

Chapter 8

Youth Sport Councils and other Program Features that Contribute to Organizational Effectiveness

Introduction

Some people take youth sport more seriously than do other people. If that seriousness revolves around winning and championships at the expense of all else, it is unfortunate. When seriousness takes the form of developing better programs for the players and the adult participants, it is good. Cooperation and communication are characteristics of effective organizations. The absence of cooperation, in particular, leads to conflict among people as well as the duplication, if not costly multiple repetition, of programs, services, and training. The absence of communication is reflected in mistakes and confusion over the purposes and goals.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer five specific program features or components that can contribute to building more effective youth programs. They include youth sport councils, training programs, drug abuse prevention, reading enrichment, and program evaluation. Each can be applied from the team level to the community or regional level.

Before this material is introduced, there are two concepts that are important in the management of human organizations. They are effectiveness and efficiency, and decision-making. Both concepts are related and influence how people perform within organizations.

Effectiveness and efficiency are management concepts to keep in mind as we go about our lives, whether sport, business or family. Effectiveness implies that our actions produce the desired results. Efficiency means that the actions occur without wasted time, effort and resources. We can be effective. We can be effective and efficient. It is doubtful whether we can be efficient if we are not also effective. This is part of the dilemma that corporations and organized society face. In attempting to achieve some balance between the two, effectiveness suffers. This results in problems of poor performance, goods and services. The reason? There is only so much time.

In management, both efficiency and effectiveness are important. Leaders cannot do it all or control all. However, when sacrifices must be made, efficiency must take second place to effectiveness. The reason is expressed well in this quotation:

If you do not have time to do it right,
when will you have time to do it over?

This leads into the second concept of decision-making. It can be a short, one person process as is done in the dictatorial systems - - efficient only when effective.

Decision-making can take place also through more lengthy discussions and planning. It may not be efficient, but it may be effective. The process by which decisions are made influences the effectiveness of those who act and the actions that take place. As was noted previously, democratic actions are generally more effective than are authoritarian actions. The democratic style of leadership tends to motivate people to become involved in what they are doing. Thus, they become concerned about the quality of the outcome. This style of leadership is the heart of what is termed, consensus decision-making.

People come into the youth sport scene with a variety of histories, abilities, attitudes, motives, and drives. From these diverse or heterogeneous people, directors are expected to develop uniformity of purpose and action. As with teams, this can be accomplished through consensus decision-making. The word "consensus" should not be interpreted to mean the same as harmony. An agreed upon course of action is a more accurate interpretation of consensus.

According to Bob Biagi, a group process authority, consensus decision-making is a way of producing decisions where the input and views of every-one are expressed. The powers of logic, expression, persuasion, plus practical considerations are brought to bear on the question so decisions can be accepted by all. It is not a technique to get the group to do what the leader wants nor is it free of disagreement. It is an open discussion of the topic or issue with bargaining minimized. (Biagi, 1978:107) Bargaining weakens the final result. The consensus technique can be used in any phase of program operations where broad support of the group is necessary to produce effective action.

In youth sport, this process can be used as an introductory exercise to explore program issues. Practice it with your participants just as you would practice any new skill. This will help you and your colleagues become familiar with how to use the process effectively. As people become skilled at it, the process can be used on more difficult problems. Here is an outline of the process, as was presented by Biagi:

Consensus Decision-Making 1 (footnote 1)

1. Describe and define the problem. situation or issue that needs to be acted upon.
2. Develop a list of all possible alternatives through what can be called brainstorming. Do not rate the alternatives good or bad .
3. Review, change, consolidate, rewrite. and set priorities.
4. Make the decision using consensus.
5. Implement the decision by determining who will do what by when and how.
6. Evaluate the results of the decision (Biagi, 1978:104-114)

I Taken from Working Together by Bob Biagi and used with the permission of Citizens Involvement Training Program (CITP). School of Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003

Similar steps are followed in value clarification exercises. Here, views are exchanged on common topics in small group sessions. This is an example. Divide a large group into small groups. Ask one group to be coaches, another parents, a third referees, and another directors or even players. Now, present them with one of the every day incidences that occur. Give them the task of developing statements about the situation that represent their respective points of view. Next, they rank their statements, share them with the group, and then discuss their findings. Taking the position of another, as has been done in role playing, is a useful exercise that helps people see other perspectives and break down barriers.

Directors might use this process to determine who should make what decision - - director or group decision. For examples of decision-making and value clarification exercises, see: Coaching Cooperative Youth Sports (Paulson, 1980), A Handbook of Structured Experiences in Human Relations Training (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1973-1975), PlayFair (Weinstein and Goodman, 1980), Values Clarification (Simon, Howe and Krischenbaum, 1972), and Working Together (Biagi, 1978).

The products of group action are influenced strongly by the processes that lead to the decisions to act. Group processes require more time than unilateral decision-making. However, when the problems and solutions are resolved through group action in which all who wish may participate, the actual "execution" of the plan can be accomplished with surprising efficiency. (Pascale and Athos, 1981:305)

With these comments about effectiveness, efficiency and decision-making, let us proceed. Youth sport councils, training programs, drug abuse prevention, reading enrichment, and evaluation are vehicles for communications. To add these features or others to a program requires the cooperation and support of local and area participants. This can be gained through consensus decision-making.

Youth Sport Councils

A way to draw different groups together into cooperative action focusing on children in sport is through central youth sport organizations. These have been called community coordinating councils (Thomas, 1977:110-111), community sports councils (Cratty, 8-9), youth sports advisory councils (Hattiesburg), and youth sport councils (Hutslar, 1980b, 1985). Youth sport councils are conceived as an alliance of local or area sport and youth agencies. Their general purpose is to be an advocacy and coordinating group for the benefit of kids in sport at all levels of play.

There are a number of reasons why these councils are useful community assets. You may be able to add additional reasons that are appropriate for your area.

Generally, there is a lack of cooperation in many community activities, including youth sport. This is evident in the competition for players, playing space, and adult leadership. In one such example of needless competition, there were six agencies in one rural county attempting to offer programs for the same small group of kids. In another case, one agency was doing a good job of training their own youth leaders to work with their younger kids. However, another agency was recruiting these trained youth away from the first group to work in their program. Both of these examples reflect competition for scarce resources - - kids and leaders - - that cooperation might help resolve to the satisfaction of all.

In other communities, the competition occurs between school and community programs. between districts, and between former school zones now consolidated. There are cases where sport has become a tool for segregation. The absence of cooperation has resulted in separate programs based on geographic clustering around neighborhoods, churches, shopping centers, and available space for play.

Separate agencies do not cooperate with one another for a number of reasons. Those listed in a well done community education handbook were: resistance to change, tradition, fear of centralization, personality conflicts, lack of administrative support, loss of identity, people who are already too busy, and a lack of understanding of the purpose or role of the new agency - - like a youth sport council. (Cale. 1980:11 9)

It seems likely that the reasons for interagency cooperation could outweigh the barriers. The advantages of cooperation include:

1. Rising costs and reduced funds which limit available services to clients.
2. Make better use of existing buildings, staff, equipment and other resources.
3. Avoid duplication of services and/or facilities within the community.
4. Lack of staff to meet the demands for service.
5. Make better use of any excess capacity, i.e., space in schools with declining enrollments.
6. Desire to keep taxes down.
7. Insufficient funds to achieve desired results.
8. Identify the agency which is best able to deliver services.
9. More needs for service than there are services available.
10. Provide services at a more convenient location for the people.

