Power of Sport in the Promotion of Student Achievement and Well-Being

Sara Henderson, MSW, LISW-S; Catelen Ramsey, MSW, LSW; Stephen Moore, M.Ed; Tasha Henderson, MSW; Samantha Bates, PhD; and Dawn Anderson-Butcher, PhD
Today’s Game Plan

- Welcome
- Objectives
- Context and Value of Sport
- Example Programs:
  - LiFEsports Program
  - Youth Leadership Academy
  - Early College Academy
- Evidence-Based Strategies
- Brainstorm, Share, Questions
Objectives

• Increase knowledge of the power of sport for promoting student academic outcomes, school climate, and connectedness, and broader health and well-being outcomes.

• Improve confidence and competence in using sport-based interventions to support school mental health agendas.

• Identify key best practices and evidence-based strategies related to using sport to support youth outcomes.
Status of Youth Today

Globally:
• 385 million children worldwide live in extreme poverty, and
• 250 million live in countries affected by conflict
• 41% of youth experience food insecurity
• More than 50% of youth are not engaged in schooling
• 7% of youth have mental health disorders

United States:
• 16% never graduate from high school
• 1 in 4 are victims of child abuse and neglect
• Over 1 million youth are involved in gangs
• 1 out of 5 youth lack age-appropriate social and/or life skills
• 20–30% of youth experience some type of behavioral mental health challenge
Value of Youth Sport

- Promote health, mental health, fitness, and overall well-being
- Increase academic achievement
- Foster social skills, friendships and social supports
- Build community identity, social capital, belonging and connectedness
- Provide “relief” or “timeout” from stressors (i.e., FUN)
- Address social exclusion
- Promote socio-economic benefits
The Power of Sport

- **Sport is powerful**
  A globally accepted and known construct

- **Sport is broad and wide-reaching**
  51 million youth participating in the U.S.
  7.6 million high school student-athletes
  Consistently increasing over last 22 years
  6.5 million youth sport leaders

- **Sport as a social medium**
  Sport cuts through cultural, racial, religious, gender, & economic barriers

- **Sport is multidimensional**
  As a “hook”
  As a medium where interventions are implemented
  As mechanism and tool for fostering development
What are we doing in Columbus, Ohio to combat these social issues and support youth with sport based PYD?
As we are discussing PYD programs please refer to the two tables on your hand out ...

1. Specific strategies Supporting references Social- and/or Life-Skill and Sport Priorities
LiFESports Summer Program
**LiFEsports** is a sports-based, positive youth development program offered at The Ohio State University in partnership with the College of Social Work, Department of Athletics, Department of Recreational Sports, OSU Extension, and Outreach & Engagement. Each summer, approximately 600 youth, ages 9-15, are served in a tuition free sport program. Nearly 100% of LiFEsports campers come from low-income families, live in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and attend poorly resourced schools in Central Ohio.
The LiFEsports Initiative

Flagship Summer Camp (4 weeks; ages 9-14)

- Tuition free; youth are bused in from local community sites (Community recreation centers, B&G Clubs, YMCAs, schools)
- Provide daily breakfast and lunch
- Free physicals, including dental and eye checks at camp registration

Year-Round Sports Clinics (i.e., Boosters)

- In partnership with OSU Athletic teams and clubs
- 10 clinics during academic year (average attendance: 80 youth)
The LiFEsports Summer Camp

- Over 600 youth ages 9-15 attend camp on The Ohio State University’s campus each summer
- 78% of LiFEsports families are currently living at or below 200% the poverty line, with 43% living below the poverty line
- 49% live in single parent homes
- 61% male; 39% female
- 87% Black or African-American; 8% were multi-ethnic; 3% White/Non-Hispanic; 2% Other
- 44% were classified as overweight or obese
- 15% involved in behavioral issues at camp
**Primary Objectives**
- Increase overall social competence
- Increase **Self-Control, Effort, Teamwork, and Social Responsibility (S.E.T.S.)**
- Promote sense of belonging to LiFEsports and tOSU

