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Parents should push their kids to play

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One of the most important takeaways from the success of Joseph Schooling and Yip Pin Xiu is that it is possible to excel as an athlete and a student.

Schooling is an economics major at the University of Texas and Yip a social sciences undergraduate at the Singapore Management University.

We often hear stories, especially from coaches, of how parents stop their children from training when examinations are around the corner. But that is a limiting approach and frankly, an unhealthy one.

We talk about pushing ourselves to achieve more, so why not extend that principle to our children? By halving their targets from the start, we are already limiting their capacity to grow.

This mentality has frustrated former national swimming coach Sergio Lopez and current Football Association of Singapore technical director Michel Sablon. Both are successful men and their opinions should mean something.

So this year, I hope to see more parents pushing their kids to aim for more, to do more, to try more, and hopefully – like Schooling and Yip – win.

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