



# Communications Toolkit:

## Attracting Families to Your Youth Sports Programs



The #ParkAndRecSports campaign is powered by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and Disney.

INTRODUCTION:

# About This Toolkit



As a park and recreation professional, each day you build important relationships with parents, caregivers and families in your community to work toward a world in which every child can access park and recreation-sponsored sports programs.

**This data-backed communications toolkit is meant to help you make these connections — as well as encourage parents and caregivers in your community to register their child for park and recreation youth sports programs. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is providing this toolkit with support from Disney. As part of Disney’s commitment to creating healthier generations, a key focus area is providing access to active play and youth sports to kids and families who need it most. Supporting programs that are inclusive, scalable and innovative helps transform parks and improve access to play spaces for kids and their families across all 50 states, the U.S. territories and Washington, D.C.**

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# Research Overview



We began our toolkit process with research. We looked at things like what is important to children and parents when it comes to youth sports, and how we can best communicate with them about park and recreation programs. Based on our research, we drafted messaging that speaks directly to families' values. After writing this messaging, we:

- Led focus groups with **parents and caregivers**, during which they shared feedback about the messaging.
- Led focus groups with **park and recreation professionals** to make sure professionals like you find the messaging helpful and accurate.
- Gathered feedback about the messaging through parent **surveys**.
- Updated our messaging based on parent and park and recreation professional feedback, ensuring our campaign is data-based and resonates with parents and families.



# Who We Want to Reach



## Audience: All families with children ages 8 to 12 who are currently involved in any youth sport

By focusing on **all families with children ages 8 to 12 who are currently involved in any youth sport**, we can:

- Target **families who are making important decisions** about sports involvement, since children, on average, quit sports by age 11.
- Include **parents across all income levels and demographics** in our campaign.
- Help build **youth sports programs that all families can enjoy**, including communities who have historically been left out of youth sports.

## Audience Values

When you know what is important to the families you want to reach, you can ensure your messaging resonates with them. Based on our research, we know your audience cares about:

- The positive, life-long impact of youth sports on their children's futures, including college scholarships and professional sports opportunities.
- The mental and physical health benefits of youth sports for kids.
- Ensuring children have fun, which is a priority for parents and caregivers.

## Recommended Call to Action

The call to action for this audience invites parents and caregivers **to sign up their children for park and recreation youth sports programs**.

# Core Messaging



## What is core messaging?

**Research tells us that consistency and repetition matter when marketing your programs.** Repeating strong messages can help you raise awareness about park and recreation-sponsored youth sports and build interest in your offerings. The marketing rule of seven tells us that your audience has to **see a message seven times** before it begins to resonate with them.

Core messaging ensures you are using the same, powerful messaging — with a clear call to action — in all your materials.

- You are welcome to **use this messaging every day** — in conversations with parents, in written outreach with your communities, on social media and more. We incorporated this messaging throughout the toolkit.
- These messages are based on research that shows us real-world, effective ways to talk about youth sports. They highlight your sports programs' benefits that are most important to families.

## Putting These Messages to Work for You

Our goal is for you to feel comfortable and excited to **use, reuse and repeat these messages**. It is important that you use the messaging in a way that feels most relevant, impactful and natural when speaking to families in your community.

In short, we hope you use these messages to meet the needs of the community that you know best. We want these messages to work for you — they are a data-backed tool, not a rulebook or a script.

You can use pieces of this core messaging throughout your materials. For example, you may pull just a line or two for social media, but use a majority of it on your website landing page.

## Core Messaging

This messaging explains the need for your work, the research that supports it, details about your approach, and a vision statement that explains what you are working toward.

**All kids deserve a fun, safe place to play where they feel like they belong.** Yet the average child drops out of youth sports by age 11, often because the sport doesn't feel fun anymore — or because the options are simply too expensive for their family. As a result, these kids miss out on the lifelong benefits of sports.

Research shows that when children play sports, they increase their chances to grow up healthy, feel good about themselves, build friendships, develop skills like teamwork, kindness and respect, and are more likely to succeed in school and in their future careers. When parents like you enroll your children in park and recreation-sponsored youth sports, we're setting up our children for success.

