Sports and Positive Youth Development

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Overview

• Model of PYD through sport

• Examples of implicit and explicit processes to PYD

• Linking research and practice
Why Study Youth Sport?

• High participation numbers
• Public funding
• Premises
  – Fitness and health
  – Growth and development
  – Obesity reduction
  – Life skills for post-sport careers

Image source: Forbes.com
Youth Sport Participation Outcomes

Source: Holt and Knight (2014)

Positive outcomes:
- Self-esteem
- Emotional regulation
- Problem-solving
- Goal attainment
- Social Skills
- Grade point averages
- School attendance
- Fruit consumption
- Contraceptive use
- Use of illegal drugs
- School dropout

Negative outcomes:
- Misuse of alcohol
- Delinquent behaviors
- Use of performance-enhancing drugs
- Undesirable social norms
- Injury
- Perspective-taking
- Moral development

Child and Adolescent Athletes → Traditional Forms of Youth Sport → Peers Parents Coaches Officials Administrators
Key Questions

• How can youth sport be used to ‘produce’ positive developmental outcomes?

• What works, under what circumstances, for whom?

• What will it take to use research evidence to improve the delivery of youth sport?

— (Coalter, 2010; Holt et al., 2013; Holt, 2016; Levermore, 2008).
Positive Youth Development

• A way of thinking about and working with young people.

• Youth as having ‘resources to be developed’ rather than ‘problems to be solved.’

• PYD is the result of mutually influential relations among individuals and their contexts.

• (Damon, 2004; Lerner et al., 2015).
A Model of PYD Through Sport

Distal Ecological Systems
(community, policy, culture)

Implicit Process

Individual

PYD Climate
Peers
Parents
Adults

Explicit Process

Skill Building Activities
New activities and sport skills
Life skill building activities
Transfer activities

PYD Outcomes
Personal
Social
Physical

(Holt et al., IRSEP, 2016)
PYD Climate: Implicit Process

• PARENTS
  – Autonomy-support/authoritative styles
    – (Holt & Knight, 2014; Holt et al., 2008a, 2009; Knight & Holt, 2013; Sapieja et al., 2011)

• PEERS
  – Social complexity, managing conflict, learning to deal with ‘different’ types of people
    • (Holt et al., 2008b, 2008c, 2012)

• COACHES
  – Support autonomy, clear expectations, model life skills
    • (Black & Holt, 2009; Breakey et al., 2009; Holt & Hogg, 2002; Tamminen & Holt, 2012)
Implicit Process Program Example

Study 1: THE WORKERS

- Personal and Social Benefits
  - Sport as an outlet
  - Opportunities for relationship building and mentoring

Study 2: THE YOUNG MEN

- Personal and Social Benefits
  - Therapy & Relationships
  - Community
  - Action & Achievement

- Broader Issues
  - Enduring constraints
  - Need for a coordinated approach

Holt et al. (2013, PSE)  
Holt et al. (2015, JSEP)
Skill Building Activities: Explicit Focus

• High expectations and accountability
• Role model desired behaviors
• Use keywords/phrases
• Emphasize academic performance
• Include team building/cooperative activities
• Use teachable moments to discuss transfer

• (Holt et al., 2016)
Explicit Process Program Example: TRY-Sport

- 3 sports (basketball, soccer, volleyball)
- 3 life skills (teamwork, leadership, conference)
- Practices structured around a life skill
- ‘Spotlighting’ and reflection to emphasize transfer

• (Holt et al., 2013)
Slums Dunk / Hoops for Kids
When is Enough Enough?

• (Social) scientists will never be satisfied we have enough evidence to make change.

• Sport organizations are resistant to change (Stenling, 2015) but want to use research (Holt et al., in progress).
Linking Researchers With Stakeholders
The trusted source for evidence-based youth sport & positive youth development (PYD) information. Sharing knowledge between researchers & the sport community.

Canada
Joined February 2016

Pinned Tweet
PYD SportNET @PYDsportNET · Aug 18
Have you read the 2nd issue of #TheSportParent? Research-based info to help you & your #kids in the world #sport!

The Sport Parent (Spring 2016)
issuu.com

In reply to Camilla Knight:
PYD SportNET @PYDsportNET · Sep 30
@cjnight @TheCPSU We're happy we could help!

This week, we're throwing it back to this great piece on how #kids want their
Take Home Messages

• Youth sport can produce positive youth development through implicit and explicit processes

• Please join us in linking research and practice @PYD SportNET
Team and Partners

• CASA Lab Team
  – Kacey Neely, Colin Deal, Meghan Ingstrup, Shannon Pynn, Kurtis Pankow, Christine Smyth

• PYD SportNET Partners
  – Dany MacDonald, Jessica Fraser-Thomas, Leisha Strachan, Martin Camiré, Katherine Tamminnen