11. Develop more effective programs through co-programming (Cale, 1980:118)
2 (footnote 2)

2 Used with permission of the Arizona Department of Education, Phoenix, AZ.

In our view, the most important reason for developing youth sport councils is relatively simple. There is no advocacy group within most communities or areas that directs its attention to kids in sport. The media is largely uninterested in youth sport. They seem to feel that if they do one piece a year on the topic that they have covered it from all points of view. This is a surprising attitude when one considers that about one in two people are touched by youth sport in some way. Yet, the media present an endless stream of features on topics like lipstick, soap operas, weeds, pets and the latest diets. This is understandable. What appears in the media is not what is important, necessary or good, or even what needs to be learned. Kids in sport, while a hot topic for some people including the media who have children, appears to be cold for the media at large. The media covers what sells.

For this reason more than anything else, it is strongly advocated that youth sport councils be formed. They can become advocacy bodies that help focus attention on what is happening and what should happen for kids in sport. At the same time, it should be known that these councils need not be established as sanctioning, ruling or governing bodies for local sport programs. This type of function may indeed centralize the power and keep organizations from coming together for the good of all. Instead, their greatest value can be in coordinating the efforts of people to elevate the public awareness of and help create opportunities for kids. In the final analysis, youth sport councils are probably most effective as community education or resource groups that focus on kids and sport.

This type of cooperative educational effort is a step in the development of what Nance and Dixon called "a fully functioning community." Nance and Dixon, (1980:15) George S. Wood (1977:8) described this as:

"one in which lifelong learning is a dominant ethic: the total community as a learning environment is the setting; the development of an effective, responsible citizenship is the goal; the development of a coordinated responsiveness of community service systems is the key strategy; and people involvement in participatory decision-making is the central feature." 3 (footnote 3)

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The primary purpose in forming a local or area youth sport council is to develop cooperative action that leads to better programs for players and adult participants. The motive behind one such group, the Ontario Hockey Council, came from a "Report on Violence in Amateur Hockey." As a result they formed their council in January, 1975 "to create a climate which ensures that every child has the opportunity to participate in and

enjoy the game of hockey at his level of competence. (You and Your Child in Hockey:6)
The major functions of this Council were:

1. to identify those areas of hockey which demand intensive study and request the appropriate subcommittee to study and report on the area:
2. to establish the priorities and study the results and recommendations of Sub-Committee reports; and,
3. where practical, to advise the application of Sub-Committee recommendations to the various organizations comprising the Council.
(You and Your Child in Hockey:7)

The sub-committees include: coaching development, parent education, philosophy and objectives of amateur hockey, player education, public and media education, research, and rules structure. (You and Your Child in Hockey:31)

The Hattiesburg, MS Area Youth Sports Advisory Council (HAYSAC) lists as its purpose: "to provide expertise in the development of standards which should govern the development and implementation of competitive sports programs for children and youth. The council limits itself to an advisory role and at no time will function in the operational procedures of specific programs." Their stated objectives are:

1. To develop standards which should govern the implementing of children and youth competitive sports programs (ages 6- 16) e.g., football, basketball, track, baseball, swimming, gymnastics, or other topics which seems relevant.
2. To develop and implement clinics for volunteer coaches, parents. and players.
3. To disseminate pertinent information to interested groups and to the media.
4. To develop training program materials for volunteer coaches.
5. To gather together materials for a "Youth Sports Resource Center."

These are all sound objectives. Here are some practical ways to accomplish these objectives and raise the awareness of the people about the consequences of youth sport participation. Youth sport councils can conduct FORUMS to address topics in youth sport. Forums can be town meetings, lecture series, radio and television broadcasts, and newspaper articles. All can be used depending on local circumstances and the focal area. RESOURCE CENTERS should be established at local libraries or within departments with material available for home study and team use. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS can be developed for groups of participants players, coaches, parents, and league directors. These are, in our view, the minimum functions that a youth sport council should undertake. Other functions are included for review and possible adoption. See Table 8-I.

Table 8-1
FUNCTIONS OF YOUTH SPORT COUNCILS

1. Forums to address topics in youth sport.
2. Resource Centers for study materials.
3. Educational programs for parents, coaches, directors, and players.
4. Coordinate youth sport among all local programs as needed.
5. Elevate the awareness of people in the community about the safe and appropriate ways to conduct sport programs for kids and adults.
6. Promote fun for children and adults in sport.
7. Encourage balanced participation among the sports options available.
8. Encourage balanced participation between sport and the other aspects of life for children family, friends, education, church, music, art, drama. dance.
9. Establish remedial, study, and enrichment programs for players involving any of the following school curriculum areas: math, science, reading, writing, study skills, personal health, safety, computer.
10. Maintain and increase communication among all youth agencies and personnel within the target area through regularly published fliers, newsletter, magazines and tabloids containing items such as sign up announcements, community sport calendars, and training tips.
11. Compile a local youth sport directory.
12. Host area-wide meetings, conferences, and recognition ceremonies for the adult leadership and volunteers.
13. Provide consulting services, possibly at minimal charges for help with facilities, purchasing, training, evaluation and leadership.
14. Plan, as needed, for special events, facilities, programs, service, and fund raising activities for the target area.
15. Send representatives to conferences on youth sport, sport medicine, recreation, physical education, sport management, and fund raising.
16. Provide financial aid and scholarship awards to program participants who have economic problems, both youngsters and adults.
17. Help mediate or solve special problems ranging from conflicts over territory to recruiting personnel to providing support and guidance in conflict situations.
18. Promote, identify, and collect data on people, participation, and programs (e.g., participation rates, drop outs, injuries, retention, effects of training, player follow ups).
19. Provide referral services.
20. Bridge the gap between theory and practice by translating theory into practical ideas that can be used on the fields, courts and meetings.

There are few limits as to what youth sport councils can undertake. Initially, a council should undertake only a limited number of tasks that can be easily accomplished. Identify one or two tasks. Develop a plan, and carry the plan through to a successful conclusion. It is possible that the idea of a council may not draw much early

attention. In that case, take the core of interested participants and do what Joseph Ringers, a Virginia community education director, suggested in order to develop cooperative relationships. First, COMMUNICATE. Show how the council can help. Then EVALUATE. Determine who can help solve the problem and how. Now DEMONSTRATE. Show the merits of the plan by conducting one or more small, successful projects. ESCALATE. Expand the original project or develop larger projects. RE-CREATE. Reform the body if necessary to absorb the new members and integrate their problems and concerns into the council. (Community Education: Managing for Success:58)

The more important part of this message follows next. Find those people who are interested in working with the concept of a youth sport council. Identify one or more manageable projects. Carry out that work and make it successful. Then, use that success to increase the program, move onto larger projects, and form new groups and relationships.

Futurists, those who plan for well beyond tomorrow, merely identify an end state worth achieving. Then they build a path from the present to that point. They do not attempt to jump from an idea of youth sport council on paper to a fully functioning council composed of all community groups in one sport season. They create steps, a series of smaller projects, that will lead eventually to an influential group that cares about what occurs in the programs that conduct sports for our children in the community.

The following procedure can be followed to get the council started.

Step 1. Identify a core of three to five people from different organizations who are willing to help get a program started.

Step 2. Discuss the concept of a council and develop a plan to draw a large number of organizations into the meetings. Make it clear that your objective is not to "take over" the sports in town.

Step 3. Send an introductory letter to the youth sport people informing them of the plans. State the meeting place, time, and ask for three representatives to attend. It might be wise, at first, that meetings be held at a neutral site with a very positive image. Seek the assistance of community newspapers to support and publicize this and every meeting. Follow invitations with telephone calls.

