**Germantown Friends School - GFS**

[**Mental Skills Training**](https://www.germantownfriends.org/athletics/sports-performance-at-gfs#fs-panel-26019)



Colleen Finegan, founder of the non-profit Positive Coaching and Leadership Group (PCLG), works with GFS student-athletes to improve their mental wellness, as it relates to sports, through mental skills training. Her workshops and training sessions are an integral part of the Upper School and Middle School programs for in- and off-season athletes and coaching staff.

While mental wellness has been a focus on the collegiate and professional levels with mental health practitioners to support their athletes, GFS in partnership with PCLG believes that it is as important to train your mind as it is your body at a young age. Finegan's mental skills training aims to have a positive effect on participation, self-esteem, and self-concept, as well as reducing anxiety, symptoms of stress, and improving overall athlete well-being. The benefits of improved concentration, regulation of emotions, and a state of flow leads to optimism, Finegan states, which is critical to improving athletic performance and coping with a sport-related slump.

Finegan's mental wellness program also includes a unique playbook to assist coaches and parents in providing mental skills training for young athletes. Topics include Visualization, Positive Self-Talk, Goal-setting, Gratitude, Journaling, and Mindfulness.

In addition to GFS, PCLG works with AAU teams, schools, and a private sports academy to help strengthen student-athletes' mindsets and improve their overall performance.

Outside of her work with PCLG, Finegan is the founding general manager and head basketball coach for AAU Lower Merion Storm, and head basketball coach for Waldron Mercy Academy and LM Hoops. She also coaches and serves as coordinator for the Narberth Girls Basketball Summer League.

Finegan earned her M.Ed. in  Positive Coaching and Athletic Leadership from the University of Missouri, her M.S. in Communication Disorders from the University of Texas at Dallas, and her B.S. in Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. At Penn, Finegan was a four-year letter winner on the Women's Basketball team, served as co-captain, was a career 1000 point scorer, and was the all-time leader in 3-point baskets in a single season at the time of graduation.