

## Socioeconomic Impacts on Youth Athletics- Analysis Study

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### Abstract

Socioeconomic, environmental factors, including family, safety, social and financial classification, and geographical location, all significantly impact youth's participation in sports. This study explores solutions and alternatives to assisting youth who may not have access to sports for socioeconomic reasons. The analysis assumes that without external financial assistance, youth athletes from lower socioeconomic classes may not have the chance to acquire the resources necessary to participate in athletics. Using the open-ended interview technique, the researchers conducted a mix of qualitative and quantitative data analysis to collect data from the participants. Participants were selected from multiple touchpoints: parents, coaches, social service workers, school system representatives, and local parks and recreation department representatives. Individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds in the surrounding counties of Tallahassee, Florida, including Gadsden, Wakulla, and Jefferson, were also considered as subjects to help determine whether there are differences based on the geographical location. The researchers completed twenty-five (25) interviews that took approximately thirty minutes each. The research found that; (1) youth athletics provides an excellent opportunity for youth development on and off the field. Youth athletic participants adopted many skills like following directions, organizational skills, and social skills. (2) youth's accessibility to sports depended on resources such as income, location of residence, and transportation ability. Moreover, the social aspect of involvement and support was another factor of accessibility. Communities that lacked mentorship and role models caused disinterest in the child's wantedness to participate in a sport.

**Key Words:** Youth – Sport, Athletics, Youth- Athletics - Social Environment, Family, Socio-Economic-Impact, Commercialized Sports, Park, Recreational Youth-Sports

### Introduction:

Youth athletics today does not look as it did fifty years ago, more so twenty years ago, when playing a game was the norm; something that was accepted and encouraged by most parents to ensure their children were learning social skills, improving motor skills, and just having fun while playing with their peers. Consistent research has been completed that focuses on the positive effects of physical activity and sports on youth in society and why sports are important. Recently there has been more talk on whether youth sports are safe, especially for contact sports like football and soccer due to medical conditions like Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy [CTE] and the potential effects on individuals. The purpose of this research topic was to explore how different environmental factors affect families, safety, family socioeconomic backgrounds, and how other neighborhoods impacts youth athletics. The average median income in the City of Tallahassee is **\$40,947**, with 28.4% of citizens living at or below poverty, with African Americans followed by White and Hispanic or Latino is the most common racial or ethnic group living in this category. The population of Tallahassee, FL, is (51.8) percent White, (34.8) percent Black, (6.86) percent Hispanic, and (12.3) percent speak a non-English language (DATA USA: Tallahassee, FL, 2015). According to the most recent Tallahassee, Florida population (2020), the racial composition of Tallahassee was White:(56.93) percent, African American:(34.81) percent Asian:(4.43) percent two or more races: (2.60) percent, other race:

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(1.02) percent, Native American:(0.17) percent, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:(0.04) percent. This recent study looked at the most common commercialized sports in the United States. What racial or ethnic group is mainly represented on the professional and collegiate level, environmental factors, and its influence on youth athletics while playing sports were reviewed. The recent study examined potential solutions, and alternatives on ways to assist the youth with having accessibility to sports activities also investigated how youth athletic finance pressure youth athletics parents, transportation cost, participation in a different school, recreation activities within other neighborhoods and counties in Florida, USA. Also, study the importance of whether agencies or sponsors are willing to assist families with a hardship situation if they have a youth interested in and want to participate in youth athletics. However, they have barriers such as finance or transportation and socioeconomic and social environment issues limiting them.

### Review of Literature

"Youth athletics cannot be isolated; it is one facet of a system of related contexts in which youth development occurs. Therefore some youth athletics research has accepted that adopting an ecological approach to youth athletics participation can be helpful (Agans, 2016). Many parents believe that sports help cultivate children in positive ways, in areas of social skills, being healthy, learning responsibility, and organizational skills (Overman, 2014). Youth athletics helping to create good citizenship, improve moral development, and build character by noting that there is no consistent social science support for that claim. While looking at development as a whole, this recent study examined various environmental factors that influence youth development, whether positive or negative. According to (Holt, 20216), looking at sport in a contextual view for action has value to sports scientists monitoring youth development's physical, social, and psychological benefits. The benefits of youth athletics participation vary from person to person and often due to their association and whether sports or extracurricular activities impacted them. Participation in youth activities and sports will help the individuals develop themselves, personal exploration, initiative, improved cognitive, physical skills, collaboration, social skills, and better connections to peers and adults (Overman, 2014).