Step 4. Conduct the first meeting. Explain the plan, distribute handout information, and seek representatives. Answer all questions, take names and addresses, and meet briefly with those interested in providing permanent assistance.

Step 5. Meet soon and frequently with the core people to make plans for the next meeting, the projects to be undertaken, and the recruitment of other

representatives. NOTE: The recruitment of representatives is an ongoing task, a goal of the council, and a selling point in demonstrating the scope and effectiveness of your influence.

Step 6. Conduct a second meeting within two weeks. Announce the date at the first meeting. Appoint temporary officers and board members if feasible who are willing workers. Identify the committees and seek volunteers to staff the positions. Consider establishing the council as an incorporated non-profit group.

Step 7. Identify one or more projects worth pursuing. Clinics for parents and coaches prior to the next sport season, and the creation of a Resource Center are good starting points.

Step 8. Do it and do it well.

Who should be invited to participate in a youth sport council? The answer to this is influenced by the local pool of resource people at your disposal. Among those who might be receptive to an invitation include the representatives of specific sport groups; community professionals in medicine and education; known sport advocates and experts; and businesses in the sport area.

At some point in the development of your local or area youth sport council, it may become useful to incorporate. This will give the council certain tax advantages, open the doors to foundation grants as well as corporate donations, reduce mailing costs, provide some liability protection, as well as gain independence from other agencies. This last point may be most important for the council to function in an unbiased manner for the benefit of all groups.

It will require the cooperation of a number of groups for a youth sport council to operate at maximum effectiveness. They should operate as 12 month, rather than seasonal, organizations.

Draw parents into central roles from the beginning. Their children are the ones who play every sport in every season. So, they are quite interested in what is best for their offspring all year long. However, there are many others who are involved with kids 12 months a year - - teachers, pediatricians, Scouts, churches, Y's, recreation departments, sporting goods dealers, plus many youth oriented, non-sport and social service agencies. It is most likely that, with minimal planning, you will find the topics presented through youth sport councils of interest to anyone who is involved with school age youngsters in a variety of programs and agencies.

According to some leaders, a youth sport council is a good way to improve sport programs for kids and adults. Form one in your area. See how it can influence your programs and participants. Write and keep us posted on the activities of your council. It might prove to be the subject for one of our next best selling book on youth sport.

A Youth Sport Training Program For Coaches And Parents

There is no dominant or widely used training program in youth sport. Perhaps this is good in our diverse society where people have differing interests and strengths. Current programs stress similar features with differences based on the background of the individual developers. The Michigan program, the first one, emphasizes growth and development plus biological and psychological material. (Seefeldt, 1981) It reflects the academic background of Vern Seefeldt, pioneer in youth sport. The ACEP program of Rainer Martens, a sport psychologist, parallels the material in his book. (Martens, 1981) as does the CEP program of Smoll and Smith (1997) in Washington state. The NCYSA program of Fred Engh emphasizes awareness videos and discussion groups. The Canadian National Coaching Certification Program is probably the most well-developed, financed, and comprehensive in North America. They target both the school and volunteer coach through clinics, books, films, and other resources (Coaching Association of Canada).

A number of sport specific programs exist in sports like baseball, bowling, soccer, softball, and tennis. Yet, few national youth sport organizations have developed and conduct their own training programs. Other existing training programs are conducted by directors who bring their own experiences, professional training, motivation, and leadership to youth sport. These may be the most effective programs.

The youth sport training program developed here for coaches and parents (See Appendix A: NAYSI Coaches Clinics) is based on material that has been widely used in youth leader and teacher education programs. The Coaches Clinics presented here emphasize coaching and teaching methods, program philosophy, sport management, evaluation, and sport skills much more than do the other training programs. Added emphasis is placed on the balanced education of children through the liberal arts and humanities. This de-emphasis on specialization is consistent with the goal of balance in the lives of youth, but neglected in the other youth training programs.

We have biases about what is done to and with boys and girls in sport. They are based on a rather standard professional preparation in education and sport management plus years of experiences with kids in sport, recreation and physical education. These biases are reflected in the Coaches Clinics.

Too frequently, it seems, we attempt to compensate for uninformed or disinterested coaches and teachers in weak programs by applying "motivational techniques" to players who are being "turned off" by poor coaching or the system. Motivation will not compensate for weak coaches who know little or about what to teach and how to teach. Learning the skills of sports and how to coach them is the crux of programs for kids.

The same problems of disinterest occur in business. In place of this, we should put more emphasis on designing better corporate or departmental structures. This

includes training leaders to be more knowledgeable in what they do. The big picture, which is not a secret, is to know children, plan, teach, teach skills and be positive.

In some ways, youth sport programs may be compared to an automobile with the accelerator pushed to the floor and the brakes on. This analogy has been used to describe the effects of two antagonistic drugs, uppers and downers, on the body when consumed at the same time. Eventually, the system will not be able to adapt to these opposing forces. In the case of youth sport, the natural result of program inadequacies, misguided adults, and the over-psyching of unskilled players is frustration and flight from the field of play. Kids are going to avoid stress. They will leave sport and seek out other activities that are more enjoyable. (Hutslar, 1983c)

A youth sport program can be run quite effectively and with a minimum of conflict with just one trained person who knows sport, children, teaching methods, and sport management. This, however, is not the usual background for parents who are involved with kids in sport. Therefore, it becomes the task of program leaders to provide the adult volunteers with these basic skills to run the programs for the benefit of the players.

At the present time, the sport drop out rate by children is unnecessarily high. This is not good and the blame falls on (1) the adults for driving the kids out, and (2) on the adults for not recognizing that kids, teenagers in particular, are restless, seek independence, and have their own social priorities. We are not adapting to their needs. Yet, some blame could fall also on the players themselves for not helping us more.

Parents should be encouraged and actively recruited to attend Coaches Clinics. They are the pool for future coaches as are the players. This particular Clinic design is presented from a developmental or "educational perspective." One stage builds to the next stage. The five stages are designed to be presented prior to the sport season with one stage added per season. After five seasons, all five stages should be in full operation. Clinics are the means by which the directors guide their staff. As with players and students, parents and coaches will develop faster when they receive leadership from more skilled trainers. With some type of education or training effort, the kids and the program will benefit from the good intentions and the positive influences of the volunteer leaders.

Here are the basic elements that are useful, but not absolutely essential, to develop and maintain a successful youth sport training program over time. They include: leadership, goals, affiliations and alliances, financial structure, sponsorship, registry and certification options, training the directors, training the coaches, sources of credit, incentives, resource centers and materials, program review and evaluation, sustaining the Coaches Clinics from season to season, and Clinic content material.

Leadership

People give life and direction to groups and organizations. Those who lead Coaches Clinics may come from youth groups, sports organizations, or professionally trained specialists. The core group may include: directors, coaches, officials, parents, players, and community leaders.

Goals

The thrust or purposes of Coaches Clinics may be drawn from previous material in Beyond X's and O's, from some of the following statements, or from ones developed from your personal experiences and training.

1. to train volunteer coaches and parents plus other youth sport leaders
2. to identify local and area resource people who can help conduct Coaches Clinics
3. to assume positive influence over the outcomes of the youth sport activities the organization promotes, conducts and endorses
4. to enhance the sport experience for youngsters and adults

Affiliations And Alliances

As the Clinics develop, it would be helpful to enter into agreements with local and area professional associations who might endorse the Clinics. Service clubs, recreation departments, schools, Y's, and medical societies are groups that can help cut across and break down organizational barriers. This can increase participation and give the Clinics greater clout and effectiveness.