At **INSERT NAME OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY**, we want ALL children — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, family income or interests — to feel welcome in our programs. That's why **we offer affordable, FUN options for sports and play that help our community's children thrive.**

- While we teach kids how to play sports like **INSERT TWO OF THE OPTIONS YOU OFFER**, we make sure they have fun while they learn and play.
- Because our programs are in our community, families save time and money since they don't have to travel far for their child's sports!
- Our coaches are invested in our kids' success because they are caring adults from our community who are passionate about sports and coaching.

**Imagine your child's joyful laugh while they kick a ball, splash in the pool or INSERT AN EXAMPLE FROM A POPULAR SPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY.** When we enroll our children in park and recreation programs, we ALL win.



## Supporting Points for Core Messaging

All kids can benefit from participation in youth sports. Research tells us:

- **Youth sports help students thrive in school.** In just one example, data shows that sports involvement in high school helps student athletes attend college and earn a degree.
- Youth sports **help children build the skills they need to succeed in their careers.** Research shows that students who participate in sports are more likely to be hired when beginning their careers, and become leaders, too.
- **Children who participate in sports grow up healthier — and the physical benefits of sports follow kids into adulthood.** Sports help kids maintain a healthy lifestyle and build lifelong healthy habits, with one study showing that physical activity is one of the least expensive ways to stay healthy.
- Sports **improve children's mental health and provide opportunities to develop social skills.** According to a study, kids who regularly participate in physical activity feel happier, have confidence in themselves, and learn skills like teamwork.

**When our children play sports, we ALL win.**

### Cited Research

- <https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=organized-sports-for-kids-1-4556>
- <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/youth-sports-facts/benefits>
- <https://www.muhealth.org/conditions-treatments/pediatrics/adolescent-medicine/benefits-of-sports>
- <https://novakdjokovicfoundation.org/5-benefits-sports-kids/>
- [https://www.academia.edu/22181128/Sports\\_at\\_Work\\_Anticipated\\_and\\_Persistent\\_Correlates\\_of\\_Participation\\_in\\_High\\_School\\_Athletics](https://www.academia.edu/22181128/Sports_at_Work_Anticipated_and_Persistent_Correlates_of_Participation_in_High_School_Athletics)



# Social Media Resources



Social media is a powerful tool to reach parents. For example, 75 percent of parents who are active online are on Facebook. Here, we are sharing best practices for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We also created sample posts and easy-to-personalize graphics you can update for your own social media channels.

You can find designed social media graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.

## Social Media Best Practices

### Positive Engagement

As one Hootsuite expert shares, “followers don’t want to talk to a faceless organization. They want to talk to real people on social media. Engaging one-on-one lets them know there’s a real person behind the account, and that can really make a difference in the trust they have for your brand.”

Engagement is one of the most important parts of successful social media management. We recommend **checking every social media account at least once a day** — more during active campaigns — and engaging with your audience. For example, if someone comments on your post, make sure to “like” it or respond to it.

Liking, commenting, sharing and engaging with parent, caregiver, partner and coach content will also strengthen your strategy.

### Facebook Post Frequency and Timing

- *HubSpot’s Not Another State of Marketing Report* analyzed work from 1,500 marketers and includes more than 50 statistics and trends to help inform posting best practices. We are using their recommendations, along with our additional research and best practices, in this toolkit.
- According to HubSpot, **Sunday** is the best day to post on Facebook. The worst days to post are Friday and Saturday.
- Post **two to three times** a week on Facebook. Don’t post more than one update a day, because Facebook is less likely to show your content if you share several times a day.

### Facebook Best Practices

- Always include an image with your post. Create photo albums or photo slides with your images to build engagement.
- Tag organizations and people to boost engagement on your posts.
- Engage with your target audience — “like” and comment on their content, etc.



