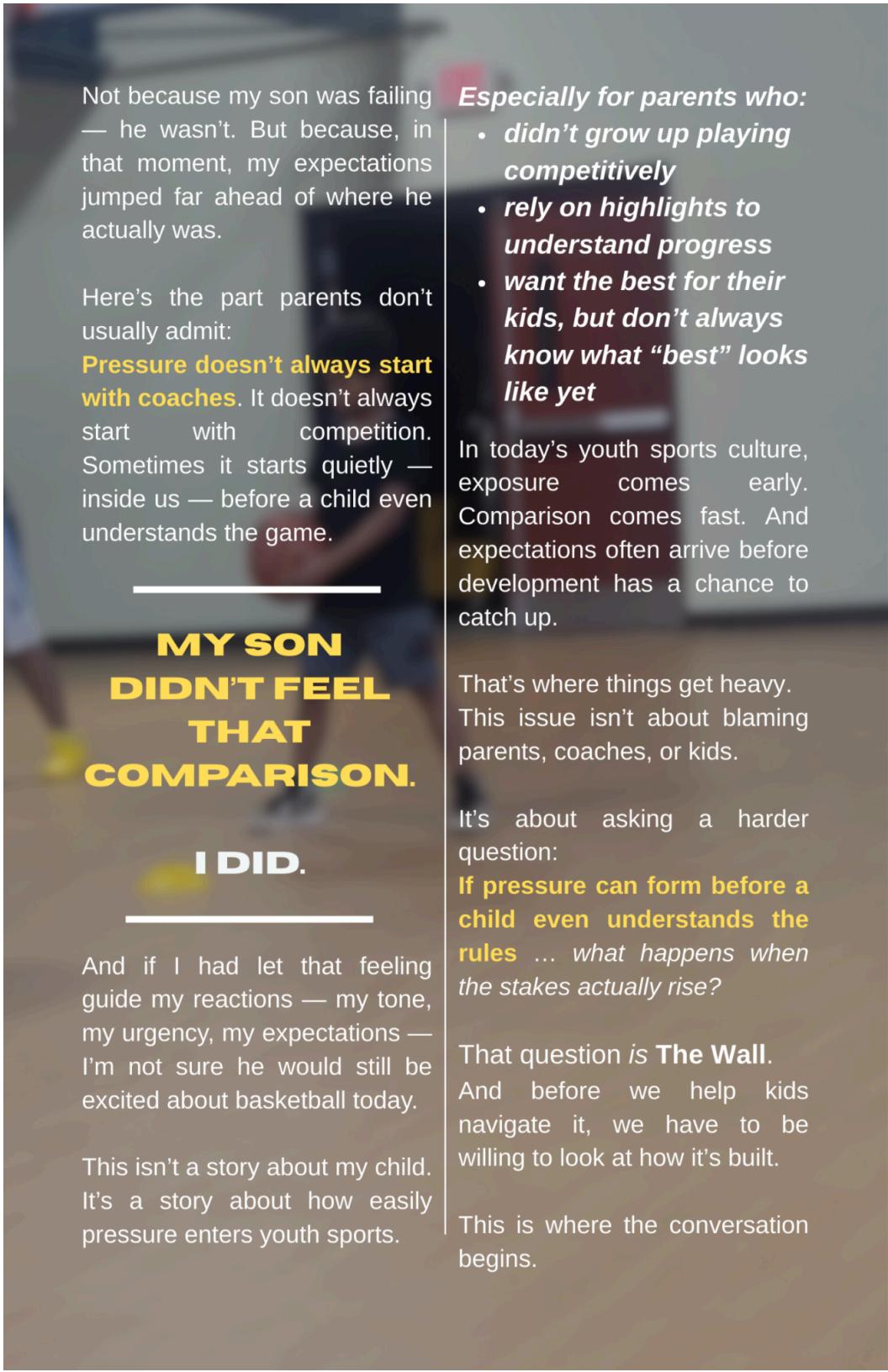
# TIP-OFF BEFORE THE NOISE

I remember when it first  
happened.

My son had just started playing basketball. He was awkward with the ball, still learning how his body moved, still figuring out where to stand. He was trying — genuinely trying — and he was excited.

That night, I was scrolling social media. A video came up of a much younger kid — maybe six or seven — with incredible handles. Clean footwork. Confident movement. The kind of clip people replay and comment on: “Different.” “Special.” I watched it. Then I looked at my son. I didn’t say anything out loud. But I felt it.

*Disappointment.*



Not because my son was failing — he wasn't. But because, in that moment, my expectations jumped far ahead of where he actually was.

Here's the part parents don't usually admit:

**Pressure doesn't always start with coaches.** It doesn't always start with competition. Sometimes it starts quietly — inside us — before a child even understands the game.

---

## MY SON DIDN'T FEEL THAT COMPARISON.

---

I DID.

---

And if I had let that feeling guide my reactions — my tone, my urgency, my expectations — I'm not sure he would still be excited about basketball today.

This isn't a story about my child. It's a story about how easily pressure enters youth sports.

**Especially for parents who:**

- *didn't grow up playing competitively*
- *rely on highlights to understand progress*
- *want the best for their kids, but don't always know what "best" looks like yet*

In today's youth sports culture, exposure comes early. Comparison comes fast. And expectations often arrive before development has a chance to catch up.

That's where things get heavy. This issue isn't about blaming parents, coaches, or kids.

It's about asking a harder question:

**If pressure can form before a child even understands the rules ... what happens when the stakes actually rise?**

That question is **The Wall**. And before we help kids navigate it, we have to be willing to look at how it's built.

This is where the conversation begins.

# TIME OUT

JAMES' JOURNEY

**HEAVY  
LEGS,  
HEAVY  
HEART**



Most days, basketball felt easy to James.  
*Not perfect. Just familiar.*

That afternoon in the community gym, the ball left his fingers the same way it always did. The layup was smooth, practiced, automatic. Kids rushed behind him, sneakers squeaking, voices echoing. For a moment, everything looked normal.

The ball hit the front of the rim.

**CLUNK**



It bounced away, light and quick, like it was in a hurry to leave. James landed under the hoop and stood there a second longer than he meant to. The game moved on without him. No one said anything. They didn't have to.



As he jogged back, James noticed the sound of his feet. Everyone else sounded sharp and quick. His didn't. His steps felt heavy, dull, like the floor was softer under him than it should've been. He glanced down at his shoes while he ran.



**They looked fine.**

**During the last drill,  
James slowed again.**

**He stopped and  
stared at his legs,  
confused. They were  
the same legs he'd  
always had. Nothing  
hurt.**

**Nothing looked  
wrong.**

**Still, something felt  
off.**

Outside the gym, the late afternoon sun stretched long shadows across the parking lot.

Milo was already talking, already moving.

He walked backward while dribbling, smiling wide, barely looking at the ball.

"Tomorrow morning," Milo said, bouncing it hard. "Park run."



Milo stumbled, caught himself, laughed like it didn't matter.

James tried to smile back. It took a second longer than usual.



In the car, the world slid past the window in streaks of orange and blue. James rested his head against the glass.

"My legs feel... slow," he said.

His dad didn't rush to answer. He just nodded. "Okay."

That was it. No lecture. No fix. Somehow, that made it feel more real.



At dinner, James's phone buzzed on the table. The screen lit up, glowing between his plate and his glass of water. His dad noticed, but didn't reach for it.



"If you go," his dad said calmly, leaning forward, "you gotta want to be there. If you stay, you gotta actually rest."

James nodded, quiet.

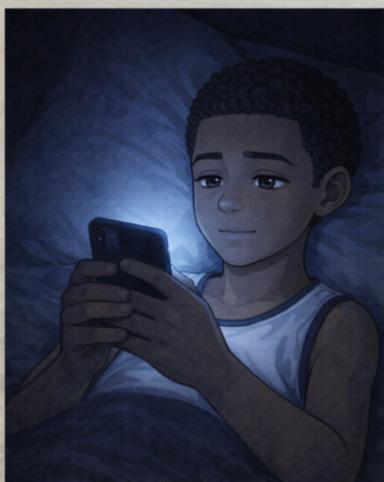
---

Later, under a streetlamp, James dribbled alone. The ball hit the ground—and squashed flat. Not really, but it looked that way. Like it didn't want to bounce. Like it was tired too.