Financial Structure

It will be necessary to advertise the Clinics, secure meeting space, provide handout and study materials, provide snacks, print attractive certificates, and other incentives. Coaches may be asked to pay a nominal fee to attend. Likewise, parents may be asked to pay a small fee to see that their children's coaches receive some preparation for the coming season. There are many other sources of funds today including local grants and business contributions. Forward thinking organizations include training as a regular part of their line item budget each year.

Sponsorship

In some cases, Clinic organizers may find one or two local businesses that are willing to underwrite the entire program. They may want their name associated with the program. This is fair. In any case, there is financial assistance available if you can strike the right cord or know the right people.

Registry and Certification Options

A registry, such as this International Registry of Coaches, is a compilation of names pertaining to a specific subject. It does not imply a level of training or competency. In this case, it does specify that those who are added to this Registry have completed a course of instruction related to coaching boys and girls in sport. The Registry procedures have been provided elsewhere at this web site. It is: <http://www.usasportsnet.com>.

Coaches who read Beyond X's and O's and pass the examination are eligible to be added to the International Registry of Coaches. For convenience, coaches who have completed other courses of study, including college course work, may also add their name to the International Registry of Coaches.

Certification implies that some generally agreed upon level of performance has been achieved. A certificate is proof of accomplishment and accountability. Meaningful certificates are based on legitimate and careful study, attention to details, sound principles and philosophies, and accurate records about the certifying process. The process gives the certificate meaning and legitimacy.

There is no one proper curriculum, study material or method, nor period of time most suitable for certifying people. It is developed through study and can involve reading, studying written materials, on the job training, written tests, performance tests, viewing films and tapes, periodic reviews, and live Coaches Clinics. Certification, in practice, can be nothing more than a handshake, or a few hours of study, an earned college degree, and continuing education as occurs in the medical profession.

The material in Beyond X's and O's, this section, and the Coaches Clinics in Appendix A can be used to develop a local certification program. It can be done in the following manner using some of the organizational skills presented previously in Beyond X's and O's.

Simply form a study group. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in your local program. Specify the main certification targets such as players, parents, coaches, officials and referees, boards, boosters and directors. Identify the local resource people (i.e., teachers and professors, doctors, therapists, nurses, psychologists, sport administrators, coaches and stars). Through cooperative effort, design and deliver the program. Modify the NAYSI Coaches Clinics to fit your needs. Remember to design an attractive certificate, pin or patch for those who complete the training.

Training The Directors

The program directors, resource people, and trainers, including the experienced volunteer coaches, can use Clinics as opportunities to organize their knowledge and experiences into effective programs. Training groups can be organized around the primary Clinic topics: sport philosophy, sport medicine, coaching and teaching methods,

sport management, sport psychology, testing and evaluation, and sport skills. Add other topics based on personal interests and expertise.

Training The Coaches And Parents

The location for the Clinics should be a large, attractive facility with nearby gymnasium and field space. It should have easy access to free parking with food nearby. A public address system is advisable. These Clinics, as well as the director's sessions, should be highly attractive events. The participation of Revenue Sports stars will help attract volunteers and parents. However, select your stars carefully, screen them, and give them an outline of topics from which to talk. The Small Business Administration does this for their speakers and it is quite effective. Many will thank you for that kind of help. A well planned and conducted Clinic will be the best advertisement you can have for the next Clinic.

Regular preseason orientation clinics for parents are strongly recommended. It helps them understand the differences between youth sport for kids compared to Revenue Sports for stars. This orientation provides them with the information they need to help their players, help their team, help the program, and behave properly. Some parents may not be able to accept the philosophy and policies of your program. In these cases, they can be directed to other opportunities for their children.

Sources Of Credit

Many coaches, parents and program leaders would like to receive some type of credit for participation in the Clinics. Academic credit and Continuing Education Units (C.E.U.'s) are available from a number of educational institutions. Some associations award "in-house" credits while service groups grant their own forms of credit for club activities. Explore the range of credits that can be offered through Clinics.

C.E.U.'s. Upon successful completion of this NAYSI Coaching Course based Beyond X's and O's, and adding your name to the International Registry of Coaches, participants may receive two (2) Continuing Education Units from the North American Youth Sport Institute.

Educators and other professionals may be required to earn additional "credits" to maintain their credentials and be eligible for annual pay increments. If this applies in your situation, present this course material to your supervisor for approval before completing the course. Additional C.E.U.'s may be sought through an independent study option.

Incentives

While we want the kids to play without incentives, it may be necessary to "bribe" the adult volunteers to assure their participation in the Clinics. Adults, unlike our youngsters, have long histories of receiving incentives. They might include: handouts,

certificates, T-shirts, free and inexpensive books, buttons, badges, patches, pins, bumper stickers, discount coupons, snacks, chances to hob-nob with the stars, and free beer. Pile on the incentives until the Clinics are well accepted. Then, reduce them gradually. Plan so that the purposes, reputation and content of the Clinics become the primary incentives for adult participation.

Resource Centers And Materials

Several convenient locations can be established where youth sport materials can be accumulated for circulation and study. Holdings can include: books, magazines, slides, charts, overhead transparencies, video tapes, plus other materials. A list of Recommended References is presented herein.

Program Review And Evaluation

It could be valuable to establish a systematic method of determining how the Clinics influence the participants. The injury rate and injury reduction presents an interesting area for evaluation. The last section of this chapter presents several other areas worth considering. Yet another approach to "quality control" would be to seek the assistance of local university or community college faculty. In the larger universities, in particular, faculties are required to conduct research. Professors in sociology, psychology, medical schools, and health, physical education or recreation might like to use your program and its participants as research subjects.

Sustaining The Clinics From Season To Season

To sustain the Clinics from season to season, recruit training instructors from the community as well as from the volunteers who go through the Clinics. Good instructors will emerge. They will demonstrate their abilities on the fields and courts, as well as in the Clinics. Actively recruit them. The strength of this approach is that the instructors are drawn from among those who are involved with the kids day-to-day. Most of the recruits should feel comfortable teaching their favorite aspect of the program after progressing through the third stage of the Clinics. At the same time, some material, such as that contained in the sport medicine and evaluation units, is quite new, complex, and ever-changing. Professional people can be recruited to handle the more complex content material.

Content Material Of Clinics For Coaches And Parents

There is no body of evidence to suggest precisely what should appear in a training program for coaches and parents. The content material in these Coaches Clinics is based on the authoritative opinion of many youth sport people, what educators and trainers commonly include in their programs, plus what is known about kids and sport. Your Clinics may be put into operation as they are presented herein, or modified to suit your local needs and resources. If Clinics are conducted based on what

is presented here, please acknowledge Beyond X's and O's as the source of your information. A line of credit or footnote will be sufficient and should read:

Taken from Beyond X's and O's and used with the permission of Jack Hutslar. The book is available for \$8.95, plus shipping, from The North American Youth Sport Institute, 4985 Oak Garden Drive, Kernersville, NC 27284, Telephone 336 784-4926. Orders for 10 or more may be purchased at discount rates.