## Twitter Post Frequency and Timing

- According to HubSpot, **Sunday, Monday and Tuesday** are the best days to post on Twitter. However, day matters less on Twitter than on other social media outlets like Facebook.
- Tweets have a shorter lifespan than posts on other social media outlets. We recommend publishing **at least one tweet a day**, but the more tweets, the better.
  - The average tweet has a life cycle of about 18 minutes, which means tweets disappear quickly from newsfeeds.

## Twitter Best Practices

- Create a shortened link through a free link-shortening service like bit.ly.
- Ensure your post is 280 characters or less including your link.
- Tag organizations and people to increase your tweet's presence.
- Use at least one hashtag, prioritizing the campaign hashtag.

## Instagram Post Frequency and Timing

- Post to Instagram between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday for consistent engagement.
- Post **two to three times per week** on Instagram.

## Instagram Best Practices

- Add a link to your bio to drive traffic to your website. [Learn how to do so here.](#)
- Feature “real” images of children engaging in your youth sports activities whenever possible. We’ve also included designed graphics you can use as needed.
- Tag organizations and people to boost engagement on your posts.
- Engage with your target audience — “like” and comment on their content, etc.
- Use at least one hashtag, prioritizing the campaign hashtag. Using multiple hashtags is another best practice on Instagram.

## Hashtags

Using one, unified hashtag with all of your park and recreation posts focused on families will help you build a powerful drumbeat of messaging. By using the same hashtag, you ensure that:

- When families click on the hashtag, they see a lot of positive, fun messaging about park and recreation programs.
- Families can start using the hashtag, sharing their own content easily.
- Partners can easily lift up park and recreation messaging.

**Please use the campaign hashtag: #ParkAndRecSports**

## Additional Hashtag Options

We included additional potential hashtag options here. Including a few of these hashtags may help you reach even more families through your posts.

#ParksAndRec

#GetActive

#YouthSports

#ActivePlay

#StudentAthlete

#Health

#BackToSchool

#MentalHealthMatters

#SwimmingLessonsSaveLives

## Tagging

You are welcome to tag NRPA in any of your social media posts:

- Facebook: @NationalRecreationandParkAssociation (<https://www.facebook.com/NationalRecreationandParkAssociation>)
- Twitter: @NRPA\_News ([https://twitter.com/nrpa\\_news](https://twitter.com/nrpa_news))
- Instagram: @NRPA (<https://www.instagram.com/nrpa/>)

## Sample Social Media Messaging

### Facebook

**All kids deserve a fun, safe place to play where they feel like they belong.** Yet the average child drops out of youth sports by age 11, often because the sport doesn't feel fun anymore — or because the options are simply too expensive for their family. As a result, these kids miss out on the lifelong benefits of sports.

Park and recreation agencies offer youth sports options that get all kids in the game. Explore and register now. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

Did you know? Research shows that when children play sports, they increase their chances to:

- Grow up healthy.
- Build friendships.
- Develop skills like teamwork, kindness and respect.
- Succeed in school and in their future careers.

Learn more about our youth sports options here. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

When you enroll your child(ren) in park and recreation-sponsored youth sports, you're setting them up for success. Learn more about our youth sports options here!  
#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

At **INSERT NAME OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY**, we want ALL children — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, family income or interests — to feel welcome in our programs. Learn more about our youth sports offerings here!

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

Registration is open! We offer affordable, FUN options for sports and play that help our community's children thrive. Sign up your kids today.

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

We're splashing, kicking and laughing our way into the fall. Register today for one of our fun, affordable youth sports programs! Registration closes **INSERT DATE**.

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

Going back to school is a great reminder that youth sports help students thrive in the classroom. Data shows that sports involvement helps student athletes attend college and earn a degree.

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

It's not JUST about the game. Sports help kids maintain a healthy lifestyle and build lifelong healthy habits, with one study showing that physical activity is one of the least expensive ways to stay healthy. Learn more about our youth sports options here!

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

Kids who regularly participate in physical activity feel happier, have confidence in themselves and learn skills like teamwork. Sign your child up for our sports programs today!

#ParkAndRecSports **INSERT LINK HERE**

## Twitter

Note: you can easily shorten links through free websites such as bit.ly.

