

The Importance of Sports Involvement Within a Community

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Senior Capstone

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One of my very first childhood memories was ice skating in Lake Placid, New York. At five years old, I skated in the same rink that the U.S. Men's Olympic team won the 1980 Gold Medal. I vividly remember hearing my skates cut into the ice which created a sound I've come to know and cherish my whole life. I also remember the banners which hung in the rafters which read "1980 U.S. Men's Ice Hockey: Gold Medalists." I was on the ice for about an hour before my parents claimed they were too cold to stay in the rink. As my father was taking my skates off, he told me the story of the 1980 team. He stated that the U.S. victory over the U.S.S.R. was perhaps the biggest upset in sports history. Due to the political state the world was in at that time, this win was monumental in our nation's history.

The following day my parents said I insisted on going back to the rink to skate again. After skating for about three hours, my parents were approached by a trainer who claimed that I had a natural talent in ice skating. According to my mother, he sat with my family and suggested I start playing hockey. My parents claim this news excited me and sparked my competitive nature and drive for competition. I told my dad that I wanted to compete and win like the men's 1980 team. The following winter in 1996, my parents enrolled me in my first hockey league in East Fishkill, New York.

In 2008, the town of East Fishkill renovated the rink with hopes to improve skating surfaces for the hockey league and recreational use. This renovation included a new skating surfacing which is known as "sport court." The surface required a lot of maintenance and upkeep which is very expensive. The town failed to keep up with the maintenance of the surface and by 2014, the leagues were canceled because the town deemed the rink to be unsafe.

— EAST FISHKILL —  
**RINK REVIVAL**

TO HELP RESURFACE THE EAST FISHKILL ROLLER RINK

**OCTOBER 20, 2018** X **EAST FISHKILL REC**

ROUND ROBIN STYLE  
**CHARITY HOCKEY  
TOURNAMENT**

**\$300 ENTRY**  
(PER TEAM, TEAMS OF 8-10)

CONTESTS FOR...

- X **FASTEST SLAPSHOT**
- X **SHOOTOUT**
- X **OVERALL SKILLS**

**\$5 ENTRY**

PLUS RAFFLES, GIVEAWAYS  
& AWESOME PRIZES

FEATURING FREE  
**LIVE MUSIC**  
FROM

HEADLINERS  
**CAUTIONERS**  
PERFORMING!

**THE STASH**

**BREAK DOWN  
THE WALLS**

**ATE BIT**

**NERDLINGER**

**NO MOMENTUM**

**HOCKEY STARTS @ 9AM / MUSIC STARTS @ 1PM**

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In September of 2018, Former teammates and long-time friends Ricky M., Lindsay P., Nick P., and myself created a fundraiser known as the “East Fishkill Rink Revival” to revitalize the rink to safe playing conditions and re-institute both in-house and travel leagues. Each of us owe not only our hockey fundamentals to this league, but the birth of our lessons for hard-work, competitiveness, teamwork skills, exercise and conditioning, and both positive mental and physical health. Most important of all, we share the common goal of offering the youth of our community involvement in a program that our fundraiser cherishes and attributes life long gain and knowledge to. On October 20th, 2018, we created the Rink Revival fundraiser in attempts to restore our Hockey program in East Fishkill, New York.

“ I grew up at the rink, it kept me out of trouble. I was there three to four nights a week trying to get better at hockey and be a better person and I want to give others that same experience”.

- Nick P. Co-organizer of the Rink Revival

“ Hockey is the best sport. Just because we have a messed up rink shouldn't mean we cant cant play it!”

- Lindsay P. Co-organizer of the Rink Revival

This is the first time that my team and I had organized a fundraiser. Personally, I’ve only played in charity tournaments and participated in other fundraisers for multiple causes. When I was younger, I played in the Tony Riccardi tournament at the East Fishkill rink. The Riccardi family donated initial funds to start the league and construction for the rink. In the mid 1990’s, Tony had passed away and the town put together a charity tournament for his family. We chose to model some of this fundraiser based on the Riccardi tournament and our other combined event

participation. Our organizers wanted this event to largely involve our local community through the efforts of local shops, vendors, and music, as the Ricardi event did so successfully. Our co-organizers Ricky, Nick, and Lindsay have strong connections with local shops. Their designated task were to acquire donations to raffle. We believed that by having local vendors at our fundraiser would maximize community involvement not only through their efforts, but would draw much larger crowds due to their reputation.