Review

The importance of developing your own youth sport-training program cannot be overstated. Volunteer coach-leaders determine what happens to the players on the fields and courts. Clinics are a positive step in positive programming. Develop a systematic and step-wise training program for your adult leaders. It establishes the goals and methods to be used in your program. Present your messages frequently so they are always in the mind of your leaders - - administrators, coaches, parents, officials - - to guide their actions. Add zip to the program by presenting the clinics in an attractive package. Adopt a yearly slogan that will help signal the direction you are taking. Make your words come alive on the fields and courts. Ask your players to submit their ideas for slogans. Some that might get you thinking include:

Let's put the kids first.

I'm a 100%er. I play for the Kids Sport Association.

Positive steps toward positive programming for kids.

For those who are serious about kids having fun through sport.

Playing today. Playing everyday.

Playing today to play tomorrow.

Fun is the name of the game.

It is not whether you win or lose, but how much you get to play.

It is what you learn after you know it all that really counts.

This day is for the kids.

This day is for the kids who want to play but have to sit on the bench and watch.

Old players were young players.

This is kids' country.

Kids fever. Catch it.

Be a 100%er.

If I am not good enough today, when will I be good enough?

Play hard. Play. Fair. Have fun.

Drug Abuse Prevention

Alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse are among the more serious social problems in North America today. These substances are particularly harmful to children and young adults. Their effects can be seen in any table that describes the leading causes of death. Almost every category of death is related to either alcohol, tobacco or drug abuse. Heart disease, cancer and accidents are three leading examples.

Important signs of heart disease have been found among kids and young soldiers. More dramatically, teenage deaths have increased where state driving and drinking laws have been lowered to 18 years of age. The messages are clear. First, as medical science finds cures, death becomes more of an issue of lifestyle and abuse rather than disease. Second, substance abuse increases sickness and death rates among all age groups.

Substance abuse can be defined as self-administered dosages of legal and illegal substances taken in extra-clinical amounts for medical and non-medical use for social and experimental reasons. It has no age limits and it can begin in childhood.

Substance abuse is considered a disease. About 10 per cent of the population appears to be very susceptible to drug dependency. For youth who experiment with drugs it means extra years of added problems. Children are immature in many respects. During this time their nervous, emotional and biological systems can be altered with drugs more so than adults. This results in abnormal development. The permanent effects of alcohol and drugs can be seen on the mental capacity of adults. These and other more severe problems are possible when drug abuse starts in childhood.

This is not an imaginary problem. Drug abuse is now common among the younger age groups. Multi-substance abuse, including the use of alcohol with other drugs, is equally common. This increases the problems that might develop since each substance has its own pharmacological effect on the body. The result, prior to death, is that our image of typical skid row bums and vagrants no longer holds true. Now these abusers bottom out in their late teens and middle to late twenties.

Drug abuse prevention has built in problems. First, drugs are glorified by many famous persons as well as older "friends." Second, many adults set bad examples of pill popping and drinking for the youngsters around them. Finally, hitting the ball or making the shot provides immediate feedback about your performance. In contrast to this, the negative effects of drug abuse may not appear for some time. This makes it difficult to convince youngsters that drug abuse can be serious, even life threatening.

ALCOHOL is the main culprit in substance abuse, if the finger can be pointed in one direction. Drinking is common. Alcohol is attractively packaged by the industry through the media, and it is easy to obtain. Drinking like your parents' drink is the "adult" thing to do. Problems related to alcohol are very common in our society. It is said to be a contributing factor in 50 per cent or more of this nation's fire deaths, drownings, traffic accidents, suicides and spouse abuse. It is not likely that alcohol will be removed from our society. That great experiment failed once. However, we can educate our children and our players about alcohol and drinking. It is best that our kids learn about this and other powerful of drugs at home. That is where all education starts. See Table 8-2. A Potpourri of Statistics on Substance Abuse by Youth, to better understand drug abuse.

Table 8-2

*A POTPOURRI OF STATISTICS
ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY YOUTH*

- The average beginning age of alcohol use is 12.5 years.
- 19% of 12 to 17 year olds have serious drinking problems (1982 data).
- There are twice as many 14-17 year old problem drinkers as there are adult problem drinkers in America.
- About 30% of all males and females, ages 12 to 20 smoke.
- 14.7% of the 12 to 17 year olds smoke (1982 data).
- Most teenagers who smoke regularly are from families where one or both parents smoke.
- The average beginning age of marijuana use is 13 years.
- Among one Sunbelt city's 6th graders, 2% had tried cocaine, 4% amphetamines, 9% marijuana, 16% inhalants, 16% cigarettes, and 36% alcohol (1983 data).
- More than 50% of teenage deaths are alcohol/drug related.
- 50% or more of all adult fire deaths, drownings, traffic accidents, suicides, and spouse abuse are alcohol related.
- Alcohol problems alone cost the American economy over \$120 billion (1983 data).
- 10% to 15% of all people with alcohol and drug problems recover.
- Recovery from alcohol and drug abuse problems is about 5% without family involvement and about 50% when the family is involved.

Why Do Youngsters Abuse Drugs? Today, some believe that youth get involved with drugs for the same reason that people climb mountains - -because it is there. The use of certain drugs is an "in thing" and kids imitate what they see at home, with friends and on the television. When drugs appear to be everywhere, the stigma or resistance against them is reduced. They become acceptable. In fact, people routinely say that the best place to obtain drugs is in and around schools. Pills and other drugs have become popular because they act faster than beer and are easier to conceal than a bottle of alcohol. Drugs may be everywhere for kids to see.

For older youth, drug abuse may take on greater significance. That is, drug abuse may be an alternative to problems with parents and friends, real or imagined, lack of

recognition or accomplishment, or serious psychological problems. Whatever the reason for drug abuse, it solves no problems and creates new disorders vastly more serious than the original difficulty.

Basic Terms. A few basic terms associated with substance abuse are presented for your review. Study them and then seek more specific information as needed.

Drugs cause what is referred to as **DEPENDENCY**, of which there are two types. **PSYCHOLOGICAL** dependency occurs when a mental or emotional need for a substance develops. Tobacco, cocaine and chocolate are familiar examples. **PHYSICAL** dependence occurs when the substance alters the way the body functions. The basic human physiology adapts to foreign substances. We develop a **TOLERANCE** to some drugs. That is, larger and larger doses are required to produce the same effect. Then **WITHDRAWAL** occurs when the drug is not used on schedule. Here the body reverses the physical dependency process. Generally tolerance and withdrawal are associated with physical dependence while psychological dependence does not produce permanent physical changes in body chemistry and physiology. The latter is "all in your head," so to speak. It may be emotionally difficult to break a psychological habit (e.g., smoking, overeating, candy) but the physical symptoms associated with withdrawal and physical dependence can be severe and life threatening. These symptoms include sweating, headaches, muscle cramps, and convulsions. Other ailments can accompany the problems of substance abusers due to poor personal hygiene, habits and eating patterns.

The substances of abuse fall in three broad categories known as stimulants, depressants and hallucinogens. **STIMULANTS** affect the central nervous system and speed up the body processes. This is felt when too much coffee consumed. Common stimulants are amphetamines, uppers or speed, cocaine and caffeine. **DEPRESSANTS** slow down the body processes through the same channel. Common depressants are barbiturates, opiates like heroin and codeine, and tranquilizers. Stimulants and depressants can produce psychological dependence while depressants more commonly cause just physical dependence. Both alcohol and marijuana are depressants but only alcohol produces physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms. **HALLUCINOGENS** or psychedelic drugs are psycho-active substances that alter moods, personality and behavior. Common drugs in this category are LSD, PCP or angel dust, DOM, and THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. Generally these substances produce neither psychological nor physical dependence but greater amounts are required to produce the same effects. This is referred to as building up a tolerance for the substance, as was previously noted

Substances Abused. The more commonly abused substances are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalants, amphetamines and cocaine. Alcohol is fermented or distilled from grains, fruit or vegetables then flavored and colored for its distinctive appearance. Beer, wine and whiskey contain differing amounts of alcohol in the same volume. Therefore it takes more beer than wine to produce the same effect.