All kids deserve a fun, safe place to play where they feel like they belong. Learn more about our youth sports programs today! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

At **INSERT NAME OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY**, we want ALL children — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity or family income — to feel welcome in our programs. Learn more about our sports options today! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

When parents enroll children in park and recreation-sponsored youth sports, we're setting up children for success. Learn more about our youth sports options today! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Registration is open! We offer affordable, FUN options for sports and play that help our community's children thrive. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

While we teach kids how to play sports like **INSERT TWO OF THE OPTIONS YOU OFFER**, we make sure they have fun while they learn and play. Sign up today! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Because our programs are in our community, families save time and money since they don't have to travel far for their child's sports! Sign up your child for one of our youth sports programs today. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Imagine your child's joyful laugh while they kick a ball, splash in the pool or **INSERT AN EXAMPLE FROM A POPULAR SPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**. Register your child for our youth sports today! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Did you know? The average child drops out of youth sports by age 11. As a result, many kids miss out on the lifelong benefits of youth sports. We can help set up our children for success by enrolling them in fun, affordable sports! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Research shows that when children play sports, they increase their chances to grow up healthy, feel good about themselves, build friendships and develop skills like teamwork and kindness. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

It's #BackToSchool season! As our kids start classes again, it's important to remember that youth sports help them thrive in school, too. For example, sports involvement helps student athletes attend college and earn a degree. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

Fact: sports help kids maintain a healthy lifestyle and build lifelong healthy habits. One study shows that being physically active is one of the least expensive ways to stay healthy! #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

#MentalHealthMatters. Kids who regularly participate in physical activity feel happier, have confidence in themselves and learn skills like teamwork. #ParkAndRecSports

Does your child know what they want to be when they grow up? Research shows that students who participate in sports are more likely to be hired when beginning their careers, and become leaders, too. #ParkAndRecSports **INSERT SHORTENED LINK HERE**

## Instagram

*Note: while we included designed Instagram images in this toolkit, families often want to see “real” pictures of kids in your programs on Instagram. We have included suggestions for the types of images you may want to include with the sample language below.*

Research shows that when children play sports, they increase their chances to grow up healthy, feel good about themselves, build friendships, and develop skills like teamwork, kindness and respect. #ParkAndRecSports **INCLUDE IMAGE OF KIDS IN YOUR PROGRAMS PLAYING**

On your mark, get set, go! Registration is officially open for our fall programs. Learn more about our fun, affordable youth sports options. The link is in our bio! #ParkAndRecSports **INCLUDE IMAGE OF KIDS ON THE STARTING BLOCKS OR STARTING A GAME**

Nothing makes us happier than when kids make friends through our youth sports programs! #ParkAndRecSports **INCLUDE IMAGE OF KIDS IN YOUR PROGRAMS LOOKING LIKE FRIENDS**

Did you know? Kids who regularly participate in physical activity feel happier, have confidence in themselves and learn skills like teamwork. #ParkAndRecSports **INCLUDE IMAGE OF HAPPY KIDS IN YOUR PROGRAMS**

It's game time! We believe that all kids deserve a safe place to play where they feel like they belong. That's why we offer more than **INSERT NUMBER OF PROGRAMS** fun, affordable youth sports options for kids in our community. Registration is open now. Find the link in our bio! #ParkAndRecSports **INCLUDE IMAGE OF HAPPY KIDS IN YOUR PROGRAMS**

When our children play sports, we ALL win. The link to fall registration is in our bio! **INCLUDE IMAGE OF PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS ENJOYING A GAME**

# Email Marketing Resources



To make email outreach easy, we included:

- **Potential email topics** that you can write about and share with families.
- Email **best practices** to help you send strong emails.
- **Sample email language** you can customize and share with your audiences.
- **Sample email language** you can customize and share with schools and school district partners, making it easy for them to distribute information about your programs.
- An **email header graphic** you can use at the top of your email, along with **design pieces** you can incorporate into your emails. You can find designed email graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.