**WHUMP**

James stopped. He stared at it. The street was normal. The night was quiet. The ball rolled back to his hand, round again, like nothing happened.



In his room, the phone glowed softly in the dark. James held it with both hands. He typed. Deleted. Typed again. Then he stopped. "Not comin."



The next morning, Milo was already at the park.

Sweat dripped down his face. His hands rested on his knees as he sucked in air.

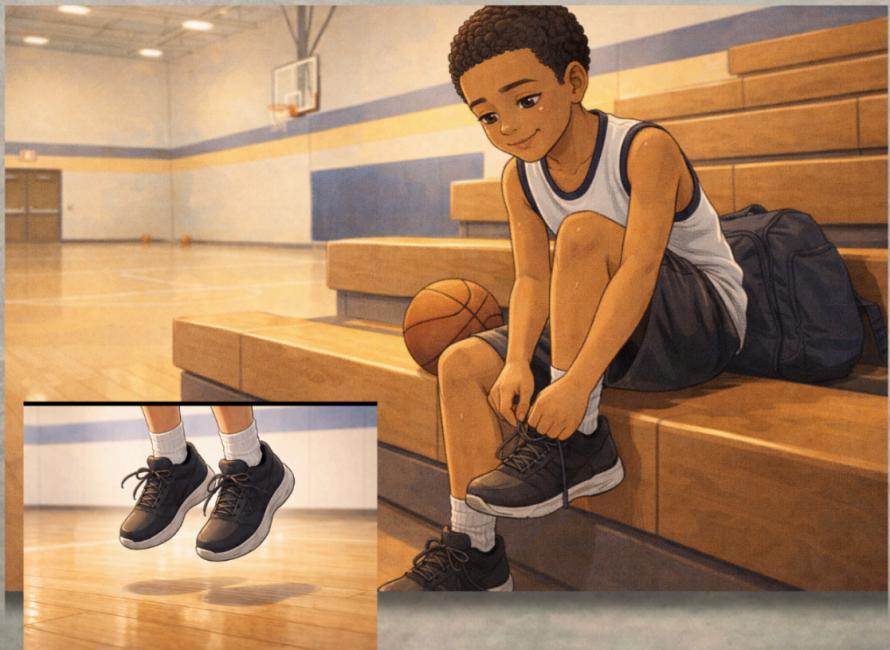
He grinned anyway.

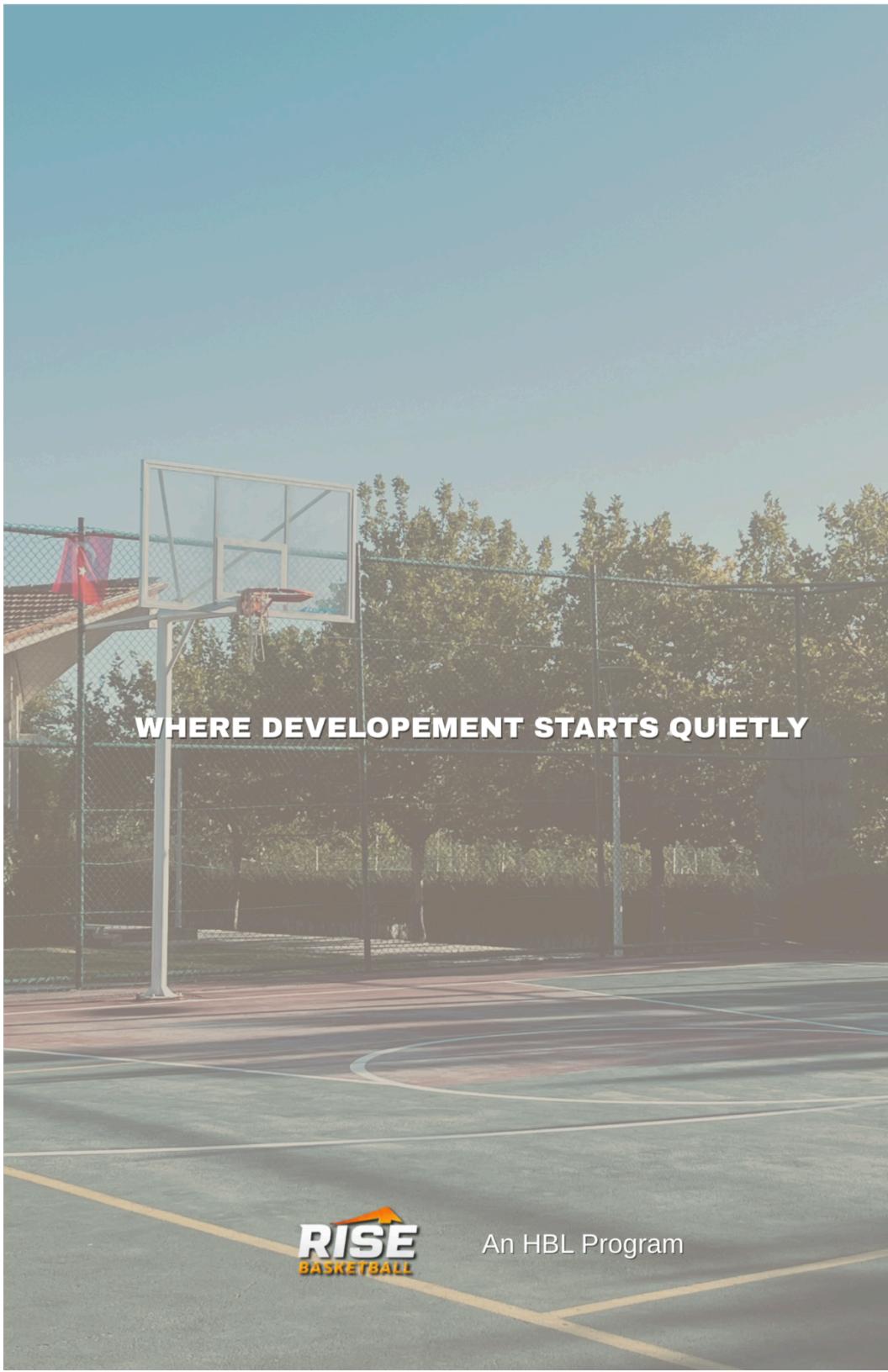
"I'm good!" Milo said, breathing hard.

---

A few days later, back in the gym, James sat on the bleachers tying his shoes. The floor beneath him felt solid again. Normal. He stood up and gave a small hop. His feet left the ground and came back down softly.

***No noise. No rush. Just ready.***



A photograph of an outdoor basketball court. In the foreground, a white basketball hoop stands on a grey court with white and yellow lines. Behind the hoop is a chain-link fence. Beyond the fence is a line of green trees under a clear blue sky.

**WHERE DEVELOPMENT STARTS QUIETLY**



An HBL Program

# The TUNNEL

## What We Get Wrong When Kids Say “I’m Tired”

When kids say they’re tired, adults often hear a problem to fix. Most of the time, it’s information to understand.

*Here’s what adults usually misread:*

**“I’m tired” ≠ lazy**

It often means the body or mind is overloaded, not unwilling.

**“I don’t want to go today” ≠ quitting**

It can be a request for relief, not an exit.

**“I’m bored” ≠ unmotivated**

Repetition without recovery drains engagement.