The music was a very large part in our event's success. According to Elena Mannes, author of *The Power of Music*, Music has the ability to unite people from all walks of life. We considered this idea when constructing our event. In our area, our rock and roll scene is very popular and generates a lot of money and viewership. A large number of our participants, volunteers, and bands were between the ages of twenty to thirty. We chose these bands and this style of music because this is the most popular genre of music amongst this age range in our local area.

Amongst our team, I have the most experience with playing organized hockey. My primary task was to assemble, supervise, and facilitate the actual tournament. This tournament was played on-foot due to the unsafe skating conditions of the surface. We chose to play on-foot because despite the surface, this community and the players still had a strong desire to play hockey. I created a bracket style system amongst the six participating teams. This style allowed the teams to play the most hockey in the allotted time period. In this style, every team played against each other. Winners would earn a point and after the first round the team with the most earned points made it to a playoff round. By having every team play against one another, I felt

this would maximize a stronger sense of togetherness and allow teams to have the most fun they could while keeping it competitive.

We started the event with a tournament which was from nine a.m. and ended at three p.m. Players of all skill level attended and participated in the tournament. Casual skaters who are just learning the game and players that have been playing their whole life played in a round-robin style tournament. The response we saw was outstanding; the atmosphere was fun and wholesome while still being somewhat competitive which was exactly what we had hoped for. Six total teams consisting of close to one-hundred players from the tri-state area competed with and against each other with the common goal to give back to our community and revitalize the rink.

“ This is a great opportunity for the community to come together to rebuild something that was a huge part of our youth. I grew up at this rink and it’s nice to see it being used again”.

- Nick Stolmer. Marist Red Foxes

After the tournament, people gathered around the pavilion area to to eat grill cooked hot dogs and hamburgers in preparation for the bands to start playing. Volunteers which consisted of parents, players, and the organizers purchased and cooked the food for the players, vendors, bands, and all attendees of the fundraiser. The live music started at 5 p.m. and the last band played at 9:30 p.m.

One of our town's most popular communities is our music scene. We thought having local and world-wide bands play at the fundraiser would be a perfect way to unite various types of people for our cause. We assembled local favorites to attend and play at our event. The response we received was something truly special. The attendance brought from the band’s followings, families, and friends brought under just one-hundred viewers.



“ Hockey is literally for everyone and it’s awesome way to get everyone together. Kids, teens, adults, and even dogs can come together for a great cause. This community deserves something great and it’s refreshing to see you guys giving everyone this ”.

- Victoria Meyer. Owner of Mischief Managed Dog Training.

“ To see the hockey community come together and fix a rink that had been considered lost by so many was something truly beautiful to see. So many of these people were strangers to

me and for everyone to unite for a common goal all for the love of the sport and community brought tears to my eyes. This shows that our community cares about the youth of tomorrow. We all want to provide a place for everyone to learn a sport that could very well shape all of their lives. From the volunteers, bands, local businesses, and players who donated to the event, we can not express a higher form of gratitude or appreciation for their time and effort. This couldn't have happened without the help of EVERYONE, similar to a hockey team”.

- Ricky M. Co-organizer of the Rink Revival

“ It’s wonderful to see all of these people coming together to support the community Great musicians and athletes with great company. It really makes me appreciate where I live”.

- Tessa H.

“ This is not only a good opportunity to raise money for the rink, but also a good way to strengthen the music scene in the Hudson Valley”.

- Jackie M.





Nick P. Ricky M. Lindsay P.