With this belief, should children be involved in some sports activity no matter their ability or attitude towards sports to achieve the ultimate development into the very best person they can be. Studies have found that youth who participated in sports. By the age of twenty-one (21) to be enrolled in college, they will perform well academically and have higher aspiration goals and more self-esteem as adults (Fitch et al., 2017). Children from lower poverty and affluent neighborhoods are more likely to be successful in overall development into adulthood. A study was completed on long-term effects on some youth who were removed from high poverty and crime-stricken neighborhoods to lower-poverty neighborhoods perform less crime, and the opportunity to have better housing potentially. The study completed by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) called Moving to Opportunity (MTO) found that "MTO had few visible long-term effects on achievement and educational results, physical health, and numerous aspects of risky behavior. Children given to the investigational and Section (8) groups had comparable scores on reading and math accomplishment tests than those in the control group. Young men who participated in the move through MTO exhibited more risks of being involved in behaviors such as smoking than male youth in the control group. Young ladies who moved through MTO experienced decreased engagement in risky behaviors (drinking) and improvements in mental health results than female youth in the control group (Gennetian, 2012).

A study by (Veugelers 2008) found a correlation between neighborhoods and youth athletics on impacting children's health and well-being. Data collected about obesity Florida is among the highest of states in childhood obesity in the ages (10-17) currently at twenty-eight (28.4%), 13th among all states. Many parents and supporters of the sport feel it is one of the first ways to combat obesity and promote being healthy and a reason to eat more nutritious foods. However, are these parents taking into account that most children under age fifteen (15) cannot cook for themselves, purchase groceries, and commit to a healthy lifestyle without their contribution. According to (Suminski, 2011) noted that lower-income neighborhoods are more likely to receive more grants and funds from the government to operate parks and recreation, and even with that, it is noted that these areas have less exposure to amenities and sports in more affluent neighborhoods. As teens mature and continue to be exposed to more independent opportunities, neighborhoods are being formed regarding community relationships local destinations, including schools and shopping centers (Giles, 2009). The family association plays a vital role in whether a child can participate in any sports team or an extracurricular activity. Parental involvement is one of the leading factors that impact youth athletics, whether time, financial and emotional support, and the experience are positive or undesirable. It originated that parents had an essential effect on youths' participation, performance, and pleasure in sport and acknowledged diverse types and levels of parental support.

Moreover, they uncovered that siblings could have both positive and negative effects on the youth athlete, such as being helpful and acting as a role model and equally experiencing feelings of separation, resentment, and jealousy (Bean, 2014). Young athletes appear to be exceptionally influenced by their neighborhood stars or other athletic relatives, celebrities, and mentors who are big sports advocates. Also, young athletes cultural backgrounds and family traditions, within the family perspective, parental behavior at a sporting contest can positively or negatively affect how the child associates with the sport and whether it is something they would like to endure every week or whenever they are engaging in the action align with a study conducted on appropriate and reasonable behaviors for parents to act while attending sports contests, children liked for their parents to be supportive, through various ways of being a supportive parent silently cheering and being able to control their emotions, cheering and dependent on the child, only for them or the team, encouragement, praise, empathy, and protective intervention when the game was getting too rough (Omli & Bjornstal, 2011). The youth-athletes are more likely to continue with an interest in the sport and suffer from less embarrassment at the hand of their parents.

However, the parents who yell throughout the event and cause unwanted attention to their children are likely to increase the disinterest in that particular game or leisure activity. Looking at it from the context of school, parental encouragement for the children to join extracurricular activities is highly favored, however dependent upon whether the training is free or has a cost and if transportation is provided will affect the outcome of successfully being a member. (Smith & Haycock, 2016) reported that there had been consistent data that shows, social class influences what extracurricular activities a child can participate in, with sports being a common ground for all social classes; however, it impacts the level of play some children can continue with involvement if there is a possibility to continue playing outside of the school setting. Family involvement is often seen as a positive engagement regardless of whether the family acts inappropriately while at sporting events. The family can also bond with one another over connected experiences, having life skills reinforced, and providing the face-to-face support needed or associated with positive youth development. According to a study by (Hodge, 2017) School sports are arguably the most accessible for the youth of all socioeconomic backgrounds. K-12, Public schools in the United States are taxpayer-funded and do not require parental support regarding administrative support (e.g., coaches, referees, or administrators).