**“I don’t care” ≠ attitude**

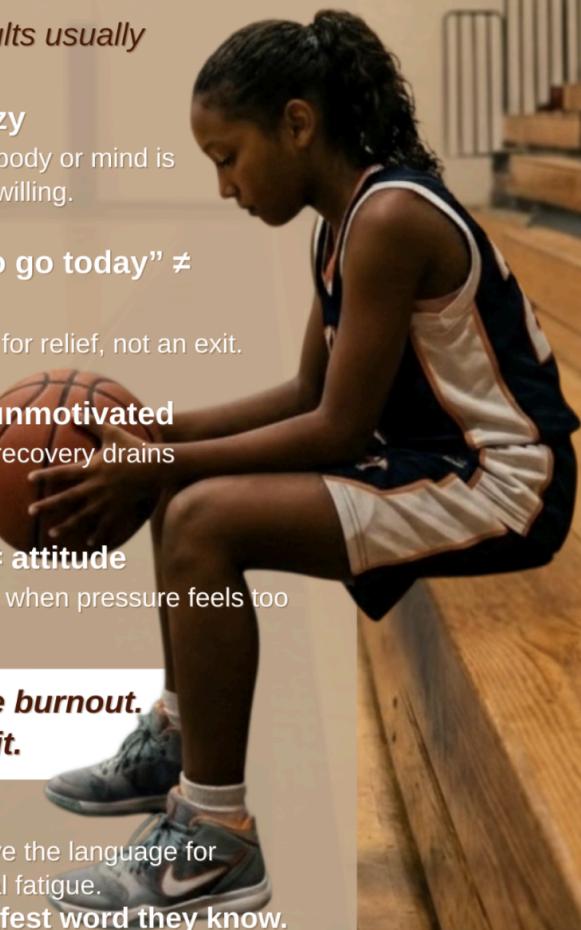
It’s often a defense when pressure feels too heavy to explain.

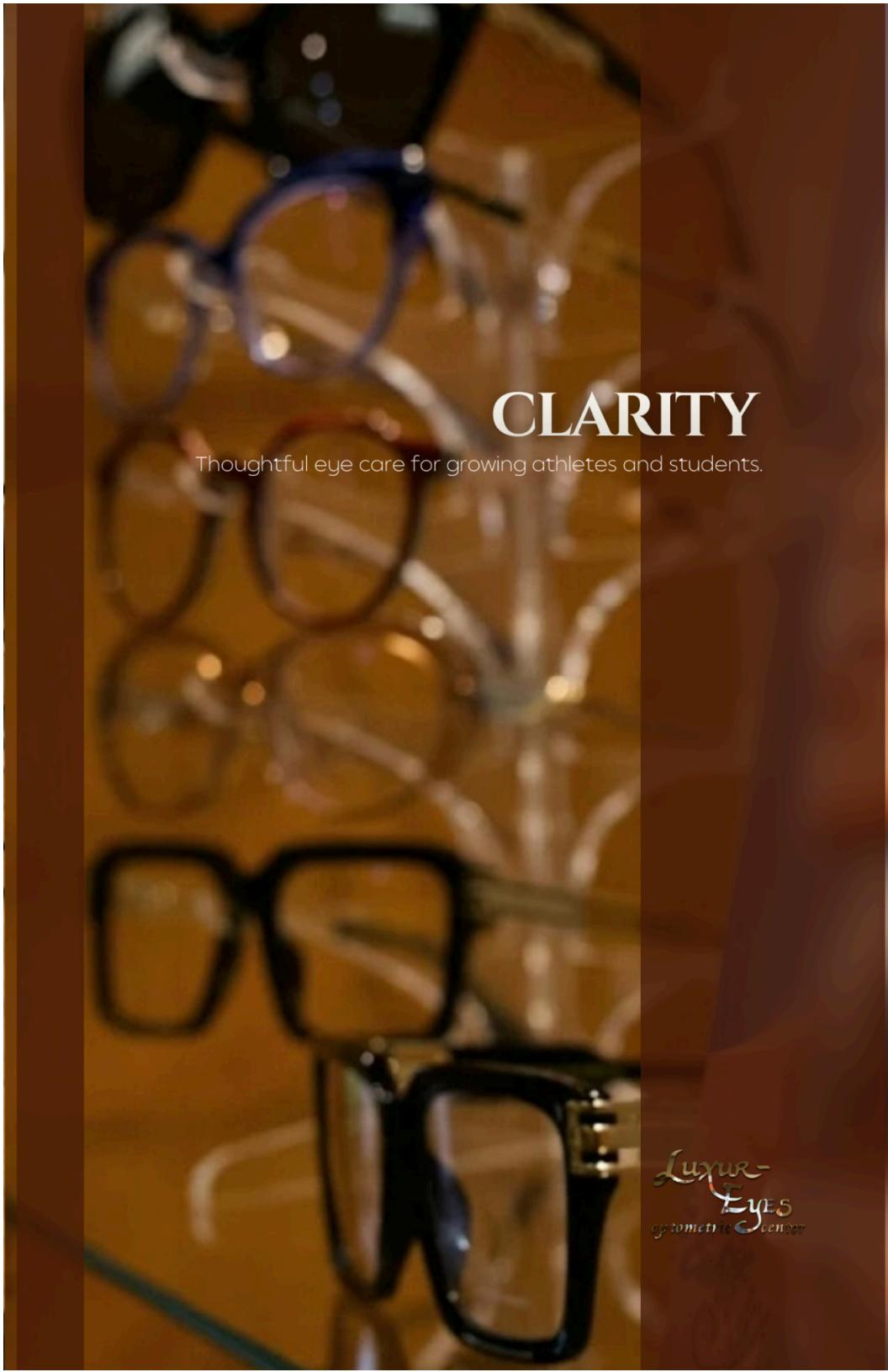
**Kids don’t hide burnout.  
They mislabel it.**

***Big Truth:***

Most kids don’t have the language for emotional or mental fatigue.

**“Tired” is the safest word they know.**





# CLARITY

Thoughtful eye care for growing athletes and students.

*Luxur-*  
**EYES**  
optometric center



# THE WALL EXPLAINED IN 60 SECONDS

*February doesn't feel different by accident.  
Here's why:*

## **Fatigue is cumulative.**

Bodies don't reset just because seasons change.

## **Intensity stacks quietly.**

Tryouts, playoffs, practices and school load up before anyone notices.

## **Rest isn't a setback.**

Adaptation happens during recovery, not repetition.

## **Effort changes before performance does.**

Heavy legs and drifting focus are early signals, not failures.

## **Comparison speeds up pressure.**

Kids absorb expectations long before they talk about them.

### ***Short version:***

Nothing is “**wrong**” when kids hit the wall.

*It's a signal - not a failure.*

# When the body ask for a pause, listening matters.

At Dominion Physical Therapy, we work with young athletes and active kids to understand how growth, and recovery interact. Not every ache is an injury - and not every slowdown means something is wrong.

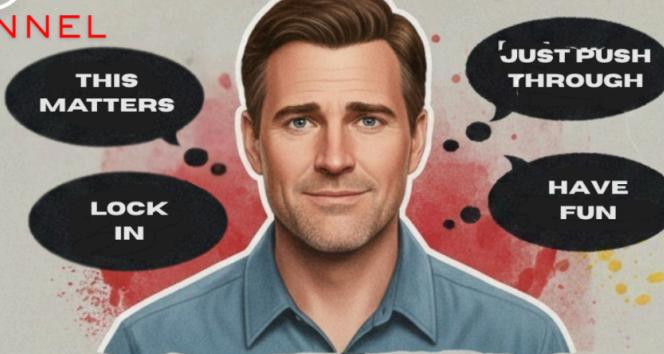
Sometimes it's simply the body asking for time, adjustment or support.



**DOMINION**  
**PHYSICAL THERAPY**  
— & ASSOCIATES —

Supporting growing athletes and families in Newport News and surrounding areas.

# The TUNNEL



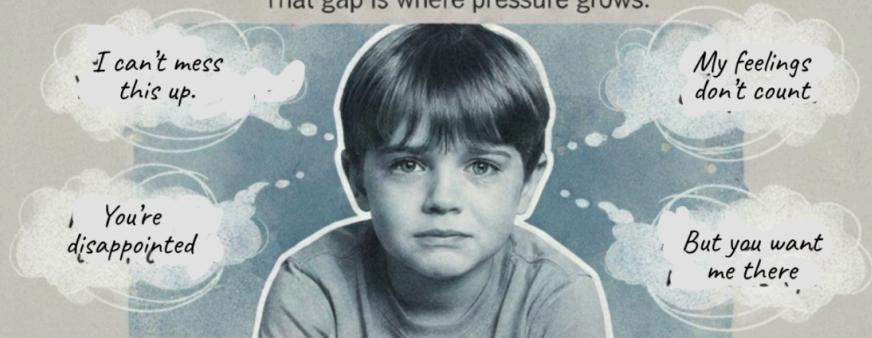
## What Adults Say.

