

# The State of Youth Sports: What's Going Right (and Wrong) in 2020

Bob Barcelona, Ph.D.  
*Department of Recreation Management & Policy*  
University of New Hampshire



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Home Schooling Day 4-PhysEd



**How's Your  
COVID-19  
Quarantine  
Going?**

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## Today's Conversation

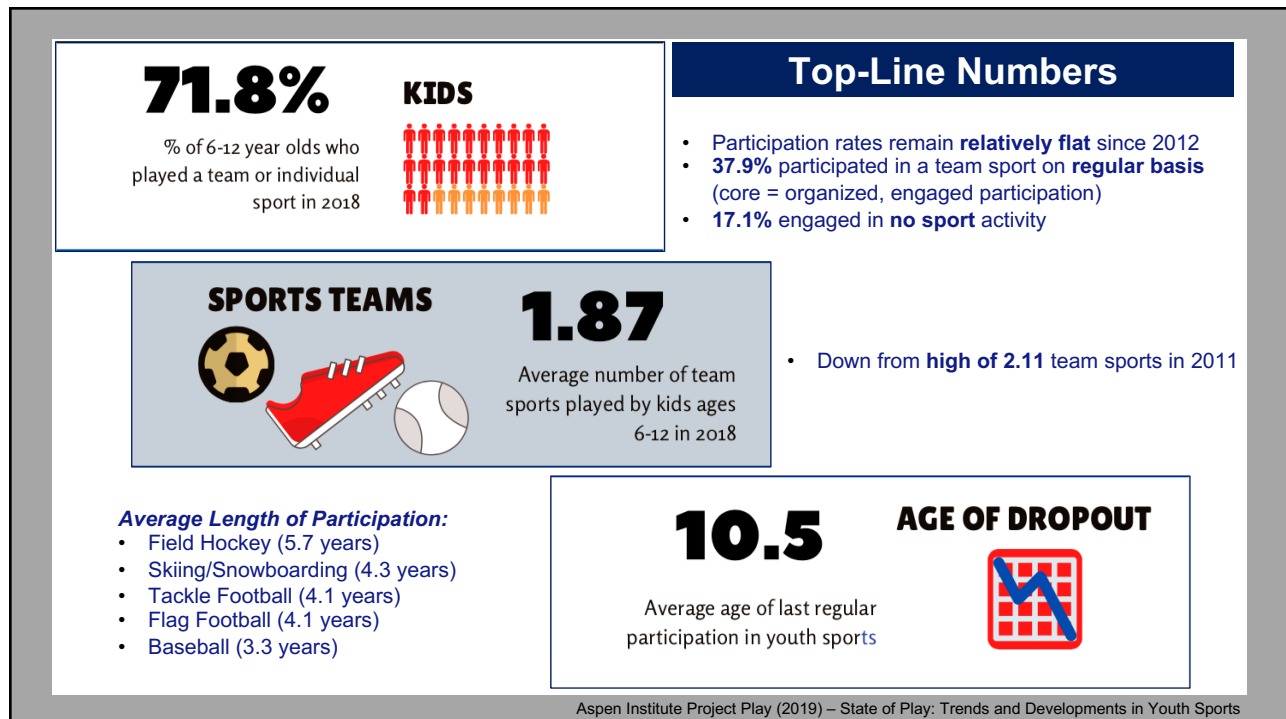


Where were we with youth sports pre-COVID-19? What were some of the big trends/issues?