Event Organizers Reading off Raffle winners

We all share the common idea of maximizing our communities involvement in our fundraiser. One of our goals was to have this event be inspired by our town and not necessarily individual contribution. By reaching out to local vendors and shops for donations and items to for raffle to contribute to our financial goal, we effectively reached multiple demographics to maximize awareness. By accessing not only Hockey players, we increased contribution efforts and brought multiple audiences to the event.

Anthony Mascalino, Tattoo artist of the Revenant Gallery in Hopewell Junction, New York, submitted a personal print to be auctioned off for raffle.



Apparel Company, Violent Gentleman submitted a tapestry and two bags for raffle for our event. This contribution was monumental for us due to this brand's popularity involving Hockey culture.

Other raffle prizes include Hockey gloves donated by Penn State College Hockey team, A 1994 Rangers Stanley Cup Plaque, Two Proven Martial Arts sweatshirts donated by local Martial arts studio ran by Alex P., N.Y. Mets tickets for next season, and New Jersey Devils

tickets.



Another donation for the raffle was by a skateboard shop called The Board Room in Red Hook, New York. The Board Room offered a skateboard deck and a sweatshirt.



In total, we had six bands play our event. The first band, No Momentum is from Poughkeepsie, New York. They are classified as Punk-Rock. The next band, Nerdlinger is from Sydney, Australia. They were touring with a local band from N.Y. and we were so lucky and fortunate they could be with us. They are classified as Melodic Punk Rock. The third band, Ate Bit is from Beacon, New York. They are Indie-Rock. Break Down the Walls, the next band we had is from Mt. Pleasant, New York. They are another Indie influenced band.

Co-headlining this event was The Stash from Beacon, New York. Classified as Melodic Rock with indie influence, The Stash's music style was a perfect fit for the audience we hoped to attract. Their fast and melodic style mixed with traditional rock and roll influence allowed any fan of rock to find something they can enjoy.



The Stash - Beacon, New York



“ It is very refreshing to see a community come together to support a recreational activity like Hockey. It is heartwarming to see bands, food cookers, clothing companies, family, friends, volunteers, and hockey players come to together to help and donate to improve existing conditions for the next generation of Hockey Players “.

- Michael J. LaPick. Drummer of The Stash

We had the great pleasure of allowing The Cautioners to headline our event. The Cautioners are a local favorite that been broken up for over three years. The attendance we had and the amount of awareness and promotion they gave our event was very special. The

Cautioners are from Poughkeepsie, New York. Their style is very unique and incorporates fast punk style mixed with melodic and indie roots which was perfect for our audience.



“ Our band hasn’t played a show in two years. When approached by the Rink Rink Revival members to play we thought it was an excellent to involve music within a community to raise money for a great cause “.

- Nick Harrison - Lead singer of The Cautioners.







This fundraiser was intended to restore something that was taken away from our community. From my childhood, I attribute any personal success I have had in my life to the fundamental skills and discipline I have learned playing in an organized Hockey league. Outside the realm of sports, I have learned the importance of hard work both individually and in a team environment. The importance of dedication and self-sacrifice was instilled in me at a young age through coaches and trainers. I now channel these acquired skills with a boss or superior in a work environment, and a professor in an academic setting. My competitive nature was instilled in me at a young and I use that in a positive way in my life to this day. Exercise at a young age is crucial to physical well-being especially in our this time of our nation's epidemic rise in obesity. Aside from physical health, participating in team oriented sports is also beneficial for mental

health. This league and youth involvement in sports is rooted much deeper than just competition. These leagues can generate large profit for the town, college scholarships and private schools can be accessible through elite play which open up paths for better education, and improved health. These are all of the reasons I chose to help with this fundraiser and most importantly, restore something in my community which is no longer available. I want to give others the opportunity I had when i first joined in 1996. These lessons and experience contributed to my personality, my academic and professional career, and my overall well-being.

I utilized the skills I learned through organizational hockey to work with not only the co-organizers of our fundraiser, but with the vendors and bands to create something that gives back to the community which greatly benefited my adolescence. Our goal was to raise \$5,000 and we generated just over \$5,500. Construction on the rink should begin early 2019 and we begin to give back to a community and organization that positively impacted so many of our lives.