**Secondary Objectives**
- Increase perceptions of athletic competence
- Increase commitment to lifelong fitness and healthy nutrition
- Increase exposure to university/college life and interest in pursuing a higher education
- Refer to other resources
4 week summer camp offered to economically disadvantaged youth ages 9-15

Free to participants

15 hours social competence curriculum focused on **S.E.T.S.**

15 days of sport curricula (5 hours of each sport)

5 hours healthy lifestyle curriculum

2 meals a day, free transportation, and health and dental physicals (n=340/year)

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnY-HsfSYoE
S.E.T.S. Curriculum

**Self-Control:**
Control of one’s self and own actions

**Effort:**
Self-directed behavior and initiative

**Teamwork:**
Working together as a group to achieve a common goal or outcome

**Social Responsibility:**
Helping others and having an understanding of how one’s own behavior impacts others
- Structured curriculum focused on self control, effort, teamwork and social responsibility (S.E.T.S.)
- Practice and application
- Debriefing
- Reflection through journaling
- Positive behavioral supports
- Transfer
- Parent/family reinforcement
5 hours of 8 sports (varies each year)

Sport curriculum: soccer, lacrosse, tennis, dance, football, basketball, running/agility, recreational games, baseball, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, and swimming

5 hours of healthy lifestyle curriculum.

Lesson outlines include preview, overview, instruction, practice, games, and debriefing

Incorporates SETS
LiFEsports Design: Other Parts

- LiFEsports Olympic Games
- OSU Campus Tour
- Parent/family Involvement
- Behavior mental health supports
- Tickets to Ohio State games
- Referrals and linkages
Follow-Up Sports Clinics

- 10 “booster sessions” per year (average of 65 youth at each)
- Hosted by OSU Athletic teams and clubs
  - Gymnastics, track/field, rugby, basketball, etc.
- Parent/family component
- Incentive for next year’s registration
- 48% of campers participated in three or more clinics
How are We Making a Difference?

- **79%** of youth participants reported they “can control my feelings” because of LiFEsports.
- **82%** reported they know how to use the skills learned at LiFEsports outside of camp.
- **64%** of campers increased in their perceived social skills over the course of the summer camp.
- **74%** increased in their perceived sport ability over the course of camp.
- **80%** reported their involvement in LiFEsports made them want to go to college.
Change in SETS

Note. Significant Differences: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .001$. 

2017 Evaluation Findings

Mean Scores

- self-control **
- effort **
- teamwork *
- social competence **

Pre | Post
---|---
3.6 | 4.0
3.7 | 4.0
3.9 | 4.2
4.1 | 4.3
4.2 | 4.3
4.3 | 4.3
Change in Sport-Specific Competence

Note. Significant Differences: * = p < .05, ** = p < .001.
Change in Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors and Sport Competence

Note. Significant Differences: * = p < .05, ** = p < .001.

Anderson-Butcher et al., in press
Change in Fitness Level

Notes. N=40; Significant Differences: * = p < .05, ** = p < .001.

Anderson-Butcher et al., in press
Youth Perceptions of Sport Competence Growth Over Time

**Self-Control**
- Pre-Year 1: High Achievers (4.5), At-Risk (3.5)
- Post-Year 1: High Achievers (4.0), At-Risk (3.0)
- Pre-Year 2: High Achievers (3.5), At-Risk (3.0)
- Post-Year 2: High Achievers (3.0), At-Risk (2.5)

**Effort**
- Pre-Year 1: High Achievers (4.5), At-Risk (3.5)
- Post-Year 1: High Achievers (4.0), At-Risk (3.0)
- Pre-Year 2: High Achievers (3.5), At-Risk (3.0)
- Post-Year 2: High Achievers (3.0), At-Risk (2.5)