Some schools can field up to three sports teams dependent on the size of the school and the interest in team sports (Ninth grade, Junior Varsity "J.V.," and Varsity teams); however, most schools can field at least a J.V. and Varsity teams only a select few athletes can make the team. Athletes who have played for years in clubs with professional coaching and travel opportunities, including associated high levels of competition, have an advantage over players from low-cost recreational programs. Therefore, when selecting a school team, frequently, there is favoritism shown to achieve the high performance that the coaches expect. There is insufficient attention to young athletes' potential long-term impacts (Green & Greenberg, 2016). School sports have become fixated on the elite players to be recruited for college and professional level leagues being connected with sports for most students; peer engagement, socialization, and health components are some factors that help endorse sport as being valuable and vital to youth development. Leon County, Florida, is considered the biggest county within the Big Bend area, making it the largest city when compared to the rural towns of Monticello, Madison, and Crawfordville. The smaller towns have a minimum of one community center in charge of registration and placement on a team for children interested in sports in their particular area. Barriers to participation in physical activity include high costs, poor access to facilities, and dangerous atmospheres (Allender, 2006). Most of these areas, including the smaller rural communities in Leon County, Florida, have limited or no access to public transportation for individuals who do not have their form of transportation.

The closeness of parks and recreation centers can assist the family with any transportation issues by simply walking to and from the activity. Also, there are other factors to consider, like the age of the youth, the climate, and potential formal or informal resources that can assist the family with transport. School sporting activities are afforded the opportunity of having transportation provided to and from games for most schools. In addition, it is dependent on the size of the school and the activity being completed. In Tallahassee, Florida, Governor's Charter is a public school in Leon County and an example of a school that does not provide transportation for its middle school level games. Student-athlete parents are responsible for transportation to and from their games for all sports offered at the school. Most parents are tasked with the carpool option, asking family or friends for a ride, or simply not allowing the child to participate.

In Tallahassee, Florida, the average cost of some sporting activities within the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department recently include youth t-ball through youth baseball \$40, youth minor and rookie softball \$40, and advance youth softball \$45, Gymnastics and Cheer Dance \$45-\$105, youth basketball \$55, youth soccer \$50, pickleball clinics \$10, and arts and crafts activities ranging from \$50-\$70 for a studio pass. Tallahassee also has multiple travel sports activities that include baseball, softball, and AAU Basketball. Elite youth players or individuals who play on traveling teams, on average, spend more money than most participants at both the community and school club levels combined on registration fees, traveling, and lodging. According to (Smith, 2017) recruiting team coach reported that children in youth athletics would benefit most from skill development versus high school juniors and seniors who are playing a travel sport and attending camps who are trying to play in front of college coaches as often as possible, to show off their athletic ability. Skill development is a direct contrast to what (Skonlnikoff & Engvall 2014) reported and spoke with parents and coaches that stated that if a child is not playing a sport by age 4 or 5, they will be behind their peers potentially not able to perform at a competitive level. The pursuit of colleges trying to recruit the best and elite players for their specified sport has pressured families with the mindset of having their children focus on one particular sport and making sure they are on travel teams and attending camps. According to (Anderson & Bakken, 2018)

The social-economic status is an essential factor that influences whether or not a child can participate in sport or extracurricular activities. Knowing the cost of registration in the City of Tallahassee, without buying the appropriate uniforms or equipment, for families that are less fortunate or unable to pay those fees impacts their children, so they are less likely to participate in sports. Another safety factor is the Chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) injury; it is a growing concern for many parents and most professional sports leagues, particularly the NFL, due to a decrease in tackle youth football participation. With research showing serious side effects from concussions and other head injuries for long periods and dependent on the contact nature of the sport, prevention and safer ways to play these sports are being discussed primarily because the sports make up billion-dollar industries between youth athletics, college, and professional. Outside of CTE, which is caused over time, understanding the factors associated with what places youth at risk for injury remains unknown (Stracciolini, 2017). Also found the reviewed risk factors that included the legal age and sex while also looking at muscle strength compared with the two sexes and whether or not a youth male was going through puberty. Youth who have not gone through puberty are at a greater risk of bone-related and traumatic injuries versus youth going through puberty and after; they are more likely to experience soft tissue and repetitive stress injuries. Some children will return to the sport they obtained the injury, while others will explore other sports and never return to the previous sport due to fear of being reinjured.