The “pop” wines have been slightly sweetened and flavored to make them more popular among young drinkers and non-drinkers.

Recent studies have noted that a couple of beers or a glass of red wine each day are not harmful and may be healthful for adults. The same cannot be said for children due primarily to their immature state of physical development. Unlike adults, youngsters tend to drink until they get sick, pass out, or the alcohol is gone. Weekly “binge” drinking is common among high school and college students.

TOBACCO is smoked, chewed or “dipped.” It is well established that tobacco is directly related to cancer and heart disease. Unfortunately smoking is one of the more common “vices” that children see their parents do. People who smoke, like drinkers, have many more health problems than do their abstaining counterparts. Alcohol and tobacco use are linked with people who are multiple drug users. Both substances are easily obtained by children.

MARIJUANA is smoked in cigarettes called joints or reefers, in pipes, and is sometimes eaten. It produces a relaxed state, causes varying degrees of visual distortion, and is intoxicating like alcohol. Since some people regard it the same as alcohol, they favor de-criminalizing it to better control the use of it. Both drugs are harmful and widely used by athletes. The strong relationship between drunk driving and accidents, auto and boat, should convince all athletes that sports and drugs do not mix. Reflex action, physical skills and thought are diminished by drug use.

INHALENTS are psycho-active central nervous system depressants. They are chemical solvents, sprays, glues and anesthetics, and are used more frequently by younger children than older teenagers. Their fumes are usually captured in some type of container and sniffed. Some cause psychological, physical dependence and tolerance problems. Chronic use and abuse can cause irregular heartbeat, brain damage, and respiratory depression. Inhalants like glue, or cleaning and lighter fluids are usually found around the house making them quite accessible to younger children.

AMPHETAMINES are psycho-active prescription drugs and their illegally manufactured look-alikes. They are called uppers or speed, come in pill and crystal form, and are stimulants. Abuse leads to psychological dependence. When taken in large amounts they cause hallucinations and euphoria followed by long periods of irritability, depression and sleep. It is common for abusers to take uppers and downers with alcohol. When these drugs are taken together, they tend to cancel each others negative effects. This smoothes the transition period after which the full effects of the drugs are felt. Mixing drugs is dangerous. They can boost each others regular effects beyond what would occur if the drugs were taken separately. Mixing drugs in random dosages is even more dangerous.

COCAINE is a drug that is inhaled through the nose, injected or swallowed. It was the high status drug of the 1980’s and is referred to as Coke or Snow. Cocaine works briefly and produces hallucinations and delusions plus erratic behavior. This brief

action prompts repeated use over short periods of time. Continued use causes psychological but not physical dependence. Mental depression occurs when use is discontinued, as with amphetamines. Chronic cocaine sniffers or snorters harm the membrane surface inside the nose. It is an expensive substance but has fallen into more common use.

Other frequently abused substances include: barbiturates, caffeine, opiates, PCP, Quaaludes, tranquilizers and valium. See your local drug council for descriptive flyers on each of these substances. As a rule, ergogenic products that aid performance and muscle building substances like steroids are not used by the pre-teenage age groups.

How Can You Tell If Your Child Is Using Drugs? It takes some detective work and knowing what to look for in order to tell if a child is on drugs. The National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) presented these signs in an informational flier. As you inspect this abbreviated list remember that you must distinguish between the changes that come with aging and maturation in young children from the negative changes that occur with drug use. The signs include:

1. Is the child changing?
2. Is the child becoming less responsive?
3. Is the child changing friends, dress code or interests?
4. Is the child becoming more difficult to communicate with?
5. Is the child beginning to show physical and/or mental signs of deterioration?
6. Is the behavior of the child becoming more intolerable?
7. Is the child becoming careless about drug use?
8. Is the child becoming dependent on drugs and paying for it by stealing from the home and friends?
9. Does the child attempt suicide? 4 (footnote 4)

4 How Can I tell If My Child Is Using Drugs was modified and used with permission of the Parents' Resource and Information For Drug Education (PRIDE). For copies of this and other materials write PRIDE. Woodruff Building. Volunteer Service Center, Suite 1216, 100 Edgewood Avenue. Atlanta. GA 30303 or telephone 1 800 241-9746 (USA) or 1 800 282-4241 (GA).

Parents can spot changes when they grow with their children and are involved closely with them in their lives. Friends, clothing, attitudes, school work and grades, family contacts, pets and favorite activities are common in the lives of most children.

Changes in these events signal may signal problems. Look for the causes. Ask questions. Get involved. Being a continual parent is not an easy task. Nevertheless it is much easier to maintain close relationships with your children than to deal with the alternatives that appear with drug induced problems.

Drug abuse causes problems for the user as well as those who associate with the user - - parents, friends and teachers. Generally speaking, drugs cause subtle to marked personality changes, introversion and isolationism, abnormal social behavior, family problems, criminal actions in order to pay for the drugs, increased incidences of illness, and ultimately death.

For the user, drugs create artificial states of euphoria, feelings of well being and escape. Unlike life, these chemically induced states can be obtained without effort or accomplishment.

In contrast to drug use, many people now prefer to abstain from all chemicals, even prescription drugs. Some extend this to food preservatives and the common aspirin. They prefer to obtain their good feelings from healthful living. This includes, as trite as it sounds, a balanced diet; plenty of exercise through sports, running, and recreation; yard work; proper rest; meaningful work; and active leisure pursuits that enrich and fulfill one's life. The process of building an interesting and enjoyable life produces the euphoria that comes with accomplishment.

What can you do? The basic rules of parenting are straight forward. Love your children. Maintain steady contact with them through their social activities, little talks, and other family activities. Get them involved in and keep them involved in a variety of activities. Teach your children how to live, learn and grow. Parents do not have to smother their children with attention and gifts, but they are required to stay in touch with what is going on in their lives. School, church, sports, crafts, recreation and family activities are the traditional ways this has been accomplished successfully in the past. Do not let drugs become the "event" that pulls your family together. Work continually with your children and teach them how to live in a free society. Many nice things happen to those who are able to maintain a reasonably close relationship within the family.

What can you as a parent or volunteer coach do when you find that your youngsters, players or neighborhood kids are involved with drugs? For starters, do not ignore the problem and avoid trying to solve the problem yourself. Instead, talk with the child and the parents. Refer parents to the many community counseling centers or the school counselor. There are many drug hotlines, both local and national, if anonymity is desired. In some instances, private counseling may be a preferred option. Look under drugs in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book to find out where to turn for help in your community. Seek professional help from experts. Table 8-3, lists Sources of Information on Drug Abuse Prevention.

Table 8-3
SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION

General Sources

- Alcohol in the telephone book
- Drugs in the telephone book.
- Health education teachers and textbooks used in college classes.
- Library in community or college.
- Local drug council.
- Local FBI office, drug education officer.
- Local Police Department, drug education officer.