Adults process intensity analytically.

## What Kids Hear

Kids process intensity emotionally.

That gap is where pressure grows.



# Same words. Different weight.

Support that starts with  
understanding

**Kids often feel intensity  
long before they can  
explain it.**



Supporting children and families across physical,  
developmental and emotional needs  
Newport News City Center

# The TUNNEL

---

## WORDS WE USE – WHAT THEY ACTUALLY MEAN

### Load

The total **stress** on a body and mind—practice, games, school, expectations.

### Overuse

Repeated stress without **enough** recovery.

### Burnout

Loss of **motivation** caused by chronic pressure, not laziness.

### Development

Long-term growth, not **short**-term results.

### Performance

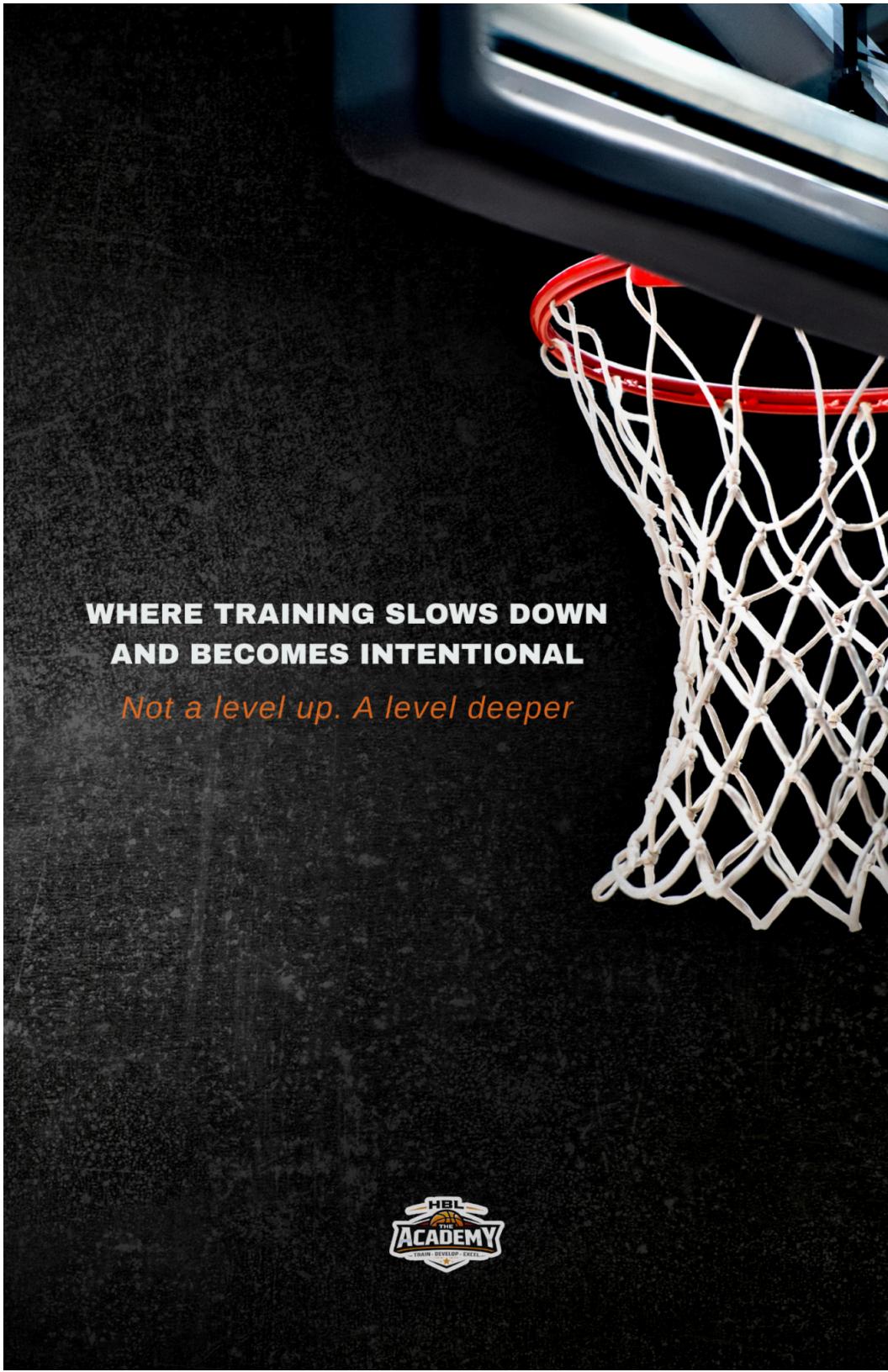
What shows **today**.

### Potential

What unfolds with time, **patience**, and space.

#### READ THIS BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE

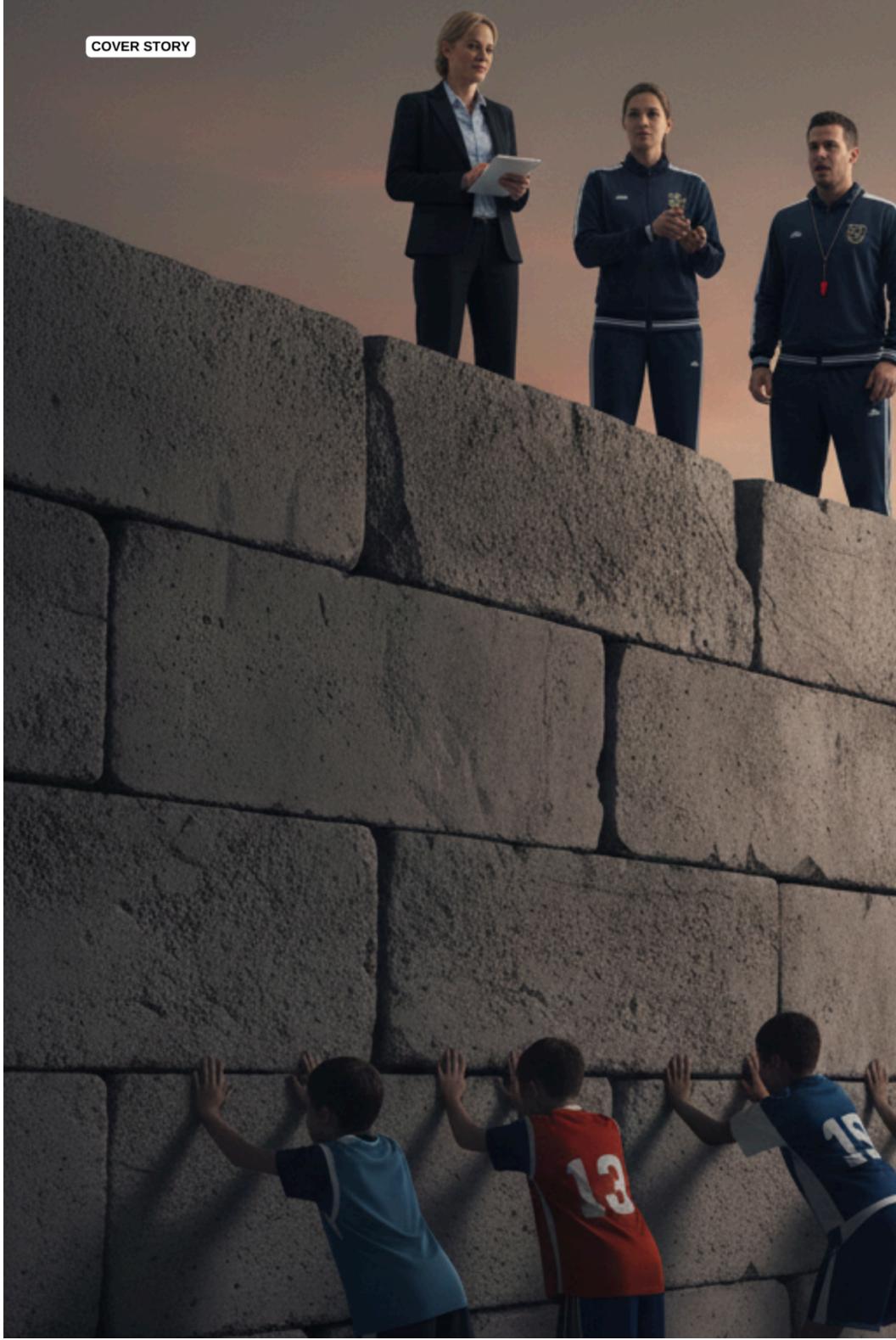
If your child feels off,  
it doesn't mean something is broken.  
It usually means something is being asked to grow.