Throughout this journey, I've learned how difficult and how much hard work is needed to organize something of this nature. I have a further understanding in how to organize, manage, and facilitate tasks in an event type of setting. I've learned the importance of strong communication with not only my peers, but also the various participants in my fundraiser. I utilized the teamwork skills I have learned in my academic and career paths to contribute to something special for our community. We hope to revitalize this league for the future of our community.

*Abstract:* On October 20, 2018, I organized and ran a charitable fundraiser in the town of East Fishkill, New York, with three other peers. The fundraiser was created to revitalize a roller hockey rink. In 2008, our town deemed our rink unsafe due to the failure to maintain and upkeep it's condition. The town was forced to cancel all in-house and travel leagues. Our goal was to earn enough money to restore the rink to a safe condition and reinstitute the leagues and promote more recreational use. Our event involved large community participation in efforts to maximize charitable donations. By revitalizing the leagues, we hope to provide the youth and adults in our community with an opportunity to improve their lives. The involvement in organized sports has the power to drastically improve one's well-being. Further research explores the effects that team sports has on someone's mental and physical health, educational influence and opportunity, and how participation provides an outlet for safe activity which can steer a person away from drugs and alcohol. I chose to participate in the fundraiser because I've been playing organized hockey since a young age. I've learned the importance of teamwork, communication, hard-work, and dedication which I implemented through each phase in our event. I hope to give others the same opportunity I had.

Some of my most vivid memories as a child were my early experiences playing both roller and ice hockey. When I was five, my parents took my family to Lake Placid, New York. I distinctly remember ice skating in the same rink the U.S. Men's Ice Hockey team upset the U.S.S.R. in the 1980 Winter Olympics. The sounds of my skates digging into the ice was something I will always remember and would continue to hear throughout my life. That following winter, my parents enrolled me in my first ice hockey league. I remembered scoring my first goal in my first game. This is where my love for hockey, sports, and thirst for competition began. The ice hockey leagues begin in the fall and end in the late winter months. I desperately wanted to keep playing so my parents enrolled me in the East Fishkill Roller Hockey league the following Summer. Roller hockey is played on roller skates on surfaces that can support the summer heat, unlike ice rinks. Throughout my entire life, I've played on countless teams and in over ten leagues in my youth and adult life. At the age of twenty-eight, I still play to this day.

On October 20, 2018 I helped organize, manage, and facilitate a charitable fundraiser called the East Fishkill Rink Revival. The E.F. Rink Revival was intended to restore a roller hockey playing surface that was deemed unsafe due to the town's failure to upkeep and maintain the rink. Due to the conditions of the rink, the town canceled both in-house and travel leagues in 2008. Our goal was to earn enough money to revitalize the rink so the town could restore these leagues. Our common goal, amongst myself and my peers, was to involve our local community with the help from local shops and vendors, roller hockey players from the tri-state area, and local bands from the area. By incorporating strong involvement with our local community, we hoped to maximize charitable donations through the use of raffles, an on-foot bracket style

tournament, food and drink sales, and ticket price sales from the live music. We utilized the reputation of these vendors and bands to promote maximum awareness and participation across all sectors of the event.

*Discussion:*

In 2008, the town of East Fishkill attempted to upgrade the roller rink with a new surface known as “sport court.” This surface requires a lot of maintenance and upkeep, which the town failed to provide. In 2014, the town deemed the rink unusable because of the poor conditions of the rink and surface; the leagues were canceled as a result. In attempts to restore the rink and re-institute the league, three other peers and myself organized a fundraiser. Our goal was to earn enough funds to resurface the rink and renovate the boards and benches. More importantly, we wanted to provide both the youth and adults of our community with an opportunity to participate in these leagues which was taken away from us. Through the research conducted by University psychologists, who specialize in athlete mental development and maintenance, physical health, drug and alcohol prevention, and academic performance, I hope to reveal how important organized sports are to an individual, and to the overall community.