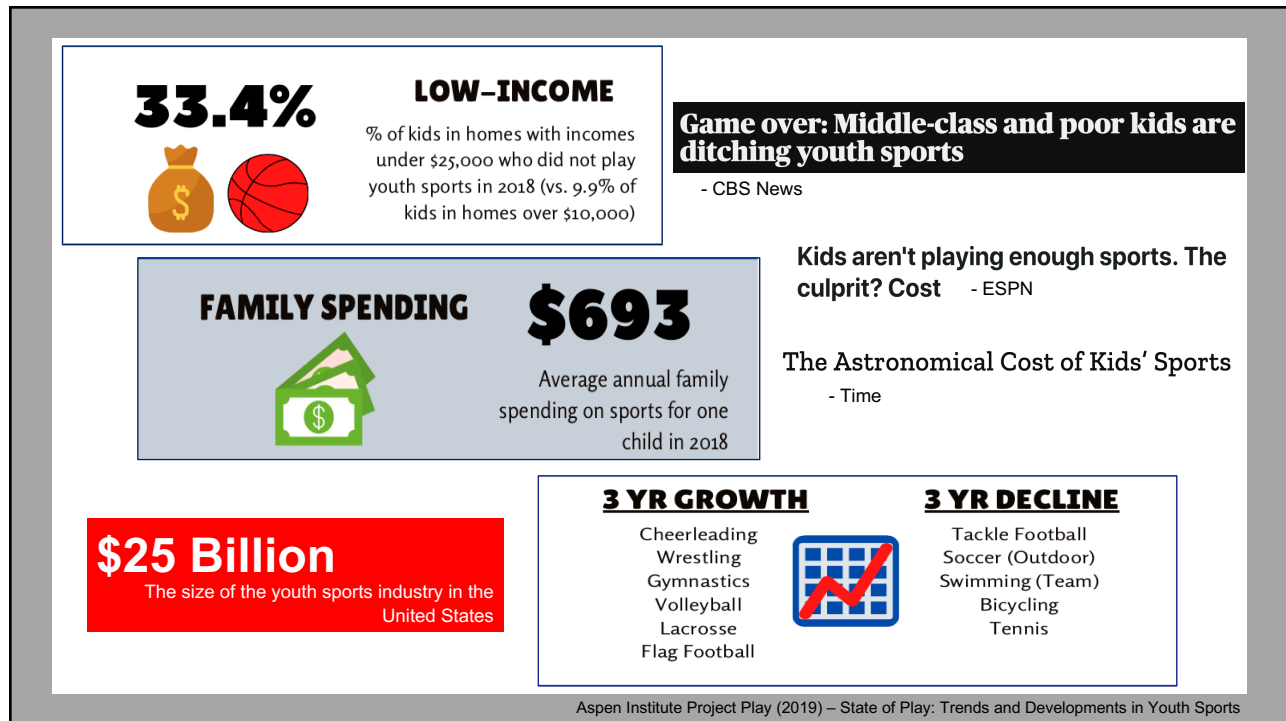
How will COVID-19 impact youth sports in the near, mid, and long term?

What can parks and recreation programs do to help shape the future of youth sports?

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**Barriers to Entry**

- **Lack of access** (spaces, places, transportation)
- **Cost**
- **Social Factors** (friends, having other kids to play with)
- **Lack of Interest or Knowledge**



**Barriers to Sustained Participation**

- **Cost**
- **Lack of Enjoyment** (having fun, poor coaching, lack of parent support, hazing/bullying)
- **Lack of Physical Literacy** (confidence and competence in sport skills)
- **Pressure** (coaches, peers, family members)
- **Physical Factors** (injury, body changes, lack of fitness)
- **Stress and Burnout** (pressure, early specialization, overtraining)

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## Gaithersburg, MD – Youth Sports Fee Waiver

**‘An incredible impact’: Poor kids are being priced out of youth sports. Here’s one solution.**

By Michael S. Rosenwald  
7-9 minutes



Carlos Amaya, 10, left, participates in an after-school soccer program in Gaithersburg, Md. (Nikki Kahn/The Washington Post)

Reform of the fee waiver request from proof of need to a check box on the registration form

Waiver requests increased by 1200%

Youth sports participation increased by 31% and 80% from students attending Title I schools

Over 85% of residents still paid the full-fee

Berk & Moon (2016)

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## Youth Sports Takeaways – Pre-COVID

### Some Positives:

- Participation rates are relatively **high** and **have stabilized**
- Demand for youth sports appears to be **growing** in the past 5 years
- The **participation gap** between boys and girls **continues to narrow** (74.9% vs. 61.1%)
- Multisport play is starting to **make a comeback**, but...

### Things to Work On:

- Boys continue to participate at a **higher rate than girls**
- Significant barriers to participation continue to be **cost, time commitment**
- Youth with more access to economic resources have **higher participation rates**
- The average sport drop-out age **continues to decrease**
- Playing **one sport** year-round **continues to grow**
- Fewer than **30%** of youth sports coaches **have been trained**

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### *Youth Sports Worry About Weathering Pandemic, and Future Play*

Will parents and children be eager to return to team sports once the threat of the coronavirus outbreak has passed?

SPORTS

### Coronavirus Could Cause Youth Sports Recession

Kids are at home instead of on ball fields—and the slumping economy means some could stay there

April 21, 2020

### Will youth sports “tournacations” and megacomplexes survive COVID-19?

Pandemic costing youth sports millions, creating uncertainty

by SCHUYLER GORDON The Associated Press | April 19, 2020 at 4:00 a.m.