**WHERE TRAINING SLOWS DOWN  
AND BECOMES INTENTIONAL**

*Not a level up. A level deeper*





# ARE WE THE WALL?

When good intentions quietly  
turn into weight — and how  
to step out of the way



**CONTINUE NEXT PAGE**

# NO ONE RUINS YOUTH SPORTS ON PURPOSE.

Parents don't wake up trying to drain joy from their kids.

Coaches don't show up planning to break motivation. Programs don't exist to burn children out.

Most adults involved in youth sports are trying to help.

- They're trying to open doors.
- They're trying to prepare kids for what's "next."
- They're trying to keep up with a culture that keeps moving the goalposts earlier and earlier.

## BURNOUT ISN'T A KID PROBLEM

And yet, more kids than ever are walking away — not after catastrophic failures, but after quiet seasons where something simply stopped feeling right.

Not because the sport got too hard.

But because it started carrying more than it should. That's where the wall actually forms.

And once you recognize it, you can step out of its way.

### Kids are built for effort.

They run themselves into exhaustion on playgrounds. They repeat the same drill until it clicks. They obsess over skills when the motivation is theirs.

Burnout doesn't happen because kids can't handle hard things.

It happens when the weight of adult expectation arrives before a child has the capacity — or the permission — to carry it.

That weight shows up quietly:

- When every season feels like it matters right now
- When improvement is measured against someone else's timeline

- When rest has to be earned
- When disappointment lingers longer than joy

*The problem  
isn't intensity.  
It's urgency  
without  
ownership.*

# WHERE ADULTS BECOME THE WALL (WITHOUT REALIZING IT)

The wall rarely looks like yelling or punishment. It looks like concern. Like involvement. Like “just wanting the best.”

## 1. When Progress Is Measured Against Someone Else

Social media doesn't show timelines — it shows moments. A six-year-old with elite handles. A ten-year-old with a mixtape. A twelve-year-old already labeled “next.”

Even parents who know better feel comparison creep in. Not because they believe their child should be that kid — but because they're afraid of what it might mean if they're not.

## Comparison compresses time.

Compressed timelines create pressure kids never agreed to carry.

## 2. When “Optional” Stops Feeling Optional

Adults say the word optional. Kids feel the implication. They feel it when attendance is noticed. When absence is remembered. When effort is quietly expected.

No one has to say it out loud for the message to land:

**Showing up is  
how you prove  
you care. That's  
how obligation  
sneaks in wearing  
the mask of  
commitment.**

## 3. When Rest Has to Be Earned

In healthy development, rest is biological. In many youth sports environments, rest becomes moral.

You earn it by:

- Playing well
- Working hard
- Wanting it enough

Kids learn that recovery is weakness — unless justified. Bodies don't work that way. Motivation doesn't either.

#### 4. When Sports Carry Adult Anxiety

Kids are perceptive. They feel:

- Disappointment before it's spoken
- Tension in car rides
- The weight of "**this matters**" even when no one explains why

At that point, the sport begins to drift. It slowly becomes about a future adults are afraid of missing — rather than a present the child chose.

#### ***That's the wall.***

#### **THE TURN: WHEN THE SPORT ACTUALLY BELONGS TO THE KID**

Jalen Brunson once described how his parents handled sports growing up.

- They didn't argue about effort.
- They didn't negotiate emotions after bad games.
- They didn't chase motivation.
- They gave him three lanes: Sports. Academics. Friends.

And they told him he could choose how much **he wanted** to invest in each.

When he chose sports — really chose it — expectations became clear.

And when he complained about his performance, the response wasn't pressure or pity. It was simple.

#### **You chose this.**

Not as punishment.

As ownership.

That distinction changes everything.

#### **WHY THIS WORKS (AND WHY IT'S SO RARE)**

Most kids today **never** chose their lane. They inherited it.

They absorbed adult urgency. They carried expectations they didn't agree to. They felt pressure without agency. That's not motivation — that's load.

Brunson wasn't pushed into ambition. He stepped into it. And when effort gets hard — as it always does — the difference between burnout and growth is whether the struggle feels self-directed or imposed.

#### **THIS IS NOT ABOUT DOING LESS**

Letting kids own the sport does not mean:

- Lowering standards
- Avoiding discomfort
- Letting effort slide

It means matching expectations to development.

It means:

- Separating effort from outcome
- Treating rest as strategy, not weakness
- Allowing kids to experience consequences of choices they actually made

## When ownership is real, motivation doesn't need to be chased.

*It sustains itself.*

WHAT ACTUALLY PREVENTS THE WALL

Not speeches.

Not tougher programs.

Not earlier exposure.

What prevents the wall is clarity.

- Clear guardrails.
- Real choice.
- Honest timelines.
- Adult restraint.

This isn't about blame.

It's about noticing when care quietly turns into control.

When kids know:

- Why they're playing
- Who they're playing for
- What they're choosing

## Effort feels aligned instead of heavy.

### THE LINE THAT MATTERS MOST

Burnout doesn't happen when kids care too much. It happens when kids carry expectations they didn't choose.

The wall isn't always something kids hit. Sometimes it's something adults stand in front of — without realizing it. And once you see that clearly, the way forward isn't harder. It's lighter.

### BEFORE THE NEXT SEASON

Before the signup.

Before the next schedule.

Before the next push to "lock in"

Ask a quieter question:

- Who is this season for?
- What is my child choosing - and what am I choosing *for* them?
- Does effort feel owned ... or managed?
- Would my child still play if no one was watching?

There are no perfect answers.

But clarity - even uncomfortable clarity - keeps weight from becoming pressure.

And pressure is where kids stop lasting

# GAME PLAN:

## Conquer February Overlap!

### 1. AWARENESS (Early Load Radar)



### 2. ATHLETE OWNERSHIP (Communicate Your Plan)



### 3. ADULT RESTRAINT (Respond, Don't React)

Coaches & Parents:  
Support the Plan!  
No Surprises.



# GAMEPLAN

*Navigating the February Overlap*

February is the most compressed month in youth sports.

Winter seasons are grinding toward playoffs.

Spring sports are opening tryouts. Practices intensify. Evaluations stack.

School expectations don't slow down.

For multi-sport athletes, this overlap isn't rare.

*It's normal.*

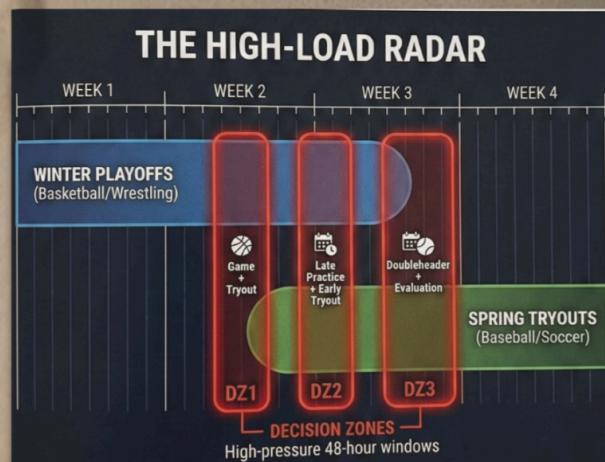
What isn't normal is pretending each commitment exists on its own.

Bodies don't experience calendars. They experience load. And when load isn't planned for, it shows up in ways that confuse families:

- Heavy legs that don't bounce back
- Effort without sharpness
- Irritability that looks like attitude
- Motivation dips that feel sudden

This isn't a failure moment. It's a sequencing moment.

This is an example of how demands stack across sports - not a fixed schedule.