By revitalizing the leagues, I hope to provide both the youth and adults in our community an opportunity to be involved in something that can positively benefit their lives. Research suggests that youth involvement in sports benefits psychological development in both a team setting, and individual progression. This is also a great opportunity for learning fundamental social skills. Elite play at an earlier age can also lead to better education in both private schools and college. These leagues also provide individuals an engaging practice. This involvement keeps participants away from detrimental activity. Most importantly, I chose to pursue this goal

with my fundraiser because I personally played in the East Fishkill league when I was five years old. I've learned so many beneficial skills and practices in this program which I use in my academic and professional career to this day. Through the results and final ideas concluded by my research, I hope to explore the positive benefits of participation in organized sports among all age levels.

*Research Problems and Main Focuses:*

In my first area of study, I want to explore how playing in organized sport leagues affects participants' psychological state in both team environments, and individually. By competing in these leagues, can participation provide progression, development, and maintenance of positive mental health? My assumption, supported by further research, indicates that this involvement benefits individuals in numerous ways. Mental health is a nation-wide concern and focus amongst researchers and society in an overall sense. According to the research team at Nami, one in five adults, which is 18.5% or 43.8 million people, experience mental illness each year. Due to this large number of mental illness, further research explores how sports and physical activity can help prevent illness. These studies focus on sample sizes from across the U.S.

The strenuous activity is beneficial for physical health which is crucial because of our nation's rapid rate of increasing obesity. Due to our nation's rapid increase of obesity, the conclusions drawn from the following studies indicate that sports combat this phenomenon. Because this is a nation-wide epidemic, these studies are comprised of participants in the U.S.

Advanced play allows for participants to access enhanced education opportunities in private schools and college. Our nation heavily focuses on the importance of education. This is not defined as problem in any sense, but I wish to explore the opportunities athletes can access

through elite play. I also wish to explore the effects on a student-athlete, more specifically uncover the experiences a student has while participating in a collegiate sport. These studies are also comprised of a sample within our country due to our domestic importance of education.

The final topic I wish to explore is how participating in sports can keep individuals from engaging in the use of drug and alcohol abuse. According to the research team at WebMD, alcohol use was used by 65% of the population in 2001 to 2002. In 2002 to 2003, usage jumped up to nearly 73% and is rapidly rising. In 2001 to 2002, high risk drinking, which was defined as at least 4 daily drinks for woman and five daily drinks for men, consisted of 10% of citizens, or about twenty million people. In 2002 to 2003, the rate increased to nearly 13%, which is about thirty million people. According to WebMD, in 2008, 19.6% of adults claim they use drugs. In 2010, that number rose to 21.5%. Again, we see an alarming upward trend in abuse. My further research explores how being involved in a sport can reduce the risks of drug and alcohol abuse. Due to the domestic epidemic of abuse, the studies will include sample sizes within our nation.

#### *Theoretical Framework: Health*

There are multiple factors and variables to investigate when exploring how sports and competition affects mental health. Involvement in organized sporting leagues positively influence mental health both individually and socially. According to a quantitative study conducted by the Newport Academy, students who participated in high-school sports were asked to fill out a mental health assessment three years after graduation. According to the research team of Newport Academy, “Researchers found that youth who were involved in school sports have better scores on all three follow up mental health assessments, compared with those who did not play sports at all”. This suggests that playing sports in adolescent years is