## Potential Email Topics

When families hear from you at least once a month, they are more likely to learn more about your agency and start building a relationship with your organization. We are sharing potential email topics here to help you build these connections.

- How your agency ensures youth learn how to play sports and have fun while doing so.
- Coach highlights (if you would like to promote your coaches).
- Player highlights/spotlights/testimonials.
  - Remember to always get approval from a student/family before sharing.
- Sports success stories.
  - For example, consider sending an end-of-season wrapup celebrating accomplishments from your teams.

## Email Best Practices

- **Keep your subject line to seven words or fewer when possible.** This allows your audience to read the full subject and become interested in the topic.
- **Include one or two hyperlinks (no more!) in each email** as needed. Limiting the number of links will help your audience focus on the most important information — without getting distracted by less critical links. We recommend choosing the most important action item or takeaway, like your registration link.
- **Include your call to action “above the fold”.** This means when a parent opens the email, they should see your main takeaway or call to action without having to scroll. If you have an email marketing platform, like Mailchimp, then using a button for your call to action is a best practice.
- **Begin by sending emails before and after the lunch hour.** While every organization’s ideal email send time is different, we recommend beginning to send emails around 11 a.m. or 1 p.m.
- **Ensure your emails are easy to read on smartphones.** Nearly half of emails are opened through a phone, so ensuring they are easy to read is important. We recommend sending yourself a designed test email and then opening it on your phone. Ask yourself:
  - Is it easy to read?
  - Can you easily click the links?
  - Do you notice design flaws that aren’t present on a traditional computer screen?If your emails are difficult to read or scroll through on a phone, then we recommend redesigning the email.
- **Create “long” links and buttons.** For example, link several words or an entire sentence, not just one word. The easier a link is to find and click, the more likely parents are to click it.
- **Include one or two images in your email.** Research shows that including a photo of one child or person in a message makes it more personal for families and helps build connections with your work and mission.
- **Send each email “from” a person’s name when possible.** Many email marketing programs (such as Mailchimp) allow you to choose whose name appears as the sender, and to choose the email address that shows up in the “from” line.
- **Make sure that each email is “signed” by an actual person, not the company.** Dropping in your signature versus simply including your park and recreation agency name will help you build connections faster.



## Sample Email Language

**Subject:** Register for fall youth sports today!

**Subheader:** We have fun, safe options for **all ages**.

All kids deserve a fun, safe place to play where they feel like they belong. That's why **we're excited to welcome your children to our fall youth sports programs!**

**Button:** Register Now

We offer affordable, FUN sports and play options for **all age ranges**. Registration is now open for:

**INSERT YOUR YOUTH SPORTS OFFERINGS**

Because our programs are in our community, families like yours save time and money since you don't have to travel far for your child's sports.

Registration closes on **INSERT DATE**.

**Button:** Sign Up Today

Questions? We love hearing from you! Please feel free to reach out to **NAME** at **EMAIL** or **NUMBER**.

All our best,

**INSERT YOUR SIGNATURE HERE**



## Sample Email Language for School Districts

In some cases, the local school district may be open to sharing information about your youth sports programs. Below is sample language you can personalize with information about your programs. You can then share this email language with your local school district, asking them to share it with their enrolled families.

*Note: We recommend personalizing this email with your information before sending it to school districts to make it easy for districts to share it with families. When busy school communicators don't have to take extra steps, they are more likely to share your content.*

**Subject:** Register your student for fall sports today!

**Subheader:** **INSERT PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY HERE** has fun, safe and affordable options

Did you know? **Youth sports help students thrive in school and build the skills they need to succeed in their careers.**

- Data shows that sports involvement helps student athletes attend college and earn a degree.
- Research also shows that students who participate in sports are more likely to be hired when beginning their careers.

**INSERT YOUR PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY NAME BEFORE SENDING TO PARTNER SCHOOLS** offers our students even more fun, affordable youth sports opportunities!

Registration is now open for **INSERT SPORTS OPTIONS BEFORE SENDING TEMPLATE TO PARTNER SCHOOLS.**

You can register here: **INSERT LINK TO YOUR YOUTH SPORTS LANDING PAGE.**

**INSERT PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY NAME** is welcoming all students — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, family income or interests — to its programs.