## Understanding the Overlap

When playoff games, practices, and tryouts stack inside short windows — especially 24–48 hours — stress appears quietly before it appears dramatically.

It usually shows up as:

- Missed shots that normally fall
- Slower reaction time
- Lingering soreness that doesn't "warm out"
- Emotional flatness or frustration without a clear reason

These aren't signs that an athlete "can't handle it." They're signals that the system is overloaded, not the kid.

The mistake families make isn't allowing overlap. It's treating every session as max-effort by default.

**February isn't about doing everything harder. It's about doing things in the right order.**

When families can see these overlaps ahead of time, they can:

- Anticipate fatigue instead of reacting to it
- Adjust intensity before frustration builds
- Communicate early instead of apologizing late
- Protect performance instead of chasing it

# Liberty Sports

At Liberty (Hampton Campus), we've got sports and fitness activities for groups of all ages.

We've got basketball and soccer leagues for your K-8th graders of all skill levels.

Throughout the year, adults can also find community through a variety of other sports, such as volleyball, dodge ball, softball, pickleball and 5K training.





**LIBERTY**  
LIVE CHURCH

# HALFTIME

## *The Parent Pause*

### **WHAT YOU SAY WHEN THE GAME IS OVER MATTERS MORE THAN THE GAME ITSELF**

The Most Important Minutes Aren't on the Clock.

The drive home. The silence. The quick comment that slips out before you realize it.

For young athletes, these moments often matter more than the score.

There's a moment after every game when **your child looks to you — not yet for analysis, not for correction, but for safety.**

They're tired. Their body is still buzzing. Their emotions haven't sorted themselves yet. And before the gym doors even close, many kids already know what's coming next.

***A sigh. A stat. A “You know what you need to work on.”***

Most parents mean well. Most parents want to help. But February is when effort is already high and energy is already low. And when pressure stacks on top of fatigue, even small comments land heavy. Halftime isn't about saying nothing. It's about saying the right thing at the right time.

#### **CONTAINMENT BEFORE CORRECTION**

Your Job Isn't to Coach. It's to Contain. When kids leave the court, their nervous system is still "on." They don't need more instruction — they need regulation.

Containment means:

- Letting emotions settle
- Separating effort from outcome
- Making it safe to come back tomorrow
- .

Correction can come later. Connection has to come first.



# HALFCOURT SET

## HOW TO RESET AFTER A BAD LOSS (OR A BAD PLAY)

The game ends. The noise doesn't. Your **legs** are tired. Your head is loud.

And **somewhere** between the buzzer and the car ride, the game starts replaying itself.

That missed shot. That turnover. That **moment** you wish you could rewind.

If that's you, here's something **important** to know: *Nothing is wrong with you.*

This is what pressure feels like when your body is **tired** and your brain is still running.

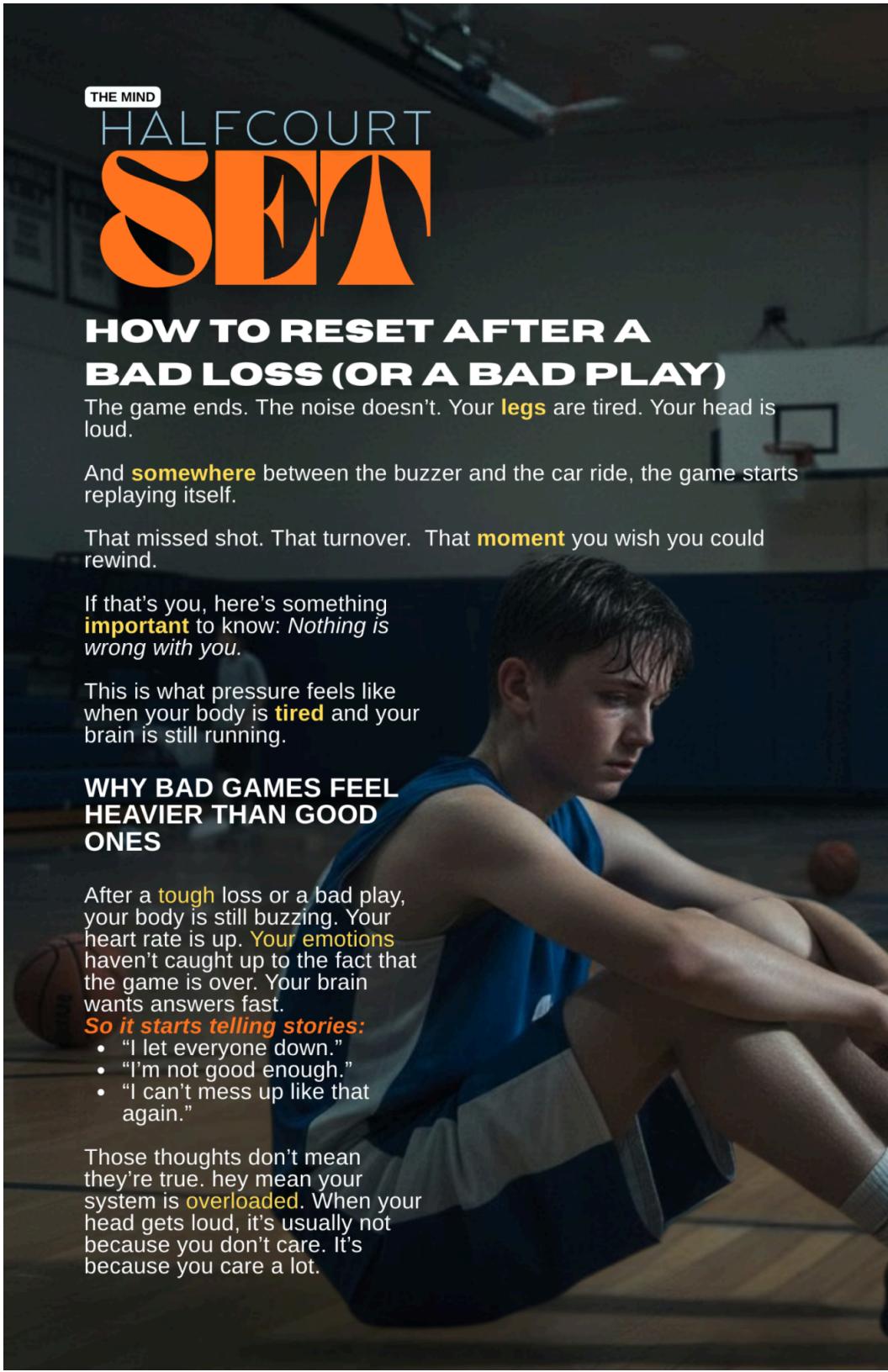
### WHY BAD GAMES FEEL HEAVIER THAN GOOD ONES

After a **tough** loss or a bad play, your body is still buzzing. Your heart rate is up. Your **emotions** haven't caught up to the fact that the game is over. Your brain wants answers fast.

**So it starts telling stories:**

- "I let everyone down."
- "I'm not good enough."
- "I can't mess up like that again."

Those thoughts don't mean they're true. They mean your system is **overloaded**. When your head gets loud, it's usually not because you don't care. It's because you care a lot.



## HERE'S THE PART MOST PEOPLE GET WRONG

You don't need to fix anything right away. Right after a game is the worst time to:

- Analyze
- Replay mistakes
- Decide what it "means" about you

Your body hasn't powered down yet. Your brain is still in protection mode. That's when small **mistakes** turn into big stories. So before you talk about what went *wrong*, you need a reset.

## THE RESET RULE

Contain first. Correct later. Reset doesn't mean **pretending** the game didn't happen. It means *clearing the noise* so the lesson doesn't feel like punishment.

*Here's how to do it.*

## THE 3-STEP RESET (USE THIS EVERY TIME)

### 1. Name one feeling

**Not a thought. Not a reason. Just a feeling.**

- "I'm frustrated."
- "I'm embarrassed."
- "I'm disappointed."

That's it. Naming the feeling lowers the volume.

### 2. Name one thing you controlled

**Not the score. Not the stat line.**

Something real:

- Hustle
- Defense
- Effort
- Communication
- Showing up even when it felt hard

This reminds your brain that the game didn't take everything from you.