significantly linked to lower depression symptoms, lower signs of stress, and better self-rated mental health in young adulthood (“Teens and Sports”). In this instance, it can be concluded that involvement in adolescent sports help negate depression-like symptoms. Catherine Sabiston, PhD, of the University of Toronto, claims “Team sports offer a heightened emphasis on group goals, social support, and sense of connection that provide more opportunity for learning adaptive coping strategies that can be essential for long-term mental health”. This discovery suggests that there is a strong connection between positive effects on mental health and developing strong team-based skills (Sabiston). There is evidence that physical inactivity is associated with development of psychological disorders. Lack of involvement in sports can lead to negative mental health conditions (“Teens and Sports”). According to Psychology Today, young people utilize sports for an outlet for positive physical and emotional expression. Athletes also develop strong leadership skills through communication and organization. Competing to win stimulates skills in cooperation, concentration, coordination, and creativity - all goals that people strive for outside the realm of sports and competition (Sport and Competition). This enhances athletes’ team-based skills outside of sports which can be used in academic, professional, and overall day-to-day activity. These results supported and approved my expectations that sports promotes positive mental health. These reasons support the importance and positive benefits for mental health gained in participation in organized sports.

Aside from the mental health benefits of sports, involvement also suggests that the exercise greatly benefits one’s physical health. The strenuous activity and exercise involved in sports can help one reach their fitness goals and help maintain a healthy weight. It also encourages healthy-eating choices (“Benefits of Sports for Adolescents”). According to CNBC,



as of 2016, thirty-eight percent of U.S. adults are obese and seventeen percent of teenagers are as well. It is no surprise to me that exercise helps reduce the risks of obesity. During this epidemic rise of obesity, it is imperative that people utilize the opportunity of organized sports to maintain positive physical health to avoid obesity.

### *Theoretical Framework: Education*

Education is perhaps one of the most important factors in our lives. Our society highly values education and the importance of providing the best teaching and institutions for youth. Because all sports require so much time and energy, common questions and research topics often arise. Do athletes make for better students? According to Newport Academy, a quantitative study found direct connections between sports involvement and characteristic development which directly affect the outcomes in the classroom. Due to involvement in team-related sports and the exercise associated with it, athletes experience benefits such as improved confidence, better concentration and alertness, reduced levels of overall tension, improved cognitive function, an increase in critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and enhanced ability to cope with stress (“Teens and Sports”). This article and experiment suggests that students who participate in sports while attending school acquire personality and cognitive traits which positively benefit their mental stability and emotional strength. These traits are necessary and are required for academic success.

Another common research question many psychologists explore: How do student athletes manage their time while attending school and participating in collegiate leagues? According to The University of Missouri Health Care, many student athletes perform much better than expected. It is no surprise that student-athletes are constantly busy with both aspects of their

lives. Because sports involvement requires memorization, repetition, and learning, their research found that students can effectively channel these skills into their classwork. It was also found that student athletes prove to have outstanding time management skills. Finally, the determination and goal-setting skills a sport requires directly translate to the classroom (“Benefits of Sports for Adolescents”). These results supported my idea that students make for better students. It is crucial that athletes have the ability to develop this skill as young as possible to ensure their success in future endeavors both academically and in their respective sport.

In addition to academic success, student athletes have exposure to some of the best education in the country. The best Division One schools in the nation are not only on top of the standings in sports, but also have the most revered and elite academic programs. By allowing athletes to pursue sports at a young age, they are more likely to be better at their sport of choice and ultimately have a chance to learn and compete with the best student-athletes in the country.

#### *Theoretical Framework: Drug and Alcohol Use and Prevention*

As stated prior, involvement in an organized sport requires a large amount of time and personal dedication. Between games, practices, team meetings and events, travel, and scheduled exercise or gym routines, players must commit a majority of their time for their own personal growth, and for the benefit of their team alike. Because of the demanding schedules, athletes stay busy and focused which keeps them away from detrimental activity. A large area of concern amongst researchers and society in general is substance and alcohol abuse across all age ranges. Numerous studies have been constructed which investigate the link between athletes and substance abuse. A study conducted by the researches of Elements Behavioral Health generated an experiment which explored the relationship between student-athletes and drug and alcohol

abuse. The first quantitative study consisted of nearly 12,000 high-school seniors. One half of the sample group consisted of students who participated in a sport. The other half consisted of students who did not participate in a sport. These students were asked to complete a survey which was intended to explore how often students used drugs or used tobacco products. Many of the students continued these surveys until they were twenty-five to twenty-six years of age. One discovery made by researchers suggested that students who participated in sports were more often less likely to use marijuana and other illicit drugs. These students also were less likely to smoke cigarettes or use tobacco. The follow up surveys indicated that those who kept up with physical activity or remained involved in an organized league smoked and used drugs much less often (“Teens Who Exercise”).