Sport-related concussions have steered the U.S Soccer's decision to ban headers for players age ten and under (Walsh, 2015) and directed other sports like football to limit contact practices and alternatives to make the game safer. In addition, the risk of drug and alcohol use was presented as a risk factor on sport participation as being a protective factor for certain substances dependent on race. A study conducted by (Dawkins, 2005) in 1988 with follow-up surveys in 1990 and 1992 found that African American females were protected the most through sport participation as sport being a protective factor in general. African American males were less likely to engage in alcohol and cigarette use, while Whites benefited the most from marijuana. Alcohol use and smoking cigarettes was considered a risk factor and dealt a lot with peer engagement and influence. (Clark, 2015) agreed that not enough research has been completed that supports why certain substance use is more related to playing a sport, while others are less prevalent among adolescents. Also, a relationship between peer engagement and its influence on substance use, often as peer pressure. A study completed in Finland by (Ng,2017) explored the culture of what substances are available to adults and how it trickles down to adolescent sports, looking particularly at alcohol use, smoking, and snuff use. In association with the study, they also examined the way coaches strategized in the promotion of not using substances.

In the perspective of substance use, also have studied the influence of peers, neighborhood connection, whether there is a party subculture (Thorlindsson, 2006), and the availability of drugs present in the area. Tallahassee is the Capital city of Florida; it lacks resources and availability of opportunities versus some of the bigger cities. As stated by (Masteralexis, 2019) The economics of sports fall within the realm of sports finance. It looks at how managers make decisions about where to raise funds and where to spend those funds. A related area, called sports economics, is also relevant to anyone interested in the financial aspects of the sport. Micro-economics investigates, among many other issues of youth-industry, organizes itself and how this structure affects the condition of competing and profits among firms in youth athletics. Recently economics has developed that examines the peculiar aspects of the spectators of the youth athletics industry. The focus has been on the spectators of youth athletics because it is organized so differently from the non-spectator youth-sports industry.

The rest of American business and the future will continue to develop more opportunities for youth athletics organizations and present challenges. As youth sports associations continue to increase their managerial sophistication, the need for a well-trained candidate in finance will become even significant. The critical financial issues facing youth athletics in (15) years may differ from those facing the youth-sports industry today.

### **Methodology**

**Subjects:** Only adult men and women participated in this recent study sampling. Subjects were selected voluntarily; however, there was a preference for parents and individuals who worked or volunteered with youth directly. Individuals who participated in this recent study were from different socioeconomic backgrounds in the surrounding counties of Tallahassee, including Gadsden, Wakulla, and Jefferson, to determine whether there are differences based on the geographical location.

**Sample size and procedures:** The researchers completed twenty-five, thirty-minute extended interviews after gaining approval from the institutional review board. The participants signed a consent form. Interviews were completed in a comfortable area for the subject to be at ease and calm. The design of questions ( Appendix-I) that were asked focused on social and environmental influences, as well as identifying risk factors that impact youth athletics. Subjects were parents, school staff, community staff, and coaches. Also, the educational background of the participants was identified as some education college or Bachelor's degree or a master's degree.

### **Results**

#### ***Sports can be valuable to youth athletics***

Interviewers agreed that they view sports as being valuable to youth development because it helps to teach them responsibilities and life lessons. Also, help the helps the winning and losing team on how to respond accordingly in a positive manner; besides sport teach youth so many things that they sometimes do not get in their home or at school; sports support children with discipline, teamwork, the meaning of hard work, drives them to stay healthy and in shape, and importantly how to have fun. No matter what the sport is that a young athlete decides to participate in, it will be beneficial for them. Several young athletes even go onto being a professional athlete which changes their lives forever; to keep their grades up and allows parents to use sports as a way to promote the children to make good grades; social skills, punctuality, gives them incentives to work hard; outside and away from technology; diversity, morale; can help youth understand how to work within groups and identify their own physical and mental strengths.

