



Youth and Sports Fact Sheets

Youth and Sports

Information gathered by the July 2004 Harris Interactive Youth Query asked 8- to 18-year-olds about organized sports participation. Findings included the following:

- Most youth had participated in organized sports outside of school (68%)
- Almost 40% were not participating at the current time (39%)
- 32% had NEVER participated in organized youth sports

When asked about the benefits of participating in youth sports, the respondents indicated that:

- 80% got a lot of exercise
- 72% learned athletic skills
- 67% worked as a team member
- 67% got to meet people they otherwise wouldn't have met
- 62% felt good about themselves
- 61 % learned about a sport and sport strategy
- 48% developed close friendships
- 42% developed discipline

Despite feeling positive about the role of organized sports in their lives, they also indicated some negative experiences:

- 31% saw parents yelling at or arguing with officials
- 30% didn't get to play as much as they wanted
- 28% saw parents yelling at or arguing with coaches
- 27% heard coaches or parents using bad language
- 23% had coaches who were too focused on winning

Organized sports participation declines with age:

- most youth stopped playing at 13 to14
- 8- to 12-year-olds said they would stop playing at 13
- 13- to 18-year-olds said they stopped at 14

Reasons for stopping participation in organized sports included:

- they stopped having fun (43%)
- not having enough time (31%)
- not believing they are good enough to play (27%)

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Youth and Weight

Information gathered by the July 2004 Harris Interactive YouthPulse indicated that children are indeed aware of and concerned about weight. Forty percent of 8- to 21-year-olds worry about their weight. Other insights include:

- More children worry about their weight than
 - worry about getting in a car accident (35%)
 - getting cancer (31%)
 - being beaten up at school (20%)
 - having problems with drugs or alcohol (12%)
- Concerns about weight increase from tween to teen years; 28% of 8- to 12-year-olds worried about weight compared to 48% of 18- to 21-year-olds

(Trends & Tundes, HarrisInteractive, Volume 3, Issue 8, August 2004)