Registration closes **INSERT DEADLINE.**

Reach out to **NAME** at **EMAIL** or **NUMBER** to learn more.

All our best,

**INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME HERE BEFORE SENDING TO THE DISTRICT**



# Website Resources



Data shows that in many cases, users only spend 15 seconds on a website before they decide to leave (or stay to take next steps). An easy-to-navigate, clear landing page about your youth sports programs can help you make important connections with families, making it more likely they will sign up for your programs, too. We are sharing:

- Easy-to-update youth sports landing page text.
- A landing page checklist to help you review your landing page.
- Graphics to help you engage families and to make your page look more designed, too.

Relying on your online registration system to attract families to your programs is not a best practice. If parents and caregivers have to search for information, or create an account to learn more about your youth sports programs, they are less likely to sign up.

## Website Landing Page Language

### Header: Youth Sports Opportunities

**Subheader:** At **INSERT NAME OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY**, we want all children — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, family income or interests — to feel welcome in our programs.

That's why we offer affordable, FUN options for sports that help our community's children thrive.

Registration is OPEN for our youth sports programs!

**Button or Bolded Link: Register Today**



Photo credit: Sports Images | Dreamstime.com, Dmytro Zinkevych | Dreamstime.com

## Header: Why our programs?

At **INSERT NAME OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY**, we believe that ALL kids can benefit from participation in youth sports. Our focus is ensuring that your family and your child have a great youth sports experience!

While we teach kids how to play sports such as **INSERT TWO OF THE OPTIONS YOU OFFER**, we make sure they have fun while they learn and play, too.

Because our programs are in our community, families save time and money since you don't have to travel far for your child's sports.

Our coaches are invested in our kids' success because they are caring adults from our community who are passionate about sports and coaching.

Our youth sports programs include:

**INSERT YOUTH SPORTS OPTIONS AND HOW TO SIGN UP HERE**

Reach out to **INSERT NAME** at **EMAIL** or **PHONE NUMBER** to learn more about our programs!

Imagine your child's joyful laugh while they kick a ball, splash in the pool or **INSERT AN EXAMPLE FROM A POPULAR SPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**. When we enroll our children in park and recreation programs, we ALL win.

**Button or Bolded Link: Register Today**

## Header: Safety is our priority.

**INCLUDE INFORMATION AS NEEDED ABOUT YOUR COVID-19 OR OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS. CONSIDER ADDING:**

- **Concussion safety.**
- **Licenses, certificates and trainings.**
- **CPR requirements.**
- **Background checks.**



## Header: Why youth sports?

**All kids deserve a fun, safe place to play where they feel like they belong.** Yet the average child drops out of youth sports by age 11, often because the sport doesn't feel fun anymore — or because the options are simply too expensive for their family. As a result, these kids miss out on the lifelong benefits of sports.

Research shows that when children play sports, they:

- **Grow up healthier — and the physical benefits of sports follow kids into adulthood.** Sports help kids maintain a healthy lifestyle and build lifelong healthy habits. Research even shows that physical activity is one of the least expensive ways to stay healthy.
- **Feel good about themselves.** Sports improve children's mental health and provide opportunities to develop social skills. According to a study, kids who regularly participate in physical activity feel happier, have confidence in themselves and learn skills like teamwork.
- **Thrive in school.** In just one example, data shows that sports involvement in high school helps student athletes attend college and earn a degree.
- **Are more likely to succeed in their future careers.** Research shows that students who participate in sports are more likely to be hired when beginning their careers, and become leaders, too.

When parents like you enroll your children in park and recreation-sponsored youth sports, we're setting up children for success.

## Landing Page Checklist

- We proofread our page for typos and for accuracy.
- Our organization's open youth sports offerings are up to date.
- Families can easily find our youth sports options, including what age ranges are appropriate for each option and their descriptions.
- Families can easily find registration deadlines.
- We've included an easy way to register.
- We've tested all our buttons and links, along with the full registration process.
- We've included an easy-to-find contact name, including an email and phone number.