**Teamwork**
- Pre-Year 1: High Achievers (4.5), At-Risk (3.5)
- Post-Year 1: High Achievers (4.0), At-Risk (3.0)
- Pre-Year 2: High Achievers (3.5), At-Risk (3.0)
- Post-Year 2: High Achievers (3.0), At-Risk (2.5)

**Transfer**
- Pre-Year 1: High Achievers (4.5), At-Risk (3.5)
- Post-Year 1: High Achievers (4.0), At-Risk (3.0)
- Pre-Year 2: High Achievers (3.5), At-Risk (3.0)
- Post-Year 2: High Achievers (3.0), At-Risk (2.5)
Youth Leadership Academy
Youth Leadership Academy Overview

• High school youth (ages 14-18) who have previously attended at least one year of LiFEsports Summer Camp.

• Prepares youth for college and post-secondary educational opportunities, expands on SETS taught at LiFEsports Camp and sports clinics, enhances leadership skills.
Youth Leadership Academy Overview

- 2019-2020 marks our six year offering YLA
- 60 youth are accepted into the program
- Meetings are twice a month throughout the school year on tOSU campus
Snapshot of Youth Leader Journey

Year 1: **Plan**- Essential leadership & communication skills

Year 2: **Prepare**- Introduction to college & career readiness

Year 3: **Practice**- College & career readiness activities

Year 4: **Perform**- One-on-one action towards college/post-secondary education
Experiential Activity: YLA Committees

Executive Board
Advocacy/Community Service
Communications
Finance
Health
Social Activities Planning

Each committee is in charge of a planning aspect for YLA to run smoothly throughout the year and completing a career experience. The career experience gives the youth an opportunity to interact with and learn from a professional who is in the occupation related to their committee.
Executive Board

- President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian
- Identify an issue that Youth Leaders have during summer camp and come up with a plan to implement solution.
Executive Board

- Provide support to all committees
- Represent the Youth Leaders to visitors at summer camp
- Career Experience: Councilman Shannon Hardin
Advocacy Committee

- Presentation on Suicide Prevention Week
- Ronald McDonald House
  - Packed care packages
  - Toured Ronald McDonald House
  - Delivered care packages and cookies to families
• Help write YLA updates for LiFEsports newsletter
• Career experience with 49Degrees
  • Sports facility design company
  • Sports related career exposure
Finance Committee

• Present to YLA about finance
  • Saving money, how to open a bank account, etc.

• Career experience: Huntington Bank
  • Tour of the bank
  • Spoke to employees about their position
  • Panel
Health Committee

• Pick a health related topic to do a research project and presentation
  • Effects of marijuana and vaping
Social Activities Committee

- Responsibility to plan two social gatherings and end of the year gala
- Career experience: how to plan an event
Experiential Activity: College Visit

- College visit
  - Bowling Green State University
  - University of Toledo
  - Ohio University
  - HBCU: Central State & Wilberforce University

- Tour, attend a sporting event, talk to college students
Experiential Activity: Camp Mary Orton

- Adventure based team building
- Trust exercises
- Reward for end of the school year
- Team bonding before summer camp
Experiential Activity: Court Camp

- gain exposure to the legal profession
- how the legal community should look to support first-generation students to help promote diversity
NHL Columbus Blue Jackets’ Attorney Greg Kirstein
Experiential Activity: Youth Leader at Summer Camp

- Assist counselor with managing group
- Apply leadership skills gained through the year
- Build connections with campers
- Act as a peer mentor
- Bridge age gap between campers and counselors
Experiential Activity: UNITY Fridge

- Harvested with UNITY Fridge.
- Crops donated to a local food pantry to reduce the impact of food deserts in the Columbus community!
Partnership with OSU Athletics: Spring Game

- Football clinic and family style lunch
- Tickets for youth and family
- Meet athletes and alumni
- LiFEsports Initiative highlighted at game
Youth Leadership Academy Data

- Social Competence
- Accountability
- Social Responsibility
- Self-Directed Learning*
- Self-Efficacy: Leadership
- Civic Awareness
- Leadership
- Self-Efficacy: Self-Directed Learning*
- Self-Efficacy: Time Management

Mean of Participant Responses (Possible Response: 0-5)

Pre-test Mean  Post-test Mean
How are We Making a Difference through the Youth Leadership Academy?

