

Respect in Sports

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A monthly newsletter for everyone interested in supporting a positive youth sports experience.



The Sports Alliance of Minnesota is a coalition of sports organizations whose mission is to provide tools for creating a positive sports environment.

Humans spend a third of their lives sleeping.

By the time you reach grade 12, you will have been in school for about 17,000 hours

Kite flying is a professional sport in Thailand.

Motivation, Culture and Sports

By Deb Weinreis, Minnesota Recreation and Park Association

Children participate in sports for many reasons. In America, some children use sports as an outlet for releasing tension, while others may look at sports as a way of meeting people or spending time with their friends. Other children may recognize the mental and physical benefits of physical activity and use sports as a way of working on their fitness. Whatever the reason, sports play a role in society and can be interpreted in many ways. But is this interpretation similar in other cultures? For example, do American children participate in sports for the same reasons as children in European countries? Can there be significant attitudinal differences between two cultures? It is evident that the role of sports can vary in other countries and it is important to look at these differences and determine the extent that these differences may influence children's attitudes towards sports.

After many years of coaching in Switzerland, I noticed that there appeared to be differences between the reasons Swiss children participated in sports versus American children. My curiosity was strong enough for me to embark on a thesis entitled; *Attitudinal Differences toward Sport and Competition between American and Swiss-German Children*. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of attitudinal difference towards team sports and competition between American and Swiss-German children. It concentrated on children between the ages of 15-18 who were involved with basketball.

The results of this study indicated that the Swiss-German athlete valued basketball as a means to obtain & maintain good health and fitness, to participate in a group environment, and to get away from daily hassles. While overall, American young people valued winning and reaching personal limits (self-fulfillment). For the Swiss-Germans, emphasis on winning and rewards did not appear to be a motivating factor for participation.

In order to keep youth sports safe and fun, it is important to understand that not everyone participates for the same reason. There are many variables determining why some children continue to play organized sports, and why so many stop. Studies show that an alarming 70 percent of children who participate in organized out-of-school athletic program will quit by the age of thirteen because of unpleasant sports experiences. Addressing individual needs in a group environment is a true challenge for anyone involved in team sports.

While this study affirmed that not everyone participates in sports for the same reasons, I do believe that there is one reason that children ultimately begin participating in sports and that's to have fun – and I think that sometimes as adults, we forget this.

Lessons about sportsmanship and fair play begin at an early age. So before you question a call, remember that it is more than the fans who are watching.

The Nosebleed Section: The point of playing must include fun

BYLINE: By LELAND GORDON-Sports Writer

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Who doesn't like fun? It's something that we all need in our lives and some people just don't like having it. It's the one thing that can make all of the other not-so-pleasurable things in life seem manageable.

This column isn't about those types of people who treat everything way too seriously. This one is about the types of prep athletes who are having a blast doing what they're doing, just having fun. For the complete article click www.chicoer.com/sports/ci_10496076

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Sports Alliance of Minnesota, PO Box 27031, Golden Valley, MN 5542

