



FINANCIAL EDUCATION FROM AMERICAN CENTURY INVESTMENTS®

Yes, You Can MoneyClips eNews

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Score Lifetime Benefits Through Team Sports

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – According to an article in the *Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine*, 60 million children ages six to 18 participate in organized athletics. Playing team sports can pay big benefits for young adults later on in their adult work lives.

The American Journal of Public Health reports that when children play a structured sport with a coach in kindergarten, they are better able to stay focused and follow directions by the time they are in the fourth grade.

“That’s important, because students who are more engaged in class tend to work more cooperatively, demonstrate more self-confidence, and follow directions and rules,” said a source from CBC News in Canada. These are “behaviors that get honed in childhood and adolescence and pay dividends into adulthood.”

Team players learn life lessons

Most children get their first opportunities to play on a team in physical education classes. Students from kindergarten through high school gain skills and become more fit while participating on volleyball, softball, soccer and basketball teams.

Team players have improved academics and 50 percent become active in team sports outside of school, reports *Personal Health Investment Today*.

The YMCA also touts the “important life lessons” of team sports, “including positive competition, fair play, the value of participation over winning, team-building, positive self-image and mutual respect for others in a fun and engaging environment.”

Women in sports

Though boys have traditionally been more involved in team sports, it’s just as important for girls to get in the game. According to the Women’s Sports Foundation, girls’ participation in high school sports has increased by 990 percent since the 1972 Title IX education amendment gave girls the right to equal participation in sports programs.

“In team sports, [women] learn to share roles and work together towards a common goal, which is a tremendous lesson in the workplace,” said Sue Rodin, founder of Women in

More

Sports and Events (WISE).

Sports statistics can teach math skills

Since sports are all about statistics and keeping score, it can also be brought into the classroom to teach math. At the University of Kansas Center for STEM Learning, teachers Steven Obenhaus and Carrie La Voy challenge students during March Madness to figure out, “What is the sharpest angle a basketball can travel entering the rim and still hit nothing but net?”

Students work as a team to figure the rim’s circumference, draw scale models and use trigonometry to get the answer. There’s “power and excitement” in teaching math this way Obenhaus says.

Finding local teams

Many organizations provide helpful information and offer online locator guides for students looking to join a sports team.

- The YMCA (ymca.net) provides soccer, volleyball, baseball, basketball, tennis and swim teams.
- City recreation departments can provide information on girls’ and boys’ baseball, underhand softball, soccer, basketball and other teams sports.
- Special Olympics (specialolympics.org) provides training and competition in team sports for kids with intellectual disabilities.

Interview Tips

- Poll classmates to see how many of them played team sports in elementary school. How many still play team sports?
- Work with one of your school’s math teachers to create a math question using sports. Include the question as an extra in you story along with the answer.
- Interview a local woman who benefited from Title IX and learn how having equal opportunities to play sports impacted her life.

About Yes, You Can

Financial education has always been important to American Century Investments, which believes one of the greatest gifts it can offer is the opportunity for children and young adults to learn how to achieve financial independence.

Yes, You Can is based, in part, on the beliefs of Jim Stowers, founder of American Century Investments and co-founder, with Virginia Stowers, of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research. For more information on the *Yes, You Can* program, visit <http://www.YesYouCanOnline.info>.

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