

Kids **FIRST** in Sports

5447 E. Lafayette - Phoenix, Arizona 85018 - 602-725-2134



The Facts About Youth Sports

The number of kids in organized youth sports

- 30-40 million kids playing organized sports each yearⁱ
- 2-4 Million coaches – less than 20% have received any type of training!ⁱⁱ
- 85% of these coaches are dads coaching their own childrenⁱⁱⁱ
- 80% of the kids are in non-school programs
- 20% in school programs
- 6.5 million h.s. athlete^{iv}
- 500,000 h.s. coaches – less than 8% receive specific education to coach^v
- Less than 20% of high school students are involved in sports^{vi}
- Participation in non-school programs, i.e. clubs has increased
- Participation in school programs has decreased

What the Kids are saying about abuse

- 45.3 percent of kids surveyed said they had been called names, yelled at, or insulted by coaches.
- 21 percent said they had been pressured to play with an injury.
- 17.5 percent said they had been hit, kicked, or slapped.
- 8 percent said they had been called names with sexual connotations.
- 3.4 percent said they had been sexually abused. This final number is very conservative because not many will admit it.

Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission 1993

Why they participate

1990 Athletic Footwear Association Survey of over 20,000 kids nation-wide asked, “Why they participate in sports.”

1. To have fun
2. To improve their skills
3. To stay in shape
4. To do something they are good at
5. The excitement of the competition
6. To get exercise
7. To play as part of a team
8. The challenge of the competition
9. To learn new skills
10. To win

- Over 65% said they participate in sports to be with friends.

Why they Quit

The Youth Sports Institute at Michigan State, in a survey of 10,000 kids nationwide, listed the top ten reasons why kids quit organized youth sports:

1. They lost interest
2. They were not having fun
3. It required too much time
4. The coach played favorites
5. The coach was a poor teacher
6. They got tired of playing
7. Too much emphasis on winning
8. They wanted to participate in other non-sport activities
9. They needed more time to study
10. There was too much pressure

As many as 70% quit by the age of 15!

Results from a survey of more than 400 parents conducted by the NFL at the National PTA Convention in the summer of 2003:

- 84 % of parents believe that youth athletic programs place too much emphasis on winning
- 64 % of parents say their children have been dissatisfied with their sports experience
- 44 % said their child has dropped out of an activity because it made them unhappy
- 92 % felt sports programs were important to the overall development of their children
- 56 % said the biggest negative is that sports are too competitive
- 50 % said they would like to see coaches be less focused on winning

National Health Concerns

Youth sports, inter-scholastic sports, and school Physical Education programs have contributed to a troubling trend in the health of Americans. In a very real sense, because youth sports have failed to prevent a 70% attrition rate by the age of 15, it is fair to say that youth sports have failed to provide for life-long physical fitness and good health.

The National Center for Health Statistics reports that seven in ten adults do not exercise regularly, and nearly four in ten are not physically active at all.

Nationally, only 29% of high school students had daily physical education in 1999, down from 42% in 1991. Many states have dropped the requirement for Physical Education altogether, and by 1999, only 61% of students – in elementary and high school - had gym class at least once per week.^{vii}

Nearly half of American youth aged 12-21 are not vigorously active; about 14% of young people report no physical activity; participation in all types of physical activity declines strikingly as age or grade in school increases; 61% of U.S. adults are overweight or obese; and 12% of children between 6-11 are overweight.^{viii}

Obesity kills an estimated 300,000 Americans every year. Smoking kills 430,000 every year. Obesity doubles the risk of premature death and increases the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, stroke, and depression.

McDonald's spends 1,000 times more on advertising as the federal government spends on promoting good nutrition. The food industry spends \$2 billion a year persuading kids to eat fatty, sugary foods. Kids watch as many as 40,000 ads a year including 10,000 ads for fast foods.

Half of the school lunches served in Arizona don't meet federal nutrition standards. Hamburgers in some schools have twice as many calories as McDonald's, and French fries served in cafeterias have 1,077 calories preserving. One school district makes \$2 million a year selling fast food snacks in vending machines.^{ix}

Annual medical spending attributable to overweight and obesity is \$93 and \$117 billion in state and federal health care costs. That's more than it cost for the War in Iraq! The federal government spends \$1,500 per person treating disease and about \$1 on prevention. Disease treatment has added 5 years to

our lifespan in the 20th century, while public health and prevention programs have added 25 years!^x

ⁱ Gould, D., and Weiss, M. (eds) *Advances in Pediatric Sport Sciences*, Vol.2: Behavioral Issues (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1987) pp. 55 ff. cfr also Weinberg, R.S., and Gould, D., "Children's Psychological Development Through Sport," in J. Silva and R. Weinberg (eds) *Foundations of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1987) pp 449-466. Also, Gerdy, John. Editor. (2000) *Sports in School: The Future of an Institution*. NY: Teacher's College Press, Columbia University. P. 55.

ⁱⁱ Gerdy, John. Editor. (2000) *Sports in School: The Future of an Institution*. NY: Teacher's College Press, Columbia University. P. 55.

ⁱⁱⁱ Engh, Fred. (1999) *Why Johnny Hates Sports*. NY: Avery. P. 73

^{iv} The National Federation of High Schools, *The Future of Coaching Education in America*, Martens, Flannery, and Roetert.

^v IBID

^{vi} Gerdy, John. (2002) *Sports: The All-American Addiction*. Jackson, MS. University of Mississippi Press. P. 125

^{vii} Gerdy. *The All-American Addiction*. p. 129

^{viii} National Center For Health Statistics, The Center For Disease Control and Prevention. On the WWW at: www.cdc.gov/nchs/faststats; www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/overwght99.htm and www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/hestats/obese/obese99.htm.

^{ix} *Siccing Sam on fat foods*, Peter Aleshire, in Viewpoints, The Arizona Republic, May 25, 2003.

^x Ibid.