### 3. Delay the breakdown

Tell yourself:

**"I'll look at this tomorrow."**

Seriously.

Most lessons land better after *sleep, food, and distance*.

Right now isn't about **learning**. It's about recovery.

## WHAT MAKES IT WORSE (WITHOUT YOU REALIZING IT)

These things keep the wall standing:

- Replaying the same moment over and over
- Comparing yourself to someone else
- Deciding what coaches or parents "must be thinking"
- Trying to feel better by pushing the feeling away

Pressure grows when you carry it alone. Resetting is how you put it down.

## THIS PART MATTERS

A bad loss isn't the wall.

A bad play isn't the wall.

The wall forms when you **think:**  
**"I have to carry this forever."**  
You don't.

**Every** athlete you look up to has **bad games**. They just learned how to reset without quitting on themselves. That's a skill. And skills can be practiced.

## ONE LAST THING TO REMEMBER

You are not your last play. You are not one game. You are not what your head tells you when it's tired. When the **noise gets loud**, slow the moment down. Reset first. Learn later. Come back lighter.

That's how you stay in the game.

# Training ROOM

---

## **WHEN THE BODY STARTS TALKING**

**(and what it's trying to tell you)**

By February, you might not feel injured.  
You just feel... off.

Your legs ache a little longer after games.

Warm-ups take more time than they used to.

Small, nagging pains show up and decide to hang around.

Here's the truth most athletes don't hear enough:

This isn't **weakness**. It's **information**.



**CONTINUE NEXT PAGE**

# Training **ROOM**

## The Reality of the “February Body”

If you play basketball, soccer, or track, your lower body is a shock absorber.

**Every jump.**

**Every sprint.**

**Every hard stop-and-pop.**

**That stress adds up.**

*Early season:* Your body bounces back like a brand-new basketball.

*Mid-season:* That same load hits differently. You need more recovery to feel the same. This is when athletes start noticing:

- Shin soreness
- Knee tightness
- Heavy, tight calves
- Legs that don't feel "springy"

**Most of the time, you aren't actually hurt. You're under-recovered.**

## What “Overuse” Actually Means

Overuse isn't about doing one thing wrong. It's about doing everything right too often, without enough pause.

## Here's how the system works:

- Stress breaks muscles down
- Rest builds them back stronger
- Growth happens between practices

When rest gets skipped, your body falls behind on repairs.

That gap? That's where soreness lives.

## Rest Isn't Laziness (It's Biology)

Think of rest as a system update. While you're sleeping or taking lighter days:

- Muscles rebuild
- Bones strengthen
- Tendons adapt to load
- Your nervous system resets (that's what makes you fast)

*Skipping rest doesn't make you tougher. It makes progress slower—and injuries more likely.*

## A Common February Signal: Shin Pain

If your shins have been talking lately, listen.

Shin pain often shows up when:

- Running volume jumps suddenly
- You're playing on hard floors or turf
- Your shoes are worn out
- Recovery hasn't kept up with demand

Pain doesn't mean "push harder." It means listen earlier.

Ignoring early signals is how small soreness turns into missed games.

## The Pro Game Plan

### *DO THIS (The W)*

- Extend warm-ups when legs feel heavy
- Stretch or foam roll after practice
- Prioritize consistent sleep (your #1 repair tool)
- Schedule one light day during busy weeks

### *AVOID THIS (The L)*

- Playing through sharp or stabbing pain
- Adding "extra" workouts when exhausted
- Treating soreness like a mindset problem
- Ignoring repeated warning signs

## Quick Body Check (Ask This After Practice)

- Is it sore—or is it painful?
- (Soreness fades as you move. Pain gets sharper.)
- Does it loosen up—or get worse?
- Am I tired—or am I actually hurting?

## When to Speak Up

Tell a parent or coach if:

- Pain changes how you run or jump
- Soreness lasts more than a few days
- You feel weaker instead of stronger

*Speaking up isn't quitting.  
It's protecting your season.*

**Remember This:  
Pushing through  
discomfort builds  
toughness.**

**Pushing through  
pain builds  
problems.**

*Your body doesn't break  
overnight.*

*It sends messages first.*

*Learning to listen is a skill—  
just like shooting or defending.*

The best athletes don't ignore their bodies.

They understand them.

# SCOREBOARD

## HOW HBL PLAYS THE LONG GAME

### WHY HBL SHOWS UP HERE

HBL wasn't built as a single program. It was built as a pathway — one that recognizes kids don't all arrive ready for the same demands at the same time.

Instead of forcing every athlete into one lane, HBL separates development into environments that match where a child actually is, not where adults want them to be.

That distinction matters most in February.

### THE SYSTEM

At its core, HBL exists to reduce unnecessary pressure in youth basketball by giving athletes the right environment at the right moment.

**Not faster. Not earlier. Not louder. Just clearer.**

### WHY THIS MATTERS IN FEBRUARY

February compresses everything:

- Seasons overlap
- Bodies get tired
- Pressure stacks quietly

Different environments allow:

- Rest without guilt
- Growth without comparison
- Progress without panic

*HBL's structure exists to absorb that pressure — not pass it down to kids.*

**Scoreboard isn't about who's winning right now.**

**It's about who's still standing when the season gets heavy.**

**HBL shows up here not because it's perfect — but because it was built to last.**

## THE PARTS

### RISE — *Where Confidence Comes First*

RISE is designed for athletes who are still learning how to enjoy the game.

- Lower intensity
- Skill repetition without judgment
- Emphasis on belonging, not performance
- A safe entry point for kids who feel behind, unsure, or overwhelmed

RISE exists so early pressure doesn't end a journey before it starts.

### THE ACADEMY — *Where Training Slows Down*

The Academy is where development becomes intentional.

- Focused skill work
- Planned recovery
- Load awareness
- No exposure race

This is where athletes learn how to train — not just how to work.



## HBL: THE ATHLETE'S JOURNEY



Not every athlete needs the same path.  
The right one is the one they're ready for.

### NEXT — *Where Exploration Stays Flexible*

NEXT is built for athletes who want to play more — without committing to a full-season identity yet.

- Open-format sessions
- Controlled capacity
- Athlete choice and autonomy
- Low consequences for rest, absences, or off nights

NEXT protects curiosity without locking kids into urgency.

### HBL: THE LEAGUE — *When Competition Makes Sense*

The league exists for athletes who are ready to compete — physically and emotionally.

- Structured seasons
- Clear expectations
- Age-appropriate competition
- Accountability matched to readiness

The league is not the starting point. It's a step — taken when the athlete is prepared for it.

# WHAT THE LONG GAME CAN LOOK LIKE

These moments didn't come from shortcuts.  
They came from seasons like this one.



**RYLIE HITE**

HAMPTON

Growth didn't always look  
obvious—until it did.

**MADDIE LEACH**

MENCHVILLE

Built consistency before confidence  
showed up publicly.

**ASIA KEELS**

KING'S FORK

**TRISTIAN  
RICKENBACKER**

PRINCESS ANNE

Proof that development  
compounds quietly.

Four players from Hampton Roads became McDonald's All American Games 2026 East nominees *because they respected the long game.*

*February isn't the end. But February mattered.*

NATIONAL

A series of silhouettes of female athletes in various sports are arranged in a diagonal line across the upper half of the poster. From left to right, the silhouettes show a soccer player, a tennis player, a basketball player, a golfer, a runner, a swimmer, and a track and field athlete. The background is a warm, textured orange and yellow.

# CHAMPIONS ARE BUILT OVER YEARS— AND SO IS CONFIDENCE.

She Scored Sports supports the journey of female athletes – from the first reps to the moments that matter.



Empowering girls to stay in the game, rise to their own levels, and own the long run.

[shescoredsports.org](http://shescoredsports.org)

# buzzer BEATER

When the Noise Fades

The horn **sounds**. The crowd thins out. The ball rack gets rolled back into the corner. And suddenly, it's quiet.

This is the part **nobody prepares** you for.

Not the loss. Not the **missed** shot. But the space that comes after.

February has a way of making everything feel **heavier** than it is.

The legs. **The schedule**. The emotions. The **questions** you don't always say out loud.