Specific Sources

- Al-Anon/Alateen Family Group Headquarters, P.O. Box 182, Madison Square Station. New York, NY 10159-0182. Telephone 212 683-1771.
- Cocaine Hotline: 1-800-COCAINE
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Public Affairs, 1405 "Eye" Street NW, Washington. D.C. 20537, Telephone 202 633-1230.
- Narcotics Anonymous (NA). World Service Office, Inc. 16155 Wyandotte Street, Van Nuys, CA 91406-3423. Telephone 818 780-3951 or 818 997-3822 (hotline).
- National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth. 1820 Franwell Avenue, Suite 16, Silver Spring. MD 20902, Telephone 1 800 554-5437.
- National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) , 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville. MD 20857. Telephone 1 800 638-2045.
- National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) Woodruff Building, Volunteer Service Center, Suite 1216. 100 Edgewood Avenue. Atlanta, GA 30303. Telephone 1 800 241-9746 (USA) or 1 800 282-4241 (GA)

What about youth sport as a solution? Sport provides a good "exercise" option in healthful living. It can have a good influence on youngsters, occupy their free time, and put youngsters in contact with influential adults. Unfortunately many college and pro players have become involved with drugs. Since youngsters usually idolize these big time sports stars, kids may be learning more bad than good habits from the stars. On the positive side, good sport models may help youngsters turn away from drugs and adopt drug-free lifestyles.

We have no control over how big name stars conduct their lives. We can control what occurs in the youth sport programs in which our kids play. Youth sport association and youth agencies can initiate drug education programs on their own or in conjunction

with other community agencies or school groups. Sport directors can start by including drug education materials and presentations in their league meetings with the players, with the parents, and with the coaches. Drug education can be effective when two or three large group presentations for the players are made during the season.

Coaches may feel inadequate about presenting drug education material. Yet, they are among the more influential people in the lives of children during the sport season. At this time, youth leaders can make short weekly lecture/demonstrations about drugs before practice. A five-minute "huddle" could include a description of one substance abused. Alcohol this week; marijuana next week. After practice, a one minute review would serve to remind the players about the important points of alcohol abuse. This type of small group presentation by coaches, when combined with league programs and parent education becomes extremely effective in reaching the kids with the correct message.

A school group in New York state called Super Teams has prepared written drug abuse prevention contracts for the players to sign. This can be extended to coaches and parents as well. The purpose of the contract, as with any contract, is to establish desired performance or behavior standards in writing. Contracts can be written so the players may not drink alcohol during the season, may not smoke any substance during the season, may not take any pills or medicines without consulting with their parents and family physician, and may not experiment with any foreign substances during the season. In some instances, it could be written that the players might be required to discourage at least one person during the season from using any kind of drug.

A large high school drug education project is now underway through the joint effort of the National High School Athletic Coaches Association (NHSACA) and the Public Affairs Department of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) of the U.S. Government. The objective of the program was to use high school coaches to reduce drug abuse among their students by 50 to 75 per cent over a five year period. Coaches were to become more familiar with their players, prevent drug abuse among their players, and start prevention programs in the schools. The program was described in free material that was obtained from the DEA. This model, based on a Cincinnati, Ohio high school project, could be effective in youth programs.

Drug abuse prevention demands broadly based action. Drugs are portrayed as a "socially acceptable" if not attractive anti-adult activity among youth. So drug education must overcome this mind-set. De-glorifying drugs may be particularly important at the younger age levels where independence and individual decision-making are not as strongly developed as among older youth.

The following suggestion concludes this section. Do not exaggerate or distort the truth about drugs in order to scare your children into compliance. This may cause them to lose faith in you later when they find out differently. You want your children's trust and cooperation. Be straight with your kids. It is the best policy.

Review

Some parents may fear that their youngsters will learn how to use these hazardous substances through drug education programs. There is some possibility that this is true. However, it is more likely that children will come to see the real picture of drug abuse when their parents help them acquire accurate information. Prevention is the key to drug abuse and there is no better place to start it than with your own children at home. Parents see their children and know them better than do any other person and are the most influential people in their young lives.

The successful prevention of substance abuse takes the form of childhood education by parents, coaches, teachers, and community leaders. Start now and do it continually. The alternative is to spend countless hours looking for signs of abuse, worrying about what your children are doing when out of your sight, and treating substance abuse problems. In the case of drugs, it is quite true that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Ask any parent whose has dealt with the death of their child or is dealing with drug problems at home. Children require love, attention, and guidance that mothers and fathers can best provide. Teach your kids how to live drug free.

Reading: A Basic Skill For Kids

Active participation in sport, recreation and physical education is a natural part of growing up for many boys and girls. It is enjoyable and contributes to their total fitness or equality of life.

Adults who supervise, lead and coach youngsters in sport programs share a common trait. They all tend to encourage their better players to work hard so they can go on to play at the college and professional levels. In fact, nothing pleases youth coaches more than to see their former players become high school, college and pro athletes. However this climb is cut short when young stars are unable to do well in the classroom, particularly read and write.

Does this really occur? Yes! All too frequently. Noted sport sociologist Harry Edwards of UC-Berkeley said that as many as 35 percent of the black athletes who are offered grants-in-aid to play at the college level cannot accept them due to deficiencies in the classroom.

You may not think that this is unusual. However, keep in mind that the better players have been pointed and prepped for high school, college and pro sports and big contracts through much of their early lives. This makes classroom deficiencies a major shame, if not a crime. In that regard, the following information should give language arts a boost. Researchers have found strong relationships between poor reading skills and:

- poor school performance,
- behavior problems,

- drop outs,
- child abuse, and
- juvenile crime.

The classroom performance of college athletes has received a great deal of attention in athletic departments. Many now employ full time counselors whose sole responsibility is to monitor and improve the educational performance of their "student-athletes." Look for these tutorial and enrichment programs to become even more popular at the high school and youth level in the years ahead.

The move toward formal tutoring for athletes should be taken as a signal. Too many parents and youth coaches allow children to go through school and become super athletes while ignoring their class work. In fact, some coaches have actually discouraged youngsters from doing well in school because it is "sissified." Similarly, black youngsters have been discouraged by their peers from doing well in school. Why? Getting good grades is a sign that they are "acting white." These actions are completely contrary to what our kids should be learning from adult leaders and their peers.

Our youngsters should be involved in healthy sports and recreation activities. By the same token, we should see to it that our kids do well in school. Learning to read is one of the basic skills of life, not to mention top level sports. In fact, there are few things more important for children than learning to read.

This is a good time to get serious about the reading skills of your children and your players. Some learn-to-read materials are presented below. Scan the list and then send for more information. Other information can be found on the Internet. See that your children and your players become as good at their books as they are at their sport skills.

Reading Enrichment Material

- Biography Today: Sports Series. Vol. I in 1992, II in 1995, III in 1998. Personality profiles of sports people for readers age nine and up. Omnigraphics, Inc., Penobscot Building. Detroit, MI 48226, 800 234-1340.
- Fitness Finders. 133 Teft Road, P.O. Box 507, Spring Arbor, MI. Age graded health and fitness workbooks and coloring books. Ask for their catalog.
- High Interest Easy Reading. 4th ed. National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801, 96 pp.. 1984. \$5.00. Things to read.
- International Paper Company, P.O. Box 954, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10010. 12 pages of how-to guides to develop better language skills.