#### ***Community activity***

Interviewers agree that community activity view as being equally or more important than sports such as tutoring, after school youth programs, or any activities that have an educational component involved in them to help reinforce the academic concepts being taught in the classroom; afterschool programs very essential because students usually get snacks, assistance with troubles areas for work, and of course adult supervision. Some other afterschool programs such as chorus, band, JROTC, Jr. Fire Marshall, Beta Club, student council, mentoring programs, Boys and Girls Club as being more important than sports for some other families. Because it provides the kids with a way to stay out of trouble and provides a particular purpose needed in the community; arts and crafts and music recreation (band, chorus) help them choose and involved in something they like while introducing them to other things outside of sports; as a role models.

#### ***Financial assistance in youth athletics***

Interviewers articulated important information about financial assistance in youth athletics. Most of the children participants did not have someone relatively close to them when they needed financial assistance to pay for their expenses associated with their sports-related activity. However, the Interviewers agree that they have seen other members on the team who have needed assistance, and the team has rallied together to help offset some of those expenses, being from a county that is full of economic title. Interviewers agree that schools and where families' annual salaries are not much, it can be a struggle to purchase all of the items needed for sports. Participation in different sports activities the equipment packages can get quite pricey. In order to cut the cost of equipment, participants view that they would hold fundraisers, which helped out tremendously. Especially the majority of the youth athletics fess is more than \$100, which is a significant issue for most of the families from that county.

One of the interviewers, who are the social worker, expressed that she had to try and advocated for needed clients, especially if it is in the education setting, also expressed that registration and equipment fees are positively high. One of the interviewers, who is the recreation director, expresses that he sees many families that are not financially stable, and he mentioned it would be challenging to increase registrations fees; he said when he was young, the fee was about \$10 to participate in a recreational sports programs. However, now it varies from \$35-\$45 dependent on the sport; also, he stated as a recreation director, he has had a few friends with kids who participate in basketball and tennis sports camps. He needed some financial assistance with paying the registration fee and some equipment fees; he also explained that the traveling team with Amature Athletic Union (AAU) Basketball is costly; all the cost from the registration fees, traveling there, hotel stay, and even pitching in for snacks and fluids while the players playing is very expensive and not all the parents can afford. Parents indicated that other ways should be put in place to assist families with transportation issues, carpooling, school buses, and charter buses to help transport youth athletics participant and their families to attend the youth activity events; such as community vans; city transportation, and recreation department buses or vans or even ride a bike.