- **74%** of Youth Leaders (YL) increased in their perceived leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills over course of program.
- **64%** of YL felt they could identify their strengths as a result of the program.
- **64%** of YL reported feeling confident they could get accepted to a good college.
- **58%** YL increased in their communication skills over course of the YLA.
- **92%** of students from YLA reported that the skills they learn are useful to them in other areas of their lives.
Youth Leaders who previously attended YLA (those involved in the second year) had statistically significant enhanced growth in broader leadership outcomes as compared first year YL.
How does this apply to sport?

Each summer, the YLA members return to LiFEsports summer camp to assist a counselor in leading a group of campers; this provides the opportunity for them to participate in sport, as well as apply the leadership skills they have gained throughout the school year during the YLA sessions.
Early College Academy (ECA) is a dropout recovery high school for students ages 16-22 in Columbus, Ohio.

Students are either one cohort age behind or have experienced crises that have interfered with their academic progress.

All students have either dropped out of high school or at risk of not graduating high school.
ECA’s Student Population

- 90% minorities (81% African American)
- 14% reported they were homeless
- 37% qualified for free and reduced lunches
- 310 students enrolled during the 2018-2019 year with a 36% attendance rate
ECA created a basketball team in 2017. This sport based intervention addresses school connectedness, school climate, student mental health, positive adult interaction, and attendance.
ECA Basketball Team  
2018-2019 School Year Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre- Basketball Season</th>
<th>Basketball Season</th>
<th>Post- Basketball Season</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team’s Average Attendance</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
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• Basketball games have become a source of school pride for the student body, improving overall school climate and sense of belonging.
• Partnership with local recreation center
  Safe place for after school
  Community partnership
2017 and 2018 Ohio Charter School Athletic Association Champions
• Increase of school pride and connectedness
• Pep Rally
• Recognizing team captains
• Leadership opportunities
• School pride days
• Winning and earning ECA t-shirts
From the table Social- and/or Life-Skill and Sport Priorities

Positive Relationships
- Develop strong caring relationships with youth.
- Foster social interactions so youth have opportunities to use social and/or life skills.
- Create a sense of belonging and identity among the team or group.
- Foster prosocial relationships among peers, teammates, parents/caregivers, adult leaders.

Positive Behavioral Supports
- Create rules/boundaries and have high expectations for the display of positive behaviors.
- Encourage and reinforce the use of both social and/or life skills and sport skills in sport.
- Consistently reinforce and encourage youth when they demonstrate prosocial skills.

Youth Leadership, Empowerment, Goal Direction, and Support
- Enable youth to take on leadership roles

Did you see other examples?
Social Inclusion

• Create opportunities to allow for social interactions.
• Foster community pride and cohesion.
• Foster sense of belonging, community, and collective identity.

Comprehensive Services

• Provide wraparound supports and health/social services to address multiple, co-occurring needs among youth.
• Offer consistent, regular contacts over an extended period of time.
• Promote fun and enjoyment, especially for those who are exposed to violence and trauma.

Social Relationships and Social Capital

• Build relationships with key figures, mentors, and/or role models.
• Promote social supports and friendships and the adoption of prosocial norms.

Did you see other examples?
Conclusion

Sport-based positive youth development programs can teach life- and/or social-skills development, and positively influence academic achievement, mental health, well-being, prosocial behaviors, and other positive youth outcomes.
At your table ...

How can you use sport based positive youth development in your own programming and school mental health practice?
• Share ideas
• Questions?
• Comments?
THANK YOU!
References