- Kusnetz, Len. Your Child Can Be A Super Reader. Learning House Publishers, 38 South Street, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577, 141 pp., 1982, \$4.95. How-to stuff plus sources of free materials.
- Newsweek English Program. Box 414, Livingston, NJ 07039 to receive free packet. Improve reading, vocabulary, writing and grammar.
- Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 500, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C. 20560. How to start a book give-away chapter in your community and more.
- Sport Scene. Articles include examples of reading and other enrichment programs from around the nation. For parents, coaches, teachers, directors and community leaders. For a free sample, write: North American Youth Sport Institute, 4985 Oak Garden Drive, Kernersville, NC 27284.
- Your local metropolitan newspaper. Ask about their student reading program.
- Speed Reading. Do not neglect your better readers. Introduce them to new reading skills such as this.

Plus

- Children's Literature Association, Department of English, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.
- Children's Theatre Association of America, American Theatre Association, 1000 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington. D.C. 20005.
- Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.
- Creative Competitions, Inc., P.O. Box 27, Glassboro, NJ 08t)28.
- Gifted and Talented Clearinghouse 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.
- National Association for Gifted Children, 2070 Country Road H, St. Paul, MN 55112.
- National Committee for Citizens in Education, Suite 410, Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, MD 21044-2396.
- Society of Children's Book Writers, Box 296. Mar Vista Station, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

- World Council for Gifted and Talented, Inc., Box 218, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027. Ask for a sample of their newsletter.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a form of research and is considered one of the more important steps in the planning process. It occurs generally at the end of the season. In actual practice, it is an ongoing activity that can be unplanned or planned, informal or formal. A standardized evaluation tool is like a thermometer. It provides repeated data, within limits, on the same topic.

Informal evaluation occurs regularly as we walk around, observe, and listen. Management by walking around (MBWA) may be the most common type of evaluation. Other forms occur by keeping logs and diaries or asking open-ended interview questions. In conducting informal evaluations, there may a tendency to seek only negative comments and events. This type of "getting the goods" on someone can gloss over the positive aspects of the people in your program. In order to obtain a balanced view of your subject, we have developed this Positive-Negative Critical Incidence Test. See Figure 8- 1.

This is an easy to use tool that will provide some objective information about what people are doing in your program. The purpose of this test is to aid you in identifying positive and negative actions, words, or attitudes that you can hear, see or otherwise detect in the behavior of your participants. As events of note occur, number each one consecutively, place the number in the appropriate cell or box, and then describe the incident briefly at the bottom of the form. Record everything or record at regular intervals. Examples include: 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off; 15 minutes on; 15 minutes off. Then tabulate the data on a master sheet at weekly intervals, and at the end of the season.

*Figure 8-1
Positive-Negative Critical Incidence Test*

Location _____ Recorder _____

Date _____ Time _____ Recording Interval _____

Other Information _____

Directions: Identify and tally each positive and negative action, word, or attitude seen or heard. Record everything or record at some specified time interval. Number each incident, place only the number in the appropriate cell, and describe the incident below.

Who	Positives	Undecided	Negatives
------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Players

Leader /
coaches

Referees &
Officials

Parents

Others

Incident Descriptions

Incident	Time	Name and brief description
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____

This is a rather crude instrument, in comparison to research tests, but it will provide a standardized basis (i.e., total number of positive and negative incidences during the recording period) for analysis. It can be used with players, coaches, parents, and supervisors to evaluate many things including the influences of your Coaches Clinics on the participants at practice sessions, games, and other events. If you like the results, continue with what you are doing. If you find too many negative events, intensify your efforts to introduce more material into your training sessions about human relations skills and being a positive influence on youngsters.

The Youth Sport Program Evaluation Form, presented in Appendix C, was developed to parallel the material presented in this book. The major areas covered in the Form include: program, equipment and facilities, training and personnel, practice and games, budget, and evaluation. The Youth Sport Evaluation Form is biased toward 100% participation. This means, if your program practices are geared toward providing participation opportunities for all, you should score higher than programs that favor select or elite player groups and authoritarian control. The Form can be reproduced and used as it is, or modified. Add or delete questions to better evaluate and analyze your situation. When using this Form or a modified version of it, please send us a copy of the results for compilation and future reference. Send your comments and criticisms as well.

Evaluation is a step in the planning process and a method to help deliver better programming. However, it does not result in better programming in itself. Furthermore, it

is no better than the purposes for which it is intended. It can even detract from the purposes of the organization. Over-testing is one example. It is time consuming and may provide more data than can be used effectively. Therefore, why test? Be alert that program goals do not become lost in the zeal to test.

There are several basic fundamentals that should be observed to improve the accuracy of testing, evaluation, and research. VALIDITY is first. All tests must answer the question, do they measure what they are supposed to measure? Next, RELIABILITY asks, do they measure the same thing every time? Then, and its importance varies, OBJECTIVITY requires that different people give the same test and get the same results?

Last is the COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE. Let us emphasize this for a moment. When conducting any type of evaluation, it is useful to have something with which to compare your own results. This can usually be a previous administration of the same test. The comparative frame of reference gives some basis for evaluation and change. Without it, it is like taking your temperature, finding a reading of 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit, but knowing nothing about normal body temperature.

Evaluation should take place from several points of view or perspectives - - log or diary, interviews, walking around, formal tests. Closed questions, such as those presented in the Form yield answers only about those topics. If it is not asked, it will not be answered. When open-ended interviewing is added, it allows the participants to respond from another perspective with what impresses or bothers them. Logs and walking around add two more perspectives. This breadth of testing will provide directors with more accurate and unbiased information about their programs that can be obtained from one perspective testing. Norman K. Denzin (1970), research sociologist, called this TRIANGULATION. When systematic evaluation is a regular part of the planning and management process, better programs can be developed for the participants.

Summary: Youth Sport Projects

The primary purpose of this chapter has been to suggest some league and program features that can be adopted to give you greater influence and control over what happens in your program. A more complete list of projects follows. Undertake these projects as needed for the benefit of your participants. See Table 8-4.

Table 8-4
YOUTH SPORT PROJECTS

- Youth sport councils.
- Quarterly forums addressing popular topics.
- Resource centers.
- Training programs for directors.
- Coaches clinics for coaches and parents prior to each season.
- Youth assemblies.

- Regular preseason orientation sessions.
- Coach-parent introductions.
- League early action panels.
- Parent meetings.

- Media links.
- Radio programs.
- TV shows on PBS or commercial networks.
- Regular publications like SPORT SCENE.
- Pre-season clinics and camps for the players.

- Pre-game clinics on rules and skills.
- Pre and post game huddles and chalk talks.
- Research centers with data banks.
- Evaluation, review and testing centers.
- Injury reporting system.

- Pilot program.
- Consulting services.
- Model programs in balance, sport reading or enrichment.
- Alcohol and drug abuse prevention program.
- Conferences for league scorers and reporters.

- Courses of study for degree and non-degree credit.
- Scholarly conferences.

The state of youth sport is such that chaos exists in some places while other areas are peaceful. Where conflict and unrest exist, positive steps can be taken to bring about more harmonious relationships. These league structures and projects are presented to place the goals of youth sport before the adult participants continually. The objective is to make youth sport a 12 month concern that over-rides the influence of big time Revenue Sports.

It does not appear that any group can assume the responsibility for changing the face of youth sport. As such, the responsibility for leadership and change must come from the parents and program directors. They must show the participants what is appropriate for youth in sport. To do this, structures and projects must be established that allow the leaders to assume influence over what happens in their programs. Desirable outcomes can be designed into the program by establishing league or organization - - wide features that present positive learning experiences for the participants. Some people may assume no leadership. This allows coaches and parents to take the programs in any number of directions, some negative and some positive. The alternative is to assume active leadership through cooperative participation and conduct activities that all can learn from, grow with, and enjoy.