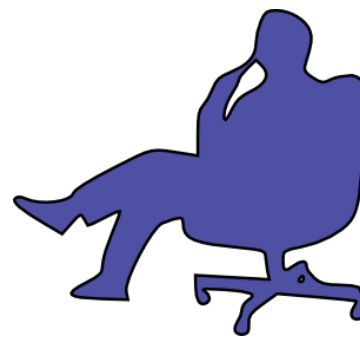
### Local parent frustrated after youth sports league cancels season without refund



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## What Does Youth Sports Look Like Post-COVID?

- When can we **start**?
- Can we manage **sports and social distancing** guidelines?
- What role, if any, will **PPE (masks) or increased/improved testing** play in coming back?
- How virus fears and realities affect **coaching/volunteers**?
- What about kids who are **immuno-compromised**?
- What is the **future of travel sports**?
- What will the demand be for **low-cost, in-town recreational sports**?
- Will parents and kids be willing to **re-invest time and money** into competitive youth sports?
- What will **municipal budgets** look like on the other side?



Some questions to ponder.  
There are LOTS of others,  
I'm sure...

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## Some Thoughts and Predictions

- ✓ Start-up predictions vary from **Summer** to **"Sometime" in the Fall**
- ✓ Variation in virus prevalence and control **by geography**
- ✓ Significant **revenue loss** from cancelled camps, tournaments, and facility reservations
- ✓ Loss of **economic impact** for towns and cities due to cancelled events
- ✓ Loss of tax receipts and **stresses on municipal budgets**
- ✓ More than **22 million** people have filed for unemployment
- ✓ Sport participation tends to **rise and fall with the economy**
- ✓ Discretionary **income will be reduced** and **existing inequities** are likely to increase
- ✓ Youth sport organizations may have **reduced access to facilities**
- ✓ Predicted **reductions in philanthropic giving** and grants
- ✓ Significant number of private **youth sport providers will fold or consolidate**



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## Changes in Local Services Spending Resulting From Increased Or Decreased Local Government Budgets (Mowen et al., 2017)

Government Service	Average % Added (Rank)	Average % Taken (Rank)	Net Allocation	Rank of Importance
Education	15.0 (2)	7.6 (10)	+7.4	1
Police Protection	14.8 (3)	9.0 (7)	+5.8	2
Transportation	17.7 (1)	12.8 (3)	+4.9	5
Fire Protection	10.0 (6)	8.1 (8)	+1.9	3
Hospitals and Healthcare	8.9 (8)	7.7 (9)	+1.2	4
Housing	13.8 (5)	13.6 (2)	+0.2	7
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	<b>14.7 (4)</b>	<b>15.2 (1)</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>6</b>
Public Welfare	9.0 (7)	11.4 (5)	-2.4	9
Corrections	6.4 (9)	10.9 (6)	-4.5	8
Libraries	5.9 (10)	12.6 (4)	-6.7	10

Findings similar to Barrett et al. (2017); 2019-2023 NH SCORP (2019)

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## Parks and Recreation WILL Help Rebuild Our Communities Post-COVID

We Build Healthy:



People



Places



Communities

What can we do to help shape youth sport priorities and meet youth sports needs in a post-COVID world?

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## Parks and Recreation - Post-COVID-19



- Time now to **plan** – volunteer recruitment and coach training
- Recreation programming will **help in recovery** (mental, physical, and social health)
- New Habits** - Free play, pick-up sports, family time, close-to-home
- Role for **low-cost, in-town, local** youth sport leagues and options
- Opportunities for **individual and dual sports** to increase in the near term
- Return towards **development-focused** youth sports
- Push and document the **value of youth sports** and **public recreation!**
- Dare I say.....E-sports?

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## State of Youth Sports – Some Data and Reports

- State of Play: Trends and Developments in Youth Sports (Aspen Institute, 2019)
- Coronavirus and Youth Sports (Aspen Institute, 2020)
- Coronavirus and Youth Sports – What the Future Holds (Aspen Institute Webinar) - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=jpVgXQwtmhU&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=jpVgXQwtmhU&feature=emb_logo)
- The National Youth Sports Strategy (US DHHS, 2019)
- Who Plays, Who Pays? Funding for and Access to Youth Sports (Rand Corporation, 2019)
- Teen Sport in America: Why Participation Matters (Women's Sports Foundation, 2018)
- Sports Specialization and Intensive Training in Young Athletes (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016)
- The Astronomical Cost of Kid's Sports (Time Magazine, 2017)
- Effects of a Facilitated Fee Waiver Program on Participation in Youth Sports (Berk & Moon, 2016)
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/sports/coronavirus-youth-sports.html>
- <https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus-could-cause-youth-sports-recession-11586260815>
- <https://www.cbssports.com/general/news/coronavirus-youth-sports-are-feeling-the-financial-brunt-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-report-says/>

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