The second part of this study was intended to discover how often the students consumed alcohol. This study found that student-athletes were actually more likely to use alcohol but authors claim that these percentages may be misleading. A total of forty-five percent of students that are not athletes claimed they drank within the month. Fifty-seven percent of student athletes also claimed they drank within the last month. It is important to note that the thirteen percent increase is not alarming because of the student athletes who do drink claim they do it less often and in lower amounts which compared to the other students who claim they drink more, and much more frequently. Also, the students who claimed to drink in the first study claimed they were heavy drinkers in the follow up studies (“Teens Who Exercise”). Most programs enforce a strict and rigorous alcohol screening. This is an important and ultimately beneficial practice which is a luxury these athletes have which others do not. This tool keeps student-athletes alcohol usage in check and helps prevent alcohol related problems and addiction. One takeaway

from these screenings suggests that student-athletes drink more because it is monitored in some sense, allowing for safer and supervised consumption. This helps prevent dangerous drinking habits. It is also important to recognize that drug and alcohol abuse are deeper rooted in one's personality beyond the realm of sports and exercise. Study author Yvonne Terry-McElrath states that "Urging young people to exercise and making sure teen athletes are screened for alcohol abuse are more important first steps to address the issue". One limitation this article has is that the studies are correlational but the findings suggest that general exercise and sport involvement greatly reduce the risk of drug and alcohol abuse, problems, and addiction. Although I was surprised that athletes tend to drink more, it is clear that alcohol abuse is rooted much deeper than psychical activity. This outcome upholds my idea that sports keeps us away from drug use. This conclusion supports the overall importance of participating in an organized sport across all ages.

*Conclusion:*

The outcomes drawn from these studies reveal that it is extremely beneficial for people of any age to participate in an organized sport. From these results, we can see how positively the presence of organized sports has on an individual, and how the results affect so many other sectors and realms of society. The exercise associated with sports provides wonderful results for both physical and mental health which we can see are some of the top priorities and concerns in our society. Physical activity is proven to promote positive mental health and helps to prevent mental illnesses. From depression and anxiety to more serious conditions, exercise and team-involvement greatly enhance our mood. In this period of drastically increasing obesity, it is now imperative people exercise regularly and there seems no better way to achieve healthy body

weight than being in an organized sports league. Education is perhaps the most important factor in one's life. It has the power to not only offer the ability to learn, but strong institutions have the power to mold your future. The studies previously reviewed summarized the positive influence competing and learning have on an individual. The positive outcomes and teachings of sports directly affect the outcomes in a classroom so prevalently. Learning opportunities can also be achieved through strong play. We can see that sports drastically enhance students across the country which allows them to receive the highest, most revered education in the country. Similar to the health concerns in our nation, drug and alcohol abuse are also on the rise. Again, we can see that the involvement sports can provide help negate the exposure to these drugs. Athletes seem to have little to no desire to engage in these dangerous activities due to their participation in their respective sports clubs. Amongst all of the sectors, a common trend shows that sports helps prevent one's risk for all of these detrimental practices and only offers positive structure and maintenance of their life. It is also interesting to see how widely connected sports are to so many vast topics. From mental and physical health maintenance, prevention of drug and alcohol use, and educational benefits, it is imperative that people explore what kind of sports programs that are available to them in the local community. I personally chose to help with this fundraiser because I truly believe that my involvement in sports heavily benefited my health, mental well-being, education and learning strengths, and my life overall. I've not only learned how to maintain my health, but I've learned skills like determination, dedication, and hard-work which I am grateful was instilled in me at such a young age. My ultimate goal is to give back my local community a program that is no longer available to them which benefited my life in so many ways.

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