You can find designed website graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.

# Media Relations Resources



We're sharing a sample, customizable press release your team can post on your website, share through social media and send to local media, too.

## Sample Press Release

**INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

**Insert Name**

**Insert Position**

**Insert Organization**

**Insert Email**

**Insert Phone Number**

**Subject:** **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME** is Accepting Registration for In-Person Youth Sports Programs

**Subheader:** Families can choose from **INSERT NUMBER OF OPTIONS** safe, fun sports options.

**INSERT CITY, STATE ABBREVIATION, DATE** — **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME** has announced registration for fall 2021 youth sports is now open.

The organization is offering **INSERT NUMBER OF SPORTS OPTIONS** in-person sports options for children ages **INSERT AGE RANGE**.

“Youth sports have life-long benefits for the kids in our community. By joining a soccer or swim team, not only are kids building healthy habits, they are also happier and more confident. These experiences translate into everything from performing well in school to learning social skills that will help them succeed in their careers,” said **INSERT NAME OF A LEADER IN YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE**. “That’s one of the reasons we’re so excited to offer fun, affordable in-person programs this fall.”

Research shows that when children play sports, they increase their chances to grow up healthy, feel good about themselves, build friendships, and develop skills like teamwork, kindness and respect, and are more likely to succeed in school and in their future careers.

**INSERT ORGANIZATION**'s fall youth sports options include:

**INSERT LIST OF OPTIONS**

“At **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME**, we want ALL children — no matter their ability, age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, family income or interests — to feel welcome in our programs,” said **INSERT NAME OF A LEADER IN YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE**. “We’re excited about the fall and not just the sports our kids will play, but the friendships they will build, too.

The registration deadline is **DATE**.

**ORGANIZATION NAME** is observing COVID-19 safety protocols to ensure children are safe while they play. **INSERT ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES/INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT ABOUT HOW YOU'RE MANAGING COVID-19**.

To learn more or to register, visit **LINK** or reach out to **NAME** at **EMAIL** or **NUMBER**.

**About INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE**

**Insert your boilerplate (a paragraph-long description of your organization, along with a link to learn more) here.**

###



# Print Materials



## Postcards

*Note: Postcards, posters, fliers and text messages help you reach families both with and without internet access.*

According to an Epsilon report, 73 percent of American consumers say they prefer for brands to contact them through direct mail, because they can read it whenever they want — and 90 percent of direct mail gets opened!

You can find designed postcard graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.

## Poster

We are sharing a print-ready poster that you can post around your buildings and sports fields (and share with school and community partners, too). Posters are most successful in areas that people walk through often.

You can find designed poster graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.

## Flier

School districts have a direct, easy communication path to families in your community. Research shows that families trust teachers and principals, so communications from a school district are likely to be trusted.

You can update the flier we created and share it with schools, asking them to send home the flier with students. We recommend sharing the flier with school communications managers or public information officers who can then ensure it goes out in your district. You can work with individual schools as well.

You can find designed flier graphics in the PowerPoint we shared as part of this toolkit.



# Text Messaging



According to Pew Research Center, 97 percent of Americans own a cell phone, and text messages have a 95 percent open rate. That makes text messages a powerful communications tool.

We have included sample text message copy below your organization can use to connect with families in your community. Your recreation software may offer text messaging services. If not, there are many other service providers. [Learn more about text message marketing here.](#)

Registration is open for **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME**'s fall youth sports programs. **INSERT LINK**

Have you signed up your child for **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME**'s affordable, fun sports options? **INSERT LINK**

Deadline tomorrow: sign up for **INSERT ORGANIZATION**'s fun, affordable, safe youth sports programs. **INSERT LINK**

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*Disclaimer: These graphics and materials are only to be used by park and recreation professionals promoting their youth sports programs. They are not to be used for other purposes without express written permission. By using your own images, you are confirming that you have all legal rights to the image, consent of those pictured in the image and understand that images may be shared through NRPA's social media channels.*



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