### ***Expenses associated with sports for a child to participate***

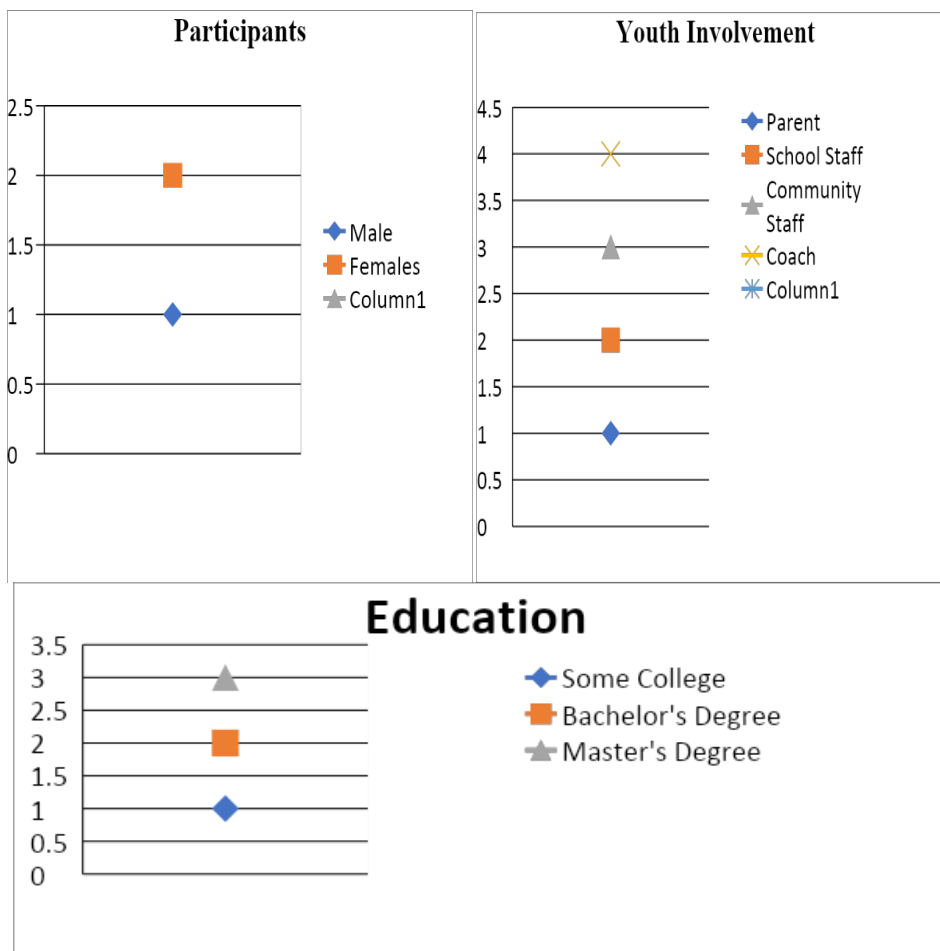
Participants during the interview express that most of the recreational sports fees should be waived. Some families cannot financially pay for their children to participate in sporting activities, but that should not be a difficulty or factor that stops a child from participating because of their families' socioeconomic status or income. Interviewers feel that some students do not participate because their parents cannot afford the shoes, uniforms, warm-ups, or equipment. Interviewers feel as if no student should feel like they cannot play a sport just because of the equipment price at any school. It may be more comfortable in a district with more funds to give sports programs, but in financially struggling counties, the players pay for most of their equipment. Interviewers understand the need to charge for fees; however, Interviewers believe that in some cases, it is expensive. Interviewers think community centers should be looking for sponsorship opportunities. Other parents express that the recreation department offers the lowest fees in the Big Bend Area in Florida and help those who may have financial hardships or families with multiple children attempting to play a sport. Interviewers said they also give coaches two waivers to give athletes on the team to play for free if a family has three or more children attempting to play. They are not able to afford the registration and uniform fee; the recreation department expresses that they will be able to work with them on a case by case basis; living in the wrong neighborhood, but if they are good enough, they will not pay for anything; some expenses are too costly for most parents to afford for their child to participate. Over the last several years, fees associated with sports have been increasing steadily for apparent reasons, which are a huge deterrent for some families when deciding whether their child should participate. Interviewers feel their opinion falls in between; understanding sports equipment can be costly and making it affordable for those who can. Interviewers express their belief that there is a common ground without financial assistance or subsidized or funded programs.

Interviewers guess they feel that some families avoid participating in sports activities that can put the family in a financial bind; Interviewers recommended the reasons for the fees; however, some families are less fortunate and cannot afford to play. Interviewers also understand that they have to buy equipment; however, they need to reuse equipment and uniforms if it will alleviate the burden of the high cost".A participant has parks within a range of ten miles.

Interviewers agree that there is a park and recreation center within 10 miles of their residence, and others express there is a small park within 10 miles, but not a recreation center".

### ***Potential risk factors that impact interest or disinterest in youth athletics***

Interviewers agree that there is a risk factor to consider potential impact a youth's interest or disinterest for sports could be the relationships between the coach and team members their interest level in a specific sport. Also, their ability level, age, family income, accessibility, prior family commitments being allowed in the game, peers, and seeing them play and wanting to do so because of that connection with each other and want to join the same team as family and friends.



Some of the participants who completed the interview had a dual role as parents and worked at the school system. Ninety percent (90%) of the participants were African American, while sixty percent (60%) of the participants were men, forty percent (40%) women. Seventy percent (70%) of the participants are single, with twenty percent (28%) single parents. Also, the participants' educational background was identified as some education college or Bachelor's degree or a master's degree.

