Why Do Youth Play Sports? An Examination of Interpersonal Socialization

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Introduction to Youth Sport

• Approximately 20 million children in the United States participated in youth sport programs (Coakley, 2009)

• Benefits associated with youth sport participation include:
  a) Increased self-esteem and social belonging (Dixon, 2009)
  b) Weight management (Holt, Kingsley, Tink, & Scherer, 2011)
  c) Higher grades and educational outcomes (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003)

• However, athlete burnout remains a persistent problem (Cresswell, 2009)
  - How can sport managers and administrators keep youth motivated and committed to sport?
Importance of Socialization

• The influence of interpersonal socialization is critical to the motivation process (Casper & Menefee, 2010)

• Socialization- “the learning of social roles and the behavior associated with those roles (Ward, 1974, p. 2)

• Parents, peers, and coaches are the most important social agents (Chan, Lonsdale, & Fung, 2012)
Parental Influence

- Youths’ sport-related decisions are most determined by parents’ perceptions of the child’s ability (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005)

- Tangible or intangible support (Beets, Cardinal, & Alderman, 2010) often foster future athletic participation (Anderson, Funk, Elliott, & Smith, 2003)

- Controlling parental behaviors are associated with negative consequences (Turman, 2007)
Coaches Influence

- Through mental preparation, goal setting, and competition, coaches establish either a positive or negative rapport with athletes (Gould & Carson, 2011)

- Youths’ motivation levels pertain to the climate established by the coach (Gould, Flett, & Lauer, 2012)

  Task-oriented climates- athletic success is caused by effort
  Ego-oriented climates- success is caused by ability (Treasure, 2001)
Peer Influence

• Peers are also influential toward the socialization process (Joesaar, Hein, & Hagger, 2012)

• Sport commitment can be enhanced by friendship quality and peer acceptance from teammates (Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009)

• Attitudes and subjective norms are formed through the team environment (Gucciardi & Jackson, 2013)
Future Directions

• Bengoechea, Sabiston, and Wilson (2015) noted that the opportunity exists to evaluate the interactive effects of these social agents.

• Furthermore, the Interpersonal Context in Youth Sport incorporated additional definitions of measurement:
  • Social interaction
  • Pressure
  • Control
  • Positive and negative ability information
  • Social comparison
  • Role modeling
References


References (Cont.)