Are we doing this right? **Is my child okay**? Did this season help or hurt?

Here's the truth: Hard doesn't mean harmful. Quiet doesn't mean quitting.

And **struggle** doesn't mean something is **broken**.

Growth doesn't always look like **progress** in the moment.

**Sometimes** it looks like **fatigue**. Sometimes it looks like **frustration**. Sometimes it looks like a kid **sitting longer** than usual, **staring** at the floor, thinking.

That doesn't mean the **game** took something from **them**. It usually means it gave them something they haven't named yet.

**Confidence** is built slowly. **Love** for the game is built carefully. And the **lessons** that last rarely arrive wrapped in **highlights**.

If this season felt **heavy**, that doesn't mean you **failed**. It means you were in it.

The scoreboard **resets**. The calendar turns. And the **work** continues – not louder, not faster – just wiser.

That's how athletes stay in the game. That's how families do too.



**“Confidence is  
built slowly. Love  
for the game is  
built carefully.”**

# COMMUNITY BOARD

Presented by the Hampton Roads Youth Sports Authority

"This board exists to show families what's available—not what's expected."

## PROGRAMS

### Newport News Youth Sports (Parks & Rec)

- Newport News
- Seasonal youth leagues
- Ages 5-15
- Spring & Fall registration open

### Bay Hoops Basketball Club

Yorktown, VA

All ages

[bayhoopsbasketball.com](http://bayhoopsbasketball.com)

### PSA Sports

Hampton

- After-school sport programs
- Grades K-5
- [thepsasports.com](http://thepsasports.com)

[thepsasports.com](http://thepsasports.com)

## TRAINERS

### Coach Stretch

- Kashif Johnson
- Basketball Trainer
- Hampton – HS
- [coachstretch.com](http://coachstretch.com)

### TribeNation Basketball Academy

Newport News

- Basketball training for youth
- [facebook.com/TribeNationBasketball](http://facebook.com/TribeNationBasketball)

### YMCA Youth Sports

- Hampton & Yorktown

[thepsasports.com](http://thepsasports.com)

Wes Com

- Han
- Fit
- Mul

Coa

- Inde
- Visi

# ARD

ority

they should choose"

## PROGRAMS

### Newport News Youth Sports (Parks & Rec)

- Seasonal youth leagues
- Ages 5-15
- Spring & fall registration

## COMMUNITY CENTERS

### West Hampton Community Center

- Hampton
- Gymnasium, indoor Facilities for recreation

[www.hrysa.com](http://www.hrysa.com)

## PSA Sports

Hampton

- After-school sports programs
- Grades K-5

[thepsasports.com](http://thepsasports.com)

[yorkcounty.gov/704w](http://yorkcounty.gov/704w)

## COMMUNITY CENTERS

### West Hampton Community Center

- Hampton
- Gymnasium, indoor Facilities for recreation

### Fort Monroe Community Center

- Hampton
- Fitness center, pool, multi-purpose rooms

## COMMUNITY CENTERS

West Hampton Community Center

Hampton

ess center, pool,

multi-purpose rooms

coachUp Basketball

Coaches

dependent coaches

[coachUp.com](http://coachUp.com) to search

### HR Sportsplex

- Newport News
- Large indoor sports facility
- turf & court sports

[hrsportsplex.com](http://hrsportsplex.com)

Know something we should add? Let us know!

(757) 555-4196

[HRYSA.com](http://HRYSA.com)



GESTURE HUMANITIES  
ATHLETICS & TEAMWORK

(757) 555-4198

[gesturehumanities@gmail.com](mailto:gesturehumanities@gmail.com)

(757) 355-4198



You don't get stronger  
when things are easy.

You get stronger  
when you don't quit.

— LEBRON JAMES

Everybody wants  
to be great,  
but nobody wants  
to be tired.

— KOBE BRYANT

Progress isn't  
always obvious.  
Sometimes it looks  
like frustration.

— SUE BIRD

Confidence comes  
from preparation,  
not applause.

— STEPHEN CURRY

In' *vegas me gavas*

# WHERE GROWTH IS PROTECTED

Not every athlete needs  
more pressure.  
Some need more space.



— Part of the HBL Pathway —

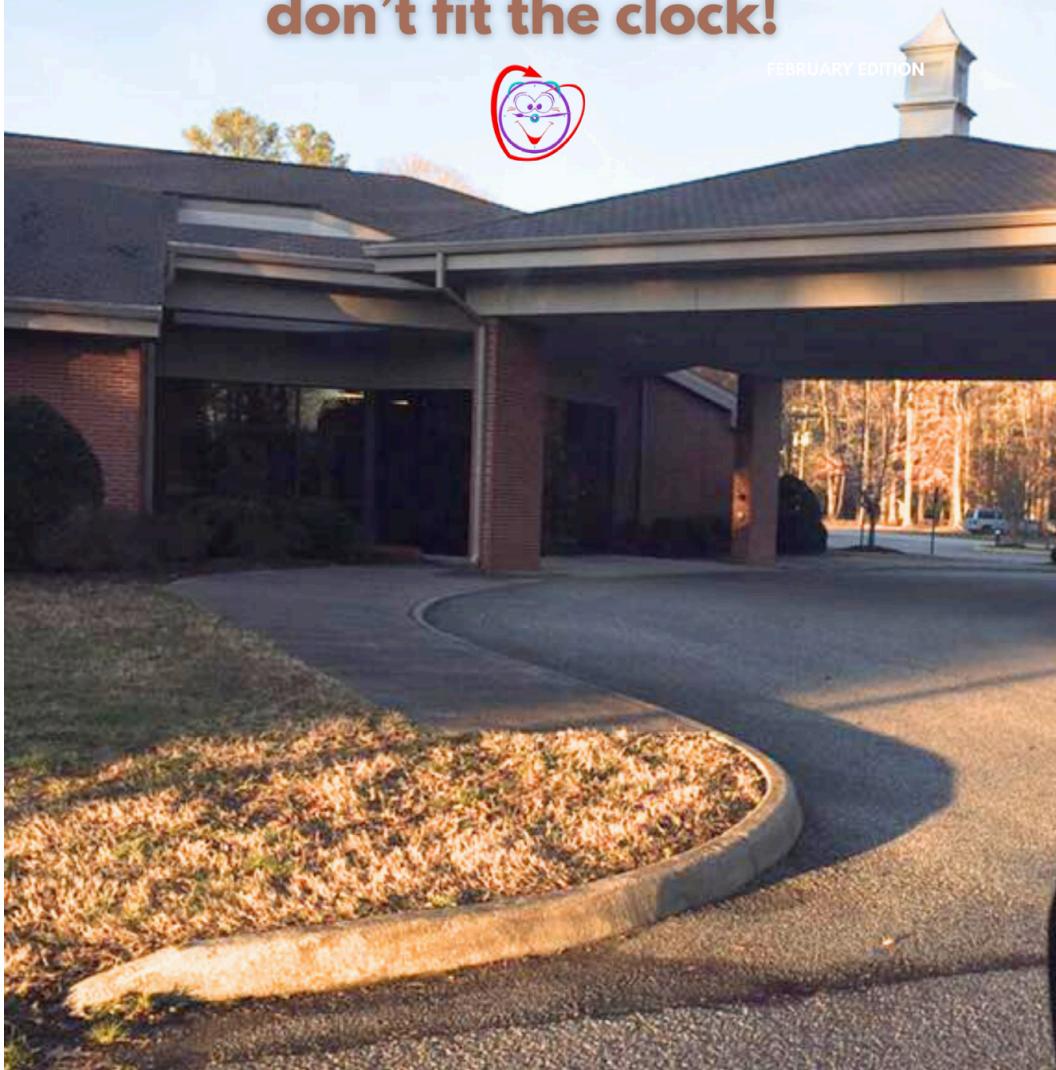
WILLIAMSONS  
HIS SPURS DODGERS  
FAMOUS



**For families whose schedules  
don't fit the clock!**



FEBRUARY EDITION



**TICK TOCK AROUND THE CLOCK LLC**

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

---

OPEN LATE EVENINGS - OPENINGS AVAILABLE  
HAMPTON VA