There are a correlation and belief that sporting events increase value to youth development. However, opportunities may vary for kids based on many factors, including their socioeconomic status, access to youth athletics, transportation, and interest in sports altogether. The research highlighted the positive and some of the adverse effects that impact youth sport—learning skills and trying to apply things learned as a youth while playing sports echoed from both the literature and the respondents involved in the interview. Some negative impacts included injury and risk to substance use, although substance use was not mentioned as potential risk factors from the respondent. Considering that most of the respondents had some college exposure, it could reflect their perceived risk factors and current influences on youth athletics. Due to the lack of respondents from various backgrounds and creeds of life, the results do not accurately analyze family social-environmental impacts affecting youth athletics. Parental involvement and consumption of youth athletics are instrumental in how youth perceive themselves, enjoyment with playing, and overall experiences linked to the activity.

As one respondent listed, "being in another location "city," he has been observed that the mindset of how individuals view youth athletics is different. In Tallahassee, he has noticed that the atmosphere is more relaxed versus while living in Miami, it was a way of life. Families could be seen walking, taking public transportation, and getting to games by any means possible because sports are seen as a way out for those families, exposure for being recruited to college and looking to bigger and better things". As clearly expressed by (Phillips, 1993)The idea of sport, as we know, has existed only since the early 19th century. Many people have tried to define the meaning of sport; the sport involves competition, rules,and playfulness. The consequences of winning or losing are limited: thus, professional sports are more like work than sport. sion

Elias and Dunning have shown how wild, often violent games of ancient and medieval times were domesticated to become rule-bound, nonviolent, and "just for fun." Sport sociology studies the phenomenon of sport from a variety of perspectives; this growing field has yet to develop a shared understanding of what its boundaries and central concerns should be. Access to sports among the respondents and how social class influences what activities are available to youth agreed that in this manner, access was one-sided, and change needs to occur. Community activity and gain access to community activities were a case associated with income and availability to youth, whether to affected transportation and the distance away from their home or neighborhood. More research needs to be conducted on family social-environmental impacts related to youth sports because of the many pressures experienced by a family to foot the cost of rising expenses to participate. Youth athletes are also pressured with the demand on their bodies, resulting in selecting one sport premature to become that elite player, putting them at risk for injury and an area that has not yet been explored associated with that; how it affects the psychology mindsets of these athletes.

### Conclusion:

Community activities like the afterschool program, the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, academic programs, music, and art were also recorded as central to development, understanding that all youth-athletes in the USA will not make it into a professional league. Although sporting expenses are regarded as being expensive, some would agree that the fees are there to help with costs associated with sports casts and running the program. At the same time, fees can also be seen as a determining reason that decides whether a child can play and participate. Accessibility to participate in youth athletics via income, afterschool program, location, or transportation was an important factor that the respondents described. Family involvement and having positive mentors and role models are things listed by the respondents when looking at potential interest and disinterest that impacted their decision and how they shaped the youth's minds about participating. Sport-related injuries specifically related to contact sports are being monitored by all levels of sport to keep individuals safe; however, it takes time to see the outcome of some changes occurring to policies and changes being made at this time.

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## **Appendix I**

### **Interview**

#### **Interview Demographic Information**

**Please circle one: Male    Female**

**Marital Status:** Please circle, Single, never married, Married, Widowed, Divorced, Separated

**Ethnic origin: Please circle one:** White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Native American or American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, Other

**Education: Please circle one:** Some high school, no diploma, High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example GED), Some college credit, no degree, Trade/technical/vocational training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Professional degree, Doctorate.

**Employment Status:** Please circle one: Employed, Self-employed, A homemaker, A student, Military, Retired, Unable to work.

#### **Open-ended Interview Questions**

Do you view sports as being valuable to youth development, and why?

What are some community activities you view as being equally or more important than sports (mentoring, afterschool programs, etc.)?

Have you or someone relatively close to you ever needed assistance financially to pay for expenses associated with a sports team or activity?

What are some efficient ways to assist families with transportation issues to and from sports activities?

How do you feel about the expenses associated with sports for a child to participate?

Are you a regular consumer of youth athletics activities?

Is there a park and recreation center within 10 miles of your residence?

What do you consider to be risk factors that can potentially impact a youth's interest or disinterest in sports?

As an adult, what environmental influences impacted your view or participation in sports?